

## The Introduction of the Carved Iris and Pupil to the Portraits of Hadrian

The official portraits of the emperor Hadrian saw the introduction of a new artistic technique that would quickly become widespread and continue to be used for centuries. This new technique consisted of forming the iris and pupil through shaping or incising the stone rather than painting them, which had been the standard in the Roman past. Hadrian's extreme popularity is expressed through the great number of existing portraits that represent him, roughly 150 (De Puma 1988, Evers 1994, Fittschen and Zanker 1983). Only Augustus has more remaining portraits than Hadrian with around 211 examples that were created during a reign more than twice as long as Hadrian's. Augustus ruled for 45 years from 31 BCE until CE 14, and some portraits date back even further to 43 BCE, where Hadrian only ruled for approximately 21 years from CE 117 to 138 (De Puma 1988, Bernoulli 1891, Opper 2008, Pollini 1999). This great number of portraits provides an excellent body of information for an analysis of the introduction of this new artistic technique. This introduction occurred over the course of his reign and multiple examples exist with and without the carved iris and pupil, as well as with various experimental styles of carving the iris and pupil that did not continue to be used after his reign. This paper analyzes sixty-six of Hadrian's roughly 150 portraits spread over the time and regions of his reign. This sample was chosen for variety in order to give a range of the new technique across the entire corpus of his portraiture, as well as for the legible quality of the accessible photographs of the sculptures.

Hadrian's portraits present a complex typology in comparison with those of other emperors partly as a result of the large number of extant representations. Typically, an emperor would enjoy two to three types in his principate, but Hadrian has been assigned as many as eight portrait types (Evers 1994, Hiesinger 1975). Scholars have often used coins, which are typically

more easily datable, to outline and date these portrait types (Opper 2008). This paper first reviews Hadrian's primary portrait typology in order to provide a context for the study. Then, it analyzes the implementation of the iris and pupil forms on the available sample of portraits. It presents conclusions that were drawn from the application of these forms to different portrait types and regions. Finally, this data is compared to present conclusions drawn about dating and use of the portrait types based on the application of the iris and pupil techniques to them.

In this paper I present multiple enlightening conclusions that I observed. First I concluded that the introduction of carving as the primary means of portraying the iris and pupil on official Roman portraits was developed in the province of Italia. Additionally, I noted that every work in this study that has been clearly identified as a conflation of portrait types originated from locations outside of Italia or was created posthumously. Third, I found that the majority of portraits come from Italia, thirty-nine out of the sixty-six studied, rather than from throughout the provinces. This suggests that Hadrian held much more visible sway within the province of Italia itself. Further, certain types, like the Baiae type and the later Busti 283 type, were more popular in Italia, where other types, the Rollockenfrisur type followed by the Imperatori 32 type, were used as more official widespread images. Finally, despite the close similarities between all of the portrait types, most of the types do not appear to have continued to be used for extended periods, nor throughout the duration of his principate. The evidence suggests that once a new type was introduced, no more than the previous type was likely to remain in use. The conclusions drawn in this paper based on the implementation and spread of the use of the carved iris and pupil in imperial portraits will help to contextualize the study of imperial portrait types in the future.

## Bibliography

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