

On this day in 130 AD, Hadrian founded Antinoopolis (Egypt), in memory of his beloved Antinous who had drowned in the Nile a few days earlier. Antinoopolis is located on the east bank of the Nile in Upper Egypt near the modern village of Sheikh 'Ibada. The site was originally an Egyptian city with a temple erected by Ramesses II and has remains dating from the Predynastic Period. In the fourth and fifth centuries the town of Antinoopolis (later renamed Antinoë) flourished, for it was the capital of the province of the [Thebaid](#).

The artefact chosen this week is a painted portrait of a woman from Antinoopolis dating from 120-130 AD. It is on display in the new galleries devoted to the East Mediterranean in the Roman Empire.



Portrait of a woman, known as "L'Européenne", AD 120-130, from Antinoöpolis (Antinoë), Egypt, Louvre Museum

From the first to the third century AD, a unique art form, the mummy portrait, flourished in Roman Egypt. Stylistically related to the tradition of Greco-Roman painting, but created for a typically

Egyptian purpose, these are startlingly realistic portraits of men and women of all ages. Egyptian mummy portraits were placed on the outside of the coffin over the head of the individual. They were painted on a wooden board at a roughly lifelike scale. It is possible to date some mummies on the basis of the hairstyles, jewellery and clothes worn in the portrait, and to identify members of a family by their physical similarities. (Source: British Museum)

You can find detailed information about this portrait [here](#).

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