

The Image of Antinous and Imperial Ideology

By James Fleming

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Supervisor: Dr. Jitse Dijkstra

Department of Classical Studies

Faculty of Arts

University of Ottawa

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Abstract

The statues of Antinous, Hadrian's favourite, are often believed to be primarily products of Hadrian's philhellenism. The easiest explanation for Antinous' unusual historical profile is that Hadrian loved Greek culture, Antinous was Greek, and the statues, mimicking Greek art, are an extravagant commemorative effort. Closer examination reveals that this is too simplistic an explanation. By quantifying extant statues of Antinous based on provenance and iconography, summarizing Hadrian's ideology, examining Hadrian's own image, and considering the cult of Antinous, we can see that Antinous played an important role in Hadrian's ideology. His cult was a social and religious unifier and helped bridge the gaps between communities and foster shared pride and community amongst adherents; the statues, often cultic objects, visually conveyed this purpose through various iconographic connections to other cults. All this complemented Hadrian's agenda of imperial unity and consolidation. Philhellenism cannot be denied entirely, but the primary purpose of Antinous' statues was ideological.

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General Introduction

Introduction

Perhaps one of the most recognizable faces from antiquity belongs to a certain Greek youth, barely older than a child, who died nearly two thousand years ago. He looks downward, not quite meeting the viewer's eyes; some might call him coy, others thoughtful. His face, softened a little by youth, has a straight nose and slightly furrowed brows. His hair is all heavy curls, brushing down over his forehead and ears and hanging down the back of his neck. He leans his weight onto one foot, hips and shoulders not quite level. His body is almost the classical ideal of the heroic nude, but his lack of muscular definition makes him appear younger and softer. Several dozens of statues of this youth exist, and yet he is portrayed with remarkable consistency. This is Antinous, in his most common portrait style, the young favourite of Emperor Hadrian. Despite the fact that Antinous died so long ago, his image is almost immediately recognizable.

What a long life his image has had. Soon after his death he became a hero, and was venerated across the Roman Empire; countless portraits were fashioned in his image to honour the Empire's new deity. His worship faded under the cultural dominance of Christianity, but he found new life in the Renaissance, when his images began to resurface and found new admirers. Sculptors drew inspiration from his images - so closely, in fact, that it is thought that some extant Antinous statues may be skillful modern-era forgeries.¹ In the 18th century, Antinous became a symbol of homosexual desire and relationships, a codeword for attraction between men during a time that discouraged such things. Oscar Wilde and Victor Hugo evoked him in their writing as a metaphor for the beautiful young man. Today, he is still seen, studied, and imagined by scholars, students, and casual viewers alike.

There is good reason for Antinous' recognizability. As of Hugo Meyer's 1991 catalogue *Antinoos*², 93 statues have been identified as his portraits, and this does not include coinage or minor images. For those keeping score, this puts him in third place for historical Romans with the most extant portraits; the only living Romans from antiquity with more portraits than Antinous are Augustus and Hadrian.³ Antinous' portraits are scattered across the Western world - housed in

¹ C. Vout, 'Antinous, Archaeology and History', *Journal of Roman Studies* 95 (2005) 80-95 at 84.

² H. Meyer, *Antinoos: Die archäologischen Denkmäler* (Munich, 1991).

³ C. Vout, *Power and Eroticism in Imperial Rome* (Cambridge, 2007) 53.

places such as Rome, Paris, and London, alongside some of the finest pieces of European art. He is in the Americas, too, in Washington and Los Angeles. There is even an Antinous in Canada; he stands in the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto (Fig. 1). He is weathered, broken at the waist and missing his arms from the shoulders. His hair is a heavy heap of curls that fall to his shoulders and chest, and his head is crowned with ivy leaves.⁴ He was copied from a 4th century BC statue of Dionysus, recut into Antinous.

The Antinous-Dionysus in Toronto is not one of Antinous' most famous portraits, but it displays themes that reflect in much of the rest of the corpus. It draws heavily from classical Greek imagery, but with some contemporary innovation to make it more 'Antinoan'. Many statues adopt elements of Polykleitan sculpture, such as a sturdy *contrapposto* and upright stance, combined with elements of Praxitelean sculpture, such as a turned gaze and, sometimes, a more extreme *contrapposto*. There are visual links between Antinous and classical Greek depictions of male teenagers, young athletes, and effeminate representations of divinities such as Apollo or Dionysus. It is tempting to explain their appearance with Hadrian's philhellenic reputation. Commonly thought of as a philhellene above all else, Hadrian must have drawn from his love of Greek culture to create these Greek-style portraits of his Greek lover, taken from him all too soon. It seems cut and dry; Antinous is a visual manifestation of Hadrian's affection for Greek culture.

Perhaps it is not so simple, though. There are many factors to consider and re-examine; recent scholarship, for instance, has rethought the extent to which Hadrian's love of Greek culture informed his actions, from the art he sponsored to the policies he enacted. Questioning this also questions Antinous' image, which was controlled by Hadrian and only produced after Antinous had died. However, if Hadrian was not primarily motivated by philhellenism, then the source of and message behind Antinous' image must be identified. This may, in turn, alter the interpretation of the image. Re-examining the source of Antinous' image will colour the subsequent interpretation of his image and alter his overall role in Hadrianic imperial ideology. And so, what was the role of Antinous' image in imperial ideology? This is the overall question that this thesis endeavours to answer.

This thesis is divided into three chapters, which strive to understand Antinous' image and its place in imperial ideology. The first chapter quantifies Antinous' statues and discusses them as

⁴ Exhibit 925.23.24 at the Royal Ontario Museum; H. Meyer, *Antinoos: Die archäologischen Denkmäler* (Munich, 1991) 82 (no. 1.60).

material artifacts; the second examines Hadrian, his own image, and his ideology; and the last combines both topics, viewing the statues, and Antinous himself, through the lens of Hadrian's ideology. Antinous, his cult, his statuary, and the ideological undercurrents present in all of them will be drawn together to identify Antinous' role in Hadrian's policies. Further detail on the contents of these chapters is given later in this introduction. Until then, there is groundwork that must be covered in order to better understand Antinous and the content of this thesis. Antinous himself is important to this discussion: his image was primarily created and circulated after his death but was informed by his life. Scholarship on Antinous will also be discussed, and the terminology used throughout this thesis is defined in order to better understand the material to come.

Antinous

In order to discuss Antinous' portraits, we must first get to know Antinous himself. Who was he? What kind of person was he? What did he really look like? What did Hadrian see in him? What about him made his death break Hadrian's heart? There is obviously a story here, and there are so many questions. If we knew the answer to these, so much light could be shed not only on Antinous himself but on Hadrian as well. Unfortunately, many of these questions cannot be answered, and Antinous' life remains clouded in speculation and historical obscurity. Antinous' legacy – his myriad of images, his cult, and his impact on the Empire – is readily available, but the life he lived only survives in a few shadowy references in literary sources and, possibly, certain pieces of art. The major literary sources dealing with Antinous are Pausanias, Cassius Dio, Aurelius Victor, and the *Historia Augusta*, although they only mention him in passing. Little detail is spared for him, and no contemporary accounts attest to his very existence, let alone any words or deeds, in public with the court or in private with Hadrian.

Chronologically, Pausanias (c. 110-180) is the first author to mention Antinous. He was approximately the same age as Antinous, and thus wrote relatively close to Antinous' lifetime. His *Description of Greece* is a travel book that, as the name suggests, describes various locations in Greece, explaining their background and various notable sites there. Antinous appears in the section on Mantinea, where Pausanias describes a temple to Antinous in the city, populated with numerous statues of the boy, which he says resemble Dionysus. He goes on to briefly mention that Antinous was Hadrian's favourite, that there is a city named for him along the Nile (that is, Antinoopolis), and that he was deified after his death. He also identifies Antinous' birthplace as

Bithynium,⁵ ‘along the river Sangarius’, and that Antinous was venerated in Mantinea because it is the mother city of Bithynium.⁶ Antinous only factors into Pausanias’ text as background information to explain the peculiarities of Mantinea, the description of which is the main focus of this part of his text. He is only given the minimum required attention Pausanias needs to illustrate Mantinea.

Cassius Dio (c. 155-235) provides more detail, although he is still rather uninformative. The section on Hadrian in the epitome of the *Roman History* devotes a short passage to Antinous. It confirms his birthplace as Bithynium (here called Claudiopolis, another name for the same city), briefly mentions that he had a close relationship with Hadrian, and then spends the rest of the passage discussing Antinous’ death on the Nile. He says that Antinous’ death may have been accidental, but it may also have been some sort of voluntary human sacrifice. According to Dio, Hadrian was interested in divination and incantation, and required a voluntary human sacrifice for some unspecified ritual required for ‘the accomplishment of the ends Hadrian had in view’. Antinous apparently offered himself up for it, and consequently died. Then, either out of grief for his dead favourite or gratitude for his sacrifice, Hadrian built Antinoopolis on the spot where Antinous died, and spread portraits of the boy across the Empire.⁷

This is the extent of Dio’s information on Antinous. Like Pausanias, Dio indicates that Antinous was Hadrian’s favourite, but does not elaborate further on the nature of their relationship. Interestingly, he also indicates that human sacrifice is the ‘true’ cause of Antinous’ death, and that the story about the death being accidental is a fabrication meant to obscure the reality of the event. He wrote several decades after both Antinous and Hadrian had died, and no doubt rumours about Antinous’ death were well-circulated by then, giving rise to the theory that Hadrian committed human sacrifice on the Nile for sinister ritualistic purposes. Dio certainly has his criticisms of Hadrian. Later on, he says that, although Hadrian was a good emperor, he was hated by the citizens by the time of his death; Dio also condemns him for the execution of political rivals.⁸ It is not a stretch to wonder if this story of ritual sacrifice is a rumour circulated by political enemies, which Dio picked up in the decades afterward. Otherwise, Dio provides no other information on Antinous. There is no record of how Antinous went from being a commoner in Bithynium to the

⁵ Modern-day Bolu, in northern Turkey.

⁶ Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 8.9.7.

⁷ Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 69.11.2-4.

⁸ Cassius Dio 69.23.2.

emperor's favourite and a member of his entourage during his travels to Egypt, nor is there any record of Antinous' actions or status at the court.

Chronologically, the next source is Aurelius Victor (c. 320-390). He wrote approximately two and a half centuries after Antinous' death, and appears to draw on Dio's account. As in Dio, Antinous plays a minor role in the narrative, and most of the information on him focusses on his death. Victor initially condemns Hadrian for his 'unnatural' passion for Antinous and young boys in general, and criticizes him for taking a lover so much younger than himself. This unnatural passion and Hadrian's self-indulgence in it are the driving forces behind Antinous' legacy: Antinoopolis, the cult, and the statues are the result. However, he may have also acted out of a sort of piety, to honour Antinous after his death in ritualistic sacrifice on the Nile. Here, the narrative turns to follow Dio's lead. According to a diviner, Hadrian would be granted a long life if another life was given willingly for him. He asked everyone, but Antinous was the only one to offer himself up, and thus he died.⁹

Victor's text was written a considerable amount of time after Antinous' death, allowing ample time for rumour to develop and be exaggerated. He follows Dio's lead regarding the theory of human sacrifice but provides more detail about the actual ritual involved. Hadrian may have been ill at the time of Antinous' death, a chronic illness that would plague him for the rest of his reign, which would be a plausible explanation for the nature of the sacrifice. Victor is generally hostile toward Hadrian, too, as seen, for instance, in his disapproval of his relationship with Antinous, for instance. It is not out of the question for him to circulate a malicious rumour to further criticize Hadrian.

The fourth major source is the *Historia Augusta*, probably written in the 4th century. The veracity of the material in the *Historia Augusta* should be regarded with skepticism. Many parts of it are littered with exaggerations and fabrications, and while the chapter on Hadrian seems to be relatively accurate, it should be noted that the text presents a certain bias against Hadrian.¹⁰ Its information on Antinous is predictably brief, only mentioning him in the context of Hadrian's trip to Egypt. Like other sources, it calls Antinous Hadrian's 'favourite', and makes vague reference to Antinous willingly sacrificing himself for Hadrian on the Nile, although it does not elaborate on

⁹ Aurelius Victor 14.7-9.

¹⁰ For example, *Historia Augusta*, Vita Hadriani, 15.2-8, which describes Hadrian turning against his allies and persecuting them in various ways.

the circumstances. This appears to indicate that the rumours present in Dio and Victor are still present and circulating, or that the *Historia Augusta* draws from these texts. After Antinous' death, the text says that he was deified by the Greeks at Hadrian's request, and that his cult had oracles who claimed to be divinely sent by Antinous but who were in fact installed by Hadrian.¹¹ The same issues from the other texts are still present in the *Historia Augusta*, albeit with extra details, especially those denouncing the cult.

Beyond these four texts, there are a few other sources tangentially related to Antinous that reveal more details about him. As a point of interest, a *collegium* in Lanuvium, southeast of Rome, was dedicated to Antinous and Diana. It celebrated a feast day on 27 November, which an inscription says is Antinous' birthday, although this could also be the date of his deification or the founding of a local temple to Antinous.¹² His actual year of birth is unknown, but it is generally assumed that he was no older than twenty; his birth is placed roughly between 110 and 112.¹³ As for the date of his death, the *Chronicon Paschale* places the foundation of Antinoopolis on the third day before the kalends of November, or roughly 29 or 30 October. Assuming that Hadrian founded Antinoopolis in the immediate aftermath of Antinous' death, before moving onward with his trip through Egypt, Antinous must have died during the last days of October. Eusebius records that all of this occurred in the thirteenth year of Hadrian's reign, placing it in 130. Putting all of this together, then, Antinous likely died around 30 October 130.¹⁴ This leaves eight years for Hadrian to establish Antinous' cult, commission and circulate portraits, and incorporate Antinous into his imperial policy before his own death in 138.

After Antinous' death, a poem was written by Pancrates of Athens that describes a hunt, during which Antinous and Hadrian kill a lion in Libya.¹⁵ The poem is not a reliable biographical source; it is filled with literary conventions and formulae that give Antinous a divine nature.¹⁶ It calls him the son of Hermes, and compares the hunt to Zeus slaying Typhon, indicating that it was probably written after Antinous was dead and his cult had been established. Hadrian certainly enjoyed hunting, and it was a popular sport among the elite; several episodes from his biography

¹¹ *Historia Augusta*. Vita Hadriani 14.7.

¹² A. Bendlin, 'Associations, Funerals, Sociality, and Roman Law: The *collegium* of Diana and Antinous at Lanuvium (CIL 14.2112) Reconsidered', in M. Öhler (ed.) *Aposteldekret und antikes Vereinswesen: Gemeinschaft und ihre Ordnung* (Tübingen, 2011) 207-96 at 214.

¹³ C.A. Williams, *Roman Homosexuality: Ideologies of Masculinity in Classical Antiquity* (New York, 1999) 64.

¹⁴ Vout, *Power*, 57-8.

¹⁵ Pancrates, *Antinous*, D.L. Page (trans.) *Select Papyri* Vol. 3 (Cambridge, 1941) 516-519 at 519.

¹⁶ Vout, *Power*, 57-8.

depict him hunting, including one wherein he founds the city of Hadrianotherae on the site of a bear hunt in Mysia.¹⁷ Even if Pancrates' poem is unreliable, the fact that Antinous is commemorated through hunting scenes may indicate that Antinous enjoyed hunting with Hadrian, or at least that he accompanied Hadrian on hunting expeditions. If this is the case, it would be the only record of an action actually carried out by Antinous before his death.

A connection between Antinous and the hunt may also be present on the Hadrianic *tondi* from the Arch of Constantine, although this connection is highly speculative. Some scholars theorize that seven of the eight *tondi* depict Antinous alongside Hadrian in a variety of scenes, including hunts.¹⁸ Assuming that there is a certain chronology to the *tondi*, the final one, showing Hadrian and his companions standing over a dead lion, may depict a more mature Antinous (Fig. 2). This figure has shorter hair and the first signs of a beard, indicating that it could be Antinous as he was at the time of his death, without the uniform idealization of his statues.¹⁹ Though there is no concrete confirmation that the *tondi* depict Antinous at all, it is a tempting glimpse at the real Antinous, before he was idealized in death and became the divine youth.

Antinous' status as favourite is also debated. It is variously characterized as a relationship between lovers, friends, a student and teacher, or even a sort of father and son relationship. The latter possibility is especially interesting considering Hadrian had no children of his own. It has also been argued that the sexual nature of Antinous and Hadrian's relationship is a rumour circulated by detractors in response to Hadrian's grief after Antinous' death.²⁰ However, Hadrian demonstrated sexual interest in male youths as early as Trajan's reign, when he and Trajan had a brief falling out over Hadrian's inappropriate advances toward Trajan's male favourites.²¹ Hadrian also had a reputation as a philhellene, and a relationship with Antinous would fall in line with classical Greek pederasty. Later writers, especially Christians, also saw their relationship as sexual, and Hadrian was accused of robbing Antinous of his manhood,²² although their polemics could stem from detractors' rumours. Keeping in mind Antinous' overall historical reputation, Hadrian's

¹⁷ A. Birley, *Hadrian: The Restless Emperor* (London, 1997) 164.

¹⁸ J.-C. Grenier and F. Coarelli, 'La tombe d'Antinoüs à Rome,' *Mélanges de l'école française de Rome* 98 (1986) 217-253 at 252. The *tondo* on which he does not appear depicts a sacrifice to Apollo, where Grenier and Coarelli suggest that Apollo is meant to be Antinous as well, as the two were conflated in Antinous' statuary later on.

¹⁹ Birley, *Hadrian*, 241.

²⁰ W. Den Boer, 'Religion and Literature in Hadrian's Policy,' *Mnemosyne* 8 (1955) 123-144.

²¹ *Historia Augusta*. Vita Hadriani 4.5.

²² For example, Prudentius, *Against Symmachus* 1.271-7.

philhellenism and Hadrian's intense reaction to Antinous' death, this thesis assumes their relationship was pederastic and sexual in nature.

A very skeletal narrative of Antinous' life can, therefore, be reconstructed by compiling the scattered sources that mention him. He was born in Bithynium between 110 and 112, and at some point entered Hadrian's entourage and became his favourite, although the exact nature of their relationship is still debated. He was with Hadrian during his travels, at least in Egypt, and likely hunted with him. In Egypt, he died on the Nile; he was no older than twenty. After Antinous died, Hadrian founded Antinoopolis on the banks near the place of his death, and proceeded to establish the cult of Antinous and commission the portraits that still survive today. Hadrian died eight years later, but thanks to his efforts Antinous would live on for centuries.

The rest is all speculation. Perhaps Hadrian first encountered Antinous during his visit to Bithynium in 123; Antinous would have been no older than 13. Perhaps Antinous was enrolled in the Palatine Schools, or became a page in Hadrian's court. Perhaps, as he grew older, Hadrian became increasingly fond of him, and their relationship escalated – maybe he saw Antinous as a son, a student, or a lover. None of this can be known, although scholars and authors have tried to imagine what could fill in the biographical gaps. As for his death, it is suggested that it was of a relatively mundane cause, and that later authors sensationalized it, or used rumours of sacrifice to attack Hadrian.²³ The story of the ritual first appears almost a century after Antinous died, in Cassius Dio, and the notion that Hadrian tried to cover up the ritual with the story of an accident seems suspicious. The sources are not concerned with Antinous himself, but with Hadrian, and only pay attention to Antinous because he affected Hadrian. They focus heavily on Antinous' death because it caused such profound and excessive grief in Hadrian. Antinous' death created a wealth of statues dedicated to a provincial nobody, and a new hero cult that endured for some two hundred years. The sources do not ask who Antinous was or what he did, but rather why his death affected Hadrian so much, and why it prompted Hadrian to commemorate him in such extravagant ways. Because Hadrian's response was so profound, there must be a story there, and critics and historians generated dramatic fictions to explain it.

The ancient sources offer a tantalizing glimpse of one of classical antiquity's most enigmatic figures, and one cannot help but wish more information had survived. Was he really the passive, thoughtful, or coy youth that his portraits seem to suggest, or was he a different sort of

²³ Vout, *Power*, 57.

person? How did he get from Bithynium to Rome, and what was his status in Hadrian's court? What did Hadrian see in him that caused such an impassioned response upon his death? How was he received by Hadrian's wife Sabina and the rest of Hadrian's entourage? How did he die? And did he really look the way he does in his statues? We will probably never know these things. Unless a lost text from an insider at the court miraculously emerges from, say, the desert sands of Egypt, the historical Antinous is lost to time. Alfred Lord Tennyson once said, 'If we knew what [Antinous] knew, we would understand the ancient world'.²⁴ Perhaps this is true. To see Rome through Antinous' eyes would not only offer considerable insight into his own life, but into the life of Hadrian, his court, the elite around him, and beyond. Antinous is gone, though, and what remains of him are his portraits and his legacy, so those will have to suffice.

Scholarship

Until recently, the bulk of scholarship on Antinous' portraits was carried out in German, and has only entered English scholarship in recent decades. A key work on the subject is Hugo Meyer's 1991 monograph *Antinoos*. It includes a catalogue of every Antinous image, from statues to relief sculptures to coins, known at the time of its publishing. For each image it provides descriptions, photographs, provenance when available, and interpretations of the iconography present. Furthermore, the book contains several chapters of analysis of the corpus, and supplementary background materials regarding Antinous' life, legacy, and context. This thesis makes extensive use of the catalogue, and the first chapter quantifies the corpus as presented by Meyer. Complementary to Meyer is Cécile Evers' 1997 book *Les portraits d'Hadrien*.²⁵ This book is a catalogue of the 150 or so extant statues of Hadrian, and includes descriptions of each. There are also sections that analyze the typology and iconography of the portraits. This thesis is primarily concerned with Antinous, of course, but an examination of Hadrian's portraiture is vital for the chapter on Hadrian himself, and Evers' catalogue is a valuable resource for that.

For literature on Antinous, Caroline Vout's works are an excellent starting point. She is an art historian who has published several articles on the image of Antinous, which are referenced repeatedly in this thesis. The chapter regarding Antinous in her 2007 book *Power and Eroticism in Imperial Rome* provides an introduction to Antinous' biography, the categorization and

²⁴ Vout, *Power*, 52.

²⁵ C. Evers, *Les portraits d'Hadrien: Typologie et ateliers* (Brussels, 1991)

identification of his images, and his overall cultural impact.²⁶ It also touches on the debate around Hadrian's philhellenism. Her article 'What's in a Beard? Rethinking Hadrian's Philhellenism',²⁷ published 2006, goes into more detail on that debate. Vout challenges the notion that Hadrian's philhellenism was the driving force of his imagery and policy, especially discussing the visual message of his beard as a touchstone for the broader debate.

Christopher P. Jones' 2010 book *New Heroes: From Achilles to Antinoos* features a chapter on Antinous.²⁸ Although Jones discusses his image, the discussion primarily focusses on his cult, which is of importance to the final chapter of this thesis. It traces the development of the cult from its Hadrianic origins to its emergence as an independent and unique entity; it is not particularly concerned with the historical Antinous, and it only mentions his images in relation to the cult. It also cites various papyri, inscriptions, and texts to better illustrate and contextualize the impact Antinous' cult had on the Empire. Other chapters are concerned with the development of the Greek hero cult, making it of interest for illustrative purposes. Other perspectives on the development of the hero cult come from Jan N. Bremmer's *Greek Religion*, published 1994, and James B. Rives' *Religion in the Roman Empire*, published 2007.²⁹ These three texts provide complementary voices to construct the history of the Greek hero cult, to which Antinous is compared.

Other literature on Antinous discusses a wide range of topics pertaining to him; several are used by this thesis. Elizabeth Bartman's eye-catchingly titled 2002 paper 'Eros' Flame: Images of Sexy Boys in Roman Ideal Sculpture' lays out a broad category of Hellenistic and Roman sculptures that depict ephobic youths, and she places Antinous among them.³⁰ This contextualizes Antinous' image among his contemporaries, and provides a look at the styles used to depict him. Christer Bruun's 2016 article 'Remembering Roman Anniversaries at Ostia: The *Dies Natalis* of Antinous, Hero and Divine Being' is a case study of the inscriptions from an Antinous cult at Ostia, illustrating the actual presence of the Antinous cult in the real world.³¹ Gil H. Renberg's

²⁶ Vout, *Power*.

²⁷ C. Vout, 'What's in a Beard? Rethinking Hadrian's Philhellenism' in S. Goldhill and R. Osborn (eds) *Rethinking Revolutions through Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, 2006), 96-123; C. Vout, 'Hadrian, Hellenism, and the Social History of Art', *Arion* 18 (2010) 55-78.

²⁸ C.P. Jones, *New Heroes in Antiquity: From Achilles to Antinoos* (Cambridge, 2010).

²⁹ J. Bremmer, *Greek Religion* (Oxford, 1994); J. Rives, *Religion in the Roman Empire* (Malden, 2007).

³⁰ E. Bartman, 'Eros's Flame: Images of Sexy Boys in Roman Ideal Sculpture' in E.K. Gazda (ed.), *The Ancient Art of Emulation: Studies in Artistic Originality and Tradition from the Present to Classical Antiquity* (Ann Arbor, 2002), 249-71.

³¹ C. Bruun, "Remembering Roman Anniversaries at Ostia: The *Dies Natalis* of Antinous, Hero and Divine Being," *Phoenix* 70 (2016) 361-380

2010 article ‘Hadrian and the Oracles of Antinous’ looks at the oracular aspect of Antinous’ cult, and places it in the context of other oracular cults and beliefs of the time.³² Much of this scholarship is not only examined to better understand Antinous, but to understand him in the context of the Empire and to compare his statues and his cult with others active at the same time.

In addition to scholarship focussed on Antinous himself, he also appears regularly, if briefly, in scholarship specific to Hadrian. It is difficult to discuss Hadrian’s later years without at least a passing mention of Antinous. Various texts of this sort are used both for discussion of Antinous but also of Hadrian. Anthony Birley’s *Hadrian: The Restless Emperor*, published 1997, and Anthony Everitt’s *Hadrian and the Triumph of Rome*, published 2009, are both excellent biographies of Hadrian.³³ They both feature chapters on Antinous, but are also important for illustrating Hadrian and his ideology. A better understanding of Hadrian leads to a better understanding of Antinous, his image, and his cult.

R.R.R. Smith and Philip Zanker’s studies are crucial for understanding portraiture in general, and the way in which used Romans used the image. Zanker developed the idea of the ‘period face’, which is detailed in this thesis, and Smith debates the idea. Zanker’s 1995 book *The Mask of Socrates* is a good starting point for understanding the period face phenomenon, while Smith’s 1998 paper ‘Cultural Choice and Political Identity in Honorific Portrait Statues in the Greek East in the Second Century A.D.’ is an interesting examination and criticism of the idea.³⁴ This thesis endeavours to engage with the period face phenomenon, using Zanker and Smith’s debates on the topic as primary sources.

Other sources are used to broadly illustrate honorific portraiture. Jane Fejfer’s 2015 paper ‘Roman Portraits’³⁵ is an excellent introduction to the topic, providing a general overview of how portraits were made, what purposes they served, and why they looked the way they did. In a similar vein, Klaus Fittschen’s ‘Methodological Approaches to the Dating and Identification of Roman Portraits,’³⁶ published 2015, also functions as an introduction to the topic, but focusses more on

³² G.H. Renberg, “Hadrian and the Oracles of Antinous,” *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 55 (2010) 159-198

³³ A. Everitt, *Hadrian and the Triumph of Rome* (New York, 2009).

³⁴ P. Zanker, trans. A. Shapiro, *The Mask of Socrates: The image of the Intellectual in Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1995); R.R.R. Smith, “Cultural Choice and Political Identity in Honorific Portrait Statues in the Greek East in the Second Century A.D.,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 88 (1998), 56-93.

³⁵ J. Fejfer, “Roman Portraits,” in Borg, B.E., *A Companion to Roman Art* (Chichester, 2015) 231-251.

³⁶ K. Fittschen, “Methodological Approaches to the Dating and Identification of Roman Portraits,” in Borg, B.E., *A Companion to Roman Art* (Chichester, 2015) 52-70.

the iconography of the portraits and their identification, as the title suggests. The primary importance of this topic for this thesis is in the discussion of Hadrian's image and the ideological messages behind it, although it remains relevant to later discussion of Antinous' image as well.

Finally, on the topic of ideology, Clifford Ando's 2000 book *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* is a thorough examination of imperial ideology on multiple levels of society and the way it manifested and was communicated across the Empire.³⁷ Sections on Hadrian and on portraiture are of particular relevance to this thesis, but the whole book provides interesting background and contextual information. Barbara Kellum's 2015 paper 'Imperial Messages' contains similar subject material, but specifically examines the intersection of portrait and ideology.³⁸ Because the images of Hadrian and Antinous were products of Hadrian's ideology, this discussion is important for understanding them.

This is a brief overview of the literature used for this thesis; the selected titles highlighted here are a cross-section of the literature used to illustrate the following discussions. Alongside the secondary literature, a selection of primary literature is also used. The *Historia Augusta* and Cassius Dio are the most commonly referred to, but because virtually no literary sources survive regarding Antinous, the focus is on material evidence and literary sources pertaining to Hadrian. Several other primary sources are mentioned in passing, particularly as illustrative tools. For example, Origen and Prudentius are used to illustrate the longevity of Antinous' cult, and Fronto's letters illustrate the ubiquity of portraiture in the Empire. However, secondary sources are used much more widely. Although scholarship on Antinous in English is relatively recent, he is often included in scholarship of Imperial Rome, and his presence, whether a looming shadow or an in-person appearance, is felt in a wide range of subjects.

Definitions

Before beginning this discussion of Antinous, the terms used both in this introduction and beyond, as well as the limitations placed on material evidence, must be defined in order to better understand the content of the thesis. This thesis focusses on Meyer's first four portrait-types, which primarily comprise free-standing statues, as well as a handful of relief portraits. These types are the main type (called the *Haupttypus* in Meyer), the main type forehead-fork variants (the

³⁷ C. Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley, 2000)

³⁸ B. Kellum, "Imperial Messages," in Friedland, E.A., Sobocinski, M.G., and Gadza, E.K. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture* (Oxford, 2015), 423-45.

Stirngabelvariantes), the Mondragone type, and the Egyptianizing type. Minor images, such as gems, cameos, carved lamps, and figurines, are excluded. Coins are not examined individually but are discussed in general terms in relation to their role in propaganda and the growth of Antinous' cult. Furthermore, the remarkably consistent nature of Antinous' coin portraits also make them valuable in the identification of statue portraits and the discussion of it. Certain other depictions are also given attention, such as the Pincio Obelisk, which contains an inscription about Antinous and a heavily stylized, pharaonic portrait of him.

'Statue' generally refers to images of Antinous carved in the round, and is a catch-all term for full-body statues, whether intact or damaged, busts, and statue fragments. Distinctions between these subcategories of statue are made only if necessary for clarity during a particular discussion. Reliefs are not included under the umbrella of the term 'statue' but are instead referred to as reliefs. Likewise, coins, gems, cameos, and figurines are also excluded. 'Portrait', on the other hand refers to any image depicting a specific individual, for whatever reason. Two ancient terms for statues that appear in Cassius Dio are also used, those being *andriantes* and *agalмата*.³⁹ *Andrias* (s.) is one of various terms for a secular statue representing a real person; the term connotes humanity, especially masculinity, rather than the divine, and *andriantes* were present in civic spaces.⁴⁰ *Agalma* (s.) refers specifically to a statue that received cultic worship, whether it depicted a hero or a god, or images of deities present in sacred spaces.⁴¹ Dio implies that there was considerable overlap between the two terms in Antinous' portraiture, but the distinction is nevertheless relevant to later discussion.

'Ideology' is a looser term. In the context of imperial Rome, it roughly encompasses the leader's overall agenda and priorities in managing the Empire, and the manner in which he maintained control of the Empire. It also includes the way in which the emperor held control of the Empire and its citizens, how he maintained the willing participation of the citizens in making the Empire function, and the overall Roman culture the citizens shared.⁴² What we mean by ideology can be illustrated by the difference between Augustus, who was focussed on stabilizing the Empire after the collapse of the Republic and enacting morality reforms, and Trajan, who is

³⁹ Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 69.11.4.

⁴⁰ J. Bremmer, "The Agency of Greek and Roman Statues: From Homer to Constantine," *Opuscula* 6 (2013) 7-21 at 8.

⁴¹ N. Spivy, *Greek Sculpture* (Cambridge, 2013) 45.

⁴² Ando, *Ideology*, 40-1.

remembered as a military leader who conquered several new provinces. Important for this thesis is the way Hadrian represented himself, and the messages he wished to convey about his administration through the images of himself that he spread through the Empire. For this thesis, ideology will mean both how Hadrian managed the Empire and what he felt the Empire should be, as well as how Antinous fit into it.

The cult of Antinous is also central to this thesis. ‘Cult’, in the ancient context, refers to a specific, local iteration of a broader religious institution. Cults were religious communities sharing the worship of the same god. The god differed from cult to cult; cults did not worship a common god, but rather a unique local iteration of a god that was nevertheless equated with similar local iterations collected under a common name. It is worth noting that the ancient concept of a cult lacks the modern negative connotation. The definition of a hero cult varied from place to place, but in general, it was a specific type of cult that venerated not a mythological god but a notable, once-living person, whether legendary or within living memory.⁴³ Hero cults generally did not have other iterations around the Empire, but were highly localized in the regions to which the object of veneration was relevant.

Finally, Christianity is discussed in this thesis, especially since the cult of Antinous persisted until the rising cultural dominance of Christianity overtook it. It is worth clarifying that I subscribe to the general theory not that the rise of Christianity and the fall of Paganism was a single significant event, but rather the gradual change in culture across the 3rd and 4th centuries.⁴⁴ Paganism here is used as an imperfect catch-all term for traditional Mediterranean cults and traditions not including Christianity or Judaism.⁴⁵ Similarly, Christianity is a catch-all term for the followers of Christ; just as there are today, many branches of Christianity existed, each with its own understanding of the faith. As such, Antinous was one Pagan tradition of many that was eventually superseded by Christianity.

The Next Step

Antinous remains one of classical Rome’s great mysteries. A teenage nobody from a provincial town became the favourite of the emperor of Rome, a man three times his age. He was close enough to the emperor to join him on imperial excursions through the provinces, and close

⁴³ Rives, *Religion*, 13.

⁴⁴ For example, A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome* (Oxford, 2010) 12-3.

⁴⁵ Cameron, *Pagans*, 26-7.

enough to take that emperor's heart with him to his end in the Nile. Yet we know nothing of substance about him, and the fact that this otherwise-unknown favourite had such a long and colourful afterlife is striking. Hadrian's immense grief for Antinous and his commemorative efforts stand out as unique and draw attention to a historical figure who seems otherwise content to remain quietly in obscurity. That Antinous is so known and yet so unknown is a mystery that begs to be unravelled.

Who Antinous was when not moonlighting as a hero is unknowable, and no amount of work can result in anything other than speculation and guesses. Instead, this thesis examines the image he left behind. The extant statues were commissioned and distributed by Hadrian, ostensibly as a commemorative effort, but the extravagance of this commemoration went above and beyond the norm, drawing attention and criticism from those around him. Hadrian had eight years to promote Antinous' afterlife, until his own death in 138, after which Antinous took on a life of his own and survived for 200 years more. Were these efforts by Hadrian wholly commemorative, though, or was there something more to it? Perhaps Hadrian simply abused his status and the resources available to him to immortalize his beloved on a remarkable scale, or perhaps Hadrian co-opted Antinous' memory for political gain, making the most of an unexpected event.

Implicit in this discussion is the question of Hadrian's philhellenism. Was the legendary Antinous borne simply of Hadrian's love of Greek culture, or was there another source of inspiration? To answer this, one must look at Hadrian himself, his policies, and his ideology. From there, a line can be drawn from him to Antinous, and we can infer Antinous' origins. If Antinous' legacy is not only an unusual commemorative gesture but also serves a secondary purpose, then it must fit into Hadrian's ideology in some way, even if that way is simply that it falls in line with Hadrian's philhellenism. This leads to the overall question that lies at the heart of this thesis: what was Antinous' role in imperial ideology?

To answer this question, this thesis is broken down into three chapters. In the first chapter, the images are examined. The chapter gives an overview of the corpus of statues, according to the types in Meyer, including the characteristics of each type. The statues are then quantified according to their format, the iconography with which Antinous is represented and attached to other cults, and the available provenance. This chapter is about the numbers: the quantity statues, their distribution, and the commonality of certain characteristics among the corpus. It also discusses the methods by which statues are identified as Antinous, and how statues are included or excluded

from the corpus. Although there are far too many portraits to allow individual attention to each, a limited selection will be specifically discussed to illustrate and clarify the discussions in this chapter.

The second chapter moves to Hadrian, who was responsible for creating the images discussed in the first chapter, and it is impossible to discuss Antinous without Hadrian. The chapter begins with Hadrian's ideology. It characterizes the manner in which Hadrian administered the Empire, and his overall goals as emperor. It then briefly digresses into introduction to Roman honourific portraiture in general, including the way it was used and why it looked as it did. Using all of the information presented thus far in the chapter, Hadrian's own image is finally examined. The underlying question of this chapter concerned the ideological message Hadrian's image was trying to convey, and, focussing especially on the irregularity of his beard, whether philhellenism was a driving force behind the way he chose to represent himself.

The third and final chapter returns to Antinous, to synthesize the previous chapters' information. First, the cult of Antinous is examined, including an introduction to hero cults in general and a look at Antinous' own cult; it discusses how Antinous fits with traditions of hero cults around the Empire, and the role it played in Hadrian's ideology. Finally, the images return. The data collected in chapter one is filtered through the lenses of Hadrian's ideology, Hadrian's own image, and the cult of Antinous, to understand the messages behind the statues of Antinous and the role they played in Hadrianic imperial ideology. It ties all the threads of discussion together to understand the complexities of the way Antinous was presented to the Empire. Following this chapter, a brief general conclusion summarizes the trains of logic woven throughout the thesis and reiterates the final answers to the questions that this thesis endeavours to solve.

In this introduction we met Antinous, and got to know him as best one can. He is well-hidden, somewhere behind the idealized marble face, but perhaps we can see him as us around the edge of the facsimile meant to represent him. It is impossible to coax him out any further, so he must be left in his comfortable obscurity. Instead, we can turn to that facsimile, and see what it has to say. The shadow of his statue covers not just him but stretches across time and space to colour antiquity and the Eastern Empire. He is a puzzle that refuses to be solved, but perhaps some sense can be made of him through the image. This thesis, then, begins in earnest with the examination of the corpus of statues.

Chapter 1: The Many Faces of Antinous

Introduction

A broad body of statues of Antinous survives from Antiquity, spread across the Roman Empire. They stood everywhere, from theatres and bathhouses, to private villas and sacred temples. In many of them Antinous is attired as gods such as Dionysus, Osiris, and Apollo, evoking the other cults of the Empire through his costumes. These statues must be quantified before we can discuss Antinous himself; we must understand what Antinous looked like and how Hadrian represented him before we can understand what that representation meant. This chapter will draw primarily from Meyer's *Antinoos*, and will provide an overview of the corpus according to Meyer, before digging deeper into the ancient purposes and uses of these statues.

This chapter contains three sections. The first is a survey of the corpus itself and an explanation of the typology of the statues as laid out by Meyer. Because this thesis deals with statues first and foremost, only the first four types will be discussed, as they comprise the extant statues. This section deals with the problem of identification, and some of the methods used to decide which statues should be added to the corpus, or removed from it. Certain case studies will be discussed to illustrate these methods and some of the problems encountered when using them. Following this is a section examining the way in which Antinous was visually identified with other divine figures. It gives an overview of the various figures connected to Antinous and the visual cues used in the statues that make these connections. These connections are quantified according to the figure they reference, and the specific iconographic elements associated with these figures that evoke them in statues of Antinous are highlighted. A small selection of statues will be singled out as exemplars to illustrate each category of connection. The actual analysis of these connections must wait for the third chapter, after the statues of Hadrian have been discussed.

Finally, the third section discusses the geographical distribution of the extant statues by listing the regions in which they were discovered and the contexts in which they were displayed, excluding examples where the original provenance has not been recorded. Even though fewer than half of the statues in Meyer's first four types still have their provenance recorded, the available data displays a sample of the spread of statues across the Empire as well as the frequency with which they appeared in certain regions. Then the statues whose exact contexts and sites of discovery are known are examined to discuss the sorts of environments in which they were

displayed. This data helps to demonstrate the spread of Antinous' cult and, through the discussion of the places and contexts in which Romans encountered images of Antinous, will aid in the later discussion of how Hadrian used the statues.

The Four Types

Meyer's catalogue *Antinoos* lists all of the known representations of Antinous as of the book's publication in 1991. He divides his corpus into several types, the first four of which cover the primary body of free-standing statues, as well as three relief sculptures. The rest of the types are reserved for minor representations that are less easily categorised, such as coins, medallions, figurines, lamps, and so forth, as well as statues where their identification as Antinous is uncertain. For the purposes of this thesis, only the first four types will be examined in detail, limiting the body of evidence to the major statues. These types cover a total of 90 statues and three reliefs. They are in various states of preservation, ranging from full-bodied statues with all extremities preserved in near-perfect condition, to mere fragments found scattered across the grounds of a temple; it contains heads with missing bodies, busts, and full larger-than-life figures. This corpus is huge; of all historical Roman figures, Antinous is third-best represented. Only Augustus and Hadrian have more surviving representations.

Of the four major types being examined in this thesis, the most frequent is what Meyer calls the *Haupttypus*, or the 'main type'. This is, perhaps, the most well-known style of Antinous. The main type includes famous statues such as the Farnese (Fig. 3) and Delphi Antinous (Fig. 4), and busts such as the Ecoeuen Antinous (Fig. 5).⁴⁶ Common features of this type include tousled curls of hair that fall across the subject's forehead and down the back of his neck, a contrapposto stance, and a downturned gaze. However, because the main type is so huge, there is a wide variety among statues. The faces may differ in appearance, while the bodies of others are in abnormal postures; the criteria that define whether or not a statue belongs to the main type hinge on comparison and relative similarities. Said criteria will be discussed further into this chapter.

The second type is the *Stirngabelvariante*, or 'forehead-fork variants', which resembles the main type; however, Meyer separates these statues from the rest based on a unique hair pattern, specifically isolating a lock on the left side of the statues' forehead that curls back and forms a

⁴⁶ Farnese: Meyer, *Antinoos*, 57-9 (no. 1.38); Delphi: Meyer, *Antinoos*, 36-8 (no. 1.15); Ecoeuen: Meyer, *Antinoos*, 62-3 (no. 1.42).

‘forceps motif’.⁴⁷ The statue Meyer returns to as an archetype of this subdivision of statues is a portrait from Chalcis, missing its hands and legs from the knees down (Fig. 6).⁴⁸ This Antinous wears a crown of ivy and grapes and has a *nebris* tied over one shoulder, identifying him with Dionysus. This type, though small, is as diverse as the main type. A unique statue in this type, from Olympia, depicts Antinous as a god of the *palaestra*, wearing a heavy cloak (Fig. 7).⁴⁹

Meyer’s third type is the *Typus Mondragone*, or ‘Mondragone type’, named for the Antinous Mondragone, a colossal head that was once part of an acrolithic cult statue (Fig. 8).⁵⁰ Now housed in the Louvre, the head gets its name from the Villa Mondragone, where it was displayed for most of the 18th century. The Mondragone head is the archetypal example of this category: its face is still identifiable as Antinous, with the same regular features as the main type statues, but instead of short tousled curls of hair, Antinous is shown with long, straight locks, parted along the middle of his head, and tied into a knot at the back of his head. In other Mondragone type statues he is depicted wearing an ivy crown. In the single statue of this type where the whole body survives, a *nebris*, imagery that clearly identifies him with Dionysus (Fig. 9).⁵¹

The final type is the *Ägyptisierende Bildnisse*, or the ‘Egyptianizing portraits’, a group of statues depicting Antinous as Osiris. This type differs the most from the main type although, like the Mondragone type, these statues are still identifiable as Antinous by their facial features. In all examples of this type, Antinous wears a *nemes*, a headdress that covers his hair, ears, and drapes over his shoulders. In the single surviving full-body statue of this type he also wears a *schenti*, a skirt covering his hips to his mid-thighs (Fig. 10).⁵² Both the *nemes* and the *schenti* are garments associated with the pharaoh, though Meyer is careful to point out that Antinous is not being identified as a pharaoh, but is instead identified as Osiris via pharaonic iconography.⁵³ The posture of these statues is also unique: instead of a *contrapposto* stance with an averted gaze, he stands upright, head facing forward, shoulders squared, hands balled in fists at his sides, and one leg stepping forward. He resembles earlier Egyptian art and archaic Greek *kouroi*, with his stiff frontal

⁴⁷ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 101-2.

⁴⁸ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 105-6 (no. 2.3).

⁴⁹ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 106-8 (no. 2.4).

⁵⁰ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 114-5 (no. 3.3).

⁵¹ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 112-3 (no. 3.4).

⁵² Meyer, *Antinoos*, 121-3 (no. 4.3).

⁵³ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 119-20.

stance and blank gaze. One statue in this type features main type-esque curls of hair poking out from under the headdress, further cementing its identity as Antinous (Fig. 11).⁵⁴

Of the 93 statues listed in Meyer's first four types, the majority are of the main type. The main type consists of 78 pieces, thus making up 83.9% of the corpus.⁵⁵ The forehead-fork variants comprise five statues, making up 5.4% of the corpus. The Mondragone type contains six statues, or 6.4%, and, finally, the Egyptian-style type is made up of only four statues, and constituting 4.3%, making it the least-represented type. The Mondragone and Egyptian-style types are generally uniform in their depictions, or, at least, have very specific visual motifs that identify them – specifically, the parted hairstyle and the king's hood, respectively. Meyer's criteria for the forehead-fork variants is rigid as well, namely the unique hair lock pattern. Nevertheless, there are no more than six statues in each of these three types, making it easier to identify consistent similarities. The main type is the least consistent, with a broad variety among its statues, though with 78 discrete examples, given the nature of the production and distribution of these statues, variety is to be expected.

The broad variety of main type statues begs the question of how statues are identified as Antinous in the first place. Only one statue from the main type has an actual inscription providing a concrete identifier marking the subject as Antinous; found in Baniyas, Syria, the inscription on this bust is carved into its base (Fig. 12).⁵⁶ By the time it became known, however, the Antinous type was already well established, so the inscription was simply a confirmation of what scholars already assumed.⁵⁷ It is too difficult to admit statues to the corpus based on similarity to the lone example that can be decisively identified as Antinous. The more iconic members of the corpus have strikingly uniform appearances; their face, hair, and build all match well enough that they can be identified as representing the same person. But the 'minor' statues, of which there are dozens, often stray far enough from the usual model that any two of them are not necessarily identifiable as the same person without comparing both to a more iconic intermediary.

Furthermore, there are a few cases where statues previously identified as Antinous have had their status as a member of the corpus revoked. Such examples are the 'Capitoline Antinous' (Fig. 13) and the 'Belvedere Antinous' (Fig. 14). At a superficial glance, both could reasonably be

⁵⁴ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 120-1 (no. 4.2).

⁵⁵ Percentages are rounded to the nearest tenth.

⁵⁶ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 99-100 (no. 1.77).

⁵⁷ Vout, *Power*, 75.

mistaken for Antinous, yet are not considered to be representations of Antinous; meanwhile more abnormal statues like the Tarragona head, which has a thrown-back head and unusual expression, are considered to be Antinous. In the case of the Capitoline and Belvedere statues, they were both removed from the corpus due primarily to their hairstyle. Both sport a mass of curls atop the head; the Belvedere's hair is short and reveals the forehead and ears, while the Capitoline's is longer and curled too tightly to be Antinous. The posture of the Capitoline Antinous is similar to Antinous, a *contrapposto* lean with a downturned gaze and one hand slightly outstretched; it resembles the Delphi statue. The face and hair, however, vary too greatly and, in the early 20th century it was re-identified as Hermes. As for the Belvedere, the face is distinctly not Antinous, and it leans in a different posture. By the 18th century its identity was already under reevaluation; in the early 19th century it was also identified as Hermes.⁵⁸

Because of the lack of Antinous statues that are labelled and clearly represent him, scholars use a sort of comparative analysis to identify his statues. Statues like the Delphi, Farnese, and Ecoen Antinous, perhaps the most iconic representations of him, constitute a benchmark for other statues. The Baniyas statue with its inscription is sufficiently similar to these depictions. However, there is another source for portraits that can be reliably identified as Antinous: coinage. Dozens of coins that depict him have survived, and the coin portraits display striking regularity in their features; they are regular enough that they can confirm the status of those benchmark portraits as iconic members of the corpus.⁵⁹

We can assume that Antinous was more easily identifiable in antiquity. It must have been crucial that Antinous was recognizable, in order to allow his cult to properly take hold in the Empire's social landscape. Pausanias indicates that he can recognize Antinouos, based on his comments about the Antinous statues in the Mantinea gymnasium. Perhaps other statues had inscriptions like the Baniyas bust. We can also assume that coinage depicting Antinous and identifying text served to identify him; some coins even state that he is 'Antinous the Hero'. Other than that, we can imagine intangible sources of identification, such as word of mouth, spoken evidence during cultic rituals, and general cultural awareness of Antinous' cult and identity. By the Renaissance, the main type, at least, was still identifiable. The Baniyas bust was published in 1517, and Fulvio's *Imagines Illustrium*, published 1570, includes a portrait of Antinous (Fig. 15)

⁵⁸ Vout, *Antinous, Archaeology, and History*, 87-8

⁵⁹ Vout, *Power*, 75.

that closely resembles both his coin portraits and the Farnese Antinous which, by this point, was already known and admired in Italy.⁶⁰ Antinous was well-enough known, though, that the Baniyas bust's inscription was a confirmation of the type. Aside from coins, extant minor portraits such as cameos and medallions confirm the regularity of the type, meaning it has been established as a category of statuary since the Renaissance. This early version of Meyer's main type was clearly regular enough to form a solid identity.

Modern comparative analysis is not infallible, however, as highlighted by the inclusion of the Belvedere and Capitoline statues. The primary dissimilarity that resulted in their exclusion from the Antinous corpus were their irregular hairstyles. The lock-pattern in Antinous' hair is so regular that it has become an important way for scholars to identify Antinous statues. Locks can be diagrammed, numbered, and examined.⁶¹ Even without diagrams, these similarities are apparent, for example, on the Ecoeuen and Farnese statues. Both have a single longer curl just above the nose, and, on the forehead on the viewer's right, the curls sweep up and right instead of falling down like the others. Above these bangs is a second layer of curls that sweep in the opposite direction on the viewer's left and blend into the bangs on the right. The Delphi Antinous' hair falls further down the sides of its head and has more volume, but again, that same pattern of bangs and locks is visible.

The hairstyle is so strikingly regular that it can be used to identify Antinous statues where nothing of Antinous himself remains. A head in Copenhagen appears to be a portrait of a young woman wearing a hood over her hair, probably carved in the Severan dynasty (Fig. 16).⁶² However, if one were to look at the back of the head, one would see that the hood blends into the hair and crown of a different statue, one that was, at some point, recut into this woman. The hair of the previous statue exhibits a mass of short curls that fall down the back of the neck. Scholars have identified the previous statue as an Antinous based on these curls, since the main type's lock patterns are so regular that they can be identified by a small panel of extant hair. This also applies to the fragments of a statue found at the temple of Poseidon at Isthmia (Fig. 17).⁶³ The pieces barely form the top of the crown of a statue's head, but that is enough to identify the characteristic lock patterns and determine that they are the remains of another Antinous.

⁶⁰ Vout, *Power*, 75-7.

⁶¹ Vout, *Antinous*, 81.

⁶² Meyer, *Antinoos*, 49-50 (no. 1.27).

⁶³ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 46 (no. 1.22).

However, only using a rigid system of lock patterns to identify Antinous statues will result in excluding more divergent portraits. After all, relying too heavily on such a system would exclude the ten statues that are not part of the main type corpus. The more rigorous the identification system, the more genuine Antinous portraits will fall through the cracks.⁶⁴ Representations of Antinous must sufficiently resemble the basic model shown by the coin portraits and the statues that best match them in categories like hairstyle, but also in facial features and general demeanour. In this way, the Mondragone and Egyptian types can still be identified as Antinous thanks to their facial features and, in the case of the Mondragone statues, their posture and coy or thoughtful demeanour, while the Belvedere and Capitoline statues can be excluded.

The Tarragona head can be used to illustrate this problem with the identification system (Fig. 18).⁶⁵ The head, worn by time, was found at the bottom of a cistern in a villa near Els Munts, near Tarragona in Spain, and probably came from an over-life size statue. The head's hair clearly resembles Antinous, with the characteristic lock pattern visible. The face, however, is not particularly identical to Antinous, but it could easily be mistaken for him or considered an irregular representation of him. The posture, moreover, is unusual. The head is thrown back and tilted to one side, gaze upward, and lips slightly parted. Despite the fact that only the head and neck remain it is clear that the full statue did not have the characteristic *contrapposto*, judging by the irregular tilt of the head.

The irregular posture resembles Alexander the Great more than it does Antinous. Alexander's portraits (for example, Fig. 19) characteristically display him with a tilted neck, far off gaze, full lips, and dishevelled hair framing the face, all of which seem to be reflected in the Tarragona head.⁶⁶ However, the head lacks the cowlicks typical of Alexander's hair in favour of Antinous' heavy curls, and does reflect Antinous' lock pattern. This raises a number of questions. Is the hair enough to identify it as an irregular Antinous? Is the posture enough to identify it as an irregular Alexander? Perhaps it is neither – perhaps this is a deliberate blending of the two systems of iconography, or perhaps it is a portrait of a private individual that deliberately evokes both figures, the same way Augustan women deliberately evoked Livia in their portraits, for example. It is hard to tell, and without any historical context, historians must rely on these markers to

⁶⁴ Vout, *Power*, 84.

⁶⁵ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 80-2 (no. 1.59).

⁶⁶ Vout, *Power*, 82.

properly identify uncertain statues like the Tarragona head. Nevertheless, Meyer identifies the Tarragona head as Antinous.

There is a theory that portrait models were distributed to regional workshops, where more statues were created, based on those models, and then distributed more broadly.⁶⁷ If this is indeed how Antinous images spread, then it is likely that regional variations and personal innovation are reflected in the regional statues. Regular Antinous statues are easy to identify, but in others the sculptor may have been incorporating regional tastes or variations, or some quirk unique to that workshop, or adding something for the sake of the individual sculptor's tastes. Perhaps the sculptor made an error while carving it and ended up with a slightly abnormal lock pattern. The line between an irregular Antinous and a non-Antinous can be fine.

A more exacting method for identifying Antinous portraits might have resulted in the Tarragona head's exclusion, but a more relaxed method may have meant the Belvedere and Capitoline statues would still be considered Antinous. The method accepted by Meyer for his catalogue has resulted in 93 statues in the corpus, 78 of which follow the main type and require careful identification based on factors like hairstyle, facial features, and posture given the broad variety of statues in the type. It seems unlikely that any current identification methods could accurately both identify every extant Antinous and exclude every pretender, and the more rigorous the system, the more room for error.

93 representations of a single individual is exceptional, as is the fact that they are generally so identifiable. Although there is a range of different representations of Antinous' face, hair, and demeanour, they can all be drawn together into the corpus by comparative similarities, similarities so striking that they can pin down a panel of hair as having once belonged to an Antinous. It is possible that there are yet more extant statues that were intended to represent Antinous, but have been excluded from the corpus based on current identification methods, and it is possible that these methods will continue to be refined.

Representations as Other Figures

Antinous was frequently represented in the guise of mythological figures, thereby associating his cult with other cults around the Empire. The most obvious examples are the Mondragone and Egyptian type statues, which feature Antinous' face, placed in a context that

⁶⁷ Vout, *Power*, 77-8.

associates him with other figures. The Egyptianizing type connects Antinous with Osiris; Antinous' cult was so closely connected to the cult of Osiris in Egypt that the Pincio Obelisk references the cult of 'Osirantinous', suggesting a hybrid divinity.⁶⁸ The connection is represented visually by giving Antinous pharaonic iconography and showing him in a posture reminiscent of Ancient Egyptian art. Likewise, the Mondragone type often represents Antinous as Dionysus by giving him a center-parted hairstyle associated with Dionysus in the Hellenistic era and adorning him with a crown of ivy, a symbol of Dionysus.

It must be noted that the most common representation of Antinous is simply as himself, with no attributes. Of the 93 extant statues, 41 (44.1% of the corpus) have no attributes, or, in a few cases, had no attributes until a later restorer added some in – for example, one fragmentary head was restored into a Dionysus with the addition of an ivy crown and then placed on an unrelated torso (Fig. 20).⁶⁹ Some of these are only heads, or otherwise fragmentary, allowing some speculation as to whether the complete statue would have some iconography below the neck, although most of the available statues representing Antinous as another god include some sort of crown or wreath. Many of these images of the divine youth are busts with no attributes, as well as a few surviving full body sculptures, such as the Farnese Antinous. Typically, these images of the divine youth, at least among the main type, are nude, with hair following the regular pattern, and a *contrapposto* lean – that is to say, everything that qualifies admittance into the main type corpus. Even differences in posture or facial features can show a connection to a different figure.

The most common mythological figure represented among Antinous statues is Dionysus. Perhaps the most common indicator that an Antinous statue is doubling as a statue of Dionysus is the crown of ivy leaves around the head, sometimes with heavy clusters of grapes hanging from it. The *nebris* is another common piece of iconography, as is a *thyrsus*. One full-body statue which is missing its arms appears to have one arm outstretched (Fig. 21), and it is thought that it once held a *thyrsus*. Furthermore, the support pedestal at its legs is decorated with grapes, and these two pieces of evidence have led Meyer to label it as an Antinous-Dionysus.⁷⁰ Even an abnormal pose can be taken as Dionysus; Meyer thus identifies the Tarragona head, with its upward gaze and

⁶⁸ Renberg, *Hadrian*, 177.

⁶⁹ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 113-4 (no. 3.2).

⁷⁰ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 95-6 (no. 1.74).

thrown back chin, as a Dionysus. There are 23 Antinous-Dionysus statues, thus comprising 24.7% of the corpus.

There are eight Antinous-Apollo statues, making up 8.6% of the extant statues. Apollo iconography among Antinous statues generally comprises a laurel or myrtle crown. Meyer identifies the Delphi statue as an Apollo, and considers the holes in the statue's crown, which likely once held an attribute that would better associate it with Apollo, and its location just west of Apollo's temple at Delphi, to be evidence. One fragmentary statue, cut off below the chest, was found with fragments of a support pedestal depicting a snake and tree trunk, which are both attributes associated with Apollo (Fig. 22).⁷¹

There are six depictions of Antinous as Osiris, making up 6.5% of the corpus. All four of the Egyptian-type statues fall into this category, depicting Antinous with rigid posture and wearing a pharaonic headdress. The other two are part of the Mondragone type, one of which is the Mondragone head itself. The Mondragone head is also occasionally connected with Apollo based on its hairstyle, but Meyer prefers to identify it as Dionysus-Osiris. The other is a head with straight hair tied into a short, thick plait at the base of the neck, with part of the hair at the front gathered into two small knots on either side of the forehead and fastened with a band encircling the head (Fig. 23); Meyer notes that the head's appearance is reminiscent of depictions of Osiris.⁷² Otherwise, regarding the four Egyptian type statues, the appearance of an Antinous-Osiris is strikingly distinct from the rest of the corpus.

Two lesser categories are Antinous as Silvanus and as Pan or a satyr. The two that Meyer identifies as Silvanus are both relief sculptures. The Albani relief, also sometimes identified as Vertumnus, another god of nature and wildlife, shows him from the waist up, a robe draped over one shoulder and tied around the waist (Fig. 24).⁷³ A garland of flowers and ribbons is tied around his head and he holds the same in one hand. The other relief is similar; this one shows the full body, and Antinous is dressed in a tunic and using a sickle to cut grapes down from a vine; a pine crown differentiates this portrait from the Dionysus ones (Fig. 25).⁷⁴ Silvanus' portraits are thus identified by floral and other nature imagery that does not fall into previous categories, like ivy crowns or laurel wreaths. Meyer tentatively identifies a third statue, a standard-looking main type

⁷¹ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 73-4 (no. 1.52).

⁷² Meyer, *Antinoos*, 116 (no. 3.5).

⁷³ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 76-8 (no. 1.55).

⁷⁴ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 96-8 (no. 1.75).

head wearing a pine crown, as either Silvanus or a satyr (Fig. 26).⁷⁵ The pine crown is used to identify another statue as a satyr or Pan, this one wearing a *nebris* as well, normally an indicator of Dionysus when paired instead with an ivy crown (Fig. 27).⁷⁶ Finally, Meyer identifies one last statue as either Pan or a satyr, this time on account of its facial features (Fig. 28).⁷⁷ The head's hair matches to the rest of the main type corpus, but the face's features are odd, with a thinner nose and longer face, and the physiognomy suggests a connection either with Pan or a satyr.

The sub-category of Silvanus and satyr portraits is much less regular than either the Dionysus or Apollo sub-categories, and as the corpus moves into more obscure sub-categories, regularity continues to decrease. There are several other statues linked to various figures, with only one or two extant examples. There are two Hermes statues, both busts, and both identified by a robe draped over one shoulder. There is another head restored into a Hermes in more recent times with the addition of wings along its head. A fourth statue was previously identified as Hermes based on its crown, which featured two small wings, although that identity was contested based on its hairstyle. As a member of the Mondragone type, its hair is long and straight, reminiscent of Apollo or Dionysus. Meyer identifies this as a statue of Dionysus Psilax, mentioned by Pausanias as a cult active in Amyclae, Greece;⁷⁸ *psila* is the Doric word for wing, suggesting a winged depiction of Dionysus, here blended with the cult of Antinous as well.

Other representations exist in single statues. A togate Antinous found in the *propylaea* of the temple of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis is identified with Asclepius. A head wearing a heavy crown of flowers is identified with Triptolemus, a figure associated with Demeter and the Eleusinian mysteries, with the flowers symbolizing rebirth. Antinous is identified with Aristaeus in a full-body statue depicting him wearing a tunic, cap, and sandals, and carrying a gardening hoe; similar to the Silvanus and Pan statues, Antinous is again associated with nature and agriculture. Another statue carries a load of fruit and flowers with one hand, and corn and poppies with the other, and is identified with the abstract *Genius* (spirit) of Autumn. A unique bust carved from alabaster instead of marble has a hole in the head where some attribute was once attached, and Meyer theorizes that this could be Antinous as Harpocrates, the minor god of secrets and silence. A head with a crown decorated with tiny reliefs is thought to represent a priest. A statue found in

⁷⁵ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 51 (no. 1.29).

⁷⁶ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 70-2 (no. 1.50).

⁷⁷ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 59-60 (no. 1.39).

⁷⁸ Pausanias 3.19.6.

the *palaestra* at Olympia, wearing a heavy robe, is either an athlete or a deity of the *palaestra*. Finally, an Antinous with the top of its head carved into a Phrygian cap is thought to represent Attis or Ganymede.

The Antinous cult was concerned with death, rebirth, and afterlife. Antinous was venerated as a ‘dying and rising’ type of deity. He is a divine youth who conquered death by ascending to godhood after drowning in the Nile, and now helps his devotees to reach a similar afterlife by travelling between earth and the afterlife to ferry souls. Illustrative of this is an inscription from Mantinea that describes his role; it was written by a grieving father, asking Antinous to bring the soul of his deceased son Isochrysos to the afterlife so that he might sit beside the gods. Hermes fulfilled a similar function, guiding souls to the underworld, which may explain the two portraits of Antinous as Hermes⁷⁹. It is also fitting, then, that many of the deities with which he is visually identified share similar roles.

Deities like Osiris and Dionysus are connected with death and rebirth, both dying in gruesome, albeit different, ways and then being restored to life. There are two traditions regarding Dionysus’ resurrection. In one, he is a demigod whose mother Semele was destroyed by Zeus’ divine form while Dionysus was still in the womb, after which Zeus sewed the infant into his thigh until Dionysus was born again.⁸⁰ He is ‘born’ from his mortal mother and then born again from his divine father, after which he becomes a god. In another version, he is torn apart by Titans, cooked, and consumed; Demeter reassembles him and brings him back to life.⁸¹ As for Osiris, he was murdered by his brother Set and his body was torn apart and scattered across the Nile; Isis gathered the pieces and brought him back to life.⁸² The two were already being connected by Herodotus’ time.⁸³ Nothing so gruesome happened to Antinous, but his death on the Nile invites comparison to the story of Osiris’ death there. A connection to Osiris would also be useful for a new cult based in Egypt, as Hadrian was doubtlessly aware.

The satyr statues invite further connection to Dionysus, although they depict Antinous as a follower of the god rather than as the god himself. The satyrs, along with Pan, are also associated with the countryside. In fact, Antinous is associated with several rural and agricultural deities, such

⁷⁹ Perhaps coincidentally, Antinous is even confused with Hermes in modern times, some examples being the Capitoline and Belvedere Antinoi, both of which were reidentified as Hermes.

⁸⁰ Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 3.253-315.

⁸¹ Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* 3.62.6-7.

⁸² Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 18.1.

⁸³ Livingstone, *Dying God*, 184.

as Silvanus, Pan, and the *genius* of Autumn, which invite a metaphorical connection to death and rebirth. It links him to cycles in nature, directly with the seasons as in his depiction as Autumn, as well as the yearly rebirth of plant and animal life. The statue of Antinous as Aristaeus follows suit, Aristaeus being a minor agriculture deity who taught useful farming skills to humanity. Aristaeus is also a son of Apollo, with whom Antinous is also associated. One scholar suggests that another reason for his association with woodland deities is that Antinous was born in the countryside surrounding Bithynium, and that retained that rural association even after his death.⁸⁴ The association would work on both levels. Triptolemus is a figure associated with agriculture as well, having been taught that art by Demeter, and the Antinous-Triptolemus statue wears a crown of flowers that Meyer interprets as an image of rebirth and renewal.

Triptolemus is also connected with the Eleusinian mysteries, and Antinous has a connection there as well. His cult was present at Eleusis; an *Antinoeia*, games dedicated to Antinous, were held at Eleusis and connected him to the figure of Iacchus, a figure venerated as part of the Eleusinian mysteries. Fittingly, Iacchus is connected to cycles of death and rebirth as well. Regarding statue evidence, the portrait of Antinous as Asclepius was found within the temple of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis, placing him right at the heart of the Eleusis cult. Asclepius, too, is a figure associated with the mysteries;⁸⁵ he was initiated into the cult and thus his worship was connected to the greater mystery cult. Perhaps Antinous himself was also an initiate. As a god of medicine, as well as a god who, according to myth, was killed, the association with Asclepius is another example of Antinous being connected to life and death.

The statue of Antinous with the Phrygian cap references a different sort of association, focussing on his background rather than any cultic connections. The Phrygian cap is a visual symbol of a figure from Asia Minor, such as Attis or Ganymede; Bithynium itself is near Asia Minor. The statue's connection to figures like Attis and Ganymede also highlights his role as Hadrian's lover. Attis and Ganymede were both the submissive partner in a sexual relationship with a god, Cybele and Zeus respectively. Furthermore, Attis and Ganymede are both depicted as shepherds, linking back to Antinous' provincial background and the cyclical element of his cult. Not only would that connection give Antinous a divine flavour, it would also, by extension,

⁸⁴ Jones, *Heroes*, 75.

⁸⁵ E.J. Edelstein & L. Edelstein, *Asclepius: Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies*, vol. 1 (Baltimore: 1945) 128.

associate Hadrian with Cybele or Zeus, meaning that such an association would benefit both Antinous' cult and Hadrian himself. As a note of interest, Pausanias describes Antinous as being from 'beyond the river Sangarius', the same river that is said to be Attis' grandfather.⁸⁶ Perhaps this is coincidental wording, but it may also be another subtle connection.

The connection to Apollo may be reminiscent of the oracular quality of the Antinous cult. There is evidence that Antinous was said to deliver oracular messages, especially through dreams, which were then circulated. Some, however, criticized the oracles as being fabricated by Hadrian.⁸⁷ Regardless of its perceived veracity, the oracular quality of the cult makes for an easy link to Apollo, especially given the presence of Antinous at Delphi, the main site for Apollo's oracle. The Antinous-Apollo from Leptis Magna also demonstrates the integration of Antinous into local cults, especially according to the analysis that this statue is meant to represent Eshmun. Eshmun is associated with Sidon, which is the mother city of Leptis Magna; Eshmun is a god of healing and is thus connected to Asclepius and the cycles of health and sickness.⁸⁸

The examination of the visual representations of Antinous as other mythical figures sheds light on the complex web of associations connecting various divinities across cultures throughout the Roman East. As we will see in chapter three, Antinous' connections with other figures helped integrate him into local religious landscapes. A connection to Asclepius or Triptolemus reinforced his place at the mysteries of Eleusis, and a connection with Apollo secured his presence at Delphi, one of the most important panhellenic cult sites in Greece. Dionysus' ivy crown alluded to his death and rebirth, and Antinous as Osiris reminded his followers of his connection to the Nile and Egypt, the site of his city and the heart of his cult.

Provenance and Context

Antinous' portraits were widespread throughout the Roman world. They have been found as far west as Spain, and as far east as Syria. As for their contexts, they have been found in villas, public buildings, and temples. However, because Antinous statues have been known for centuries, many of them have lost their original provenance. The best that can be said of some statues' origins

⁸⁶ Vout, *Power*, 110.

⁸⁷ Renberg, *Hadrian*, 172.

⁸⁸ Vout, *Power*, 109-10.

is that a statue was purchased on a given date but its whereabouts before that are unknown,⁸⁹ or, even further, a statue is simply first recorded as being known by a given date and there is no information about where it came from or how it arrived at its contemporary location.⁹⁰ The distribution of portraits can only be assumed based on the statues whose provenance is recorded.

Of the 93 Antinous statues, counting all four of Meyer's major types together, only 39 statues are listed with certain provenance, or 41.9% of the corpus. Of the remaining 54 statues, or 58.1%, 12 have an uncertain or probable provenance, and the other 42 have no data at all. Because Meyer is unsure of the provenance of those 12 statues, they will not be included in the following analysis, nor will the 42 with no data whatsoever. This leaves 39 statues to be examined. Many of these 39 statues list only the city or region where the statue was found, but 26 of them list the exact provenance, either the site at which they were found or, in some cases, their exact location, thus providing context for the statue. These 26 will also be discussed to illustrate the contexts where statues of Antinous stood.

Of the 39 statues with recorded provenance, 20 are from Italy; representing 51.3% of statues with known provenance, or 21.5% of the whole. This is the highest percentage of statues in any region of the Empire. Six of these are from Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli alone, making this the greatest number of Antinous statues found at a single site anywhere in the Empire. Perhaps this is to be expected, given Hadrian's close involvement in the creation of these statues. Two of the statues from the villa are of the Egyptianizing type: the only two of that type with certain provenances. Seven more of the statues are from Rome or its environs, making this the most statues found in a single city after Tivoli, and two more are from nearby Ostia. Another Italian statue is from Hadrian's Villa at Palestrina, and one is from Lanuvium. The Mondragone head is from Frascati, and the last is from Aquileia.

The second-highest concentration of statues is in the eastern half of the Empire, situated in Greece and the eastern coast of the Mediterranean; ten of them are from Greece and three of them from the Middle East. 14% of the statues were found east of Italy, or 33.3% of the statues with known provenance. Included among these are the Delphi Antinous, as well as the Baniyas bust, the only Antinous statue found with a surviving inscription. All 13 of these statues are of the main

⁸⁹ One example is a head wearing a myrtle crown, purchased in Cairo in 1878; its previous whereabouts are unknown. Meyer, *Antinoos*, 31-3 (no. 1.10) (Fig. 29).

⁹⁰ E.g. a statue of Antinous as a Satyr, which has been known since 1876, but its prior origin is unknown. Meyer, *Antinoos*, 70 (no. 1.50) (Fig. 27).

type; one of them, the Olympia statue, falls into Meyer's forehead-fork variant type. Most of the Greek statues are from the Peloponnese, as well as one each from Athens, Eleusis, Adipsos, and Delphi. One statue was found at an unknown site in Greece; a more exact provenance cannot be ascertained. In the East, one is from an unknown site in Turkey, one is from the city of Baniyas in Syria, and the last is from Caesarea Palestina.

Italy and Greece are the primary regions where Antinous statues have been found. Five more statues are from Africa, and only one was found west of Italy, in Tarragona, Spain. One statue each is from Iol Caesarea in modern Algeria, Carthage, and Leptis Magna, and two are from Egypt; the relative lack of statues from Egypt, especially Antinoopolis, is conspicuous given the strength of Antinous' cult there. The lone statue from Egypt was purchased from an art dealer who claimed it was from Hermopolis; whether or not that is its exact provenance, Meyer is sure that it is from Egypt, after comparing it to contemporary Hadrianic portraiture from Egypt and finding similar sculptural details (Fig. 30).⁹¹ Another statue may have been found in Antinoopolis which, like the other, was purchased from an art dealer; again, whether or not it is actually from Egypt, Meyer does draw similarities in the carving of the hair with other Roman Egyptian statuary (Fig. 31).⁹²

With the exception of Hadrian's Villa, very few sites have yielded more than one statue of Antinous. The next highest concentration is Rome itself, including those listed as 'near Rome', with seven statues. Two were found in Ostia, and two more were found in Patras in Greece. Regionally, Italy has the highest concentration, and Greece the second. For the most part, the rest of the statues were the only ones found at their specific site and, moreover, the only ones found in that entire modern country. One statue each was found in Spain, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Turkey, Syria, and Israel. This means that there are very few individual sites or cities that have yielded statues of Antinous with any certainty, and many of them were spread broadly across the Empire.

The distribution of the statues supports Antinous' popularity in the Eastern Empire. The three main centres of his worship were Antinoopolis, the city built for him by Hadrian; Bithynium, his place of birth; and Mantinea, which claimed to be Bithynium's mother city. None of the statues with recorded provenances is from any of these cities, although it must be admitted that the data is skewed because of the lack of available information. Pausanias describes Mantinea in his

⁹¹ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 25-6 (no. 1.2).

⁹² Meyer, *Antinoos*, 78-80 (no. 1.58).

Description of Greece and notes that there was a room in the gymnasium there that contained several images of Antinous – paintings, reliefs, and statues alike – most of them conflating Antinous with Dionysus. Mantinea was on the Peloponnese, and there are a number of surviving statues found in nearby cities, attesting to the popularity of the cult in the region.

The lack of statues from Antinoopolis, or Egypt in its entirety, is conspicuous. There are none from Bithynium either; the closest representative is a statue that was found somewhere in Turkey. The cult was certainly present in these places, as coins bearing Antinous’ image have been found from more than thirty cities and leagues across the Empire, across the Peloponnese, mainland Greece, Turkey, and so forth. Remarks in literary sources provide evidence for his cult across the Greek East, such as a passage from Origen, writing in the 3rd century, which implies that the cult of Antinous is still active in Antinoopolis.⁹³ An inscription in Mantinea from a grieving father prays to Antinous to take care of his recently deceased son Isochrysos.⁹⁴ These echoes of Antinous place him across the Eastern Empire, and this is supported by the relative density of statues found in this half of the Empire, concentrated on Greece but present in other regions too. Furthermore, fewer than half of the extant statues can be considered in this discussion of provenance; one can only imagine where the remaining 56 statues once stood.

It is also worth noting that many of the 39 statues with recorded provenance have their origins identified in more detail. 26 of the 39 record either the site at which they were uncovered or, in some cases, the exact spot and context of the statue, thus providing some data about the sorts of locations in which these statue were displayed. Some records are more useful than others: Meyer lists a statue from Caesarea Palaestina as being found ‘in a wall’ without further elaboration, meaning that was likely not where it was displayed in Antiquity. Others, however, are very useful. The Delphi Antinous was found just outside the temple of Apollo, still standing upright on its pedestal when it was uncovered in the 19th century. In the interest of making this information more accessible, it is provided in the table below.

Location	Context	Number in Meyer
Aidipsos, Greece	Public Baths	2.3 (Fig. 6)
Athens, Greece	Magazine of Hadrian’s Library	2.1

⁹³ Origen, *Against Celsus* 3.36.

⁹⁴ Jones, *Heroes*, 79.

Caesaria Palaestina, Israel	Part of a wall	1.70
Carthage, Tunisia	Odeon	1.62
Delphi, Greece	West of the Temple of Apollo	1.15 (Fig. 4)
Eleusis, Greece	<i>Propylaea</i> of the Temple of Demeter and Kore	1.17 (Fig. 37)
Frascati, Italy	Villa Mondragone	3.3 (Fig. 8)
Isthmia, Greece	Temple of Poseidon	1.22 (Fig. 17)
Lanuvium, Italy	Estate of the Torre del Padiglione	1.75 (Fig. 25)
Leptis Magna, Libya	West Baths	1.61 (Fig. 35)
Lerna, Greece	Villa of the Myloi	1.4
Olympia, Greece	Palaestra	2.4 (Fig. 7)
Palestrina, Italy	Hadrian's Villa	1.67
Rome, Italy	Gardens of the Villa Casali ⁹⁵	1.24
Rome, Italy	Auditorium of Maecenas	1.29 (Fig. 26)
Rome, Italy	Near the Villa Doria Pamphili	1.31
Rome, Italy	<i>'in aedibus Victostrarum'</i>	1.43
Rome, Italy	Quirinal Hill	1.74 (Fig. 21)
Tarragona, Spain	Cistern of the Els Munts Villa	1.59 (Fig. 18)
Thyrea, Greece	Villa of Herodes Atticus, Loukou Monastery	1.5
Tivoli, Italy	Pantanello of Hadrian's Villa	1.23
Tivoli, Italy	Pantanello of Hadrian's Villa	1.30
Tivoli, Italy	Hadrian's Villa	1.55 (Fig. 24)
Tivoli, Italy	Pantanello of Hadrian's Villa	3.6
Tivoli, Italy	Centro Camarelle of Hadrian's Villa	4.3 (Fig. 10)
Tivoli, Italy	Pantanello of Hadrian's Villa	4.4

Only three of the statues were found in explicitly religious contexts: the temples at Delphi, Eleusis, and Isthmia. Many were found in public settings, like baths and theatres; this is in line with Pausanias in his description of the Antinous images decorating public spaces like the Mantinea gymnasium. The villas were mid-way between public and private; while the villa was

⁹⁵ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 47.

technically a private home, it was expected that guests and clients would visit on a regular basis and so these statues were seen publicly, even if they were not on public display like the bathhouse statues. This is especially true for Hadrian's Villa, which was meant to be largely a display case for the emperor and enjoyed by more than just the emperor himself.

The lack of statues found in explicitly religious contexts is noteworthy. The three that were found in these places match their contexts. The one from Delphi is, of course, the Delphi Antinous, a portrait connected with Apollo. The statue from Eleusis is Antinous as Asclepius, a figure associated with the Eleusinian mysteries, as was Antinous himself. This statue illustrates the way in which Antinous was linked to local cults and practices. The statue from Isthmia is fragmentary; all that exists is part of the crown of the head and one eye, and the way Antinous was represented in the greater statue is lost. Given the lengths to which Hadrian seems to have gone to connect Antinous to other cults, and the volume of statues representing him as other divinities, one might expect a greater presence at cult centres.

However, even lacking the presence of Antinous at cultic sites, there appears to have been no shortage of him in the public eye. By placing him in contexts like bathhouses, theatres, and libraries, a person living in a city that venerated Antinous would encounter him during their day-to-day business. According to Pausanias' description of Mantinea, statues blending Antinous with figures like Dionysus were displayed in the city gymnasium, and other statues like the Antinous-Dionysus-Apollo from Leptis Magna were also found in public, non-cultic spaces, so it was not just Antinous as himself being displayed in public. If Antinous was represented as another divinity as a way to integrate him into the religious landscape of his surroundings, it was no doubt done publicly; visual reminders of this integration were displayed in plain view around cities that accepted him into their religious landscapes.

If the available provenances within the current corpus of extant Antinous statues were to be accepted as a microcosm of their dispersion in Antiquity, they would suggest that the statues were mainly present in Italy and Greece and extending into the rest of the Empire, from Spain to Syria, primarily displayed in public or semi-private contexts. As discussed above, the distribution of Antinous coinage covers the same regions as the statues – Italy, Greece, North Africa, and the Near East – but extends further into the East and into Egypt and other regions where no extant statues are known to have been found. It is easy to imagine that the distribution of statues followed suit, and that those statues' provenances, or the statues themselves, have been lost.

Conclusion: The Corpus

This chapter has served to give an overview of the surviving corpus of Antinous statues, and to provide a groundwork for more detailed discussion of the purposes and uses of these statues in Antiquity. The survey of the available types within the corpus illustrates the wide variety of extant statues, and the diversity of the statues even within each type. It also serves to illustrate the methods of identifying members of the corpus and the difficulties that accompany identification. Within each type is a range of figures with whom Antinous is visually connected, which shows variety in his cult. Antinous is attached to several other divinities and their cults, most notably Dionysus, as well as more obscure or local divinities. He becomes part of a complex web of associations, fitting neatly in amongst already-established gods and integrating him into the religious landscape. In some cases, these associations serve to promote Hadrian by extension, such as the statue that identifies Antinous as a figure like Ganymede or Attis, which in turn identifies Hadrian with Zeus or Cybele. These associations benefited Hadrian indirectly, and they helped ensure that Antinous' cult would last beyond Hadrian's death by making him part of the Empire on a local level.

From the portion of the corpus with available provenance it is clear that Antinous statues were displayed in public contexts or semi-public villas; this is supported with literary evidence from Pausanias. He was present in the public eye across the Empire, at least in Italy and eastward and, from a similar distribution of Antinous coins, it can be extrapolated that the statues were present even further East, into Egypt and Bithynia. In certain examples, the provenance provides a window into Antinous' integration into the religious landscape; for example, the statue of him as Asclepius from Eleusis visually ties him to Eleusinian mysteries. He must have been a familiar sight to Romans during and after Hadrian's reign, visually present in major cities throughout the Central and Eastern Empire.

This summary of the corpus of surviving statues has provided a look at the broad variety of statue types, the visual iconography employed in them, their provenances, and the contexts in which they were displayed in antiquity. Already, hints at Hadrian's agenda in producing and distributing these statues can be seen, and the ideology behind them. This chapter has mainly been descriptive, but it is necessary to lay this data out as a foundation for discussing this ideology. In the next chapter, Hadrian's ideology is discussed independent of Antinous, and Hadrian's own

image and artistic output are examined as well. In the third chapter, Hadrian is used as a lens through which to filter and understand the data presented in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Hadrian, Philhellenism, and Policy

Introduction

Hadrian was the first Roman emperor to sport a full beard. Until his accession in 117, emperors represented themselves as clean-shaven, in the style of politicians of the Republic. After Hadrian, emperors largely followed his lead and wore full beards until Constantine took the throne in 306, when fashions returned to a clean-shaven look. Fashion was an important part of the emperor's public image; image was a way to assert his administration of the Empire and convey the messages and ideas that were important to him in that administration. Public image was no less important for Hadrian, and the fact that he used his image to break from an established visual tradition going back centuries is significant.

Of course, this thesis is not primarily about Hadrian, but about Antinous and the nature of his image. Most, if not all, of Antinous' images were produced by Hadrian after Antinous died, and thus Antinous had no control over his image; Hadrian constructed and controlled Antinous' image until his own death in 138. Because he was so close to the emperor but lacked any official status, Antinous would likely not have had control over his own image even if he were alive. Antinous himself is a mystery, and therefore the images are more indicative of Hadrian and his values and ideas than providing any insight into Antinous as an individual. The easy assumption is that Antinous' images were a philhellenic creation, because Hadrian had a reputation for liking Greek culture, his relationship with Antinous resembled pederasty, and Antinous' portraits resemble images of classical Greek youths and athletes. Similarly, Hadrian's beard is thought to be philhellenic, echoing the beards of classical Greek men, as well as contemporary philosophers and intellectuals looking to the classical past. The assumption has validity, but the origin of Hadrian's beard is still debated. While it may be a philhellenic fashion, it may also have roots in contemporary elite Roman fashion, or emulation of military styles.

To understand Antinous' image, one must understand how Hadrian represented himself, and why he chose to break from the established visual tradition of his predecessors. To do that, one must understand his ideologies; the way he ruled the Empire reveals the messages and ideas he wished to express – messages he communicated via his images. This chapter will also discuss

honourific portraiture at large, and highlight the manner in which Romans used images of themselves to communicate their identity and personal ideologies. These two discussions together will be used to examine Hadrian's actual portrait statues, using Cécile Evers' catalogue *Les portraits d'Hadrien* as reference, and attempt to determine whether Hadrian's self image really was philhellenic, or if other influences were at play. Determining the influences behind Hadrian's image will elucidate the influences behind Antinous'. Antinous' image will be the subject of the following chapter, which will synthesize the discussions presented thus far.

The Emperor's Ideology

It is stating the obvious to say that every emperor governed the Roman Empire differently, each according to his unique ideologies. Such is the difference between Augustus, remembered for stabilizing the wreckage of the Republic and enacting morality reforms, and Trajan, known as a military leader who conquered Dacia and Mesopotamia. Hadrian also had his own goals and priorities in managing such a huge and populous Empire. This section will briefly examine the ideology by which he governed. Imperial portraiture was inherently connected to propaganda and was thus a part of the ideology expressed by the emperor in question. Once Hadrian's ideology has been examined, his portraiture and image can be examined with that ideology in mind.

Perhaps the most notable characteristic of Hadrian's reign is that he ended the gradual expansion of the Empire's borders. The 'Empire without limit' had been, until Hadrian, a hallmark of Roman ideology at large.⁹⁶ Rome steadily annexed new provinces around the Mediterranean, beginning with Sicily during the first Punic War (264-241 BC). While most of the expansion occurred during the Republic, emperors continued to add territory – notably, Augustus added Egypt and Trajan added Dacia. Hadrian did not conquer territory, and in fact put a hard stop to Roman expansion. It was a policy of 'imperial stasis'.⁹⁷ The Empire had reached its greatest extent, and Hadrian would be going no further. Instead, it was time to look inward, inspect what Rome already had, and work toward maintaining it and improving it rather than adding something new.

Hadrian was also the first emperor to actually give up territory. The Empire had reached its geographical maximum under Trajan with his additions of Mesopotamia, Assyria, Greater Armenia, and Dacia. At the time of Trajan's death, the newly added provinces were already

⁹⁶ Birley, *Hadrian*, 116.

⁹⁷ Everitt, *Hadrian*, 211.

unstable, and Hadrian relinquished Roman control of all of the territory east of the Euphrates and Tigris.⁹⁸ Portions of Dacia and Moesia across the Lower Danube were also abandoned in the wake of unrest, and Hadrian may have even considered abandoning Dacia altogether.⁹⁹ It was a strategic move on Hadrian's part that served as a prelude to an overall ideology of consolidation and stability. Hadrian's accession had been a perilous one – Trajan did not name a successor until he was on his deathbed, an appointment rumoured to be the result of Plotina's scheming¹⁰⁰ – and he inherited an Empire with fragile borders facing unrest and revolts. Along with the instability in the newly annexed provinces, there was also a revolt in Britain that needed attention. Hadrian cut away the Trajanic provinces to better deal with the provinces in which the Empire had more investment.

'Imperial stasis' involved not only giving up unstable territory, but also more clearly defining Rome's current territory. In the *Aeneid*, Virgil calls Rome *imperium sine fine* – the Empire without limits, either temporal or spatial.¹⁰¹ An Empire without limits suggests that the current limits of the Empire were transient and malleable. Everitt describes them as porous. They were not hard lines, with Roman governance on one side and another power's influence on the other. Rather, they marked the territory directly governed by the state, beyond which were territories influenced by the state but not directly governed by it – client kingdoms, perhaps, or allied tribes. Workers, merchants, and travellers came and went. Fortifications did not block access to the Empire but rather controlled it.¹⁰² It was implied that state governance and influence could always extend further, that new provinces could be added, even if the state was not actively pursuing conquest. Not only did Trajan add five new provinces to the Empire, but he also interfered with the politics beyond the Eastern borders, installing client kings in places like Osrhoene and having a particular claimant to the Parthian throne elected.¹⁰³ To consolidate his policy of 'imperial stasis', Hadrian better defined the Empire's borders and made them more permanent. Hadrian's Wall in Britain is a well-known example of this, but Hadrian also constructed border walls in Germany and northwest Africa.

The German border was demarcated by an unbroken palisade. Construction on the palisade began during Hadrian's imperial visit to Germany and Raetia. Fortifications were already present

⁹⁸ *Historia Augusta*. Vita Hadriani 5.3.

⁹⁹ Birley, *Hadrian*, 84-5.

¹⁰⁰ *Historia Augusta*. Vita Hadriani 4.10.

¹⁰¹ Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.272.

¹⁰² Everitt, *Hadrian*, 210-1.

¹⁰³ Birley, *Hadrian*, 73.

along the border, in the form of a series of watchtowers constructed under Domitian and Trajan. The palisade was an immense undertaking, described as an unbroken wall of ten-foot-tall posts, whole trees split in half and buried in the ground, connected by crossbeams. The German border was some 563 kilometers (350 miles) long, meaning huge swaths of forest had to be cut down.¹⁰⁴ The palisade likely did not add any significant defensive or military value to the already-established line of fortifications.¹⁰⁵ The watchtowers worked effectively and the Germanic tribes did not pose a major threat of invasion.¹⁰⁶ Rather, it was a psychological tactic. To the Germanic barbarians, it was a clear, indisputable symbol: beyond the palisade was Roman territory, and the barbarians were not welcome there. An imposing wall of huge oak posts certainly made that clear. For the Roman soldiers, it was a symbol of a different sort: here ended Roman lands. Beyond the palisade was something else, foreign lands populated by barbarians. The Empire without limits now had clearly-defined limits.

The wall in Britain is even more complete, stretching across the entire island, leaving no potential room for invaders to circumvent it without attacking it head-on or bypassing it by sea. In antiquity the wall was plastered white, making it a striking visual symbol.¹⁰⁷ Another wall was constructed in Numidia and was underway when Hadrian visited the province in 127. A complete wall, as in Britain or Germany, was not feasible here, but several long stretches mud brick lined with ditches were constructed. The gaps in the wall were supervised and, once again, access to the Empire was controlled. This allowed nomadic groups living near the border to continue their seasonal migration, albeit in a controlled manner; it also improved agriculture inside the border wall.¹⁰⁸ While perhaps not as imposing as the walls in Europe, it nevertheless served to demarcate the borders, both for outsiders and for the Romans themselves.

Birley's discussion of the palisade in Germany raises an important secondary function. The palisade was a huge undertaking and the job was done by the most available able bodies: the troops themselves. Along with building an extensive palisade, the troops in Germany were also put to work in converting the forts and watchtowers from wood to stone.¹⁰⁹ The labour kept the troops occupied in lieu of active combat and kept them fit and working. Alongside Hadrian's new drilling

¹⁰⁴ Everitt, *Hadrian*, 211.

¹⁰⁵ Birley, *Hadrian*, 116.

¹⁰⁶ Everitt, *Hadrian*, 211.

¹⁰⁷ Everitt, *Hadrian*, 223.

¹⁰⁸ Birley, *Hadrian*, 210.

¹⁰⁹ Birley, *Hadrian*, 117.

techniques and enforced spartan conditions, he maintained order and discipline among the troops and ensured that they were in good fighting condition, even as he had extended defensive measures undertaken.

This consolidation was not just symbolised in walls and fortifications. In Rome, before leaving on his first tour of the provinces, he completed a ceremony that involved retracing the *pomerium*, the symbolic border of the city itself, performed in conjunction with the anniversary of the city's founding. Emperors could expand the *pomerium*, provided that the Empire itself had also expanded. Trajan planned to have the *pomerium* extended but died before achieving that goal. Hadrian discarded this plan and traced the borders as they were already.¹¹⁰ It was a symbolic act of restraint. Although he could extend the city's territory, and extend the Empire's, he refused to do so. It was not simply that he did not add any new territory, but he had made the conscious decision to stop expanding the Empire and to look inward at what the Empire already possessed.

By consolidating the Empire's territory and withdrawing from the new and unstable provinces, Hadrian did not need to expend resources on Romanizing them. Thus, he was able to divert those resources into the stable provinces and fund building projects, inspections, and tours.¹¹¹ As he travelled through the Empire he left public works and inscriptions in his wake. For example, Antioch received major financial support during Hadrian's visit there in 123, which helped the city recover after an earthquake eight years earlier. He also had an aqueduct and baths built, and nearby Daphne received a new theatre. When the repairs were completed, he held a festival in celebration.¹¹² Early into his reign Hadrian cancelled nine million sesterces worth of provincial debt owed to the imperial coffers, a clear indication of his intent to use funds to support established provinces rather than trying to Romanize new ones.¹¹³ The *Historia Augusta* calls that debt cancellation a shallow attempt to garner popularity, but it was also part of his greater system of consolidating resources and benefiting the Empire's current provinces.¹¹⁴

The public works and inscriptions trace Hadrian's tour through the provinces, and he certainly travelled extensively. He personally visited most of the provinces in the Empire and travelled to many of their major cities. Regions such as Britain and Spain only received one official

¹¹⁰ Everitt, *Hadrian*, 203-4.

¹¹¹ Ando, *Ideology*, 319.

¹¹² Birley, *Hadrian*, 153.

¹¹³ *Historia Augusta*. Vita Hadriani 7.6-7.

¹¹⁴ *Historia Augusta*. Vita Hadriani 7.6.

visit, but he stayed in Greece three times, and visited regions such as Syria and Anatolia more than once as well. He was also the first emperor to make an official tour of the African provinces.¹¹⁵ Along with public works, Hadrian conveyed other benefits to the provinces. He founded cities such as Hadrianotherae in Mysia and Antinoopolis in Egypt. Both were ostensibly to commemorate personal events – Hadrianotherae was founded on the site of a particularly successful bear hunt, while Antinoopolis was founded on the site where Antinous drowned – but they also doubled as strategic foundations. Hadrianotherae was built on a fertile plain lacking other major cities,¹¹⁶ and Antinoopolis sat on a trade route connecting the Nile to the Red Sea.¹¹⁷ Other cities received higher status. Utica, for instance, previously a *municipium*, requested and received an upgrade to *colonia*, a more prestigious status, and was granted appropriate privileges.¹¹⁸

While touring the provinces, Hadrian made a point of inspecting troops, especially those stationed in the border provinces. In Numidia, Hadrian personally inspected their weaponry and equipment, conferred honours, and conducted drills.¹¹⁹ He sent them on regular marches of up to 32 kilometers (20 miles), and accompanied them, always on foot or horseback rather than in a carriage. His inspection of the troops extended to their personal lives and living conditions. He stripped away excess and had amenities like porticoes and gardens demolished, because some officers treated their postings as vacations and used such luxuries to relax.¹²⁰ The *Historia Augusta* also records Hadrian wearing simple uniforms.¹²¹ Perhaps, as in the drills and marches, he imposed the same on his troops.

According to the *Historia Augusta*, the state of the military had been gradually deteriorating since the time of Augustus, although it fails to elaborate on this claim.¹²² If that were the case, then reforms were necessary. Hadrian's role models for these reforms were Scipio Aemilianus (185-129 BC) and Caecilius Metellus (160-91 BC), as well as Trajan.¹²³ Aemilianus and Metellus imposed spartan living and working conditions on their troops, to keep them

¹¹⁵ Birley, *Hadrian*, 203.

¹¹⁶ Birley, *Hadrian*, 164.

¹¹⁷ R.E. Zitterkopf and S.E. Sidebotham, 'Stations and Towers on the Quseit-Nile Road,' *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 75 (1989) 155-189 at 156.

¹¹⁸ Birley, *Hadrian*, 206.

¹¹⁹ Birley, *Hadrian*, 211.

¹²⁰ Everitt, *Hadrian*, 209.

¹²¹ *Historia Augusta*. Vita Hadriani 10.5.

¹²² *Historia Augusta*. Vita Hadriani 10.3.

¹²³ *Historia Augusta*. Vita Hadriani 10.1.

disciplined and in good fighting form.¹²⁴ Aemilianus removed luxuries like camp followers, elaborate meals, and even beds; he took part in all of these reforms just as his troops did. The harsh conditions, along with severe discipline, restored the troops to fighting order, and only then did he continue his campaign. Metellus imposed similar conditions on his troops during the Jugurthine War (112-106 BC), also stripping away luxuries as well as leading by example.

Aemilianus and Metellus are curious models for Hadrian's reforms. Both generals were locked in warfare at the time of their reforms, but Hadrian's Empire was largely at peace. The border conflicts continued to burn, but there was no threat to the Empire at large, and Hadrian was clearly not a warmonger bent on conquest. While the reforms echoed his Republican heroes, the circumstances were quite different. No doubt, Hadrian needed to prove his military might. After all, he had already abandoned Trajanic provinces and made clear that he was not interested in conquest. Perhaps such reforms nevertheless painted Hadrian as an emperor with an interest in maintaining the military even without actively using it in large-scale war. Furthermore, the army was apparently out of shape, and reforming the army and restoring it to order would indicate to his peers that he was invested in the military. It was in his interest to maintain peace, given his focus on stabilizing the Empire, but he also prepared the army to face potential threats.

Another element of Hadrian's military reforms was a novel training method. He had his troops run drills practicing the fighting techniques of various enemies they could potentially face, as well as devising his own techniques. They studied, so to speak, the techniques of the Parthians, Celts, Sarmatians, and so forth.¹²⁵ One can imagine that they learned these techniques to better understand them, and thus better combat them. Regardless of where the troops were stationed, they were trained to combat enemies from other parts of the Empire, theoretically allowing them to be relocated anywhere and be competent and battle-ready.¹²⁶ Cassius Dio attests to the efficacy of his reforms, praising the soldiers' efficiency and high morale. The methods that Hadrian introduced were still commonplace campaign practices during Cassius' lifetime several decades later.¹²⁷

Hadrian's emulation of Aemilianus and Metellus segues nicely into his interest in Rome's past and his efforts to recall it, another ideological aspect of his reign. Perhaps the bluntest example of this was a change in his styling on coinage; until 123 his coins showed his name as Imp. Caesar

¹²⁴ Everitt, *Hadrian*, 205-6.

¹²⁵ Everitt, *Hadrian*, 208.

¹²⁶ Birley, *Hadrian*, 119.

¹²⁷ Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 69.9.4.

Traianus Hadrianus Aug., but it was then altered to simply Hadrianus Augustus.¹²⁸ The year 123 was exactly 150 years after Octavian had received the title Augustus. Certainly, Augustus did not share the same ideology of imperial stasis, but he was also a stabilizer. Augustus' founding of the Empire is easily interpreted as him picking up the pieces of the Republic and reassembling them into something more stable and functional. Perhaps Hadrian had a similar goal in mind.

Hadrian did not limit himself to emulating historical people. One extant portrait of Hadrian directly identifies him with Mars (Fig. 32).¹²⁹ Mars is a military god, and Hadrian was certainly interested in the military. It would not be the first time a sitting emperor had depicted himself as a god. In the East, emperors were occasionally absorbed into older cults; in some places, Caligula was worshipped as the sun, and Nero as Apollo.¹³⁰ Emperors also made deliberate depictions, such as a statue of Claudius as Jupiter, and the Colossus of Nero, the 120 foot tall namesake of the Colosseum, which depicted Nero as the sun.¹³¹ Hadrian was the first emperor to depict himself as Mars, however.¹³² Mars, of course, is the god of warfare and the army, but the Hadrian-Mars does not exude a typical military image.

This is made clear by comparing the Hadrian-Mars to the Hierapytna Hadrian (Fig. 33).¹³³ The Hierapytna statue survives in full, save for one arm. It is cuirassed and crowned, with one arm raised in victory. One foot steps on the back of a much smaller figure, the personification of a conquered people. This statue sends a clear message of military might. He is the triumphant general, crushing a conquered people into the ground. The Hadrian-Mars' pose, in contrast, is more static. The figure stands at rest, head turned away from the viewer. It holds a sword and shield and wears a helmet, indicating its identity as Mars, but stands in the heroic nude, a sophisticated echo of ancient Greek art. This is not Mars as a warmongering general, but a more pensive and cultured character.¹³⁴ Rome held Mars in special significance, as the father of Romulus and an ancestor to the city itself. Hadrian used the image of Mars to identify himself with Rome's past and foundation. Furthermore, his wife Sabina was identified with Venus, notably in a portrait statue from Ostia.¹³⁵

¹²⁸ Birley, *Hadrian*, 147.

¹²⁹ Evers, *Portraits*, 159-160 (no. 100).

¹³⁰ H.F. Burton, 'The Worship of Roman Emperors,' *The Biblical World* 40 (1912) 80-91 at 83-4.

¹³¹ E. Champlin, 'Nero Reconsidered,' *The New England Review* 19 (1998) 97-108 at 105.

¹³² E. Haley, 'Hadrian as Romulus or the Self-Representation of a Roman Emperor,' *Latomus* 64.4 (2005) 969-80 at 974.

¹³³ Evers, *Portraits*, 119 (no. 50).

¹³⁴ T. Opper, *Hadrian: Empire and Conflict* (Cambridge, 2008) 72.

¹³⁵ T.C. Brennan, *Sabina Augusta: An Imperial Journey* (Oxford, 2018) 91.

Venus had been associated with the foundation of Rome since Julius Caesar's time and his veneration of Venus Genetrix, or Venus the Mother. Venus is also the mother of Aeneas, the ancestor of Romulus and hero of the *Aeneid*. Therefore, both the sitting emperor and empress are depicted as two religious figures associated with the foundation of the Empire.

Hadrian looked to the past to characterize his commitment to imperial stability, but he also looked to ensuring that stability for the future. Hadrian had no children himself, in part due to his unhappy marriage with Sabina, and perhaps in part due to an apparent preference for boys. Unlike Trajan, who adopted Hadrian on his deathbed, Hadrian made sure to adopt successors early enough to ensure a stable succession and prevent unrest. His first pick for successor was Ceionius, who died of illness shortly thereafter.¹³⁶ Consequently, he adopted Antoninus Pius, and had him adopt both Marcus Aurelius and Ceionius' son Lucius Verus, thus ensuring a stable dynastic succession for the next two generations. The adoption scheme was successful; dynastic succession occurred smoothly until Commodus' death in 192, 50 years after Hadrian's own death.

Hadrian also prepared to implement the Panhellenion in 128. It was intended to unify the Greek cities in the same way in which they had been unified during the Persian Wars (499-449 BC). Hadrian had grand ideas for this league and its functions. It was to meet every four years in Athens, at the newly-completed temple of Zeus. Delegates from various cities were to attend the meetings, representing not just the Greek mainland but the entire Greek diaspora within the Empire.¹³⁷ It would unify this subculture within the Empire, as well as grant them some level of autonomy. This certainly plays into Hadrian's interest in the past and efforts toward unity, as well as his philhellenic reputation. However, the Panhellenion was never fully implemented, and Antoninus Pius discarded it.

The Panhellenion was created to promote unity among the Greek communities of the Empire and may be indicative of his philhellenic tastes. Whether or not that philhellenism was the driving force of his ideologies, it does appear that Hadrian was fond of Greek culture. He travelled to Athens three times over the course of his reign and held an archonship, a magistrate position, there before that. He granted requests for Athenian legal reforms, some of which echoed reforms of Solon and Cleisthenes.¹³⁸ On the cultural side, he finished the temple of Zeus that had been left

¹³⁶ T.D. Barnes, 'Hadrian and Lucius Verus,' *Journal of Roman Studies* 57 (1967) 65-79 at 75.

¹³⁷ Birley, *Hadrian*, 219.

¹³⁸ Birley, *Hadrian*, 177.

half-completed for centuries, built a new aqueduct and the Library of Hadrian, and offered patronage to the Epicurean philosophers based in the city.¹³⁹ Cassius Dio records that he presided over the Dionysia in 125, enthusiastically fulfilling his role while decked out in Athenian dress.¹⁴⁰ Otherwise, he travelled extensively through the region, visiting major cities in the Peloponnese and mainland Greece and stopping at important cultural sites, such as the tomb of Epaminondas.¹⁴¹ It is easy to assume that he was fond of the area, and of Athens in particular, and perhaps he was. This is not to suggest that Greece was the sole recipient of his benefactions, as his work in other provinces demonstrates, but there is a notable concentration of benefactions in Greece.

Antinous appears to be another piece of the philhellenism puzzle. As mentioned in the general introduction, Hadrian's relationship with Antinous was probably pederastic in nature, whether that meant it was sexual or based on mentorship, or both.¹⁴² Antinous was culturally Greek, and would have been a teenager when Hadrian met him; Hadrian himself was roughly 35 years older.¹⁴³ Hadrian honoured Antinous after the boy's death in such an extravagant way that it suggests a deeper relationship, perhaps a sort of mentorship reminiscent of authentic pederasty. A relationship with Antinous is hardly an imperial policy but could be indicative of Hadrian's broader taste for Hellenic culture.

The main trends in Hadrian's ideology can be summarized as an interest in consolidating the current holdings of the Empire and halting the gradual growth of the Empire's borders. By stopping the growth and focussing inward, he had the resources to personally visit the provinces and deliver benefactions. He also took an interest in reforming the military, whipping it into shape after years of leisure and neglectful superiors. In lieu of the occasional incursion or revolt that needed suppressing, the troops were kept in fighting shape with innovative new drilling techniques and labour building border walls, supplemented by a deliberate removal of luxurious living conditions. His policies are coloured by an interest in Empire's past, historical heroes, and legendary founders. It is in this context that his philhellenic sensibilities should be considered.

¹³⁹ Birley, *Hadrian*, 183-4.

¹⁴⁰ Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 69.16.1.

¹⁴¹ Birley, *Hadrian*, 179.

¹⁴² See pages 7-8.

¹⁴³ Birley, *Hadrian*, 159 supposes that Hadrian first encountered Antinous when the former visited Bithynia in 123. Hadrian was born in 76, while Antinous was born between 110 and 112.

Roman Portraiture

With Hadrian's overarching ideological policies in mind, it is time to turn to Hadrian's self representation through honourific portraiture. Honourific portraiture was an important means for Romans to develop their image and convey messages about themselves. Such portraits were not vanity objects, nor were they even intended to represent the subject in a perfect likeness. Rather, they were tools of communication. Understanding Hadrian's policies is only half of the key to understanding his imagery; the other half requires understanding the way portraits were used writ large.

Portraits of the imperial family were ubiquitous in the Roman Empire. It is estimated that between 25,000 and 30,000 imperial portraits were produced under Augustus alone, and the number only increased as the imperial period progressed.¹⁴⁴ Imperial portraits populated every conceivable public space, and were a constant presence for the average citizen of the Empire. In a letter to Marcus Aurelius, Cornelius Fronto describes statues of the emperor as being present in 'money-changer's bureaus, booths, bookstalls, eaves, porches, windows, anywhere and everywhere'.¹⁴⁵ Surely, given the sheer volume of portraits produced, other emperors were just as ubiquitous, and just as present in the daily life of an average citizen of the Empire. Even today, Roman portraits survive in abundance. Roughly 25,000 to 30,000 Roman portraits survive, of which 4,000 to 5,000 are images of the imperial family.¹⁴⁶ While that is a considerable quantity, it is only a fraction of what was produced in antiquity, across the four centuries between the Late Republic and the decline of the Western Empire. Fronto's claims of the ubiquity of these portraits must not be an exaggeration, if just for their enormous number. There was no escaping the image of the emperor.

The image of the emperor was considered to be a stand-in for the emperor himself, whether in a portrait in the round or on a coin. In a similar fashion to how the presence of a god could be felt in their cult statue, the presence of the emperor was felt in his portraits. In effect, the emperor's statues served as a proxy for him. In settings where a public official acted, such as courts of law, marketplaces, and at public assemblies, the portrait of the emperor was also present; since the emperor could not be present in all of these places at once, the portraits served as his presence

¹⁴⁴ Kellum, *Messages*, 424.

¹⁴⁵ Cornelius Fronto, *Correspondence of Marcus Cornelius Fronto* 4.12.4.

¹⁴⁶ Fittschen, *Approaches*, 52.

there instead, confirming the actions of the presiding official and ratify the decisions made there.¹⁴⁷ The emperor's authority and his presence on the coins legitimated the transaction taking place, and even ensured the value of the coins themselves.¹⁴⁸

The importance of both coin portraits and portraits in the round depended on the sacrosanctity of images of the emperor. That notion of sacrosanctity began during the Augustan era.¹⁴⁹ There are records of treason charges against Romans who violated images of the emperor in some way, especially during the reign of Tiberius. Offenses against the statues were considered offenses against the emperor himself. A *praetor* of Bithynia, Granius Marcellus, was accused of treason by his *quaestor*, and some of the charges were that he had placed a portrait of himself physically higher than those of the Caesars, and that he had knocked the head off of a portrait of Augustus; these accusations particularly incensed Tiberius.¹⁵⁰ In another incident, the *eques* Lucius Ennius melted down a silver statuette of Tiberius to reuse the silver for common household purposes, and was therefore indicted for treason. In this instance, however, Tiberius personally vetoed the charges, despite the protestation of jurist Aetius Capito that Ennius' crime was one against the state of Rome itself.¹⁵¹

Any disrespect to the statue could be considered disrespect to the emperor. Beyond the two cases relayed by Tacitus, Suetonius lists other, similar crimes. Beating a slave beside a statue of the emperor, expressing negative opinions of the emperor to such a statue, or even changing clothes and thus exposing oneself before an imperial image were considered capital offenses, at least under Tiberius.¹⁵² The *Historia Augusta* recounts cases of Caracalla condemning people to death for urinating too close to imperial portraits.¹⁵³ Anything done to a statue of the emperor was thus considered done to the emperor himself. However, this could also be used deliberately against the emperor. When Nero had his mother Agrippina executed, a sack was tied around the neck of one of Nero's statues with the words 'you deserve the sack', in reference to a traditional punishment

¹⁴⁷ C. Douzinas, 'Prosopon and Antiprosopon: Prolegomena for a Legal Iconology,' in C. Douzinas & L. Nead (eds.), *Law and the Image: The Authority of Art and the Aesthetics of Law* (Chicago, 1999) 36-68 at 47.

¹⁴⁸ Ando, *Ideology*, 220. Xx cite paul

¹⁴⁹ Ando, *Ideology*, 221.

¹⁵⁰ Tacitus, *Annals* 1.74.

¹⁵¹ Tacitus, *Annals* 3.70.

¹⁵² Suetonius, *Life of Tiberius*, 58.1.

¹⁵³ *Historia Augusta*. Vita Antonini Caracallae 5.7.

for parricide, effectively calling for Nero's execution.¹⁵⁴ The treatment of images of the emperor by other citizens could be a political statement as well.

Damnatio memoriae is another example of statues being used by others for political statements. When an emperor was condemned, his statues would be pulled down or recut into images of their successors.¹⁵⁵ There was procedure for this, but in the case of broadly unpopular emperors the citizens could take matters into their own hands, such as when portraits of Caligula were torn down by the people after his death. When the Senate considered formally passing *damnatio memoriae* against Caligula, Claudius disallowed the motion but nevertheless had his remaining images removed from public display.¹⁵⁶ When Domitian died, the Senate apparently tore down his statues in the senate house and smashed them, and then passed a motion of *damnatio memoriae*, thus removing the rest of his images from the Empire.¹⁵⁷

Coins were the most expedient way for an emperor to circulate his portraits, which was especially important for a new emperor. The emperor was expected to mint coins bearing his portraits early in his reign, and coins bearing the likeness of the emperor were a propaganda tool declaring an emperor's claim to the throne. Procopius, a usurper against Valens, presented coins minted in his image to the legions to convince them that he was the rightful claimant to the throne; these coins were the only evidence he produced of his legitimacy. His coin portraits emphasized his connection to the Constantinian dynasty to further cement his legitimacy, and he had some minted, likely in Constantinople, with the stamp of the Arles mint to suggest Empire-wide support.¹⁵⁸ In a similar, more unfortunate episode, the landowner Valerianus Paetus had gold medallions struck with his portrait as gifts for his mistresses.¹⁵⁹ The contemporary emperor Elagabalus, cognizant of the way that usurpers minted coins in preparation for rebellion, saw this as a threat and had Paetus executed for treason.¹⁶⁰

For modern scholars, one use of coinage is to help identify statues of the emperor. Coinage has text that declares the identity of the portrait on its obverse. Roman portraits were generally erected with inscriptions that served a similar purpose, but most portraits have been separated from

¹⁵⁴ Kellum, *Messages*, 424.

¹⁵⁵ Kellum, *Messages*, 424.

¹⁵⁶ Ando, *Ideology*, 240.

¹⁵⁷ Suetonius, *Life of Domitian* 23.1.

¹⁵⁸ Ando, *Ideology*, 225-6.

¹⁵⁹ Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 80.4.7.

¹⁶⁰ R. Van Dam, *Kingdom of Snow: Roman Rule and Greek Culture in Cappadocia* (Philadelphia, 2002) 66.

their inscriptions. As previously mentioned, only the Baniyas bust has an identifying inscription.¹⁶¹ An original inscription is the most accurate way to identify a statue, and thus date it, but those are rare. In fact, more inscriptions remain than actual statues, remaining *in situ* while the statues have been removed and lost.¹⁶² While the inscriptions can be valuable resources for learning about non-imperial Romans, they are also useful in distinguishing imperial from non-imperial portraits. Without the inscriptions, coins become the next best way to identify an imperial portrait.

There are no portrait types represented on coins that are not represented in the round. Any portrait on a coin, therefore, has at least one corresponding portrait in the round. That said, there are portrait types that do not have corresponding coin portraits, for reasons that are unknown.¹⁶³ Portrait types that are also represented in coinage were reliably identified as early as the Renaissance period, and there is little confusion in the identity of emperors, save for some of the short-lived ones who did not have time to produce enough portraits to build an identifiable corpus.¹⁶⁴ For the likes of Hadrian, highly prolific as he was, this is not an issue. As for the portrait types that are not represented on coinage, they must be identified by physiognomic comparison, but that is not an absolute science. The comparison must be strong enough to be an uncontested match, or the type must otherwise be represented in different media, like relief sculptures.¹⁶⁵ This is further complicated by the manner in which non-imperial Romans often imitated the appearance of the imperial family in their own portraits, intentionally or not; this can lead to confusion as to what belongs in the corpus and what does not.

It is thought that portraits in the round and coin portraits were based on common prototypes. The first notion of these prototypes was proposed in the late 19th century, postulating that ‘portrait types’, a term also used in antiquity, were models that were produced centrally and then distributed for replication elsewhere. None of these prototypes survive. They may have been made from short-lived materials such as clay or plaster before their likeness was transferred onto a stone portrait.¹⁶⁶ According to this theory, prototypes were made for each of the portrait types of the given individual; for example, prototypes may have been made for Antinous for each of his main type, Mondragone type, and Egyptianizing type portraits. When a provincial city wanted to erect a

¹⁶¹ See page 21.

¹⁶² Fejfer, *Portraits*, 235.

¹⁶³ Fittschen, *Approaches*, 57.

¹⁶⁴ Fittschen, *Approaches*, 53.

¹⁶⁵ Fittschen, *Approaches*, 57.

¹⁶⁶ Fittschen, *Approaches*, 53.

portrait, the sculptor commissioned for the task worked from a prototype and replicated it as accurately as possible.¹⁶⁷ In Antinous' case, for example, the striking regularity of his hairstyle is a good indicator of centrally produced prototypes.¹⁶⁸ The physiognomic differences, however, may be the result of regional variation. For example, in his *Periplus on the Euxine Sea* Arrian of Nicomedia describes a statue of the emperor in Trapezus that is ugly and does not suitably resemble Hadrian; he recommends that Hadrian replace it with a similar but better executed portrait.¹⁶⁹ Arrian is probably signifying that this statue did not represent Hadrian's physiognomy close enough.¹⁷⁰ Zanker also proposes that Arrian disapproves because it did not correspond to an official type.¹⁷¹

Accurately representing the subject's physiognomy was key, as the most important part of a Roman portrait was its head, which conveyed the subject's identity.¹⁷² Portrait faces received even greater attention in the second century.¹⁷³ Portrait prototypes were probably just heads, so that the studio could match the likeness as accurately as possible, while the rest of the body was left up to the commissioner. Faces were replicated using measuring points, transferred from the prototype to the actual statue; some statues still have their measuring points drawn on, perhaps as a conspicuous way to communicate that the portrait was an accurate recreation.¹⁷⁴ Some prototypes may have been more elaborate to include other aspects, like Caracalla's characteristic turned head.¹⁷⁵ The emphasis on the face can also be demonstrated by the targeted destruction of statue faces during processes of *damnatio memoriae*.¹⁷⁶ Because the face was the most important part, statue heads were often created separately, and afterwards inserted into premade busts or statue bodies. While the bust or body could help contextualize the portrait, the identity of the portrait was found in the face and head.

As for the rest of the body, there were a few different, almost predetermined styles of portrait bodies that could accompany a head. Standing, equestrian, and seated figures were

¹⁶⁷ L.A. Riccardi, 'Uncanonical Imperial Portraits in the Eastern Roman Provinces: The Case of the Kanellopoulos Emperor,' *Hesperia* 69 (2000) 105-32 at 113.

¹⁶⁸ Vout, *Power and Eroticism*, 77-8.

¹⁶⁹ Arrian, *Periplus*, 1.3-4.

¹⁷⁰ Ando, *Ideology*, 229.

¹⁷¹ P. Zanker, *Provinzielle Kaiserporträts: Zur Rezeption der Selbstdarstellung des Princeps* (Munich, 1983) 7.

¹⁷² Fejfer, *Portraits*, 236.

¹⁷³ Smith, *Choice*, 62.

¹⁷⁴ Fittschen, *Approaches*, 63.

¹⁷⁵ Fittschen, *Approaches*, 56.

¹⁷⁶ Fejfer, *Portraits*, 236.

available for male portraits, dressed either in a cuirass or a toga, or represented in the heroic nude; for a Greek man, wearing a *himation* was also an available option.¹⁷⁷ Each of these costumes and postures carried a specific, basic meaning – the cuirass was clearly a symbol of military strength, while the toga emphasized a man’s citizenship and Romanness – but could take on more nuanced meaning depending on the statue’s context.¹⁷⁸ The bust format only developed in the late Republic, and was originally small and meant only as a support for the portrait head; the bust portion contained no extra information about the subject, leaving that up to the viewer. The format gained increasing popularity over the span of the Empire, and along with popularity, the bust also increased in size and detail.¹⁷⁹ By the end of the first century CE, it showed the breast and shoulders and could include clothing. Antinous’ busts as Hermes, with part of a cloak shown drawn over his shoulder, are a good example of this (Fig. 34).¹⁸⁰ Into the second century, the busts included parts of the arms, or even the entire arms, including the hands, and even held objects. The bust had evolved into half of a full body statue, and as such, had much more room to show contextualizing details that could better carry intended messages.

Portrait types were often introduced to commemorate certain milestones or events during an emperor’s reign. Coin types were personally and consciously decided upon by emperors, and in fact it was expected for them to do so; they directly determined new coin types for propaganda purposes, and coin types were especially useful for spreading the immediate political concerns of the court.¹⁸¹ This is evidenced in Suetonius, who says that Augustus was so pleased with a horoscope delivered by the astrologer Theogenes that he had a new coins struck that featured his sign, Capricorn.¹⁸² Nero also had coins depicting him as a lyre player to celebrate successful musical performances in Greece.¹⁸³ There are other recorded instances as well, and it seems that coin types were a fast way for emperors to convey particular messages about themselves.

Emperors who were members of the imperial family prior to their accession, such as Marcus Aurelius and Caracalla, have portrait types that depict them as children. As they grew older, they required new portrait types to depict them as adults. Otherwise, starting with Augustus,

¹⁷⁷ Smith, *Choice*, 64.

¹⁷⁸ Fejfer, *Portraits*, 245.

¹⁷⁹ Fejfer, *Portraits*, 245.

¹⁸⁰ E.g. Meyer, *Antinoos*, 26-7 (no. 1.3).

¹⁸¹ Ando, *Ideology*, 216.

¹⁸² Suetonius, *Life of Augustus*, 94.12.

¹⁸³ Suetonius, *Life of Nero*, 25.2.

imperial portraiture tends to ‘freeze’ the emperor at the same age across the rest of his reign. This is especially visible in emperors with long reigns; Augustus remains of some indeterminately young age until to his death at age 75. The portraits do not reflect aging, then, but are assumed to reflect significant events in their reign, although this is difficult to prove conclusively.¹⁸⁴ Many portrait types are similar enough to each other that their political messages are not easy to discern, but others are clear enough in their intentions that they can still be interpreted.¹⁸⁵ For example, the most common depiction of Hadrian, at least among surviving statues, is as a cuirassed general.¹⁸⁶ It may be stating the obvious, but it is clear that this version of Hadrian carries a message of military strength. However, Hadrian’s portrait types are not always so clear-cut. Over the course of long reigns, especially those of Hadrian and Trajan, portrait types began to blur or be combined, elements of one appearing in the other. Portrait types were often numerous and similar, which may indicate that the blending of portrait types was encouraged.¹⁸⁷

The ideological power of images of the emperor is apparent. For the average citizen portraits were a constant reminder of the emperor’s presence and messages, whether statues erected in public spaces or portraits stamped on the backs of coins. But what of other portraits? Romans produced images not only of their emperors but of themselves, too. To return to that previous statistic, 25,000 to 30,000 Roman portraits remain, of which 4,000 to 5,000 are of the imperial family. This means that there are between 20,000 and 26,000 that are not imperial portraits. These private portraits express their own messages, and even contribute to spreading imperial messages, intentionally or not.¹⁸⁸

Private portraits in the imperial era were not always interested in realistic depiction – nor were imperial portraits, as seen in Augustus’ eternal idealised youthfulness. In the late Republican era, extreme verism was in fashion. High-standing Romans represented themselves as true to life as possible, closing the gap between the subject and the viewer and making the subject seem immediate and human. By expressing the advanced age of the subject, veristic portraits also convey the wisdom and experience that come with age.¹⁸⁹ However, this trend of faithful, brutally-rendered realism faded in the early years of the Empire, and private citizens generally preferred

¹⁸⁴ Fittschen, *Approaches*, 59.

¹⁸⁵ Fittschen, *Approaches*, 59.

¹⁸⁶ Vout, *Hadrian*, 56.

¹⁸⁷ Fittschen, *Approaches*, 64.

¹⁸⁸ Portraits of private, non-imperial citizens, not necessarily portraits intended for private display.

¹⁸⁹ Fejfer, *Portraits*, 238.

the same idealised youthfulness as the emperor instead. Intentionally or unintentionally, private citizens began to represent themselves with traits similar to the emperors, especially those regarded as ‘good’ such as Augustus, Trajan, and Hadrian. This practice is called ‘assimilation’, and is sometimes so complete that it is difficult to determine whether a portrait is actually of an emperor, or is simply a highly-assimilated private portrait.¹⁹⁰

This idea of assimilation is related to the concept of the ‘period face’, best described by Paul Zanker. The period face, or *Zeitgesicht*, refers to the way portraits of private men and women tended to resemble the reigning emperor and empress, respectively, whether intentionally or not. Zanker argues that by the middle of the Augustan period, private citizens related to the iconography of the emperor, which had its own ideological motivations, instead of previous, more individualized fashions.¹⁹¹ The most drastic incidence of the period face came with Hadrian’s accession – according to private portraiture, once Hadrian grew a beard, the rest of the men in the Empire grew them too. There is visible truth to the period face, as imperial fashions tended to spread across the Empire.¹⁹²

The notion of the period face is useful. According to the theory, a private Roman portrait is, in general, easily dated to the reign of the emperor it resembles. However, this is not a universal truth. Zanker himself concedes that certain segments of Roman society did not adhere to the period face, most notably intellectuals. Portraits of intellectuals became common in the second century, characterized by long, unkempt beards, furrowed brows with visible signs of age, and receding hairlines.¹⁹³ Emperors like Marcus Aurelius and Septimius Severus would later exhibit similar characteristics on their own portraiture, especially the long beard, but by that point the popularity of the intellectual imagery was growing without imperial precedence, making it independent of the period face phenomenon. In this case, however, Zanker theorizes that there is a sort of reverse period face occurring here; rather than the citizens of the Empire being influenced by imperial fashions, imperial fashions were influenced by the citizenry, and Marcus Aurelius and the like were assimilated into this category of portraiture.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁰ Fittschen, *Approaches*, 65.

¹⁹¹ Fejfer, *Context*, 273-4.

¹⁹² Smith, *Choice*, 59.

¹⁹³ Zanker, *Mask*, 224.

¹⁹⁴ Zanker, *Mask*, 226.

There is disagreement, however, regarding the universality of the period face. While it is apparent that emperors influenced fashion across the rest of the Empire, it is not as clear-cut as the definition suggests. Under the definition of the period face, portraiture can be divided into emperors, emperor-imitators, and certain classes of portrait that are exempt from imperial fashions, most notably philosophers. Smith suggests that the issue is more nuanced, that there was a system of cultural choices and differentiation available to Romans in representing themselves, which projected a wider variety of social, political, and cultural messages.¹⁹⁵ It ascribes greater agency to the portrait subjects than simply the unthinking mimicry of imperial fashions.

On top of this, there is the additional problem that portraits were not always true to life. Augustus is an obvious example; as already mentioned, he does not age at all across his 40-year reign. With the gradual disappearance of verism, private portraits also became idealised. The manipulation of private portraits went deeper than this, though; private citizens represented themselves as people they were not. It is tempting to read a Roman's self-representation as a true window into their actual life and experiences, a temptation that Smith terms the 'biographical fallacy'.¹⁹⁶ Bearded portraits are labelled as philosophers, but oftentimes the subject only wanted to represent themselves as a philosopher. Identity cannot, therefore, be assumed from a portrait. Portraits require identifying inscriptions to actually discern the nature of the subject and, in cases where this sort of identification exists, overlap between represented identity and actual identity is often only partial at best. Private portraits are not accurate representations of private citizens, but instead can be used to catalogue the various types of portraits available to those citizens. As previously mentioned, there were certain categories of portrait, each carrying broad meanings that become nuanced when viewed in context. Much of that context is now missing, and it is easy to look at extant statues and see philosophers, athletes, and soldiers, where in reality they were city aristocrats.

The communication of ideology was not exclusive to the emperor and his family. Private citizens projected their own messages as well. The manipulation of portrait statues was an effective way to share these messages. For the emperor, the statue was his constant presence by proxy, and a guarantee that he oversaw government activity and other transactions. His portraits reflected him and his agenda as he wanted them to be seen – militaristic portraits for an emperor concerned with

¹⁹⁵ Smith, *Choice*, 59.

¹⁹⁶ Smith, *Choice*, 60.

military strength, or togate portraits for the cultural and civically-minded emperor. Private citizens did similar things. They manipulated their own image to serve their own purposes. Some looked like learned philosophers, while others resembled the emperor. Roman portraits did place value on faithful recreation of certain aspects of the subject's appearance, notably the face, but portraits also doubled as a medium by which to express ideology. Portraits were a way for Romans to use their own image to spread their messages to a wider audience.

Hadrian's Beard

With this understanding of the function of the Roman portrait, we can examine the way Hadrian actually depicted himself. As of the publication of Cécile Evers' 1994 catalogue *Les portraits d'Hadrien*, 149 statues of Hadrian have survived from antiquity. They exist in varying states of preservation, from well-worn heads to pristine full-body statues. Most extant statues have known provenance, and come from all over the Empire, from Spain to the Levantine coast. If Hadrian produced statues at a rate similar to Augustus, only a fraction of them survive, but that fraction attests to the ubiquity of the emperor's image. 92 of them are found in Italy, including Rome, comprising a hefty 61.7% of the whole. After that, the most common regions are Greece, with 14 statues or 9.4%, and Asia Minor, with eight, or 5.4%. Beyond that, statues are scattered across the Empire in ones and twos and threes, presenting a relatively even distribution. This is not surprising for an emperor, who needed to make himself known in all corners of the territory that he administered.

An in-depth look at the numbers for the corpus is not necessary, but some interesting statistics can nevertheless be seen. Most of the statues are fragmentary, extant only as a head or less. 94 out of the total 149, or 63.1%, are like this, either intentionally created as detached heads or else missing the rest of the statue to which they once belonged. They are all identifiable as Hadrian by physiognomic study, but wear no clothing or accessories, either intentionally or because the rest of the statue, which may have had some attribute, has been lost. 80 of the 94 heads have no attributes, comprising 53.7% of the total 149 statues. The remaining statues, just under half of the corpus, exhibit a wide array of identifiable attributes including military clothing, crowns, and cloaks.

If the 53.7% of statues without attributes are too fragmentary to determine whether any attributes were present are removed, this reduces the corpus to 69 statues. Interestingly, of the more complete statues, the most common attribute is the cuirass. 37 out of the 69 statues are

cuirassed, comprising 54.3% of this total, or 24.8% of the whole 149. 11 of these statues also wear the *paludamentum*, and two others wear the *paludamentum* without the cuirass underneath. Also of note is the statue of Hadrian as Mars; as previously discussed, it was the first time a sitting emperor had depicted himself as Mars.¹⁹⁷ It carries Mars' attributes – the helmet, sword, and shield – and is otherwise nude.

All of these statues wear a beard, as is usual with images of Hadrian. The beard and general physiognomy of the statues are consistent enough to warrant identification as Hadrian. At that time in history, though, the beard was unusual; while Nero's statues depict him with sideburns, Hadrian was the first emperor to wear a full beard. The *Historia Augusta* says that he wore a beard to cover a spotty complexion.¹⁹⁸ Several other explanations are debated in scholarship, which can all be loosely bound into a few major theories. The first returns to his philhellenic reputation. While Roman aristocrats had kept their beards shaven for centuries, Greek men never abandoned the fashion. The full beards shown in classical Greek portraiture were still in fashion in the East.¹⁹⁹ Hadrian exhibited admiration for Greek culture, seen in the way he patronized Greek territories and possibly maintained a pederastic relationship with Antinous. He participated in the Eleusinian mysteries at least once, and presided over the Athenian Dionysia in 125, where he is recorded as having worn full Greek dress and performing the role with enthusiasm. According to the *Historia Augusta* Hadrian's interest in Greek culture started in his youth, and his passion for studies apparently earned him the nickname '*Graeculus*', or the 'Little Greek'.²⁰⁰

Also relevant to this theory is the possible influence of Epictetus, an Athenian philosopher whom Hadrian may have known personally. In one discourse, Epictetus argues that the beard is a necessary tool for distinguishing the sexes, and that a man without a beard might as well be a woman, since women are naturally hairless and men are naturally hairy, and that those who do not conform to such categories are unnatural or monstrous.²⁰¹ Birley suggests that Hadrian first encountered Epictetus on his way to Athens for his archonship in 110;²⁰² while Hadrian would have certainly encountered Greek culture in Rome, his archonship would have immersed him in it. Combined with Epictetus' ideas, this may have convinced him to adopt Greek fashions.

¹⁹⁷ See page 46.

¹⁹⁸ *Historia Augusta*. Vita Hadriani 26.1.

¹⁹⁹ A.R. Birley, "Hadrian and Greek Senators," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 116 (1997) 209-45 at 215.

²⁰⁰ *Historia Augusta*. Vita Hadriani 1.5.

²⁰¹ Arrian, *Discourses of Epictetus* 3.1.

²⁰² Birley, *Hadrian*, 60.

Another explanation is that it was a fashion statement. At some point beards came into fashion among young men in Rome.²⁰³ There is a precedent, as the lower classes in Rome had always worn beards. Martial complained about the itchy feeling of a farmer's kiss, and likened it to that of a billy goat.²⁰⁴ It is worth noting that evidence such as honorific portraiture tends to come from the middle classes and above, and it is tempting to simply imagine all of Rome conforming to their fashions. Perhaps this trend among aristocratic youths was a form of counter-culture, isolated to this specific social circle, but was subsequently catapulted into broader popularity when Hadrian became emperor.

The third explanation is that the beard was worn to conform with military fashions. Unlike the aristocrats in Rome and the other major cities, beards were fashionable among military men.²⁰⁵ Vout rightly notes that the most common surviving depiction of Hadrian is as a cuirassed general.²⁰⁶ We can already see that over half of Hadrian's surviving portraits with identifiable clothing are dressed in a cuirass or a *paludamentum*, or both. The cuirass and *paludamentum* are hallmarks of the military general look. The cuirass was a symbol of military service, while the *paludamentum* indicated bravery and manliness.²⁰⁷ Hadrian also represented himself as Mars; this may be part of his identification with Rome's founders, but Mars is also an unmistakably militaristic figure. Mars is the only Roman divinity with which Hadrian is identified, at least in contemporary extant statuary.

Both the fashion and military theories challenge the 'period face' phenomenon, an important theory when examining Hadrian's beard. The period face, argued by Zanker, proposes that Roman citizens consciously or unconsciously modelled their public image after that of the emperor, and thus all of the portraits from a given emperor's reign will naturally resemble him. Hadrian's image is a significant break from the established image of previous emperors. If the beard is a fashion statement, then his image is not informed by the contemporary period face but rather by his social environment prior to his accession. In that case, the people inform his fashion, not the other way around – or, that a narrow slice of the Empire informs the emperor's fashions, which in turn informs the fashions of the broader Empire. It necessitates evolving fashions in the

²⁰³ Smith, *Choice*, 75.

²⁰⁴ Martial, *Epigrams* 12.59.

²⁰⁵ Smith, *Choice*, 75.

²⁰⁶ Vout, *Hadrian*, 56.

²⁰⁷ Smith, *Choice*, 64.

Empire that are not depicted in honourific portraiture, which is not impossible. After all, honourific portraiture was not concerned with replicating the subject's true appearance so much as conveying a message, and as a result was somewhat idealized.²⁰⁸ It is not hard to assume that men would deliberately represent themselves as resembling the emperor while their real-life appearance did not.

Zanker argues that Hadrian's beard was a philhellenic phenomenon. He concedes that there were certain groups exempt from the broader period face; these groups, such as the philosophers, had their own period face, separate from that of the emperor.²⁰⁹ He compares Hadrian to the *kosmetai*, a group of Athenian magistrates elected to oversee the *gymnasia*. They were not professional intellectuals, but nevertheless cultivated a learned image; some wore long beards reminiscent of classical philosophers, while others wore shorter beards and approached Hadrian's own image.²¹⁰ Zanker sees the *kosmetai* and Hadrian as part of the same burgeoning fashion trend of longer and longer beards, which was part of a fad for an intellectual look that would culminate with the likes of Marcus Aurelius and Septimius Severus.²¹¹

Hadrian's reign saw an uptick in the popularity of this style of intellectual portrait; bearded men were also sometimes shown with receding hairlines and furrowed brows. Romans of a status high enough to receive honourific portraiture may have suddenly taken an interest in learning and intellectualism. In this instance, the period face did not start with the emperor and disseminate to the rest of the Empire, but rather the emperor's image was influenced by a period face that already existed. Rather than assimilating with the previous emperor's image, Hadrian assimilated with the Hellenized intellectual image.²¹² This argument, then, falls into the philhellenic camp. Hadrian admired Hellenic intellectualism and chose to break from the clean-shaven tradition of his predecessor by inserting himself into a Hellenizing tradition. He simply moved to a separate period face running parallel to that of the emperor.

Smith, however, pulls away from the period face theory and allows Hadrian more autonomy in his image. Hadrian already has a reputation as a philhellene, and so one assumes that his image must be philhellenic. A first distinction is made, though, in how Hadrian's beard (and

²⁰⁸ Fejfer, *Portraits*, 237.

²⁰⁹ Zanker, *Mask*, 224-6

²¹⁰ Zanker, *Mask*, 220.

²¹¹ Zanker, *Mask*, 223-4.

²¹² Zanker, *Mask*, 224-6.

hair) appears to be carefully styled and trimmed; artificially styled hair and beards were not a fashion in classical or Hellenistic Greece.²¹³ Beards also appear in depictions of the Roman middle classes; relief portraits show bearded lictors, soldiers, and charioteers.²¹⁴ A portrait of Philopappus wears a beard that would be considered Hadrianic were the statue not created in the later years of Trajan's reign.²¹⁵ While it could be indicative of Hellenizing trends, it could also simply be indicative of a broader fashion in the Empire before Hadrian became emperor.

Furthermore, Smith finds Zanker's period face theory too simplistic. While the emperor and his subjects shared a general visual motif, it is not so clear cut that we can say that emperor dictated a single style and that the rest of the Empire followed suit – or, in Hadrian's case, that the emperor followed a specific alternative style, after which the rest of the Empire followed suit. Rather, according to Smith, there were different fashions in play and Romans could participate in them as they saw fit. Personal representation was bound up in cultural representation; portraits carried messages, and the way in which people chose to represent themselves was how they conveyed those messages.²¹⁶ It was not a simple matter of copying the emperor and assimilating into the period face, but one of greater choice and agency, even if that choice was to copy the emperor's style.

Nevertheless, we cannot dispense with the period face phenomenon entirely. After all, there was a visible increase in popularity in the emperor's style, and the Augustan princes tended to look nearly indistinguishable from each other.²¹⁷ There was an uptick in the popularity of the beard after Hadrian took the throne,²¹⁸ but the theory is not infallible. Smith's arguments have shown that the whole of the Empire did not blindly follow the emperor's styles. Yes, emperors set style trends, but other fashions existed alongside those trends. The beard did not start with Hadrian, nor did the clean-shaven look end with him. Besides, Roman portraiture was not meant to be an exact representation of the subject, but a system of choices and messages that the subject wished to convey. A Roman citizen's copying of the emperor's portrait style was just as much a statement as breaking away from that style.

²¹³ Smith, *Choice*, 63.

²¹⁴ Smith, *Choice*, 83.

²¹⁵ Smith, *Choice*, 73.

²¹⁶ Smith, *Choice*, 92-3.

²¹⁷ Smith, *Choice*, 88.

²¹⁸ Zanker, *Mask*, 202.

This brings the discussion back to Hadrian. His beard is intellectual and Hellenic, or fashionable, or military. Either way, he broke from the established period face of the likes of Trajan and Augustus, although he may have fallen into the parallel style of the Hellenic intellectual. Smith argues that if Hadrian's beard is philhellenic and intellectual, then Antoninus Pius' beard must be as well, being a variant of the same trimmed and curled beard worn by Hadrian.²¹⁹ This is a valid point, although it could also simply be the result of Hadrian's setting of a new period face in which Antoninus participated rather than returning to the previous clean-shaven trend. On the other hand, the philhellenic explanation assumes that Hadrian wanted to identify himself with the Greeks. 'Graeculus' was not exactly a flattering nickname, or one he would give to himself.²²⁰

There is also the possibility that Hadrian wished to visually distance himself from Trajan and the emperors before him. As already demonstrated, Hadrian's reign of consolidation and stability was very different from Trajan's conquests, and in fact the regions that Trajan conquered contributed to the instability Hadrian needed to rectify. The policies of imperial stasis and consolidation marked a notable change from previous administrations, and he may have commemorated the difference with a notable change in his imagery as well. The departure from previous styles of portrait communicated something new and something innovative. The new and innovative policies included military matters and the stabilization of the Empire, and the full beard was already an established fashion for military men. The image and the message line up well.

Conclusion: Hellenic or Military?

Since portraits were political creations, one must turn to the outward expression of Hadrian's policy. While he did demonstrate some fondness for Hellenic culture, the main trend in Hadrian's ideology has to do with matters of stability and the military. Among his policies, those of imperial stasis and the consolidation of the Empire's current territory stand out as the most unusual and innovative. He improved fortifications in border provinces and added defensive structures which, while not major additions to the actual defensive value of the pre-existing fortifications, symbolized Rome's new commitment to consolidating and maintaining what was already under imperial control. Hadrian is not remembered for wars and conquests, although he

²¹⁹ Smith, *Choice*, 60.

²²⁰ Vout, *Hadrian*, 56.

took an interest in refining the military and keeping soldiers in peak condition. He implemented changes to deter incursions as well as changes to better deal with incursions should they happen.

Hadrian's primary objective was stability. Along with the fortifications securing the edges of the Empire, he worked to improve the interior as well. His travels allowed him to be present in and inspect the Empire's holdings, and he ensured the quality of troops, fortifications, and civilian amenities. He gave benefits to the provinces and cities in order to improve the settled regions of the Empire. He set up a dynastic succession to avoid civil wars and potential destabilization. His commitment to stability is also indicated in his self-identification with Augustus and other founding figures of Rome. Hadrian most frequently represents himself as a general decked out in military armor.

He does not represent himself with firmly Hellenic attributes. His beard is reminiscent of other depictions of military men, and thus, the combination of beard and military dress portrays Hadrian as a military man, a leader who supports the military of Rome and could maintain and control the Empire, through defenses and military strength as well as consolidation and stabilization. In short, Hadrian's imagery is indicative of his military and stabilizing policies. Philhellenic influences cannot be ignored, and it does seem that Hadrian had a genuine fondness for Greek culture, but the beard seems less a product of philhellenism and more of a military-minded emperor focussed on stabilizing and protecting the Empire.

Hadrian's image was therefore not primarily a product of his philhellenic tastes. His philhellenism cannot be wholly dismissed, but it was not the sole motivating force behind his image's unusual beard. Rather, it also speaks of his military background, his image as a strong leader, and his ideology of promoting unity and cohesion within the Empire. What, then, of Antinous? Antinous' image was created and controlled by Hadrian, and as such, it is easy to assume that it was born from the same philhellenism as Hadrian's. However, if we agree that Hadrian's artistic output was not primarily motivated by philhellenism, then there is no reason to assume that Antinous' image was fashioned by Hadrian's philhellenism as well. We now return to Antinous and view his statues in the context of Hadrian's ideology.

Chapter 3: Antinous and Ideology

Introduction

Antinous' presence in the Empire is not simply a philhellenic-flavoured commemoration of a deceased lover, but can be primarily considered as another of Hadrian's efforts to promote unity in the Empire, this time through religious means rather than, say, the geopolitical efforts of border walls and territorial withdrawals. Antinous and his cult promoted a shared community among worshippers in the eastern and central areas of the Empire. Antinous brought the people closer to each other and closer to the emperor and was an agent of Hadrian's ideological agenda. The cult of Antinous is an important point of connection between Hadrian's ideology and Antinous which has not yet been discussed in detail in this thesis. The cult and the statues of Antinous were both constructed in the aftermath of his death. They were political tools for the Empire's elites, but they may have been genuinely commemorative entities as well. As previously discussed, Cassius Dio implies that statues of Antinous doubled as both portraits (*andriantes*) and cult objects (*agalмата*), implying an intimate connection between Antinous' historical identity and image and his cult and divine persona.²²¹ We cannot discuss Antinous without discussing his cult, and we cannot discuss his images without considering them both as public portraits and religious objects.

This chapter will begin with a brief digression examining the nature of hero cults to contextualize Antinous' cult and to compare and contrast him with his precedents. After that, the cult will be examined through the lens of Hadrian's ideology, as discussed in the previous chapter, to demonstrate the ideological source of the cult. Finally, the discussion will return to the statues; data collected in the first chapter regarding the statues' provenance and iconography will be revisited, but now in the context of the cult and Hadrian's ideological agenda. Antinous' statues attest to the widespread popularity of the cult and the way in which Antinous generated a shared sense of community, encouraging unity and cohesion among people and groups throughout the Roman Empire.

²²¹ Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 69.11.4. See page 13.

The Cult of Antinous

The archetypal classical Greek hero cult was a small, local community of worship devoted to a once-living person. Generally speaking, the object of the cult was an exemplary person who was important to the community where he was worshipped; because veneration stemmed from local significance, the hero did not typically enjoy widespread worship outside the relevant community.²²² However, the term hero is not so easily defined. Often it was used as a catch-all for any number of minor divinities, demigods, and important historical people, and the exact definition varied from place to place.²²³ The first hero cults honoured semi-legendary and often semi-divine Homeric heroes, such as Achilles, Agamemnon, and Odysseus. Although they were relevant to broader Greek culture, Homeric heroes were specifically venerated in places associated with them in the epics, such as Odysseus' veneration in Ithaca.

From the Homeric heroes, hero cults developed into the veneration of local historical figures. People such as city founders and war heroes, and, later, artists and politicians, were venerated locally, but were not relevant beyond their community. The Spartan general Brasidas, who died during the Peloponnesian War, provides an excellent example. He defeated the Athenians at Amphipolis and broke Athenian control of the city, but fell in the battle; the Amphipolitans buried him within the city walls and regarded him as a founder of the city.²²⁴ Yearly games and sacrifices were held in his honour in Amphipolis and Sparta. The cult grew spontaneously; Brasidas attained the status of hero independently and the Amphipolitans performed rituals to recognize this status.²²⁵ He performed great deeds for Amphipolis and was venerated specifically by that community.

By the Hellenistic era, the concept of the hero cult had evolved again. It was often used as an elaborate method of commemoration, especially by wealthy noble families. Jones describes this as a devaluing of the term – 'hero' could refer to a historical figure venerated by a local cult, or it could simply indicate a deceased person. The designation of hero nevertheless evoked a certain air of divinity, wherein the deceased had been elevated to higher status in death, but deceased people could be called heroes regardless of whether they had performed some great deed for their

²²² Jones, *Heroes*, 13.

²²³ Bremmer, *Greek Religion*, 12-3.

²²⁴ Thucydides, *Histories* 5.11.1.

²²⁵ Jones, *Heroes*, 25.

community.²²⁶ Furthermore, by the 4th century CE, even ordinary deceased people could be called heroes.²²⁷ It had become a term of commemoration as much as one of religious worship.

The Romans did not have an exact equivalent to the hero. In Rome, the dead were generally divinized as part of the household cult of the ancestors. The deceased were referred to as gods, *di manes*, and received offerings at their tombs, which were considered sacred property. This veneration of the ancestors helped define and maintain the household's identity, and could be seen as a miniature version of larger, state cults like that of Vesta, the maintenance of which ensured the order and stability of the Empire.²²⁸ The concept of venerating specific people in a manner similar to Greek hero cults was known to the Romans, however; one might consider Cicero who, in his letters to Atticus, expressed his wish to build a shrine to his deceased daughter Tullia and even considered having her formally deified.²²⁹ The line between divinity and deceased mortal was blurry in Roman terms, and the ambiguity would later give rise to the imperial cult and the veneration of the emperor.

The emperor had a unique status in terms of his divinity. He was seen as having an element of the divine, but was not divine himself, as imperial officials were careful to distinguish. Only so-called bad emperors, such as Caligula and Commodus, tried to have themselves worshipped as gods while still alive. In practice, though, views on this varied around the Empire. Some saw the emperor as a god, while others saw him as a man; some communities offered sacrifice to the emperor, while others sacrificed on his behalf. Most people saw him as both god and man, and that context determined whether his mortal or his divine aspects were more prominent at a given moment.²³⁰ The *Hermetica* describes him as the last of the gods and the first among men.²³¹ This gives him a sort of intermediary status bridging the gap between mortal and divine realms – much as heroes also acted as intermediaries.

Hadrian was interested in the Eastern hero cults. This is not surprising, given his interest in the Empire's history, as well as his affinity for Greek culture. For example, he stopped in Troy, the home of Rome's ancestor Aeneas and thus doubtlessly of historical interest to Hadrian, during

²²⁶ Jones, *Heroes*, 49-50.

²²⁷ Rives, *Religion*, 18.

²²⁸ Rives, *Religion*, 117-22.

²²⁹ Cicero, *Letters to Atticus* 12.18.

²³⁰ Rives, *Religion*, 150-5.

²³¹ *Hermetica* 24.3.

an official trip through Asia Minor to restore the alleged tomb of Ajax²³² in 124.²³³ Similarly, at some point during his reign, he erected a statue of Alcibiades, a hero of the Peloponnesian War who later defected to Persia, and sponsored sacrifices at his tomb.²³⁴ His interest in heroes even affected his official policy. Many of the communities included in Hadrian's Panhellenion acquired their membership by proving that they were founded by heroes.²³⁵ Antinous' death marked Hadrian's most notable revival of the hero cult, even though it did not adhere entirely to the classical hero cult model. Rather, it combined the hero cult with aspects of more mainstream cults.

Antinous' coinage labels him a hero.²³⁶ As with Brasidas' cult, Antinous was the veneration of a once-living person and saw local worship. His cult centres were places associated with him: Antinoopolis, the site where he died; Bithynium, his hometown; and Mantinea, traditionally seen as Bithynium's mother-city.²³⁷ Unlike Brasidas' cult, however, Antinous' spread much further than his centres of worship, illustrated by the broad provenance of his statues. The fact that his representations were found all across the Empire is indicative of widespread veneration – more widespread than an archetypal Greek hero cult. As previously discussed, statues were concentrated in Italy and Greece, indicating greater popularity and more concentrated worship in those areas, but he was essentially present in all corners of the Empire.

In addition to the statues, inscriptions and coinage attest to a greater presence as well. An inscription in Mantinea describes the aristocrat Eurycles Herculanus donating money to build a *stoa* in honour of Antinous.²³⁸ Inscriptions from Ostia and Lanuvium show that *collegia* in the cities were dedicated to Antinous – the *collegium* in Ostia held a feast in late November, apparently celebrating Antinous' birthday.²³⁹ As for coins, some 30 cities or city leagues issued coins depicting Antinous. These cities appear in clusters: several in the Peloponnese with Mantinea at their heart, a handful in Bithynia concentrated on Bithynium, other small clusters along the Asia Minor coast, and a few individual cities like Ephesus and Smyrna. The geographical distribution of the coinage resembles the provenance of the statuary. The clusters of cities honouring Antinous suggest that the cities adopted his cult spontaneously, and that the worship of Antinous spread

²³² Philostratus, *On Heroes* 8.1.

²³³ Birley, *Hadrian*, 164.

²³⁴ Athenaeus, *The Deipnosophists* 13.574f.

²³⁵ Jones, *Heroes*, 68.

²³⁶ Jones, *Heroes*, 80.

²³⁷ Pausanias 8.9.7.

²³⁸ Jones, *Heroes*, 80.

²³⁹ Bruun, *Anniversaries*, 365.

naturally from city to city, from one local, voluntary organization to another, rather than through imperial pressure alone.²⁴⁰ The fact that Antinous escaped the confines of local centres of worship and spread across swaths of the Empire attests to the unusual nature of his cult. While imperial pressure likely played a part in Antinous' popularity, it seems that there were aspects of the cult that spoke directly to the people who participated in it.

Antinous had an undeniable element of divinity to him despite his historical origins. He was seen as a divine intermediary between the mortal realm, the gods, and the underworld. Antinous' widespread veneration is unusual, but his divinity after death was not; there was a wide range of traditions and beliefs regarding heroes at that time. He also fits in well with Roman veneration of the dead, although his cult focusses on him as an individual rather than including him in a broader category like the ancestor cult or the imperial cult. He could be a hero or a minor god, depending on tradition and location, and in fact the dividing line between the two categories was blurry at best.

As a god, Antinous was worshipped as a protector and, perhaps, caretaker. He could answer prayers and heal the sick.²⁴¹ Sick adherents could pray at his temples, and he would then visit them in their dreams to cure their illnesses.²⁴² He took care of his worshippers, both in this life and the next. An illustrative and rather touching example comes from an inscription in Mantinea on the base of a column, likely from a father regarding his deceased son, asking Antinous to raise up the soul of the young Isochrysos to sit together with the immortals.²⁴³ In Roman times, the notion that a deceased person had been raised to the status of a god or was otherwise enjoying a happy afterlife among the immortals was a common way to comfort their grieving family and friends, and it appears in various inscriptions and texts.²⁴⁴ Antinous' identity as a god may be this sentiment made manifest through Hadrian's own apparent grief.

His influence over the mortal realm is not an anomaly. In some places, heroes were thought to still affect the living world around them. Heroes could protect the city and ensure oaths were kept. If a hero was treated poorly or not offered sufficient veneration, he might send illnesses to the community in punishment.²⁴⁵ Consider mythical characters like Asclepius, ostensibly a mortal

²⁴⁰ Jones, *Heroes*, 79.

²⁴¹ G. Németh, "The Corpse Daemon Antinoos," *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 14 (2013) 145-53 at 152.

²⁴² G.H. Renberg, *Where Dreams May Come* (Leiden, 2016) 515.

²⁴³ *Inscriptiones Graecae* 5.2.312.

²⁴⁴ Renberg, *Oracles*, 169.

²⁴⁵ Bremmer, *Religion*, 12.

son of Apollo, killed by the gods for transgressive acts of healing. Even in the myth he is a mortal hero, and yet traditions developed that transformed him into a god. There were sanctuaries dedicated to him as places of healing and medicine, and he was thought to be able to heal sick worshippers. Antinous appears to have attained this sort of worship, despite his mortal roots. There was ample precedent for Antinous' own deification.

Antinous is indebted to Greek and Roman tradition, but there is an Egyptian element to his apotheosis that cannot be ignored. By drowning in the Nile, Antinous became deified and associated with Osiris, and assimilated into his cult.²⁴⁶ This automatic deification of those who die in the Nile was recorded as early as Herodotus, who describes the way the bodies of those who die in the Nile, for instance by drowning, became something more than human and could only be handled by the priests.²⁴⁷ No more than a few years earlier,²⁴⁸ in fact, a woman named Isidora drowned in the Nile, and her tomb describes how she has become an immortal nymph due to the nature of her death.²⁴⁹ This tradition provided Hadrian with a convenient starting point for establishing Antinous as a new god, in a manner already accepted by the local populace.

Combining his biography with his worship, he died as a mortal and then rose again as a god who now served as an intermediary between human and divine and assisted his followers. Modern scholarship places him with the 'dying and rising' gods, a category of figures associated with death and resurrection, representing the cycle of life, rebirth, and fertility. In their mythology, these figures die and are then resurrected. Several of these figures are associated with Antinous himself, such as Osiris, Dionysus, and Adonis. Some scholars even place Jesus Christ among the dying and rising gods. In fact, Origen indicates that some ancient devotees compared Jesus with Antinous himself, indicating that some thought of the two in terms of a similar divine background or function.²⁵⁰ After all, both were earthly men who were worshipped after their deaths, and brought their followers to a happy afterlife.

Unlike the average hero cult, the cult of Antinous escaped the confines of local veneration and spread across the Roman Empire. Perhaps the most unusual thing about him is his ubiquity, resembling a mythological hero more than a once-living hero. His widespread worship is more

²⁴⁶ Birley, *Hadrian*, 248.

²⁴⁷ Herodotus, *Histories* 2.90.

²⁴⁸ D. Endsjø, *Greek Resurrection Beliefs and the Success of Christianity* (New York, 2009) 116.

²⁴⁹ É. Bernard, *Inscriptions métriques de l'Égypte Gréco-Romaine* (Paris, 1969) 343.

²⁵⁰ Origen, *Against Celsus* 5.63.

reminiscent of an Asclepius than a Brasidas, and he became mythologized as a divinity in his own right. But it would be wrong to assume that his cult was a completely new phenomenon. His divinization, worship, and influence over the mortal realm all had precedents in Greek, Roman, and Egyptian culture. Pieces of tradition combined in a unique way to bring forth Antinous, and to create a hero whose religious community was shared around the Empire.

The Cult of Antinous and Imperial Policy

The Greek hero cult generated a shared identity in the local community. Worshippers could connect their family, community, or city to a hero who was important in local culture and who had done great things. These connections were a source of pride. This was especially true of the Homeric heroes; the ability to associate oneself with an important cultural hero was a mark of status and prestige, that could be shared among worshippers.²⁵¹ In addition, worship kept the memory of the hero alive, by maintaining his presence in the community after his death. Worship also brought the community together in a shared effort to preserve his memory and helped define the community's identity.

In fact, religion at large served to build community. Civic life and religious life were inseparable, and the gods were ever-present in all spheres of society. Communities, as focussed as the household or as broad as the city, defined themselves by their religious worship and ritual practices; participation in those practices was simply part of being in the community. It was a symbiotic relationship; community defined and was defined by religious practice.²⁵² Broad, notable examples may include the cities that associated major patron divinities with their community, such as Apollo at Delphi or Artemis at Ephesus. Rome recognized gods like Roma and Jupiter Optimus Maximus as its own patrons, and, later, also recognized the imperial cult.

The cult of Antinous similarly built a shared sense of identity and pride amongst its worshippers. The cult conducted communal rituals like festivals, games, and mystery rites, which would have promoted unity amongst participants. However, Antinous' cult included a few variations that differentiated his cult from others. He was not a great notable of his community; he was no Brasidas. Surely some echoes of his importance beyond Hadrian's affections would have survived otherwise. He was promoted to the status of hero and venerated by imperial decree. A community did not generate around him spontaneously or organically around him, and there was

²⁵¹ W. Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge, 1985) 204.

²⁵² Rives, *Religion*, 128.

no push to honour a deceased individual who had made a mark on his community. Rather, his cult was artificially constructed on the orders of an autocrat.

He was legitimized by Egyptian tradition, which stated that those who drowned in the Nile were deified and assimilated with Osiris. Antinous' cultic presence in Egypt centered on Antinoopolis, a strategic foundation by Hadrian. His cultic centre at Bithynium was probably established by Hadrian and legitimized by it being his birthplace. Being priest of the mysteries of Antinous was a public office, and one of the electoral tribes was called *Antinois*.²⁵³ His veneration in Mantinea, whose main connection to Antinous was as the mother city of Antinous' birthplace, seems less organic; Pausanias says that Hadrian established a cult site there because of its ancestral link with Bithynium.²⁵⁴ His presence elsewhere, in several cities scattered across the Empire that do not seem to have any direct connection to Antinous, is remarkable.

From these centres Antinous' cult spread to neighbouring cities, apparently spontaneously. In many cases, veneration of Antinous seems to have been a way for individuals and communities to display their loyalty to Hadrian, rather than to worship Antinous himself. Coinage depicting Antinous often displayed the name of the person who subsidized the coins; these people were usually local notables with some connection to Hadrian, such as Aristotimos. He was an ambassador from Delphi who met with Hadrian in 125 and later subsidized Antinous' coinage in Delphi and commissioned a statue of Hadrian there as well.²⁵⁵ In the months following Antinous' death, a delegation from Thessaloniki met with Hadrian and asked permission to bring the Antinous cult to their city, as a way for the city to gain prestige in the eyes of the emperor and compete with major neighbouring cities.²⁵⁶

Similarly to the imperial cult, adherence to the cult of Antinous became as much a political statement as it was membership in a religious community. In fact, Roman religion was generally inseparable from civic life. Antinous' cult was connected to the emperor and the elite saw the opportunity for advancement and prestige through promotion of the cult. The Antinous cult could be adopted spontaneously and voluntarily by communities as an indirect method of honouring the emperor. It mimicked the imperial cult in that communities honoured and worshipped the emperor to display loyalty to him and seek status. While some imperial cults were installed by the Roman

²⁵³ Jones, *Heroes*, 79.

²⁵⁴ Pausanias 8.9.8.

²⁵⁵ Jones, *Heroes*, 80.

²⁵⁶ Opper, *Hadrian*, 188.

government, other communities set up their own cults, and official approval brought prestige to the community. On a personal level, provincial imperial cults offered advancement to the elites who were involved in leadership roles.²⁵⁷ While Antinous was not officially connected to the imperial cult, the fact that he was associated with Hadrian meant that, during Hadrian's reign, his cult represented a similar method of garnering imperial favour.

Once the cult was well-established, the historical inclination toward hero cults may have done the rest of the work. Antinous was made into a god by imperial decree, and his cult was spread by elites seeking imperial favour, but it may have been Antinous himself who inspired lasting devotion. The cult may have begun as a political tool, but it evolved into a genuine cult that held meaning and value in the lives of its adherents. The fact that he was a semi-divine being thought to have real influence over the lives of his worshippers and provide benefits in exchange for veneration may have been an incentive for individuals to adopt and preserve the cult. This spiritual benefit for participation may have been what allowed the cult to survive once the political benefit disappeared. There are also traces of belief in Antinous' divinity outside of the scheduled rituals and cultic spaces. Consider the inscription by Isochrysos' father. His message to Antinous does not appear to be part of an attempt to gain favour with the emperor, nor does it seem to exist in conjunction with events Hadrian initiated; rather, it seems as though Antinous has made some sort of impact in this man's life outside of the regularly scheduled rituals, and we can imagine that there were more like him. Worship of Antinous might have carried favour with Hadrian, but succeeding emperors had less of a stake in the success or failure of the cult, and so the cult had to have its own value and be able to stand and continue on its own.

The fact that the cult was, or became, an established cult helped ensure Antinous a long afterlife. Some archaeologists argue that all the statues of Antinous were produced between Antinous' death in 130 and Hadrian's death in 138, under the assumption that, once Hadrian was dead and had stopped promoting the cult, no one in the Empire would be interested in creating statues of Antinous.²⁵⁸ By extension, that assumption would mean that nobody would be interested in participating in the cult after Hadrian's death, and once Hadrian was dead there would be no imperial pressure maintaining the cult, and Antinous would fall into irrelevance. While it is

²⁵⁷ Rives, *Religion*, 151.

²⁵⁸ Vout, *Antinous*, 83. Vout herself argues otherwise.

impossible to determine the dates for the statues themselves, there is evidence that Antinous' cult survived independently after Hadrian's death and, presumably, statues continued to be made.

The cult of Antinous was still alive and well into the 4th century. He is mentioned by Christian writers who condemned the cult, indicating that it still had enough presence to be noteworthy and, possible, be seen as a threat to Christianity. In the third century, Origen was particularly critical of Antinous, essentially claiming that the oracles and miracles delivered by Antinous were shams orchestrated by the priesthood to trick devotees. He also contrasted Antinous and Jesus. He said that Antinous lived a sinful life of lust and that his cult was fraudulent, while Jesus lived a life of virtue and holiness and enjoys true divinity, clearly indicating that it is better to follow Jesus than Antinous.²⁵⁹ Prudentius included Antinous in a denunciation of the worship of deified emperors, calling him Hadrian's Ganymede and stating that Hadrian robbed Antinous of his manhood.²⁶⁰ Prudentius wrote in the latter half of the 4th century, and while this passage says nothing explicit about the cult's contemporary status, Antinous was still well-known enough at that time that Prudentius felt the need to denounce him. This would indicate that there were still devotees of Antinous actively worshipping in some parts of the Empire, two and a half centuries after Antinous' deification.

The cult of Antinous successfully caught the attention of the Empire's Greek population, as it was most present in Hellenized areas. As a hero cult, it created an Empire-wide community and encouraged shared cultural identity. At the same time, the cult, at least until Hadrian's death, was also a political instrument connected to the emperor. Participation in the cult, regardless of whether that participation stemmed from genuine religious activity, also expressed loyalty to the Empire and to Hadrian. Furthermore, the cult built a shared identity for participating communities with the rest of the Empire by integrating the focus of that identity with imperial identity.²⁶¹ The cult was a successful vehicle for imperial unity and cohesion in a religious context.

The cult of Antinous was a common and unifying religious institution, but it must be conceded that certain elements also suggest an *ad hoc* aspect of the institution, and that the sense of unity was a positive side effect that Hadrian capitalized on afterwards. At some point in the process of the establishment and growth of the cult he must have realized the potential benefits of

²⁵⁹ Origen, *Against Celsus* 3.36.

²⁶⁰ Prudentius, *Symmachus* 1.271-7.

²⁶¹ Opper, *Hadrian*, 191.

the cult and its capacity to further his ideology of unification. However, we cannot be certain of the driving force for the cult's initial creation. As suggested by the ancient sources, the cult's foundation may have been fuelled by Hadrian's personal grief. His high status would have allowed him to extravagantly act upon that grief.

As we have seen previously, the ancient sources generally prefer the sensationalist explanation that he was killed as part of a ritual human sacrifice to ensure Hadrian's longevity.²⁶² From there, one could theorize that he was killed specifically in the Nile to ensure his apotheosis in accordance with Egyptian tradition, allowing Hadrian to found the cult. This explanation is unsatisfactory, especially considering Hadrian's reaction to Antinous' death. He wept like a woman, say the sources, and grieved more for Antinous than he did for his own sister.²⁶³ He was, apparently, inconsolable, and members of his court tried to assuage his grief in various ways, such as identifying a new star in the sky that was said to be Antinous' deified soul.²⁶⁴ The rumours of elaborate human sacrifice came later, and often from malicious sources.²⁶⁵

Admittedly, it is dangerous to assume the actual personality or thoughts of historical figures when primary evidence tends to be biased and apparently more interested in making a point than presenting objective fact. Rumours of human sacrifice may have been an attack on Hadrian's character, an effort to discredit him, built upon his unusual commemoration of Antinous. The human sacrifice explanation cannot be ruled out entirely, but it also cannot be unquestioningly accepted as objective fact; there are endless alternative explanations. Birley suggests suicide, since Antinous was approximately 20, and a grown man; Hadrian had an unfortunate reputation for 'defiling' adult men, and his desires carried the weight of imperial authority; perhaps Antinous needed a way out of the relationship.²⁶⁶ Without more detailed evidence about Antinous, the matter remains unclear.

This thesis operates under the assumption that Antinous' death was not an intentional event but a sudden and unexpected one. We may presume, then, that the creation of Antinous' cult was not a planned, orchestrated process set in motion by murder or sacrifice, even if Hadrian and his court, at some point, seized upon the unfortunate event and used it for political gain. The most

²⁶² See pages 4-6.

²⁶³ Cassius Dio 69.11.4.

²⁶⁴ Den Boer, *Religion*, 134.

²⁶⁵ Opper, *Hadrian*, 174.

²⁶⁶ Birley, *Hadrian*, 248-9.

cynical theorist might suggest that the entirety of Antinous' legacy is simply the political exploitation of the boy's memory, but we must balance this with evidence of Hadrian's grief and the possibility that the cult's establishment contained elements of actual commemoration. Nevertheless, while we cannot be sure of the original incentive, we can be sure that, almost immediately, the cult was used for propaganda purposes, given that Thessaloniki sought an official chapter of the cult once the imperial train reached Alexandria.

Antinoopolis was founded on the spot where Antinous died and is another example of official policy capitalizing on the boy's death. Hadrian had already planned to found a city on the Nile at roughly the same spot, halfway between Heptanomia and Ptolemais. The city was probably going to be called Hadrianopolis, but Antinous' sudden death likely prompted Hadrian to rebrand the city in the boy's honour.²⁶⁷ The city was founded as a centre of Hellenic culture in Egypt and sat on one end of a trade route connecting the Nile to the Red Sea. The establishment of the city was a strategic development as much as a commemorative one. Hadrian made similar foundations as well: Hadrianutherae, ostensibly commemorating a bear hunt, exploited an excellent location on a fertile plain in Mysia where no pre-existing city stood.²⁶⁸ Antinoopolis would not be the first strategic foundation disguised as a monarch's whim.

If Hadrian's eventual aim was to unify the Empire under a common religious banner via the Antinous cult, one might wonder why he set about creating a new religious institution when the Empire already had a common religious institution, that being the imperial cult, which does not appear to have included Antinous. There is no surviving record of his deification via standard imperial channels.²⁶⁹ This is not unexpected, though, as Antinous had no official status in Hadrian's court. By Hadrian's time, individuals like Marciana and Matidia, who were relatives of Trajan – members of the royal family but not *augustae* themselves – had been officially deified. Antinous was not a relative of the emperor, nor did he hold an official court position, so he could not be included with the imperial cult. Nevertheless, his deification was of a different status than the private deification of loved ones in the Empire.²⁷⁰ There was already an easy path to deification through Egyptian tradition, and Hadrian exploited the East's familiarity with hero cults. Or, on the other hand, perhaps Antinous' distance from the imperial family is what allowed Hadrian to

²⁶⁷ Birley, *Hadrian*, 250.

²⁶⁸ Birley, *Hadrian*, 164.

²⁶⁹ Vout, *Power*, 114.

²⁷⁰ C.H. Hallett, *The Roman Nude: Heroic Portrait Statuary 200 BC – AD 300* (Oxford, 2005) 204.

construct a hero cult. Antinous' personal closeness to and social distance from Hadrian allowed the emperor to deify Antinous under the guise of a hero cult. Thus, the cult could inspire shared pride and community while still maintaining an imperial connection.

There is no single, obvious answer as to why Hadrian focussed on this new cult for the purposes of unification rather than the imperial cult. However, it did not necessarily function in opposition to the imperial cult. Veneration of the imperial cult was a symbol of loyalty to the emperor and his predecessors; its maintenance was obligatory and ensured the success of the Empire as a whole. Antinous inspired personal devotion and direct benefit to the worshipper specifically. Nevertheless, despite his detachment from the imperial cult, he still carried an air of imperial weight, at least while Hadrian was alive, functioning as a focal point for community-building under the hero cult flag, and a demonstration of loyalty to the emperor. The two cults could easily have existed side by side, and the polytheistic nature of the Roman religious landscape meant that they did not have to be mutually exclusive.

In fact, this lack of official connection to the imperial cult may be responsible for Antinous' striking longevity. The veneration of Julia Drusilla and Poppaea Sabina, both imperial women deified via the imperial cult, became obsolete once their respective emperors were dead. Their veneration was dependent on the emperor who deified them, and they lost relevance to the rest of the Empire once said emperor was dead. Antinous, on the other hand, existed as a hero separate from the traditions of the imperial cult and was rarely depicted in statue or coinage in connection with Hadrian.²⁷¹ Because of this, he had relevance to his worshippers that was greater than his association with the emperor. Therefore, once Hadrian died Antinous remained relevant, and his cult endured even after the disappearance imperial pressure obligating his worshippers to maintain the cult.

The cult of Antinous helped Hadrian unify the Empire, on a religious and cultural level. The hero cults encouraged a sense of shared identity and community and, through Antinous Hadrian sought to increase the scale of this shared identity. By exploiting traditions from Egypt and the Greek-speaking East, Hadrian rooted the cult on a local level, allowing it to take hold and flourish in a manner different from the official imperial cult. The development of Antinous' cult from the veneration of a deceased mortal to the veneration of a divinity who could have an impact on the lives of his worshippers also appealed on a personal level; Antinous exhibited the best

²⁷¹ Vout, *Power*, 116-7.

qualities of both a hero cult and a more mainstream cult. All of this, combined with a healthy dose of imperial propaganda, allowed Antinous to spread from his cultic centres and enjoy a strong presence across the Greek-speaking East, as well as some presence in Italy and the West. This presence long outlasted Hadrian's own life and continued its activity until Late Antiquity.

Ideology and the Cult Image

Antinous had no say in his own image. Most, if not all, of Antinous' statues were created after his death in 130; he was not alive to see them. Even if he were alive, however, it is unlikely that he would have had much control over his own image anyway, associated as he was with the emperor. Hadrian controlled the image and commissioned and distributed images that were both cult statues and portraits of his deceased beloved. This lasted until his own death in 138. After that, images of Antinous came from the cult, which carried on Antinous' legacy for its own worship. Hadrian was responsible for the image's creation; he established Antinous' remarkably consistent image that would endure for hundreds of years after.

As previously demonstrated, Roman portraiture was firmly rooted in ideology. A portrait cannot reliably be considered an accurate representation of the subject; Romans were not interested in creating lifelike depictions of themselves for the sake of vanity, but rather freely manipulated their own image to convey a specific message. Antinous was no different. The images of him produced after his death probably do not depict him as he looked in life, and not just because he was no longer available to sit for a portrait. There is no doubt that his image, like that of Hadrian and Sabina, was manipulated by Hadrian to serve specific purposes and convey specific messages, as do other Roman portrait images.

However, the understanding of Antinous' representation is complicated by Cassius Dio's note that, as previously discussed, Antinous' statues were both *agalмата* and *andriantes* simultaneously.²⁷² Presumably, this means that the statues were seen as both images of a deceased boy and cultic images of a hero. It suggests that from the very beginning the images were produced in conjunction with the cult as images of a new god, but that they could also stand alone as images of a deceased youth, thus representing him both as a religious figure and a historical figure. Viewing images of Antinous in either context, religious or historical, conveys similar, yet differing, ideological messages.

²⁷² See page 13.

To determine the messages conveyed by the statues in a cultic context, both the provenance and the iconography must be revisited. The first chapter of this thesis quantifies both; the distribution of the statues and the frequency of specific iconography are both counted. This section returns to those numbers but now filters them through the rest of the information on Hadrian's ideology and Antinous' cult. Especially in the discussion of iconography, a selection of statues is examined as representatives of larger groups. There are far too many statues to discuss individually, but they can be grouped together based on iconography. This section will begin with the Leptis Magna statue as an interesting case study, and from there branch out to discuss Antinous' connections with other cultic figures.

As shown in the first chapter, 52 of the 93 statues depict Antinous wearing the attributes of other cultic figures. This drew him closer to those cults and equated him with other figures. An Antinous wearing Osiris' attributes is Antinous, but it is also Osiris, and the two figures are attached in one statue. By extension, these connections also built new connections between the cults with which Antinous was associated. Apollo and Dionysus were not only connected to Antinous, but also connected to each other via Antinous. Hadrian's ideology demonstrated an interest in drawing the Empire closer together and unifying it as a whole, and Antinous played his part on a cultic level. By participating in local cults that were attached to Antinous, worshippers could express devotion to their own local god and to Antinous, as well as Hadrian while he still reigned.

The Leptis Magna Antinous represents a complex combination of cults (Fig. 35).²⁷³ The statue likely began as an Apollo, and had its head reworked into Antinous, possibly hastily in the wake of a sudden imperial visit. It attests to Antinous' presence in the city, or at least Hadrian's presence and the inclusion of Antinous' as a way of garnering favour with the emperor. Selecting an Apollo statue to recut into Antinous could not have been mere chance; Antinous was associated elsewhere with Apollo, such as at Delphi, and both gods were thought to deliver oracles to their worshippers. Furthermore, Apollo was often depicted as an idealized youth, so the decision to combine Antinous with Apollo in Leptis Magna makes sense on a representational level as well.

Vout draws a deeper connection, identifying the Leptis Magna statue with Eshmun (also spelled Echmoun), a Semitic god of healing. Eshmun's cult was particularly prominent in Sidon, Leptis Magna's mother city. Vout draws the Eshmun connection from the snake imagery on the

²⁷³ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 82-4 (no. 1.61).

Leptis Magna statue, a symbol of Eshmun as well as Apollo, and the statue's Phoenician context.²⁷⁴ Eshmun closely resembles Asclepius: both were sons of Apollo, both were gods of healing, and both died and were later resurrected. Assuming that this statue does represent Eshmun as well as Apollo and Antinous, it tied Antinous to the immediate religious landscape by assimilating him with an important local cult. It may have been an expression of loyalty to the emperor, tying an important local cult to imperial religious identity, or indicative of Antinous' spread through the Empire by connecting with worshippers on local and personal levels.

Accepting this connection between Antinous and Eshmun opens up a broader web of connections. Damascius calls Eshmun the Asclepius of Beirut, and describes him as a beautiful youth who hunted regularly, and who was the beloved of an immortal deity. In this case the deity is Astronoë, who may be an aspect of Astarte. Compare this to Adonis, beloved of Aphrodite; Attis, beloved of Cybele; and Antinous, beloved of Hadrian. In the process of describing Eshmun, Damascius appropriates Attis' story, telling how Eshmun castrates himself in a frenzy inspired by Astronoë. This act apparently kills him, and he is revived by Astronoë as a god.²⁷⁵ This draws an even more explicit link between the two figures and, by extension, to the rest of the hunt-loving beloveds, as well as to the resurrected gods. Antinous is connected to these figures in turn through the Leptis Magna statue, tying him visually as well as conceptually to these figures.

Also notable is that some of these figures, particularly Attis, come from Asia Minor, like Antinous himself. One statue depicts Antinous wearing a Phrygian cap, a stereotypical visual cue identifying a character from Asia Minor (Fig. 36).²⁷⁶ By extension this tied him not through cultic functions but through geographical origin to a host of other figures. Ganymede is one such example, not a hunting god but the youthful pederastic beloved of Zeus. The next logical step after a connection between Antinous and Ganymede is a connection between Hadrian and Zeus, which would have served Hadrian well. The Phrygian cap also put Antinous in the same sphere as Paris, who was often depicted in a similar Praxitelean style as Antinous.

The Eleusis statue depicts Antinous as Asclepius, the Greek counterpart to Eshmun, found in the *propylaea* of the temple of Demeter and Kore, placing him at the heart of the Eleusinian mysteries (Fig. 37).²⁷⁷ The statue depicts him wearing a Greek-style mantle similar to other

²⁷⁴ Vout, *Power*, 109-10.

²⁷⁵ Damascius, *Life of Isidore* 142B.

²⁷⁶ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 86-7 (no. 1.65).

²⁷⁷ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 39-42 (no. 1.17).

depictions of Asclepius. Hadrian participated in the Eleusinian Mysteries at least once,²⁷⁸ in 124, and it is plausible that Antinous was initiated into the mysteries with Hadrian at that time.²⁷⁹ Asclepius was already associated with the mysteries, having been supposedly initiated himself, and the Antinous-Asclepius statue in Eleusis not only promotes the connection between Antinous and the network of ephebic hunter gods, but ties him to Eleusis as well. At the statue's feet is an *omphalos*, variously indicative of Delphi, Dionysus, and chthonic deities. It may also indicate Iacchus, a minor figure attached to the Eleusinian mysteries with whom Antinous was also identified; he is called the New Iacchus and Iacchus-Antinous on coins from Adramyttion and Tarsus, respectively.²⁸⁰ Meyer says that if the statue represents Asclepius, then the *omphalos* is a chthonic attribute.²⁸¹

The mysteries at Eleusis were likely associated with the afterlife and the cycle of death and rebirth; both elements are associated with Antinous as well, especially his identity as a dying and rising god. One of the statues shows Antinous as Triptolemus, a figure, like Asclepius, directly attached to the Eleusinian mysteries, as well as an agricultural deity in his own right (Fig. 38).²⁸² According to myth, Demeter, one of the figures central to the mysteries, cared for Triptolemus while searching for Persephone, who had been kidnapped by Hades, and taught him the arts of agriculture. Triptolemus is therefore a bridge to a collection of agricultural deities with whom Antinous is identified, such as Aristaeus, the first beekeeper and another son of Apollo. Antinous was also identified with Pan, Sylvanus, and the satyrs, all deities of agriculture and wilderness. His connection to Diana, goddess of the hunt, in Lanuvium also fits this pattern.

As noted, the statue from Leptis Magna that identified Antinous with Eshmun originally depicted Apollo, specifically the Apollo Lycaeus type, a subtype depicted with one arm raised over the head and the other resting against a support column.²⁸³ Antinous is represented as Apollo in eight statues, usually identified by a laurel or myrtle crown. One of the most notable Antinous-Apollo statues is the Delphi Antinous, found standing upright and still on its pedestal just outside

²⁷⁸ *Historia Augusta*. Vita Hadriani 13.1.

²⁷⁹ Birley, *Hadrian*, 215.

²⁸⁰ Jones, *Heroes*, 80.

²⁸¹ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 40.

²⁸² Meyer, *Antinoos*, 43 (no. 1.19). The provenance of this statue is not recorded.

²⁸³ B.S. Ridgway, "A Story of Five Amazons," *American Journal of Archaeology* 78.1 (1974) 1-17 at 9. The Apollo Lycaeus type is derived from a lost work, possibly by Praxiteles, showing Apollo in the subtype's characteristic pose. It is thought to have stood in the Athenian Lyceion, according to Ridgway.

the temple of Apollo at Delphi (Fig. 4).²⁸⁴ Delphi was the best-known centre of Apollo's cult, and home to his most famous oracle. The Delphi Antinous represents Antinous' placement at the site of a major Greek cult, and draws a close connection between the two figures. It also attests to Antinous' popularity; he was noteworthy enough to find a place at Delphi, one of the most important cults in Greece. Apollo, like Antinous, is a healing god and represented as an epebe. Antinous also delivered oracles, both through the medium of a priest, and by visiting adherents through dreams while they slept in his temples; it is unusual for a god to do both.²⁸⁵

However, the most common association is Antinous as Dionysus. 23 statues of Antinous depict him with some sort of Dionysiac attributes. This often means a crown of ivy and grape clusters but can also be a *nebris* or *thyrsus*. It is noteworthy that the Leptis Magna statue, already incorporating Apollo and possibly Eshmun, also evokes Dionysus. When the Apollo-Eshmun's head was replaced with that of Antinous, the new head was adorned with a crown of ivy leaves, a telltale symbol of Dionysus. Dionysus is not directly connected to Apollo in the same way Eshmun is, but he is still part of the same network. He is another youthful divinity, and also one associated with death and rebirth, called the 'twice-born' in mythology. As previously mentioned, one version of the myth describes Dionysus' 'birth' from his mortal mother, and rebirth from his divine father, after which he becomes a god.²⁸⁶ Like Antinous, Dionysus was born again and became divine.

One statue is identified by Meyer as Dionysus Psilax; the statue has no recorded provenance, but Psilax was an epithet unique to the worship of Dionysus at Amyclae, in Greece (Fig. 39).²⁸⁷ Pausanias identifies Amyclae as a small village with unique versions of conventional Greek deities. Dionysus Psilax is a particularly interesting cult to Pausanias, who feels the need to explain the unusual epithet, noting that *psila* was Doric for wings.²⁸⁸ This village may have adopted Antinous and integrated him into their unusual version of Dionysus for imperial prestige, as Antinous' presence in the Dionysus Psilax cult would have demonstrated both an element of loyalty to Hadrian as well as participation in the broader system of Antinous cults around the Empire. This also draws Amyclae closer to the other Dionysus cults, as well as other cults

²⁸⁴ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 36-8 (no. 1.15).

²⁸⁵ Renberg, *Dreams*, 515

²⁸⁶ See page 29.

²⁸⁷ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 112-4 (no. 3.1).

²⁸⁸ Pausanias 3.19.6.

associated with Antinous. Antinous draws the village of Amyclae into conversation and unity with other communities across the Roman world.

The last major node in this network is Osiris. Of all the gods to whom he was connected, Antinous' most profound connection was with Osiris. In addition, Osiris was another god who was thought to have died and come back to life.²⁸⁹ However, Osiris is also connected to the Nile, and those who died in the river were thought to become as gods themselves – as Osiris, even. Antinous is no exception. Inscriptions in a tomb at Hermopolis for a woman named Isidora, who died a few years before Antinous, describe her death on the Nile and subsequent deification.²⁹⁰ Although she became a nymph rather than an aspect of Osiris, her story seems to foreshadow Antinous' own death and deification.²⁹¹ By drowning in the Nile, Antinous automatically became associated with Osiris and attained an element of divinity according to Egyptian tradition, with or without Hadrian's interference.

The connection was indeed deep. The Pincio Obelisk, now standing in Rome but variously believed to be from Antinoopolis²⁹² or from Hadrian's villa in Tivoli, is dedicated to 'Osiris-Antinous', a blend of the two gods into a single, inseparable entity.²⁹³ This blend of divinities was unique to Antinoopolis and the Egyptian Antinous cult and represented Antinous' particular relationship with Egyptian religion and his integration into the local culture.²⁹⁴ The integration is also seen in six surviving statues that depict Antinous as Osiris. Four are of Meyer's Egyptianizing type, which use the imagery of the pharaonic hood and the *schenti* skirt. None can be traced back to Egypt, and in fact two of the four were found in Hadrian's villa. The other two are depictions of Dionysus-Osiris.

Osiris is an exemplar of the 'dying and rising' type of god.²⁹⁵ His death and resurrection are the reason for his position as the god of the dead. Notably, Osiris was conceived of as a sort of Egyptian equivalent to Dionysus as early as Herodotus, who says that Osiris is simply the Egyptian name for Dionysus.²⁹⁶ Syncretism was common in Greco-Roman religion, and gods were regularly

²⁸⁹ See page 29.

²⁹⁰ *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* 8.473-5.

²⁹¹ Endsjø, *Beliefs*, 116.

²⁹² Birley, *Hadrian*, 255.

²⁹³ Jones, *Heroes*, 76.

²⁹⁴ Renberg, *Hadrian*, 177.

²⁹⁵ See page 70.

²⁹⁶ Herodotus, *Histories* 2.42.

identified as equivalent to gods from other parts of the Empire.²⁹⁷ Perhaps representations of Antinous as Dionysus are so common because of Dionysus' link to Osiris. Hadrian could bring Antinous, deified via Osiris, to Greek parts of the Empire by translating Osiris to Dionysus and working with the cross-cultural connection.

Antinous sits in the middle of a web of divinities stretching from Italy to Asia Minor to Egypt. He connects major cults like the Eleusinian Mysteries and Delphic Oracle to minor cults like Dionysus Psilax. He bridges the gaps between gods of death and rebirth, healing, prophecy, agriculture, and the hunt. These gods were already linked, but Antinous' presence among them brought them all closer together and unified them under one name. The worship of Antinous was also the worship of a dozen other gods. Furthermore, Antinous brought worshippers together under the imperial banner, and turned their attention not just to Antinous and the gods to whom he was linked, but to the emperor as well, thereby promoting loyalty, community, and cohesion. Hadrian worked hard to promote these concepts in all spheres of his administration, and Antinous was his agent for religious community and solidarity.

The way Antinous was represented as other gods supports the cult's function as a unifying agent. The provenance of the statues highlights how widespread the cult was, and its success at reaching all corners of the Empire. The distribution of statues roughly corresponds to the spread of the cult, and the images attest to Antinous' presence. 39 statues have some sort of provenance recorded, even if it is broad, such as identifying the region or city in which the statue was found. It is easy to imagine that there were hundreds, if not thousands, of images of Antinous produced in antiquity, and 39 makes for a small sample size, but it will have to suffice. The highest concentration of statues is from Italy, followed by Greece. A handful of other statues were found scattered around the Levantine Coast, North Africa, and Western Europe.

None of these statues can be traced back to any of Antinous' three major cultic centres. However, several were found in the Peloponnese, not far from Mantinea, in Isthmia, Lerna, Olympia, Patras, and Thyreatis. An additional four statues were found on the Greek mainland, in Aidipsos, Athens, Delphi, and Eleusis; one more statue does not have a provenance more specific than Greece. Pausanias describes multiple Antinous statues in a single sanctuary in Mantinea, though there is no evidence to indicate which ones were there, if they survive at all. The statues

²⁹⁷ Rives, *Religion*, 144.

found in Greece, however, are physical evidence of his cult's presence in the region, thanks to Hadrian's exploitation of the hero cult institution.

One should expect similar concentrations of statues in Bithynia and Egypt, but few statues can be traced to either region. As with Mantinea, it can be assumed that statues of Antinous stood in Antinoopolis and Bithynium, but those statues, or their provenances, have since been lost. One statue is allegedly from Antinoopolis, but its earliest known provenance is its purchase from an art dealer in Cairo. Similarly, a second statue from Egypt, this one allegedly from Hermopolis, close to Antinoopolis, was also acquired from a dealer elsewhere. Both statues use characteristically Egyptian carving techniques, however, and are probably from the region. This indicated that there was at least some sculptural presence in Egypt.

The highest concentration comes from Italy, which lacked a major cultic centre as far as we know. The Antinous cult had enduring presence in Italy, however, and this surely benefited from the nearby presence of the emperor promoting the cult. The single site with the highest concentration of statues in Italy, or anywhere else in the Empire, is Hadrian's villa in Tivoli, with six of the 26. Given Hadrian's intense personal connection, it is of little surprise that so many images of Antinous appear on his property. Five others were found in Rome, which can be ascribed variously to the worship of Antinous, the proximity of the emperor, or local notables making a point of honouring Antinous to curry favour with the emperor. Two statues from Rome were found in homes or villas, another during excavations for the National Bank on the Quirinal Hill, and a fourth near the now demolished 17th-century Villa Doria Pamphili. The fifth was found in the Auditorium of Maecenas, an old and highly public place where Antinous would have been on full display. Unfortunately, that statue is fragmentary; it is unknown what version of Antinous was present in the auditorium.

Two statues were found in Ostia and a third in Lanuvium, two cities in which the cult of Antinous was present, attested to in inscriptions. In Lanuvium, a *collegium* dedicated to Antinous and Diana hosted a feast every year on 27 November, or Antinous' *dies natalis*. Whether that means that 27 November was the birthday of the mortal Antinous, the divine Antinous, or the foundation of a local temple to Antinous is uncertain, but nevertheless the date is celebrated in conjunction with his cult.²⁹⁸ The combination of Antinous and the huntress Diana is interesting too; as previously demonstrated, Antinous was associated with hunting. Hadrian certainly enjoyed

²⁹⁸ Bruun, *Anniversaries*, 365-6.

hunting, and a poem by Pancrates written after Antinous' death suggests that Antinous partook in hunting alongside Hadrian.²⁹⁹ The lion hunting *tondo* from the Arch of Constantine, carved for a Hadrianic arch, features an unidentified figure who resembles Antinous, and may be a visual depiction of Antinous participating in a hunt.³⁰⁰ As demonstrated in the first chapter of this thesis, Antinous was also occasionally represented as nature and agriculture figures such as Sylvanus and Triptolemus, further tying him to Diana's domains.

The Ostia inscription, interestingly, dates to 170, decades after both Antinous' and Hadrian's death. The inscription also marks 27 November as Antinous' birthday and establishes an annual feast on that day. The inscription comes from another *collegium*, this one interested in renovating a local temple.³⁰¹ The date of this inscription directly attests to continued cultic activity after Hadrian's death. Christian writers record the cult's endurance in Antinoopolis centuries later, but the *collegium* inscriptions indicate that Antinous still received veneration even outside of the three major cultic centres after the political advantage associated with maintaining the cult was gone.

Mainland Europe west of Rome has yielded only one statue with confirmed provenance, that being a head found in a villa's cistern in Tarragona. Tarragona had been an important imperial city since the Punic wars, and Hadrian wintered in Tarragona in 123; coins minted during his stay there mark a change in his imperial styling. A personal relationship with the city may have prompted the owner of the villa where the head was found to erect a statue of Antinous to curry favour, as Antinous appears to be largely absent from Western Europe otherwise. A handful of other statues were found scattered around North Africa, one each in Carthage, Leptis Magna, and an otherwise unknown site in Algeria. Carthage and Leptis Magna were both major Roman centres at that point, and it would not be surprising for a major city to continue seeking imperial favour; the theory that the Leptis Magna statue was hastily recut into Antinous in the wake of an imperial visit seems to indicate as much.

These provenances paint a broad picture of the spread of Antinous' statues, and by extension his cult as well. Of the 39 statues, however, 26 of them have more specific provenance recorded, down to the exact site at which they were found.³⁰² These statues can provide a narrow

²⁹⁹ Pancrates, *Antinous* 1-25.

³⁰⁰ Birley, *Hadrian*, 241.

³⁰¹ Bruun, *Anniversaries*, 361.

³⁰² A specific breakdown of the provenances of all 26 statues can be found in the table on pages 34-5.

cross section of the contexts in which Antinous statues appeared. As a primarily cultic figure, one might expect that many of his statues were discovered at cult sites or temples, but in fact only three come from such places. These are the Antinous-Asclepius from the temple of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis, the Antinous-Apollo from the temple of Apollo at Delphi, and a fragmentary statue head from the temple of Poseidon at Isthmia. The Isthmia statue is too damaged to discern much information, but the other two represent Antinous as gods directly attached to the sanctuary in which they were found.

Six were found in private villas, although one of these, the Villa Doria Pamphili, is a modern construction; another is only identified by Meyer as the *aedes Victoriarum*. The statue from the Villa Casali in Sicily was displayed in the house's garden, while fragments from the Els Munts villa in Tarragona were found in the cistern. Hadrian's villa at Tivoli, where six more statues were found, deserves its own category thanks to its huge scale and imperial functions. While villas functioned as homes, they also hosted visitors and incorporated farming operations. A statue in a villa would not just be viewed by the owners, but by their whole household and the guests and clients visiting there. This is even more true for Hadrian's villa, which was so extensive and so public that he had a smaller villa-within-a-villa wherein he could isolate himself and find privacy. The Antinous statues from villas might not have been as public as others, but they were also not hidden away from the world.

The 11 other statues were found in full public display. The Leptis Magna statue, discussed previously, was found in the city's bathhouse. Others were found in various places, such in the theatre of Maecenas, the *odeon* at Carthage, and Hadrian's library in Athens. Their placement in public locations put them in full view of passersby, thus placing Antinous himself in the public eye. If the number of statues of Antinous was even remotely comparable to that of the emperors, it is easy to imagine Antinous' face appearing around every corner, looking out at viewers from any and every public space. Such a narrow sample of statues presents an imbalanced spread of provenance, lacking in cultic sites but otherwise equal between public and semi-private spaces.

There also appears to be little correlation between location and iconography, save for the temple statues: the Delphi statue is an Antinous-Apollo, and the Eleusis statue is an Antinous-Asclepius. Antinous' connection with another cult thus was represented both through visual iconography and with Antinous' presence at that cult site. Similarly, a statue found at the *palaestra* at Olympia appears to represent him as an athlete, or perhaps a minor god of the *palaestra*.

Otherwise, there appears to be little connection between the location of an Antinous statue and its iconography. The Villa Casali statue is an Antinous-Dionysus, and the Leptis Magna statue is an Antinous-Apollo-Eshmun. Meanwhile, the statue from Herodes Atticus' villa in Loukou has no iconography. Unless one guise or another was particular to the place where the statue was displayed, it seems as though he could appear anywhere in any guise.

The provenance sample size is unfortunately small compared to the size of the available corpus, but it shows rough correspondence to the spread of the cult, barring an unusually high concentration in Italy. Hadrian's villa skews the results, but an abundance of images of the emperor's favourite at the emperor's villa complex is easily explainable. The overrepresentation in Rome may also be due to more extensive excavation in the city, with statues appearing during the creation of modern structures.³⁰³ These statues' discovery in modern times facilitates the recording of their provenance; statues found earlier may not have recorded provenance simply because it was not a scholarly concern at the time. Other statues from Italy, though, do directly correspond to cultic presence in the area. Barring Italy, statues appear in Greece most frequently, home to one of Antinous' three major cultic centres.

The existing information does suggest a correlation between Antinous' statues and the Antinous cult. In places where the Antinous cult had little presence, the statues may be present thanks to Hadrian's influence or the desire of local elites to garner favour with Hadrian; they are known to have subsidized coinage depicting Antinous and promoted and participated in the Antinous cult for the same reason. The message read through a statue of Antinous could be devotion to the cult, as well as to Hadrian. By the time Hadrian died, the cult had become so entrenched in local cultures, thanks to Antinous' representation as other deities, that it persisted for centuries after. Antoninus Pius had no particular association with the Antinous cult and, when Hadrian was gone, the cult's advantageous link to the emperor was severed.

Antinous and Hellenism

Antinous' statues represent his position as a common point of connection across different divinities around the Empire. The statues were not just cult images, though, but also portraits of Antinous, presumably meant to be idealized representations of the mortal, deceased Antinous. When considered as portraits they were not necessarily objects of worship, but objects of

³⁰³ Vout, *Antinous*, 94.

commemoration to immortalize a deceased lover. Like other aspects of Roman religion, religious life and public life overlapped. However, it is worth considering the statues as separate from the cult and examining them as objects of commemoration. Unfortunately, so little historical information survives about Antinous' life that the statues cannot be seen as biographical; rather, they must be viewed as pieces of art and considered in relation to Hadrian's ideology.

The common image of Antinous is of an ephebic teenager. His depictions as such fit into a loose category of statues Bartman calls 'sexy boys'. The characteristic 'sexy boy' statue depicts an effeminate youth lacking the muscular definition of Polykleitan sculpture; instead the body appears soft. They are nude or wearing minimal clothes that accentuate their nudity, such as a *nebris*. The characteristic statue leans in an exaggerated Praxitelean posture, with the head turned away from the viewer in a demure or passive sort of way. Usually, these statues also feature effeminate, curling hairstyles that hang heavily over the head and neck.³⁰⁴ The result is an eroticized depiction of an ephebic youth, reminiscent of Greek sculpture and likely bringing to mind pederastic relationships.

Characters depicted in this fashion, aside from Antinous himself, include Apollo, Dionysus, Paris, Ganymede, and Adonis, all characters who are already attached to Antinous on a cultic and iconographic level. With the exception of Apollo, all of these figures hail from the eastern edges of the Empire. They are foreigners even to the Greeks. Antinous, too, comes from the periphery; while Bithynia is a Greek-speaking part of the Empire, it is further east than the Asia Minor coast and sits near regions like Phrygia. Slaves waiting on diners at elite dinners were expected to be young, well-groomed, and sexually attractive, often bearing Greek names.³⁰⁵ Indeed, such slaves were the ideal male lovers for Roman men, especially because a slave could not be further demeaned by carrying out the passive role during sex.³⁰⁶ That is not to say that any of these gods or heroes were slaves, but they all fit this idealized image of a male lover, and perhaps Roman men fantasized about them in the same ways. One might consider the slave's submissive role and observe the downturned and averted gaze of their statues.

Antinous coincidentally fits the criteria for the young male lover. He was young, no older than 20 when he died, and he came from the Eastern reaches of the Empire; if his statues have any

³⁰⁴ Bartman, *Flame*, 250.

³⁰⁵ J. D'Arms, "Slaves at Roman *Convivia*," in W.J. Slater (ed.), *Dining in a Roman Context* (Ann Arbor, 1991) 171-84 at 173.

³⁰⁶ Williams, *Love*, 520.

element of truth to them, he was probably a handsome youth. Maybe that is what drew Hadrian to him in the first place. Whatever the motivation behind Hadrian's policies and Antinous' image, Hadrian did have a streak of admiration for Greek culture; entering into an idealized pederastic relationship with a foreign youth invites a philhellenic interpretation. Pretty young slaves, however, were also a sort of status symbol for the elite. Augustus had a group of young boys from North Africa and Syria who entertained him with pretty faces and conversation.³⁰⁷ Catullus also describes attractive Bithynian litter-bearers used as accessories or status symbols.³⁰⁸ Because Antinous easily fits into the categories of an ideal male lover, it is no wonder that Hadrian chose to depict him in the same manner as similar mythological figures.

This all said, many of Antinous' statues do not conform exactly to Bartman's 'sexy boy' category. She notes this herself. The image she refers to most frequently as a 'sexy boy' is an Antinous-Dionysus that, although missing its limbs, stands in an exaggerated *contrapposto*, wearing a *nebris* and ivy crown, head turned away, and torso soft and undefined (Fig. 27).³⁰⁹ However, other Antinous statues have somewhat better-defined musculature and a posture that is more stable and active, more similar to a Polykleitan *contrapposto* than an unsteady Praxitelean lean. The hair is comprised of heavy curls, but they are shorter and more uniform in length. However, most of his statues still show him with his gaze downturned, which makes him appear passive.³¹⁰ Antinous is a visual blend of classical Greek idealized sculpture and Hellenistic ephebes, combined into something new and unusual.

Antinous is represented in a recognizably Greek fashion, albeit with a contemporary Roman twist. Stylistic references in his image identify him as an idealized pederastic lover and, in life his relationship with Hadrian resembled pederasty. Antinous was culturally Greek, and Hadrian had a reputation for a love of Greek culture, from his '*Graeculus*' nickname to his patronage of Greek regions of the Empire. When attached to Hadrian, who had ultimate control over the image, it is easy to read the statues as purposefully Hellenizing and appealing to Hadrian's perceived philhellenism. However, the previous chapter has argued that philhellenism was not the primary motivator in Hadrian's own image and policies and, if that is the case, Antinous' image deserves to be reconsidered as well.

³⁰⁷ Suetonius, *Life of Augustus* 83.1.

³⁰⁸ Catullus, *Carmina*, 10.14-6, 25-6.

³⁰⁹ Meyer, *Antinoos*, 70-2 (no. 1.50).

³¹⁰ Bartman, *Flame*, 269.

Greek art styles and representations do not necessarily mean philhellenism. If they were, any Roman man who had himself represented in the heroic nude would have to answer for the same. Roman men regularly had themselves represented in full or partial heroic nudity as early as the Late Republic, in statues with veristic heads attached to idealized bodies. Partial nudity may have been a reconciliation of the Greek heroic nude with Roman modesty, but full nudity was not uncommon in honorific statuary either.³¹¹ Full nudity in imperial times was generally only used for younger men, such as the Julio-Claudian princes, until Claudius adopted the style himself.³¹² One might ask if those princes were philhellenes, too, as well as the other emperors like Claudius who employed the heroic nude.

As noted in chapter two, heroic nudity was one of a selection of portrait styles available to Roman men, each with its own set of messages and associations. The heroic nude and the idealized body can connote youth and vigour,³¹³ or divinity. The use of the heroic nude portrayed the subject in conversation with the great heroes of the Greek past who often functioned as exemplars of virtue and achievement.³¹⁴ Furthermore, it was also used in private commemorative statuary, which Antinous' nude statuary resembles. While the circumstances associated with Antinous' deification were exceptional, his image roughly falls in line with the style of commemorative imagery already used in the Empire, and associates him with youth and divinity.³¹⁵ Greek styles do not necessarily represent an unusual bias toward Greek culture, but also participation in recognizable styles that were mainstream in the Empire.

Representing Antinous in styles that mimic Polykleitan and Praxitelean statuary may have been a strategic move as well. Hadrian promoted Antinous' cult in Greek-speaking areas: Bithynium and Mantinea were both in culturally Greek regions, and Antinoopolis became a centre of Hellenic culture in Egypt. By using Greek styles Hadrian made Antinous culturally appropriate for the places in which he was installed and promoted. Antinous was a recognizable and familiar image for the regions where Hadrian pushed to make him relevant. Furthermore, if Antinous was first and mainly identified with Osiris, a primarily Egyptian deity, he had to be translated into a more recognizable form that would be identifiable for the Greeks and Romans. Osiris was

³¹¹ T. Stevenson, 'The "Problem" with Nude Honorific Statuary and Portraits in Late Republican and Augustan Rome,' *Greece & Rome* 45 (1998) 45-69 at 48-50.

³¹² Hallett, *Nude*, 190-2.

³¹³ Stevenson, *Problem*, 52.

³¹⁴ Hallett, *Nude*, 218-9.

³¹⁵ Hallett, *Nude*, 204-5.

translated into Dionysus, and Antinous was given an image that combined centuries-old artistic styles recognizable to the Greeks.

Therefore, Hadrian's choice to represent Antinous in Greek styles is not necessarily indicative of an exceptional devotion to Greek culture. Classical Greece was admired by the Romans and elements of their art and culture were mainstream in the Empire. Romans participating in this mainstream culture are not outliers. Hadrian's decisions regarding how to represent Antinous could easily have been strategic moves to try to ensure the cult's success and the longevity of Antinous' legacy – just as Hadrian's decisions about his own image were strategic. Images carried messages; portraits were not vanity objects meant to depict the subject as they were in life, but public statements meant to convey messages. Antinous is not exempt.

This is not to deny any possibility that Hadrian had a love for Greek culture. He had a reputation as a philhellene for a reason, as illustrated previously. However, his interaction with Greek culture cannot be dismissed simply as an aberration. To dismiss Antinous' image as merely a philhellenic phenomenon – the image only exists as it does because Hadrian loved Greek culture – would be to dismiss significant nuance, political strategy, and cultic appeal. Perhaps Hadrian did love Greek culture, and perhaps that love is what drew him to Antinous and inspired him to commemorate Antinous in the way he did. It cannot be the only explanation, though. Antinous served an interesting ideological function and should not be oversimplified.

Antinous' cult was likely a combination of commemorative efforts on Hadrian's behalf and a political development to push Hadrian's ideological agenda. Hadrian exploited various traditions on deification and hero cults, and installed the cult in cities that had connections to Antinous and would be receptive to such a cult. This, combined with the statues he commissioned and distributed, would ensure that Antinous' memory would survive. The imperial elites spread Antinous' cult and image as a method of garnering favour with Hadrian for themselves and their communities. The cult, thus spread by the elites and adopted by various cities, inspired unity and cohesion not only within individual communities but among communities as well. The result is that Antinous became a vehicle for Hadrian to bind the Empire together on a religious level, complementing other policies that also encouraged unity in other spheres. He became part of Hadrian's overall ideological message of cohesion, represented culturally by the cult and visually by the commemorative statues.

The process of promoting Antinous and ingraining him in local culture also resulted in his development into an established cult that grew beyond Hadrian. Legends around Antinous became embellished and conflated with those of other gods with whom he was associated. By the time Hadrian died, and the cult was no longer politically advantageous, it had become entrenched in local culture to the point that it persisted for centuries. Antinous became a god in his own right, who delivered oracles and offered protection and the promise of a happy afterlife. He remained so prolific that Christian writers in Late Antiquity wrote polemics and felt the need to denounce him. He lingered in some form or another until the cultural dominance of Christianity finally snuffed him out.

Antinous' statuary conveyed messages of unity across different cults of the Empire. By visual association he was included in several popular cults, like that of the Delphi Apollo and the Eleusinian Mysteries, and in more localized cults. He was a common denominator across different religious institutions around the Empire, who was also attached to Hadrian. Worship that included Antinous also included these other cults in the conversation, as well as the emperor, and that worship promoted unity with other communities and loyalty to the emperor. He was depicted in Greek styles that made him recognizable and relatable to the communities in which he was present, and celebrated the historical Antinous' own Greek heritage.

The Hellenic influence over Antinous' image cannot be ignored. He was a Greek youth, in a Greek-style relationship with Hadrian, who loved Greek culture, and when he died he was commemorated in a fashion that resembled classical Greek art and religion. But to stop there would be a disservice; Antinous' legacy is much more complicated. He constructed shared culture and community across a huge part of the Empire, and inspired loyalty toward Hadrian. He was an agent of Hadrian's broader policies, coopted into supporting Hadrian's ideological push toward cohesion across the Empire. When Hadrian died, Antinous lived on, and remained the focal point of a broad community for centuries. The historical Antinous remains an unknown mystery, and the legendary Antinous is a complex puzzle of ideology.

General Conclusion

In the autumn of 130 AD, Antinous of Bithynia, favourite of Emperor Hadrian, fell into the Nile and drowned. Grieving, Hadrian set out to immortalize him; Antinous became a god, a cultural icon, and an artistic movement. A boy who started out as a provincial nobody suddenly became one of the most recognizable faces in Western art. He became a banner under which the Roman Empire could draw together on a religious, cultic level; he participated in Hadrian's ideology of unity and cohesion. His face is well-known, but the boy himself remains all but unknown. Next to nothing is known of his life, his character, or his relationship with Hadrian. The emperor clearly loved him enough that his heart was broken upon Antinous' death, and yet we do not know why. All we know is that Antinous was born, was loved, and he drowned.

Instead, we turn to the image he left behind, and see what it has to say. This thesis began with a question. What was the role of Antinous' image in imperial ideology? Answering this question has proven to be a complex undertaking, but at this stage we can look toward an answer. The shortest and simplest answer is that Antinous' image, as seen in his portrait statues, built communities and fostered a shared sense of identity on a cultic level in order to further Hadrian's overall ideology of unity. This is the essence of it, but if the previous three chapters have demonstrated anything, the answer requires a certain amount of nuance. Accurately answering this question is a deceptively large undertaking.

We began with the images themselves. In his push to commemorate Antinous, Hadrian had countless statues of the boy carved and distributed across the Empire. As of Meyer's 1991 catalogue *Antinoos*, 93 of those statues have been rediscovered in varying states of total, partial, or fragmentary preservation. Even without moving into deeper interpretation, simply quantifying the corpus of extant statues and observing trends can say a lot about how the image functioned. Meyer divides these 93 statues into four types. The vast majority of statues are from the main type, or *Haupttypus*, comprising 78 of the 93 statues, or 83.9% of the corpus. The other 15 statues are divided amongst three variant types. Five are of the forehead fork variants, or *Stirngabelvariante*, which resembles the *Haupttypus* but displays an irregular arrangement of hair locks on the forehead; each statue has the same irregularity, allowing Meyer to arrange them into their own subtype. Six statues belong to the Mondragone type, which shows Antinous with a completely different hairstyle composed of long, straight locks tied into a knot at the back of his head. The

final four statues are of the Egyptianizing type, which shows Antinous in the rigid, upright posture of classical Egyptian art, and wearing a pharaonic hood. The frequency of the *Haupttypus* makes Antinous clearly recognizable, and his image is so strikingly uniform that Antinous can be identified from mere fragments of carved hair. Given the widespread nature of Antinous' statuary, this makes for an easily recognizable face anywhere in the Empire.

The broad spread of statues across the Empire is attested to in the statues' recorded provenance. The majority of statues have no provenance; either they were never lost and then rediscovered, or they traded hands enough times that their original location was forgotten. 39 of the 93 statues have some recorded provenance, and were found across the Empire, as far west as Spain and as far east as Turkey. The bulk of statues come from Italy and Greece, but the rest were scattered to every corner of the Empire. Of these 39, the specific site at which 26 statues were found is recorded; these range from temples, to private villas, and to public spaces such as bathhouses and auditoriums. One can only imagine Antinous occupying any and all public spaces within the Empire, a familiar face at every turn.

We can also quantify the iconography with which Antinous was represented. 41 of the 93 statues have no attributes, or the statue is fragmentary enough that the attributes have been lost; these statues simply depict Antinous as himself, a young god and a deceased youth. The remaining 52 statues give Antinous objects or clothing typically associated with other figures. The most common of these figures is Dionysus, wherein Antinous is given a crown of ivy and grapes, or perhaps a *thyrsus* or a *nebris*. He is also frequently identified with Apollo and Osiris, and is occasionally connected to many other figures, including Asclepius, Sylvanus, and Triptolemus. He is usually attached to gods of death and resurrection, owing to his cult's focus on the same. He is also connected with gods of nature, agriculture, and hunting, perhaps because of his own interest in hunting, his provincial origins, or his cult's connection with life and rebirth. These connections place him in conversation with cults already established around the Empire and help him integrate into the local religious landscape where his cult was present.

The way Antinous was represented as other gods is a key aspect of the way he was used as part of Hadrian's ideology, but to properly illustrate that, the actual ideology must be discussed. The major relevant aspect of Hadrian's ideology is his interest in consolidating and unifying the Empire. This is clear from the very beginning of his reign when, instead of continuing Trajan's conquest of the Middle East, he abandoned newly conquered territory and retracted the Empire's

borders, making him the first emperor to do so. His reign marked the end of the Roman ideal of *imperium sine fine*, perhaps best encapsulated in the *Aeneid*. Instead, he marked clear boundaries for the Empire and focussed his efforts on improving what was within the borders, rather than conquering new territory. The Trajanic provinces from which he withdrew were unstable and not Romanized, meaning that extra effort and resources would be required to maintain them, at a time when the Empire was facing threats on other fronts. That withdrawal was a strategic move, but once it was done, it allowed Hadrian to spend those resources improving cities within the Empire.

To better demarcate the Empire's borders, he constructed a series of walls, the most famous of which stands in England. Others were built along the German borders and in western North Africa. These borders were already adequately defended by series of watchtowers; the walls had as much symbolic value as they did defensive. To Romans they signified the end of Roman territory, and that everything beyond was untamed barbarian land; to outsiders, it was a clear indication that everything inside the walls belonged to Rome, and intruders were not welcome. The construction of the walls performed an interesting secondary function as well. Because Hadrian was not interested in conquest, the Empire's standing army only saw combat during episodes of unrest, so he put the soldiers to work constructing the border walls to keep them fit and disciplined.

Maintaining the fitness of the army was important because, according to *Historia Augusta*, discipline had faltered. Camps became luxurious and officers abused their status to treat peaceful postings as vacations. Among other reforms, he imposed Spartan living conditions on the troops, demolished luxury infrastructure, and banned ostentatious uniforms. Notably, Hadrian lived just like the soldiers while staying in the camps, leading by example. He participated in drills alongside the common soldiers, including going on 20-mile marches with them on foot rather than on horseback. He also initiated new drilling methods that included teaching the soldiers the combat styles of common enemy groups, and having them spar with each other, to better prepare them for potential conflict with these groups. Soldiers were trained in all manner of fighting styles, given that they could be posted anywhere in the Empire and be expected to fight groups they had never personally encountered before. This emphasis on military reform is part of Hadrian's interest in consolidating the Empire's current holdings, by better defending it. It also stems from his own military background, accompanying Trajan on campaign and serving in the armies before his accession.

Hadrian's emphasis on the military and leadership was the primary message communicated through his portraiture. Roman portraits were not objects of vanity but of ideology, always carefully designed to convey specific messages about the subject to the viewer. Hadrian's beard, a novelty for emperors at the time, was a common fashion among soldiers and military leaders, and this coincides with his most common statue type being that of a cuirassed general – 80 of the extant 149 statues of Hadrian either depict him with no identifiable attributes or are too fragmentary to show any attributes that may have been present, but of the remaining 69 statues, 37 depict him in a cuirassed military fashion.

Hadrian's overall policy was one of strong leadership, improved defenses, and improvement of the Empire's current holdings in place of seeking new conquests. It was a consolidation and stabilization of the Empire, defining what it was instead of pursuing further additions. He traveled widely and visited most of the Empire's provinces personally, funnelled money once used for conquest into their development, and laid out policies such as the Panhellenion, which would have allowed a certain level of autonomy for the historical Greek city states and allowed them to form sub-communities within the Empire. Stability and consolidation, and the resulting unification of the Empire, was encapsulated in his image of a strong military leader. Viewers across the Empire saw him in this guise and understood that it was a visual representation of his ideology.

This means that, contrary to some scholars' assumptions, Hadrian's beard was not an entirely philhellenic phenomenon. Some scholars credit his beard to his philhellenic tendencies, noting that Greek men stereotypically wore their beards long, while the usual image of a Roman man was clean-shaven. Certainly, Hadrian was the first emperor to sport a full beard. However, Hadrian kept his beard trimmed shorter than the typical classical Greek man, and the beard was, at his time, a common fashion for military men. Combined with the fact that his most common portrait type depicts him wearing a military cuirass, his beard depicted him as a strong military general and a leader who would defend the Empire. While we cannot deny that Hadrian admired Greek culture, his ideology, including his image, was far more complex than that. In light of Hadrian's image, we must also reassess Antinous' image. Antinous' visual similarity to classical Greek statuary draws an easy connection to Hadrian's apparent philhellenism, but if the rest of Hadrian's output is not primarily informed by a love for Greek culture, then we cannot assume the same is true of Antinous.

The statues of Antinous were produced in conjunction with the establishment of his cult, which resembled a hero cult, albeit one that grew beyond its local centres of worship thanks to its initial connection to Hadrian. The cult was installed primarily in Antinoopolis, Bithynium, and Mantinea, and was then spread by the elite who used it as a way to curry favour with the emperor. They adopted the cult, minted coinage, and erected statues to show their loyalty to Hadrian, resulting in a hero cult that spread across the Empire. By the time Hadrian died, the cult had become ingrained in local culture and had taken on a life of its own such that it outlasted Hadrian by 200 years. The statues were meant both as portraits of Antinous and as cultic objects.

The statues' known provenances reflect the spread of the cult, concentrated around the three cultic centres in Greece and the Near East, but also reaching into Italy and the western parts of the Empire. The cult was featured at prominent religious locations, particularly Delphi and Eleusis, as evidenced by statuary found there, that visually combines Antinous with figures associated with those sites. His presence at major cultic sites indicates just how prolific his cult became. Other statues were found in public and private villas, and while many of these may be visual displays of loyalty to the emperor, they may also indicate a growing popularity in the cult and the cult's inclusion in public life. Hadrian established games and priesthoods in Antinous' main cultic centres, placing Antinous in public life around the Empire.

The visual connections between Antinous and other deities is perhaps the most telling feature of Hadrian's ideology at work. Antinous not only becomes a bridge between his own cult and the other gods of the Empire, but also draws those cults closer together via himself. The emperor's favourite, now a god and dressed in iconography belonging to other cults, draws the cults closer together and shelters them under the imperial banner. He inspires unity and cohesion within his own cultic community, and across communities, now bound together in common worship of Antinous and, by extension, common loyalty to Hadrian. Even after Hadrian's death, when it was no longer politically advantageous to venerate Antinous, he was still a common element that drew together other cults around the Empire, thus continuing to exert Hadrian's ideology of unity well after Hadrian's death.

Antinous is represented in classical Greek styles; his statues variously resemble Paxitelean and Polykleitan forms, albeit combined and altered into something new. We cannot wholly deny a philhellenic influence behind Antinous' image, but focussing only on Hadrian's philhellenism would over-simplify a complex and nuanced artistic endeavour. We can look at Hadrian to see that

his own image is often assumed to be primarily philhellenic itself. However, we have already seen that Hadrian's own portrait image, specifically his beard, did not stem from his desire to appear more Greek, but served to present him as a military-minded leader who focussed more on defending and strengthening the Empire than expanding it. By adopting a policy of defense and consolidation, he improved the Empire as it was, rather than expending resources to conquer and stabilize new territory. In other words, philhellenism was not the sole motivating factor. Therefore, we can ask the same of Antinous. He appears Greek, but his image, like Hadrian's own, is not primarily informed by Hadrian's philhellenism. Antinous' image was informed by Hadrian's ideology.

The classical Greek styles in Antinous' portraiture were typical artistic styles at the time that conveyed divinity, heroism, youth, and virility. Antinous' participation in these styles made him familiar and mainstream. The iconography of other gods ties him to various communities around the Empire and ties the communities together in turn, strengthening the network of the Empire's cults while building a new network with Antinous at the centre. The cult, then, is the central point at which Antinous connects to ideology and, as cult images, the statues are visual manifestations of that ideology at work. While the statues likely had an aspect of genuine grief and commemoration attached to them, as did Antinous' divinization and the rest of Hadrian's memorials, the event of Antinous' death also served an ideological purpose for Hadrian. The statues promoted the cult and Hadrian's message of unity and consolidation. Hadrian's policies worked on a military and economic level, while the cult of Antinous worked on a social and religious level.

Thus, the role of Antinous' image in Hadrian's ideology was as a social unifier. The statues were familiar to people across the Empire, and combined well-known artistic styles and the iconography of various cultic figures with an imperial favourite whose very presence was a reminder of Hadrian, responsible for the creation and spread of the images in the first place. The images were produced in conjunction with the cult of Antinous, and used as cultic objects. The worship of Antinous was merged with important cults around the Empire such as the Delphi Apollo and the Eleusinian Mysteries, and carried Hadrian with it, as that participation in the cult engaged worshippers in loyalty to Hadrian. By combining different cults and figures, Antinous bridged the gaps between them. All of this worked to help unify the Empire on a social and religious level hand-in-hand with Hadrian's policies that promoted imperial stability and improvement.

Through his apparent grief, Hadrian sought to immortalize Antinous, but quickly incorporated the memory of the deceased youth into his ideology of consolidation and stability. His efforts to commemorate Antinous were widely successful, and Antinous lived again as a god for 200 more years. Although his cult has vanished, Antinous still enjoys a long afterlife in the imagination of artists, scholars, and viewers alike. Two thousand years later, we still wonder about him. His well-known face and his historical obscurity create an intriguing puzzle that we are still trying to solve so many centuries after his death. Many of his statues remained unburied, admired and displayed throughout the Renaissance, so many, in fact, that Antinous' *Haupttypus* was a recognizable category of portraits by the 1600s.

Today, Antinous captures the imagination for other reasons: as a symbol of male beauty and romantic male-male relationships. In *Les Misérables*, Victor Hugo describes the tragic Enjolras as an 'savage Antinous', an untamed beauty with little interest in women.³¹⁶ Several of Oscar Wilde's poems make reference to Antinous as well, as a paragon of beauty and male desire.³¹⁷ Marguerite Yournecar's novel *Mémoires d'Hadrien*, an imagined autobiography of Hadrian, foregrounds the romance between Hadrian and Antinous.³¹⁸ In 2006, while preparing for an exhibition in Leeds, the Antinous Mondragone head was unpacked from its crate, only to reveal two red lipstick prints along its jaw, the mark of a viewer's passionate attraction to the long-dead youth.³¹⁹ In 2018, Rufus Wainwright's opera *Hadrian* premiered in Toronto, devoted to his relationship with Antinous and the aftermath of the boy's death.

A quick internet search for Antinous reveals websites and blogs run by Neopagans claiming to worship Antinous, attempting a revival of his cult and worshipping him as a patron of homosexual men. In Neil Gaiman's novel *American Gods*, Antinous makes a cameo appearance toward the end that, within the context of the novel, implies that Antinous still enjoys an active worship in some capacity, and similarly functions as a god of homosexual desire and beauty.³²⁰ Antinous' cultic legacy still inspires others today, although now recognized more for his relationship with Hadrian. Perhaps he could still be considered a protector deity, though, now

³¹⁶ V. Hugo, trans. I.F. Hapgood, *Les Misérables* (New York, 1887) 67.

³¹⁷ Such as O. Wilde, *The Sphinx*, in O. Wilde, *Poems* (London, 1913) 245-68 at 251.

³¹⁸ M. Yournecar, *Mémoires d'Hadrien* (Paris, 1951).

³¹⁹ Vout, *Hadrian*, 63.

³²⁰ N. Gaiman, *American Gods: Tenth Anniversary Edition* (New York, 2011) 461.

watching out for LGBT+ men in a world that is still hostile toward them, and could serve as a Neopagan representation of their identity.

Antinous drowned in 130 CE. His cult persisted for centuries but was eventually swallowed by the cultural shift toward Christianity. Antinous never died, though. His face is one of the best known in western art, displayed in galleries from Los Angeles to Copenhagen. His relationship with Hadrian has now transformed him into a patron of same sex love and male beauty. Yet, so little is known about him. The contrast between his recognizable legacy and his unknown past turns him into an intriguing puzzle, one that may never be solved. We can wonder, though, and try our best to find answers in a sea of questions. His image, created by Hadrian to support his imperial ideology, is an enduring symbol. One might ask if Hadrian had any idea of how long-lasting his efforts would be. And what would Antinous think of it all? A boy from Bithynia, catapulted to the status of imperial favourite, lifted to the heavens as a god, and kept alive by admirers for hundreds and hundreds of years. Perhaps he would be surprised, or proud, or humbled. These are things we will never know. All we can do is study and admire his image and legacy and wonder.

Appendix – Images



Figure 1: Antinous-Dionysus, in Toronto (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 69 [no. 1.60]).



Figure 2: Lion Hunt *Tondo* from the arch of Constantine (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 134).



Figure 3: Antinous Farnese (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 40 [no. 1.38]).

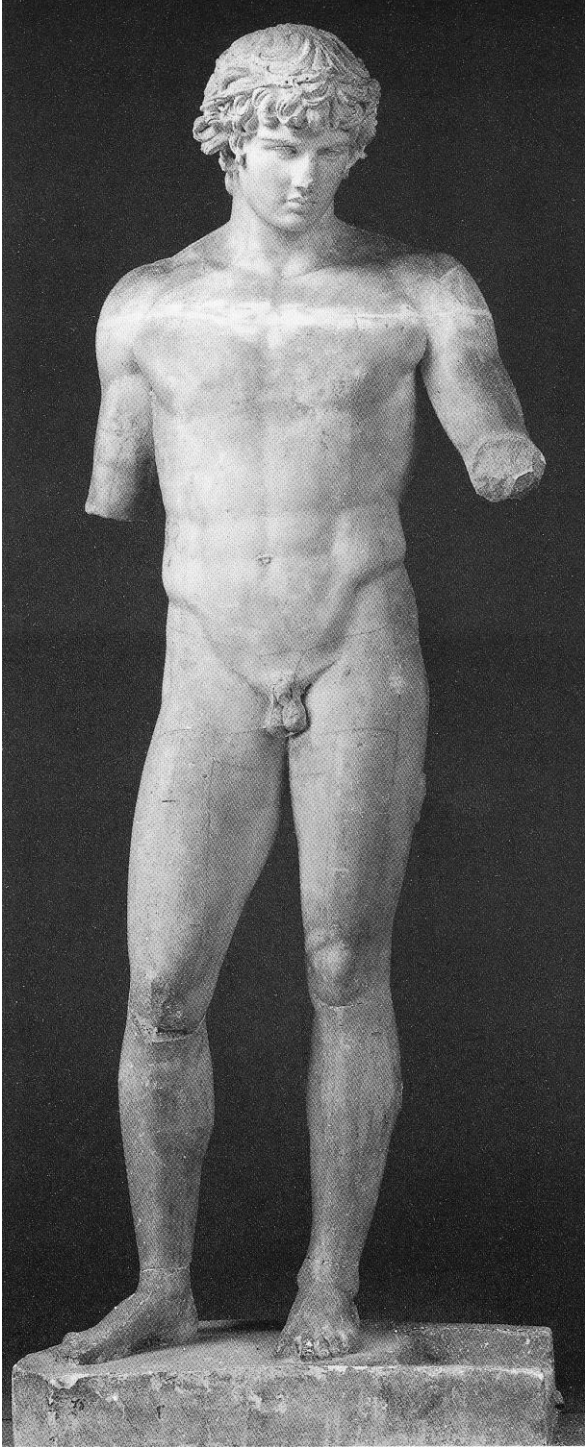


Figure 4: Delphi Antinous (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 14 [no. 1.15]).

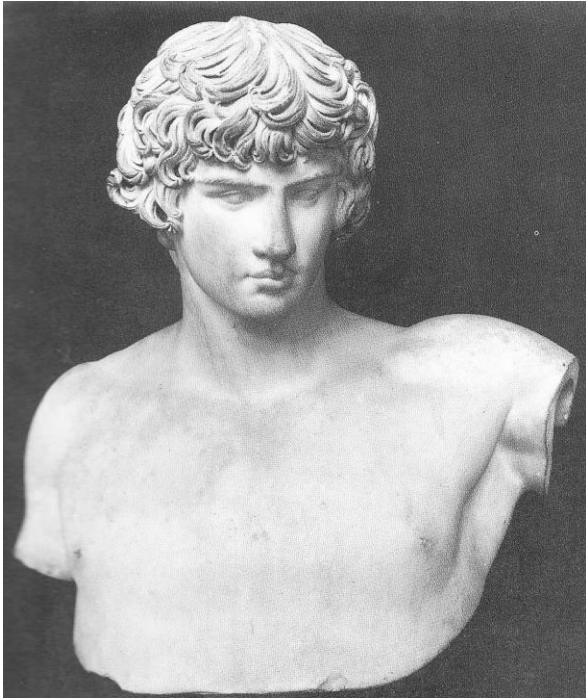


Figure 5: Écouen Antinous (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 47 [no. 1.42]).

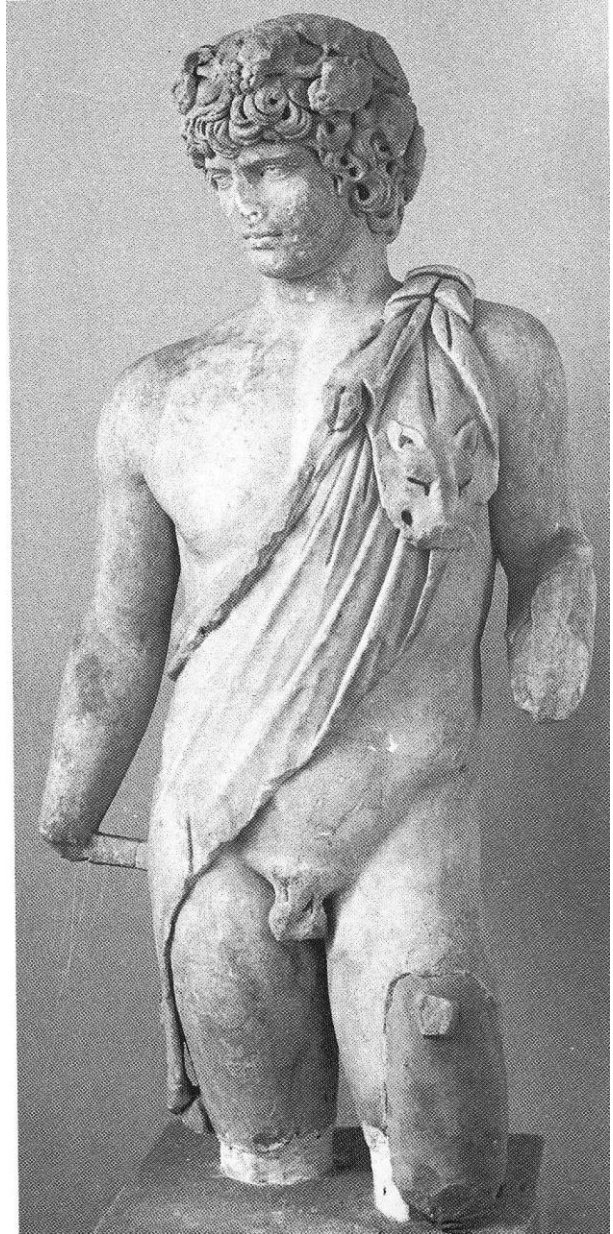


Figure 6: Antinous-Dionysus of the Forehead-Fork Variant Type (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 94 [no. 2.3]).



Figure 7: Antinous from the Palaestra at Olympia (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 96 [no. 2.4]).

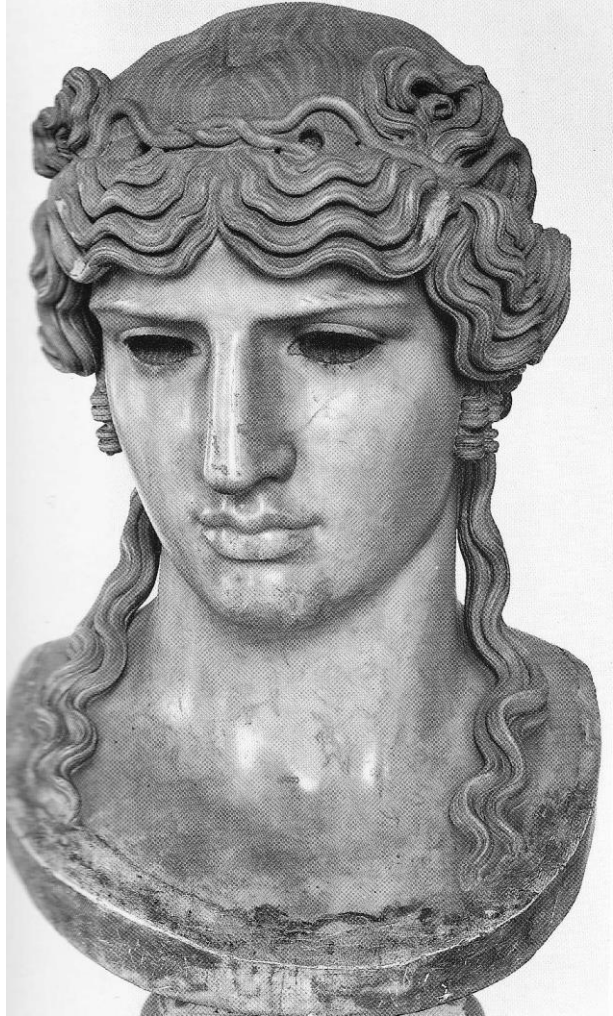


Figure 8: Antinous Mondragone (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 101 [no. 3.3]).



Figure 9: Antinous as Dionysus (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 102 [no. 3.4]).

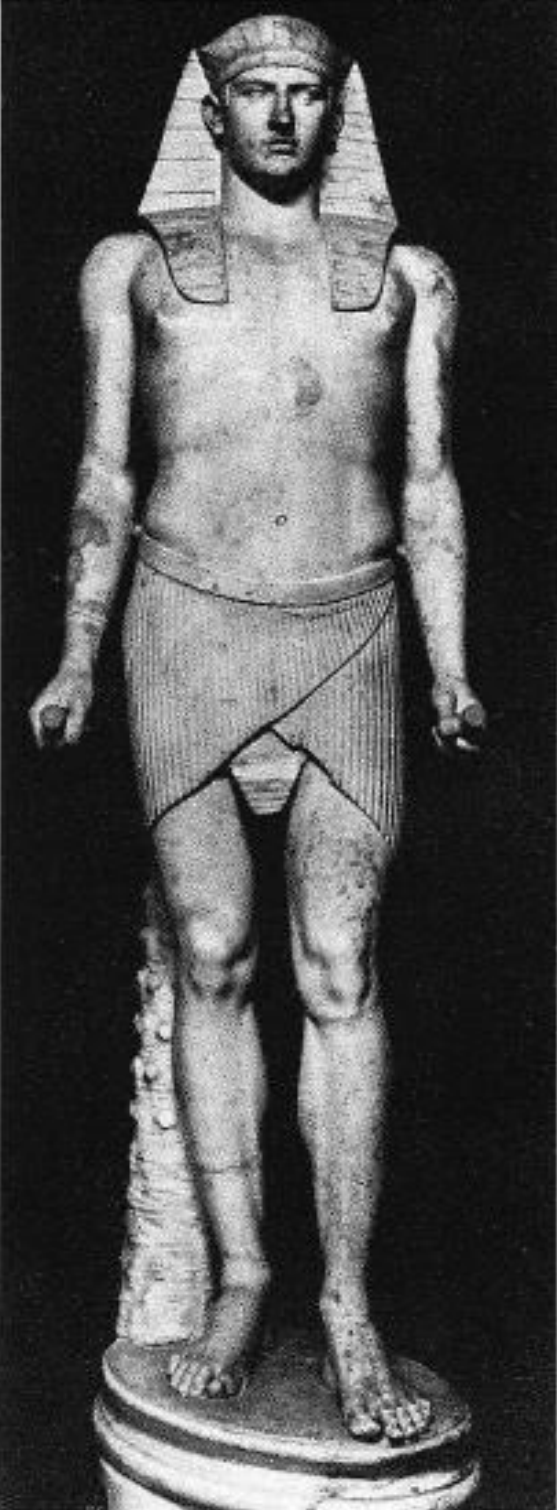


Figure 10: Antinous-Osiris (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 108 [no. 4.3]).

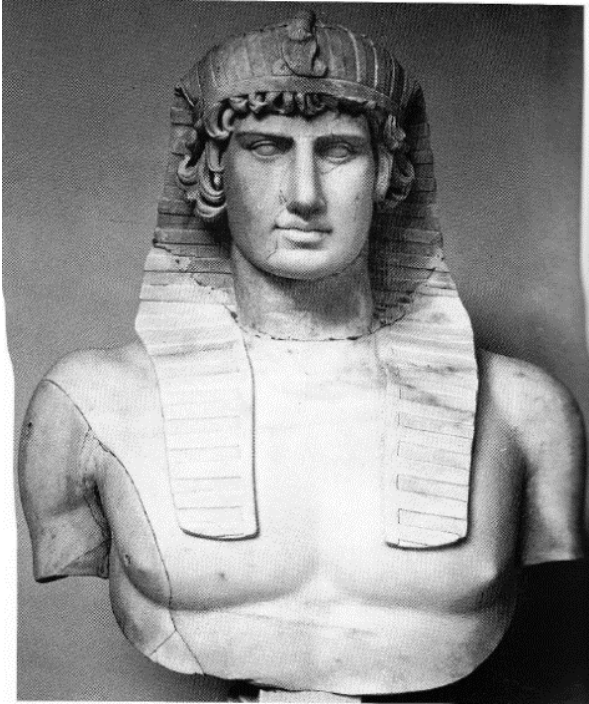


Figure 11: Antinous Osiris
(Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 106 [no. 4.2 in Meyer]).

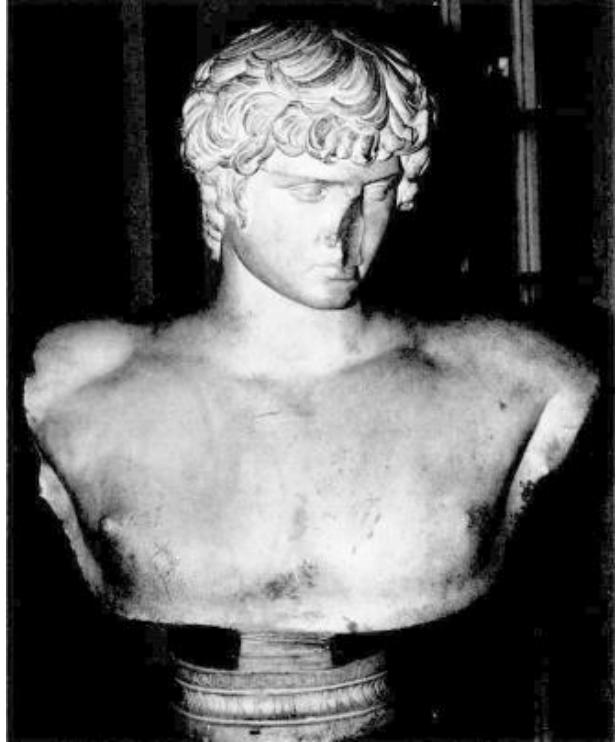


Figure 12: Antinous from Syria; only surviving statue with an inscription (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 88 [no. 1.77]).

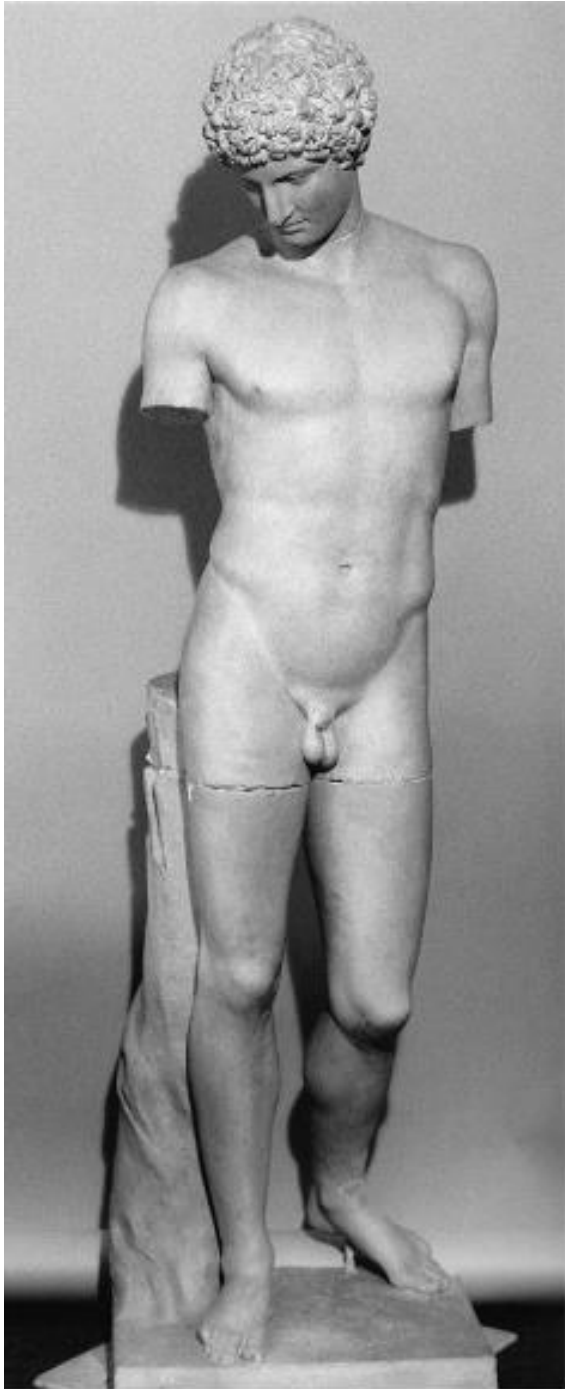


Figure 13: Cast of the Capitoline Antinous (Vout, *Power*, 80).



Figure 14: Belvedere Antinous (Vout, *Power*, 79).



Figure 15: Antinous from the *Illustrium Imagines* (Vout, *Power*, 78).



Figure 16: Antinous recut into Severan woman (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 29 [no. 1.27]).



Figure 17: Antinous head from Isthmia (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 23 [no. 1.22]).

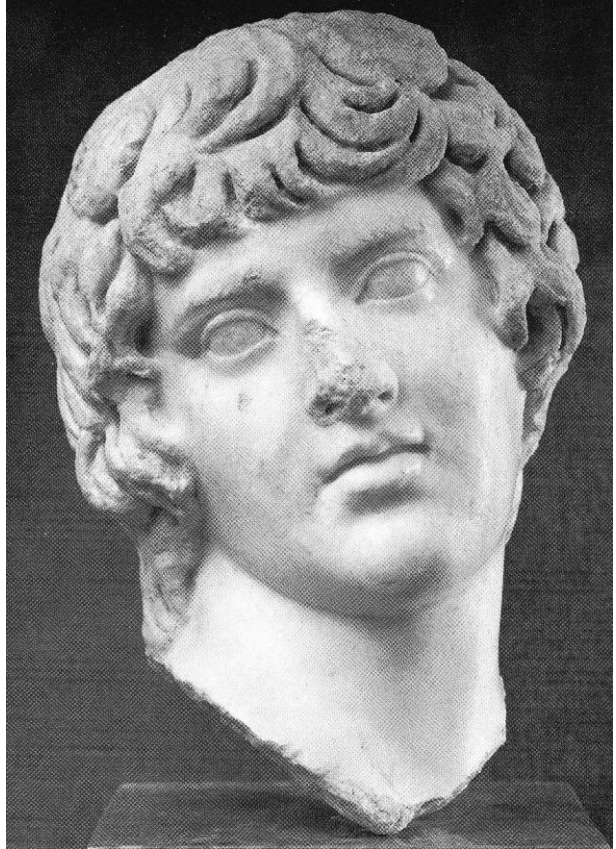


Figure 18: Antinous from Tarragona (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 68 [no. 1.59]).

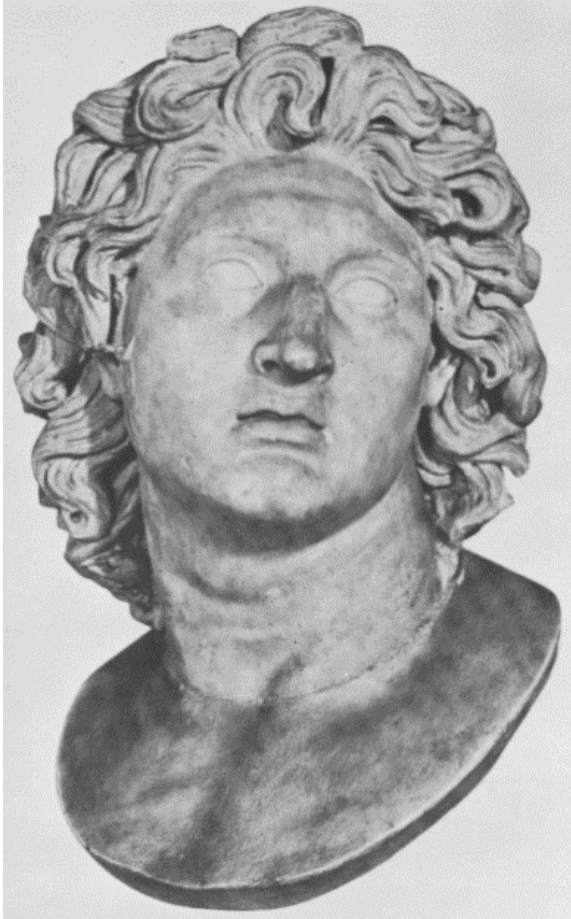


Figure 19: Typical bust of Alexander
(H. Hoffman, "Helios," *Journal of the
American Research Center in Egypt* 2 [1963]
117-24, Plate XXIV



Figure 20: Antinous head restored into
Dionysus (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 100 [no.
3.2]).

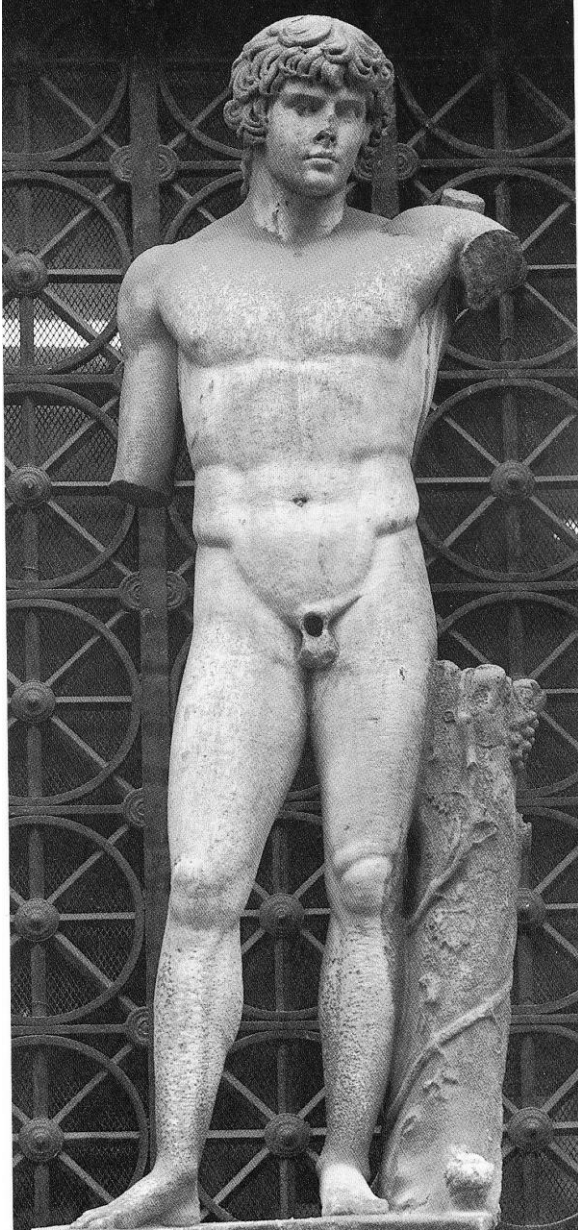


Figure 21: Antinous from the Quirinal Hill
(Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 84 [no. 1.74]).

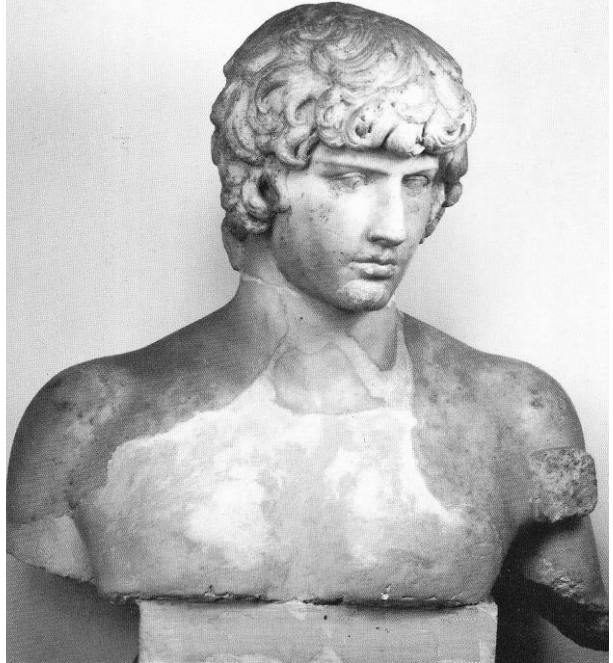


Figure 22: Antinous-Apollo fragment (Meyer,
Antinoos, Plate 61 [no. 1.52]).



Figure 23: Antinous-Osiris (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 103 [no. 3.5]).



Figure 24: Albani relief of Antinous-Sylvanus (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 65 [no. 1.55]).



Figure 25: Antinous-Sylvanus (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 86 [no. 1.75]).

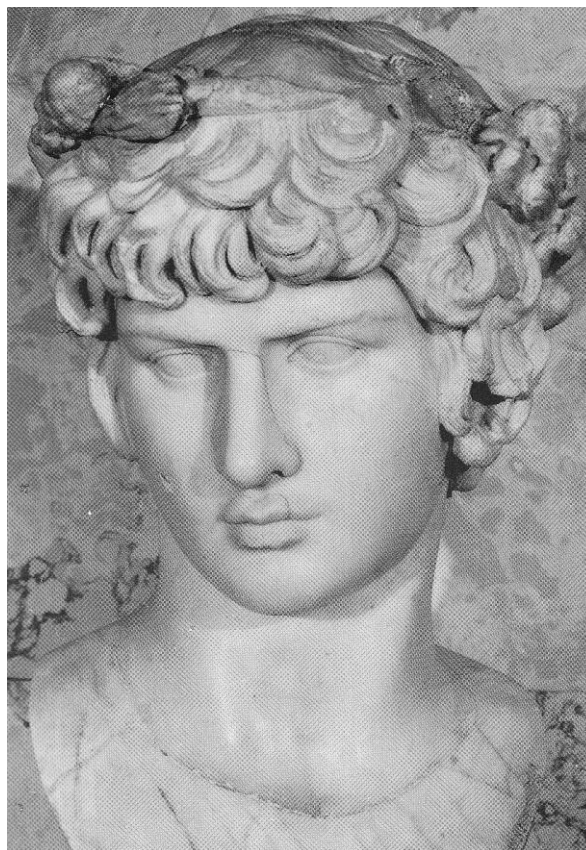


Figure 26: Antinous as Sylvanus or a satyr (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 31 [no. 1.29]).



Figure 27: Antinous as a satyr, wearing a pine crown (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 58 [no. 1.50]).

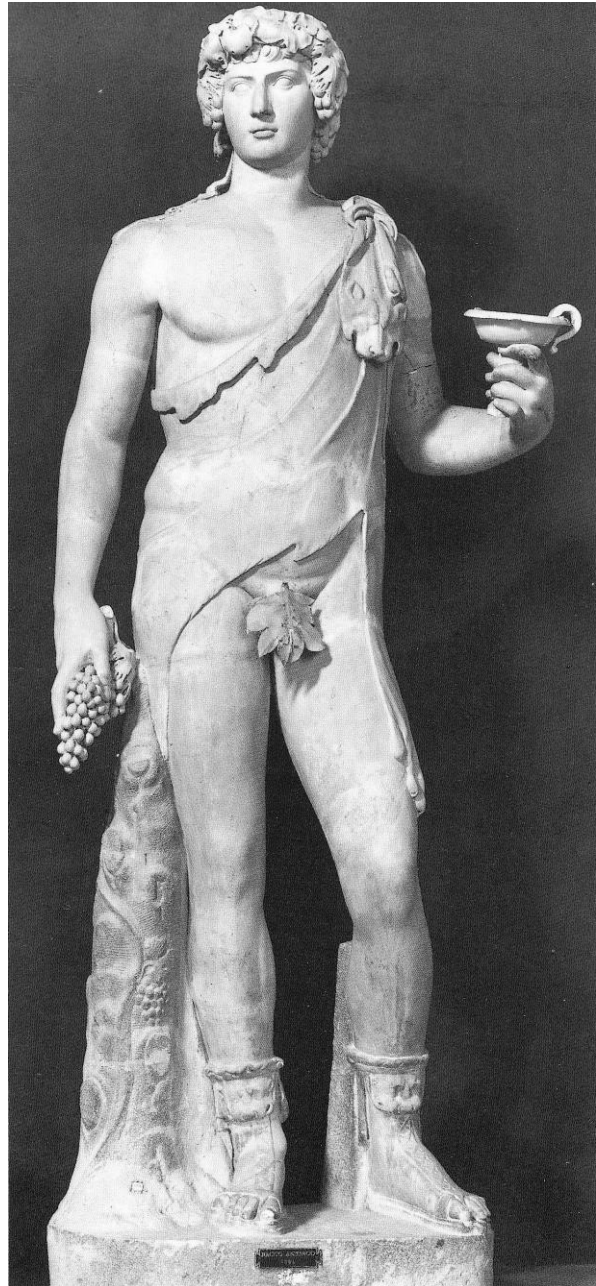


Figure 28: Antinous as a satyr (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 43 [no. 1.39]).



Figure 29: Antinous head from Egypt (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 8 [no. 1.10]).

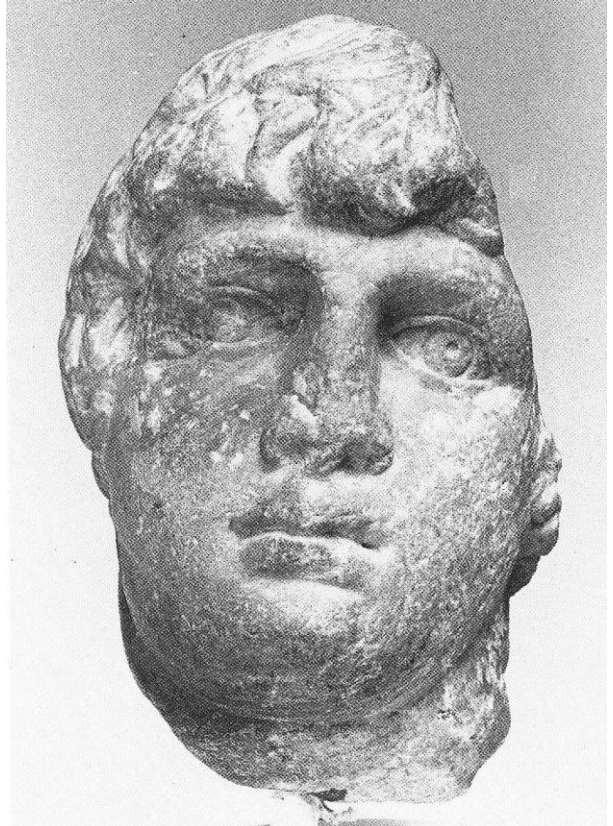


Figure 30: Antinous head from Egypt (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 2 [no 1.2]).



Figure 31: Antinous bust possibly from Antinoopolis (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 67 [no. 1.58]).



Figure 32: Hadrian as Mars (Vout, *Hadrian*, 77).



Figure 33: Hierapytna Hadrian (Vout, *Hadrian*, 69).



Figure 34: Antinous as Hermes (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 3 [no. 1.3]).

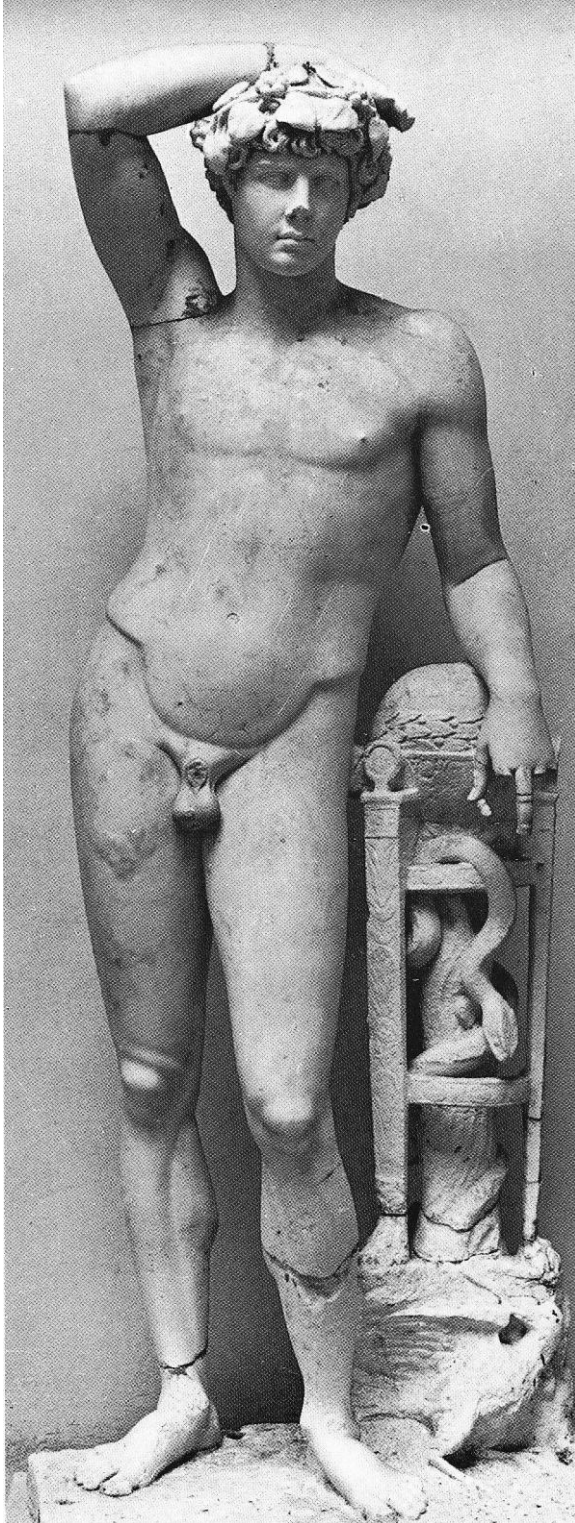


Figure 35: Antinous-Apollo from Leptis Magna (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 70 [no. 1.61]).

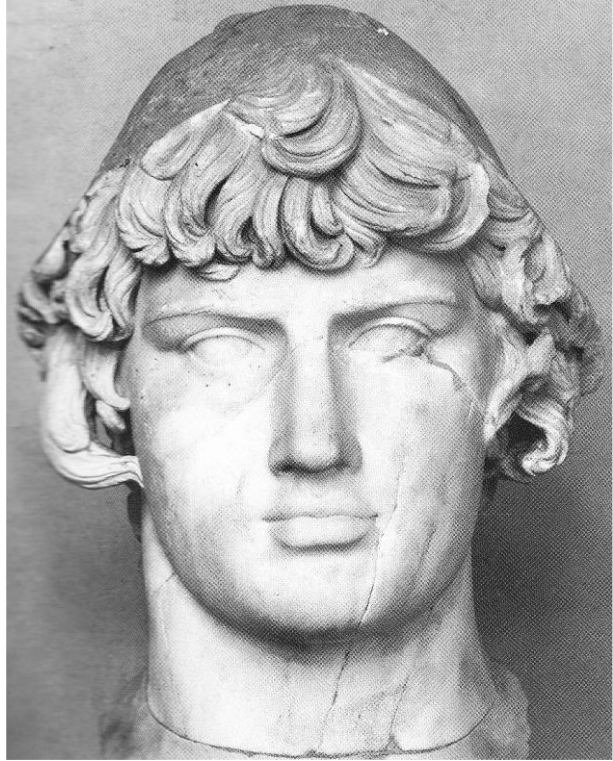


Figure 36: Antinous wearing a Phrygian Cap (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 75 [no. 1.65]).



Figure 37: Antinous-Asclepius (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 16 [no. 1.17]).



Figure 38: Antinous as Triptolemus (Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 17 [no. 1.19]).



Figure 39: Antinous as Dionysus Psilax
(Meyer, *Antinoos*, Plate 99 [no. 3.1]).

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