

Unravelling the Past

*A Comparative analysis of Child Mummies in
the Roman Empire.*

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By

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Abstract

1. Why were these children mummified in this “adult” fashion and not simply inhumed or cremated as was more usual in the Roman empire?
2. Was this merely a local phenomenon or was this tradition spreading?
3. How useful or necessary are the methods of natural science when it comes to studying mummies?

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1 Introduction

The discoveries made in the Fayum Oasis, Egypt in the 1880s and later, revealed a form of burial that had never before been associated with the Romans, mummies (Gessler-Löhr 2012:664; Petrie 1889:8). In some aspects one could almost have called them an anomaly if one were to compare them with the more common practice of cremation or simple inhumation. If it not been for the astounding number of them, with around 1000 wooden portraits and more than 1200 masks known, the sheer number of mummies that once existed from the Roman Period are staggering (Gessler-Löhr 2012:664). There are far too many to be counted as an anomaly. Of the mummies, masks and portraits found there was quite a number of children represented, no complete statistics of gender, ethnicity or age estimates have been compiled so far.

When I first started working on this thesis I knew exactly what material I wanted to write about, but I was not yet certain on how I would be approaching the subject. I found the portraits and mummies from the Fayum region incredibly fascinating. So much so that I had actually intended to write about them earlier when I did my BA, even if it soon became clear to me that the subject matter was far too big for that assignment. So, when the time came for me to begin work on my MA thesis, I thought - finally I can work with this amazing material. I was incredibly fascinated, and wanted to learn everything I could about it. My faculty advisors told me to keep narrowing down the material until I reached a more tangible amount of material to work with, so I went from portrait mummies in general, to wanting to do a comparative analysis of them until I finally found myself focusing on the child mummies.

Specifically, I kept wondering why there were quite a few children mummified during the Roman period in Egypt, and furthermore why there were not more differences between the child mummies and the adult ones. Even before the Ptolemies and Romans ruled Egypt, the mummification of children was done quite rarely.

Romans did not typically cremate or even bury all their children - at least not as far as the archaeological data has shown so far. At most cemeteries excavated from the Roman period there seems to be too few child graves according to the estimates of child deaths in a pre-industrial society. Which further strengthens the point that not all children received a “proper” burial. Greeks and Romans tended to bury their children in ways that differed from

what they would do with adults. Sometimes, it was merely in a different location, whilst other times one could clearly see differences in the treatment and manner of burial. One of the reasons why I found this so fascinating was because, most of the books I read about mummification stressed that it was quite costly. This meant that in a society where child mortality rates were probably very high, it was baffling why so many children were mummified as it could have been seen as an unnecessary expense. That being said, there are examples of mummification that clearly was more cost-efficient as well.

If mummification was to be considered a purely Egyptian custom, then why was there such clear “Roman” developments in the decoration and style of mummies? Why did they change at all instead of keeping to the more typical Egyptian fashion? Did this mean that this was a local phenomenon, or did the custom of mummification spread outside of the borders of Egypt.

“Bodies - especially mummified ones – contain a wealth of information on ancient health, disease, genetics, and diet that can be recovered with modern technology. The archaeological contexts of bodies are equally important. The tombs, grave markers, burial wrappings or coffins, and any accompanying pottery, jewellery, weapons, and other items are essential for reconstructing aspects of daily life as well as burial ritual, religious beliefs, social organization and economics.”

[Wisseman 2003:1].

As stated above by Wisseman, bodies are full of information about a wide range of things. Needless to say, well preserved bodies will give us much more information than decomposed or cremated remains. How we deal with our dead is quite telling as to how we view death or even the afterlife itself, after all bodies do not only give us information about the deceased, but also the community the individual belonged to. Intentionally¹ mummified remains tell us that the preservation of the body had a great deal of importance, furthermore we can also assume that the community behind the mummification were reasonably advanced as mummification in itself is by no means a simple process.

¹ I use the word “intentionally” as mummification can also occur naturally.

For the most part the line of inquiry regarding research about intentional mummification has been centred around the word how, for example how did they perform it? Or how much did it cost? There has also been research about whether or not the mummification process became better or worse with time. Other aspects that have been researched in depth are the decorations, art and artefacts associated with the mummies. There has been very little focus on the question of why, why were these people mummified?

This might be because when it comes to Egyptian² mummies, the why is for the most part clearly explained by their religious beliefs. Furthermore, mummification was usually reserved for people with means, as it was quite costly. As one does not “bury” oneself one could assume that the financial burden connected to this would lay with the family of the deceased, unless of course the deceased had money put aside for this purpose. This is obviously also true when we are discussing child burials in any shape or form, as ultimately it is the parents that ultimately decide how their child is to be put to rest. Now this may seem like a pretty obvious statement, but that does not mean that it is not an important point to make. We know that several adults in ancient times planned extensively how they would be buried, tomb stones, mausoleums or monuments were ordered ahead of time. Some even made wills where the responsibilities of holding the funeral rites were distributed to friends or associates if no family members of the deceased were available to do so. There were even clubs where money was pooled so a communal resting place could be commissioned.

As adults we know that death is inevitable, most think it is somewhere in the distant future. It appears as if for most middle to upper class Romans the worst possibility was not death itself, but the prospect of being forgotten. Which was why *damnatio memoriae*³ was such a feared and severe punishment, so to preserve one’s memory it was important to plan ahead.

However, a child’s death is usually not something you can plan for, which makes how such a death is dealt with even more telling. The possibility of learning more about a society and culture should therefore increase if one studies child burials.

for the purpose of my thesis I have landed on one main line of inquiry and two other supplementary questions that I would like to answer to the best of my ability:

² Ptolemaic or mummies that predate the Ptolemais

³ A form of punishment where every record of a person’s name, or all images of them were destroyed. The point being that all traces in history of the person would be destroyed.

1. Why were these children mummified in this “adult” fashion and not simply inhumed or cremated as was more usual in the Roman empire?
2. Was this merely a local phenomenon or was this tradition spreading?
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To answer these questions, I am conducting a comparative analysis of sorts on child mummies and other more “normal” child burials. My main focus will be on 3 child mummies from Roman Egypt, but other mummies will be mentioned in passing, the Grottarossa mummy from Italy and the majority of child remains found in the Yasmina Cemetery in Carthage, Tunisia. This will be a qualitative and quantitative comparative analysis, in the sense that I will be using both a relatively large sample of material and a small sample of material in my analysis. In addition to the usual comparative method, ethnographical comparison will also play a part in my analysis. As I’ve had no direct access to the mummies other than seeing some of them displayed in museums, I will be focusing on mummies that have already been reasonably well researched by others, with that I mean that tests have been run and that results were available in publications.

The theoretical framework I have chosen for this thesis will be anchored in Romanisation theory, globalisation theory as well as hybridisation theory. As they all deal with social and cultural changes, as well as changes that occur in material culture. These theories will help to view the material and the analysis of it in a different light. Before the analysis can take place I will be introducing you to the three types of burial that will be discussed in this thesis inhumation, cremation and mummification.

In addition, I find it prudent to also give an introduction to Roman Egypt as well as to what it could have been like to be a child in the Roman Empire. Furthermore, we will also be taking a look at the spread of other aspects of Egyptian culture. Together these elements will help build the basis of what I will be analysing and how I will be doing it, as well as being useful in my discussion. Firstly, I will start by explaining some of the research history of this field of study.

2 Research History

As I mentioned in my introduction, the research on the mummies who have been classed as Roman or Graeco-Roman, have been mostly art historic in nature. In 1887 a merchant by the name of Theodore Graf instructed all his agents to collect as many mummy portraits as possible from a cemetery in the Fayum region, this resulted in a collection of 330 samples and fragments (Gessler-Löhr 2012:665; Wisseman 2003:2). The other major focus of research was the mummification process itself. Whether or not the technique had changed, degraded or even improved over time (Gessler-Löhr 2012:668; Wisseman 2003:2).

During the middle ages mummies were imported in large quantities to Europe, this was mostly due to the popularity of using ground up mummy powder in medicines (Wisseman 2003:1). These medicines were so widely used, that a counterfeit version using mixtures of pitch and herbs instead of mummy powder was a so called hot commodity (Wisseman 2003:1). There are even records of mummies being pulverised to make paper and there have also been some mentions of mummies used as locomotive fuel (Wisseman 2003:1-2). Some mummies would be unwrapped in front of an audience as a form of entertainment, afterwards the mummies would usually be discarded making further study extremely difficult (Wisseman 2003:2).

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that mummies especially Egyptian ones became more of a subject for study than merely entertainment (Wisseman 2003:2). Scholars would unwrap mummies to study the bodies inside as well as the embalming techniques, they would later discover that rewrapping the mummies was a very difficult task and not always possible (Wisseman 2003:2).

Most people probably think of mummies as looking like the ones we recognise from movies and comics with cloth bandages that seem easy enough to remove. Some mummies would be almost completely solidified from the hardening of resins and embalming fluids that the only feasible way to open the mummies would be by using tools such as chisels and saws (Wisseman 2003:2). This would naturally make rewrapping the mummies a serious challenge, and in most cases, they did not bother. In other words, displaying the unwrapped mummies in the museums was in most cases not an option (Wisseman 2003:2). Despite this tradition of destroying mummies for various purposes a surprisingly large number of mummies are still in museums today and thus available for further study (Wisseman 2003:2).

3 Background

3.1.1 Setting the stage part 1: Roman Egypt and Fayum

You might wonder why it is so important to present the history of Roman Egypt and how it was organised, at least in the context of this thesis. Rome especially is often described as a melting pot of cultures and people, and this is also the case of Roman Egypt, at least in the larger cities. It is of interest to my line of inquiry to try to establish whether the children who were mummified were Romans, and therefore one needs to have an understanding of how Roman Egypt functioned.

Contact between Egypt and Rome were not something that suddenly occurred, it was at least as early as the second century BC, when the Ptolemies asked the Romans for help to deal with internal conflicts (Gagos and Potter 2010:63). Traditionally when we talk about Rome and Egypt, the latter is often nicknamed the grain chamber of the Roman empire due to its vast farmlands and major grain production in which the majority was exported to Rome. Egypt was however far from being just an agricultural country (Jördens 2012b:247). When Egypt was annexed into the empire, almost one third of the annual grain supply of the city of Rome was collected as payment for land taxes, which made Egypt even more essential than when they had merely been an ally (Gagos and Potter 2010:64, Mattingly 2010:289).

Before the Romans took control over Egypt it had been under Greek rule or more precisely ruled by the family of one of Alexander the great's generals, the general in question had himself crowned as pharaoh and it was his family that ruled Egypt before it came under Roman rule. As a result of the Greek administration, Greek was the official language of the elite and the administration, while commoners spoke demotic (Gleason 2010:229). At first Egypt was an independent state with its own monarch, but clearly under Roman protection, however after Marc Anthony and Cleopatra lost the battle of Actium against Octavian⁴; Egypt officially became a part of the Roman Empire.

⁴Who would later become Augustus.

When Octavian or rather Augustus as he renamed himself brought Egypt into the Empire, he made some changes to the administrative structure, but he kept a lot of it unchanged. The division of Egypt into somewhere around 40 districts called nomes which had been established by the Ptolemaic monarchs remained largely unchanged at least during the first century of Roman rule (Gagos and Potter 2010:63).

However, some rather peculiar policies were put into place in Egypt, which were in place until the end of the third century AD (Gagos and Potter 2010:63). Some of these changes are peculiar because they do not resemble anything found in any of the other provinces in the Empire, but this was probably due to the strategic importance of Egypt and also to stop a repeat of what had happened with Antony

Among the changes implemented by the Romans was this: The Prefect⁵ and procurators, were from the equestrian⁶ class instead of the senatorial class (Gagos and Potter 2010:63). This was probably done to make sure that no other senator could gather a power base in Egypt to rival Augustus'. Furthermore, no Roman senators or equestrians were allowed to travel to Egypt without express permission from the emperor (Gagos and Potter 2010:63). However, even though Augustus is commonly regarded as the first emperor, he never claimed such a title in his life-time, but it goes without saying that it was most likely Augustus himself or at least the senate who had to give such a permission, until after Augustus' death when the title emperor was actually in use. In addition to these two peculiar new "rules", Egypt retained a closed monetary system, meaning that they had another currency than Rome and the rest of the Empire, this was in effect until 296 AD (Gagos and Potter 2010:63).

The most relevant and important task for the prefect and the other members of the new imperial administration in Egypt was to regulate the use of state land and to collect taxes from the population or at least oversee the collection (Gagos and Potter 2010:67). Although some knowledge of how much one would have to pay in taxes exist, there is not as much knowledge about how heavy the taxation would have been felt because simply we do not know for sure what the average wage or profit for a commoner would have been. Although there are some indications that farmers attempted to run away from their homes before the tax

⁵ Highest ranking Roman official in Egypt

⁶ The next rank down from senatorial class, defined by the value of their landownings

collectors were due, so it could have been a substantial amount if this was a common occurrence (Gagos and Potter 2010:67).

Surprisingly, when the Romans annexed Egypt which had up until then been ruled by Greeks they did not find a country that was purely Greek in nature. The country had a relative small number of cities modelled after the traditional Greek polis, furthermore some of these did not even have a citizens' council (Jördens 2012b:247). Although Egypt's grain farming and agriculture in general were of great importance this did not mean that Egypt was merely occupied with agriculture (Jördens 2012b:247). There here had been various settlements with a distinctive urban character in the country from early times, complete with wealthy citizens as well as their own traditions and culture, this was especially the case of the major towns in the Nome districts⁷ (Jördens 2012b:247).

As well as offering citizens all the usual amenities of city life, a fair amount of these cities were major centres of first rate culture. (Jördens 2012b:247). During the reigns of the Ptolemies there was a very active policy of settling, this resulted in the founding of several towns which maintained the high standards that Greek settlers were accustomed to, this was most certainly the case of the settlements in the Fayum region (Jördens 2012b:247). These cities had streets fashioned after the traditional grid pattern streets found in Greek towns, theatres, gymnasia and large markets (Jördens 2012b:247). Not only were these cities more distinctly Greek in character than Egyptian, however the people who lived in them were most definitely well versed in Greek culture as well as educated like the Greeks, the only major difference between these cities and the cities in Greece were the fact that they did not have political bodies or administrative autonomy like their peers in Greece had (Jördens 2012b:247).

In comparison to the provinces that the Romans established in north-western Europe during the same time period, in Egypt the Romans found a small number of already established cities with a population that were amazingly similar to the people that inhabited other new Greek cities (Jördens 2012b:247). However, instead of taking advantage of this potential found in these cities, they implemented various new rules and changed the civil rights policy that

⁷Nome was a province in Ancient Egypt

instead alienated the local elite, which naturally made these people uncooperative with the new Roman regime (Jördens 2012b:247). This in turn led to a great deal of internal conflicts within Roman Egypt, what should have been a rather smooth transition from the reign of the Ptolemies to the Roman reign was instead much more problematic than the Romans had expected (Jördens 2012b:247).

Although, Egypt certainly had slaves as was common in that time, there is little evidence of slaves being extensively employed in agriculture, which means that slaves most likely would have had other duties designated to them (Kehoe 2010:304). One could also perhaps see this as a sign of how important agriculture was viewed in Egypt, due to much of their religion being focused on the Nile and its bounty. Perhaps slaves were deemed unworthy to work the land in some way, or it could also be due to slaves being exceedingly expensive in the area or some restrictions being applied to ownership that we are unaware of. The only thing we do know is that contrary to popular belief, it appears as if slaves was not such an essential part of the economy as what it had been in Rome.

Citizenship had a very different connotation in ancient times, today citizenship in one's country is almost always a given. Of course, there are exceptions to this even today, but nonetheless having citizenship today is not really comparable to what it was like in those times. When the Romans officially took Egypt over the question of citizenship obviously had some importance, mainly who if any would be granted Roman citizenship and how to deal with the existing citizenship rules that had been in effect before the Romans seized control (Jördens 2012b:249).

For most people, Roman citizenship was not something automatic it was something you earned, under the Ptolemies it was also possible for people of the elite in the service of the Greek rulers to be elevated to important positions at the Ptolemaic court which was the nearest equivalent to Roman citizenship during the Greek period (Jördens 2012b:249). One of the prerequisites to reach such heights under the Ptolemies was that one was willing and capable of adopting not only the Greek language and culture but also to take on the Greek model (Jördens 2012b:249).

In other words, it was not really that necessary to be born Greek, rather it was more important to be educated in the Greek fashion (Jördens 2012b:249). To achieve this one had to frequent

establishments like the gymnasium and ephebia (Jördens 2012b:249). Furthermore, it was a given that one was capable of mingling and networking with the cultured upper class, in other words in addition to being educated one had to be accepted by the upper class as well as being socially confident (Jördens 2012b:249). This changed when the Romans became in charge, during the Ptolemaic reign “citizenship” had been obtainable for some people, but the Romans tightened the reigns and made it more difficult to obtain. Which was in itself odd, given that this was almost exclusively done in Egypt. There were still some venues open for people wanting to obtain Roman citizenship, which would have been appealing as they were exempt from most taxation.

The most common way to gain the status of citizen was to serve in the military, the soldiers in the legions already had Roman citizenship, however there was another branch of the military called *auxilia*⁸ or auxiliary which was designated for the ones without citizenship (Pollard 2010:223). At the end of their voluntary service in the *auxilia*, some or perhaps all of the veterans received a diploma for services rendered and citizenship (Pollard 2010:223). Most of the recruits to the auxiliary forces in Egypt were so called *peregrines*⁹, and this would have been the easiest way for them to gain citizenship as they would most likely not gain it through marriage alone (Pollard 2010:211).

We know that veterans from the legions often received land or enough money to purchase land after their service ended, as they were already citizens another reward was needed especially given that the Roman army was based on voluntary duty and that their service could often be more than a decade long. Furthermore, the reward of citizenship would often also apply to wives and children, although strictly speaking soldiers were prohibited from taking wives while in service (Pollard 2010:223). Although, it does seem like unsanctioned unions did occur, and that some of them did receive these benefits even if it was strictly speaking against policy (Pollard 2010:223). That was not to say that Roman citizens could not join the auxiliary forces, and there were also records that showed that some soldiers obtained citizenship during their service (Pollard 2010:211).

⁸ Basically, a legion for non-citizens, also had some specialty branches.

⁹ Freed men

The elites in the capitals of the nomes were called metropolites and were for the most part descendants of the Greek settlers, and like Roman citizens they had several advantages awarded due to this status (Gagos and Potter 2010:70). This class was protected, and you could not marry into it, the male metropolites even had to go through a process called epikrisis to verify their heritage around the age of 14 (Gagos and Potter 2010:70).

Roman citizenship did not only make it so one was partially or totally exempt from taxation, as an added bonus one was also usually exempt from liturgies¹⁰, however this was also the case with the metropolites of Alexandria and also later for the Antinoites¹¹, as well as for fathers of five children or more, women, veterans, priests etc. (Gagos and Potter 2010:71). This would have made it the virtual golden goose for social climbers to obtain citizenship in either these two cities or from Rome itself, this all changed in 212 AD when Caracalla granted citizenship to all freeborn people in the entire empire (Ando 2010:178). Needless to say, after that went into effect, major changes would have been made to the benefits of citizenship because if not one would for one have lost almost all of the tax revenue for the entire empire.

In other words, before the edict of Caracalla simply embracing the Roman culture or marrying a citizen would not have been enough to be granted the same status. This also makes it unlikely that adopting Roman customs would have been anything but strictly voluntary, as it did not necessarily have any benefits. This means that adopting the Roman portrait-style when decorating mummies for example would probably have been due to other factors than to elevate one's social status or because it was expected, it might have been a choice made due to entirely different reasons like taste.

The Fayum region lies about 80 km southwest of Cairo, it is also one of Egypt's most fertile regions due to its vast water resources and exceedingly fertile soil of Nilotic origin (Davoli 2012:152; Kessler 2001:292). Although this region often is referred to as the Fayum oasis; it is not a true oasis since it actually is connected to the Nile valley via a natural channel (Davoli 2012:152; Kessler 2001:292). This natural channel made it possible to farm even

¹⁰ Compulsory public service, like tax collection or serving as police etc.

¹¹ Citizens of the city established in honour of Trajan's dead lover Antinous.

larger areas for the crown as well as making it possible to harvest crops multiple times each year (Davoli 2012:154; Kessler 2001:292).

Most of the Greek population that settled in the Fayum region (see figure 1) were Greek soldiers or government officials appointed by the Greek pharaohs (Kessler 2001:292). We know about one of these officials named Zenon and that he had large land holdings in this area, because he left behind quite an extensive archive of papyri (Kessler 2001:292).

3.1.2 Setting the stage part 2: Childhood and death

Tradition was extremely important to the Romans, and this is exceedingly clear if one is to take a look at their laws, which for the most part was based on *mos maiorum*, which when roughly translated means the traditions of the ancestors (Lefkowitz and Fant 2005:95). In other words, most of the rules that regulated their society were inherited and may bear a resemblance to what we today call unwritten rules, even still they had a great influence on the laws that were actually written down. Having children or not was not necessarily a choice for Romans and not because of the lack of modern day contraceptives, but because of various restrictions on those who remained childless (Golden 1988:153). Having children was a necessity, not only to keep the family line going. It also made sure that there would be somebody to take care of you when you grew old as well as somebody to complete the various necessary funerary rites for you when the time came.

Roman social structure was not only nuanced but also complex in nature and children's place in this social structure was distinctly different from the place allocated adults (Norman 2002:302; Veyne 2003:9). Literary sources often mention that children are closer to the divine than adults in that they often were connected to prophecies or omens, they were allowed to participate at public executions and they were also for the most part protected by the laws until the age of seven (Norman 2002:302).

One of the reasons for children having a different place in society compared to adults could also perhaps be attributed to high infant mortality rates. Although one cannot know the numbers for certain, some numbers have been suggested for example 30 to 40 out of a 100, mortality rate during the first year of life (Golden 1988:155). There are no definitive records of mortality rates for the Roman empire, however it is quite common to make use of the Coale-Demeny model life table to estimate an approximation of these numbers (Norman 2002:309). Even though the Roman empire was fairly advance in many ways, nevertheless we estimate that child mortality rates were fairly high, as is common in most pre-industrial societies (Golden 1988:155; Norman 2002:302,309; Severy 2010:9; Taylor et al. 2014:166).

In comparison today most of the numbers are out of 1000, with some countries within the African region having the biggest numbers with 52 deaths out of a 1000 within the first year of life (WHO 2017). With that being said infant deaths in the world in 2016 was 4,2 million

in total, however in 1990 the numbers were more than double that with 8,8 million infant deaths (WHO 2017). Now it might seem meaningless to put these numbers up against one another, but if we are to use the numbers suggested by Golden (1988:155), that would mean that for the Romans, Greeks, Egyptians and other contemporary civilisations that would mean that perhaps as many as 400 infants out of a 1000 died. There can be no doubt to the fact that these mortality rates impacted the roles children played in the society, the socialisation process as well as how they would have been commemorated after death (Norman 2002:302-303).

3.1.3 A brief introduction to Roman burial practice and mummification

According to both Cicero (*De leg. ii*, 22, 56) and Pliny the elder (*Hist. Nat. vii*, 187) it was inhumation, and not cremation, that was the first proper form of burial rite in Rome.

Although archaeological sources do not necessarily support the written sources in this case, as the cemetery in the Forum, which has been dated from the eighth to the sixth century BC, is filled with both inhumation and cremation graves. Another important source to what was common or acceptable for the Romans is the Law of the Twelve Tables (Lefkowitz and Fant 2005:95; Toynbee 2009:39).

The law of the Twelve Tables was some of the oldest laws that the Romans had, and they were extremely influential on later laws as well. These laws were even made available to the common people as they were displayed at the Forum, which meant that the laws were not only available to the aristocrats (Lefkowitz and Fant 2005:95). Even though the Tables became outdated, they were never officially removed (Lefkowitz and Fant 2009:95).

Furthermore, if we look at the Law of the Twelve Tables it does not discriminate between inhumation and cremation, and it is probable that they were near equal in popularity during the fifth century BC (Toynbee 2009:39).

In addition to inhumation and cremation there was a third option available to Romans, and that was the combination of embalming and inhumation (Toynbee 2009:41). Although, embalming was not seen as a Roman custom, it was instead seen as a foreign practice and was most likely not as common as regular inhumation or cremation (Toynbee 2009:41).

Under inhumation there was also the option known as *puticuli*, which was in essence a mass grave reserved for the poorest of the poor, criminals, beggars, slaves etc., perhaps even unwanted children (Lanciani 1897; Lanciani 1899). Though these have mainly been found in the city of Rome itself, and were supposed to have fallen out of use during the reign of Augustus (Lanciani 1897;1899). Though such pit graves could be a possible explanation for the lacking in child graves.

According to Tacitus the emperor Nero killed his then pregnant wife Poppaea in 65 AD, he further describes that her burial did not follow the Roman norm (*Ann.16.6*). Tacitus describes further that she was embalmed in spices following the traditions of foreign kings and that she was not cremated (*Ann.16.6*). One could argue that traditions of foreign kings could mean

many things, and after all there is no specific mention of mummification. However, one cannot deny that embalming and mummification are connected, in Egyptian tradition the latter does not exist without the other. Whether or not Poppaea was mummified or merely embalmed is not that important in this instant, it is more interesting that cremation was the Roman choice in this period and that it is stressed that Poppaea's form of burial was foreign in nature. This could mean several things, but in this case the most obvious conclusion would be that embalming or mummification was not a widespread practice in the empire. Although, given the numbers found in Egypt from the Roman period, this means that it was more likely a local phenomenon. I will not go into all the specifics of the mummification process, but some changes occurred like evisceration, no longer being an automatic part of it. Some sources say that the mummification trade had become poorer due to its inhabitants no longer understanding hieroglyphs.

4 Material

Here I will present the archaeological material that is the basis of my analysis. For the purpose of this thesis I had to have some criteria to determine what material I would be using. Criteria number one is that the material had to be reasonable well researched and that there were some publications available, this was mainly due to my restricted access to the material. Secondly, the mummies were to be restricted to the time of Greek or Roman rule. Lastly, the age estimate of the mummies would not be older than 12.

4.1.1 The Yasmina Cemetery

The Department of Classics of the University of Georgia excavated a cemetery outside of the Theodosian city wall of Roman Carthage from 1992 to 1997 (Norman 2002:303). This cemetery, the Yasmina cemetery is located in a suburb also called Yasmina in today's Tunis and appeared well preserved during the excavation (Norman 2002:303).

The location of the cemetery is significant for several reasons, during the reign of Augustus it was re-founded as a Roman city and it was commonly recognized as the third largest city in the empire (Norman 2002:303; Norman 2003:37). According to Norman (2002:304) Carthage could be categorised as a metropolis and might have had as many as 250 000 inhabitants. To put it into perspective that is about one third of the population of the city of Oslo today. However, it is important to stress that Carthage had a long history before the Romans seized control over the area.

Traditionally it is said that the Phoenicians founded Carthage in 853 BC, the city was then destroyed later by the Romans in 146 BC during the third Punic war (Norman 2003:37). From 146 BC until the first century AD it was under Punic control, which means that when the Romans took the city in the first century AD, there must have been quite a large indigenous population present in the city (Norman 2003:37). Nevertheless, the Romans tore the city down and rebuilt the city after Roman standards, although they did actually follow the orthogonal grid left by the Punic city when they rebuilt (Norman 2003:37).

According to contemporary sources, Carthage apparently practiced religion which required human sacrifices, specifically child sacrifices during the Punic period (Norman 2003:37).

This practice was apparently not restricted to Carthage alone as other Phoenician colonies in North Africa as well as in the Mediterranean also worshipped the same gods in this manner (Norman 2003:37). The sacrifices were made in honour of the gods Baal Hammon and Tanit, the ages of the children were from around 1 month old up until the age of five (Norman 2003:37).

The children were buried at a special ritual place, which was marked with a stele inscribed with the names of the parents who had given up their children to this practice (Norman 2003:37). The practice seemed to disappear when the city came under the Romans, but the worship of Baal and Tanit continued, although they did slowly but surely merge into the more Roman deities Saturn and Juno Caelestis after a time (Norman 2003:37). Excavations in the area has not revealed any child sacrifices from the Roman period, and it appears that the sacrifices changed from human to animal as stelae showing bulls being sacrificed were found at the site (Norman 2003:38).

With that being said, one cannot deny that there might be a possibility of an unsanctioned secret place near the city where the sacrifices continued after they fell out of favour. There is a written source by Tertullian (Apol.9.2-3) where he claims that the sacrifices continued to be practiced in public until the proconsul Tiberius ordered that the priests in charge be crucified, he further writes that the practice continued after this event, although they were now performed in secret. If that was the case, it would mean that the sacrifices continued even under the Roman rule, which could certainly be one possible explanation as to why there were not more children buried at Yasmina. Still it is important to note that this is the only reference to the continuation of child sacrifice in Carthage under the Roman rule and as previously mentioned none of the excavations in the area have found evidence of it being true.

Why would the Romans who commonly practiced infanticide and also quite commonly exposed unwanted children (Veyne 2003), stick up their noses so to speak at the child sacrifices? According to Norman (2003:38) one of the reasons why the Romans found the practice so abhorrent was for one that it was conducted in public, and furthermore that children up until the age of five were sacrificed. Norman (2003:38) states that by this age children in Rome would have been a clear member of the family, and that it would be unthinkable to violate the family in such a way.

One of the things that makes this cemetery extremely interesting to my research project is the fact that the part of the cemetery that has been excavated so far, has been in use for virtually the entire history of Carthage as a Roman city, more specifically from the beginning of the first century AD until the sixth century AD (Norman 2002:303). It is important to note, that according to Norman (2002:303) it appears as if it could possibly have been in disuse during parts of the fourth century AD, although since the cemetery has not been excavated in its entirety we have no way of knowing if other parts of the cemetery were used instead during this period of time.

Nevertheless, this means that the Yasmina cemetery has a unique potential of showing burial practice over a longer period of time, and how it developed. Especially since according to Norman (2002:304-305) it is the only cemetery which has had such a long period of continued use. However, Norman (2003:37) also cautions using the funerary material from the African province as Roman material, even though she also clearly states that the Africa Proconsularis was one of the more clearly “Romanized” provinces in the empire, as well as the most urbanized one which was a relatively easy sail away from the Italian mainland. Which in other words means that this could possibly be seen as close to Roman as one could come outside of the Italian mainland.

Evidence supports that men, women and children from both wealthy and modest backgrounds were buried at this cemetery (Norman 2002:305). Furthermore, there has been found a total of 38 sets of skeletal remains in this cemetery alone, belonging to children over 7 years old, see figure (Norman 2002:305). The burials that have been dated to the first, second and third centuries AD at Yasmina are all cremated remains (Norman 2002:305). There has not been discovered an area dedicated to cremation at the cemetery thus far, making it likely that the remains were cremated elsewhere before being transported back to the cemetery before being allocated to a resting place (Norman 2002:305). Most of the available data from this site is from the inhumation graves, this is due to the fact that analysis of the cremated remains has not yet been completed, in other words we do not yet know if any children were among the cremated remains (Norman 2002:306).

The adult inhumations from the later periods were found all over the site, however the children were found exclusively in one area of the cemetery (Norman 2002:306). In another

later Carthage cemetery from the Vandalic period the children were dispersed all throughout the cemetery, however as previously stated this was not the case at Yasmina (Norman 2002:306). At Yasmina, the child burials were all centered around early cremation monuments in the middle of what has been excavated of the cemetery so far (Norman 2002:306). The most significant of these monuments is the Tertullus tomb, which is among other things decorated with images of the she-wolf and Romulus and Remus (Norman 2002:307).

The remains of children that have been dated to the fifth century were all inhumed, however the form of inhumation differs quite a lot from case to case (Norman 2002:306). In this period children were laid to rest in stone coffins at ground level, in cobble-lined graves covered with rubble or in amphoras of varying sizes (Norman 2002:306). Some of these graves had been filled with wet plaster at the time of burial, the reason why is not clear, but one could assume that it was to protect the integrity of the grave in some way (Norman 2002:306).

Norman (2002:306) describes that some of the plaster had imprints of the folds from burial shrouds, furthermore she states that the plaster has not been found in connection to the amphora burials. Furthermore, small deposits of ash have been found in connection to some of the child burials, which Norman (2002:307-308) states could have a connection to funeral rites or commemorative meals or even offerings to the Underworld deities which is a clear possibility if one looks at Toynbee (1996:50-55, 61-64).

The grave goods connected to the children at Yasmina is sparse or nonexistent, three of the children were found with jewelry, and none of the children at Yasmina were buried with a coin for Charon which is quite significant (Norman 2002:308). Because payment to the ferryman was considered essential to most Romans. No other evidence of grave goods was found in the child burials at Yasmina, however lack of grave goods or sparse grave goods do appear to be typical for most burials at the Yasmina cemetery (Norman 2002:308).

In other words, lack of grave goods cannot be used to determine the wealth of the deceased or their families, as it appears to have been the norm. Furthermore, several of the early cremation graves have quite elaborate and clearly expensive tombs and yet no grave goods (Norman 2002:308). According to Norman (2002:308), there appears to be a pattern when it

comes to the sparse grave goods found in this case jewelry, is only found in connection to inhumation graves of children between the ages of 1-7, which she states is similar to what is found at the Lankhills¹² cemetery in Britain, however as she also states the numbers are far too small at Yasmina to be able to discern a certain pattern.

In the case of the Yasmina cemetery approximately 36,5% of the inhumation graves excavated so far belong to infants and children under the age of seven, in other words if one is to believe the common opinion that mortality rates for children were high, then there are too few child graves (Norman 2002:309). Although, Norman (2002:309) clearly states that this is typical of the Roman cemeteries that have been excavated so far. Furthermore, she states that there could be several apparent reasons for these low numbers in general, like for example poor preservation, bias by excavators, inconsistencies in the scientific analysis done, poorly defined terminology and or also limited excavations (Norman 2002:309).

Nonetheless, Norman (2002:309) states that these reasons alone are not enough to explain the apparent lack of children found in cemeteries. Clearly there is something regarding child burials that we still do not fully understand, because if the child mortality rates of pre-industrial societies truly apply to the Roman Empire, then there should have been a greater number of graves. Norman (2002:309) states that when it comes to burials the archaeological material is not enough, and suggests that literary sources must be used to further explain the available material as well as the material that is not present.

¹² Roman cemetery in Wiltshire, UK

4.1.2 The Spurlock Mummy (Lazarus) - 1989.06.0001A

In 1989 the University of Illinois acquired a human mummy for their museum's collection, when a mummy that had previously been in a private collection was sold (Wisseman 2003:ix). Several other museums and institutions had been interested in purchasing the mummy at the time, but due to laws that regulated the transportation of dead bodies in the US it would be difficult if not impossible to move the mummy out of the state of Illinois where it had been for the last 60 years (ibid).

To be able to transport the mummy out of Illinois, it would require a death certificate which would be very difficult to obtain without potentially damaging the mummy, not to mention persuading a doctor to issue one. Therefore, the University of Illinois was in many ways a perfect solution to this conundrum, it was as previously mentioned purchased in 1989 to the university of Illinois' World Heritage Museum, now known as the Spurlock museum (see figure 2) (ibid).

The mummy in question had been obtained for the private collection from the Fayum region in the 1920s and was classified as a Roman-period mummy (ibid). Little to nothing is known about the archaeological context of the mummy, however the mummy was for the most part intact. The specific provenance of the mummy will likely never be known, we know the region it came from, but not which dig site or which tomb (ibid). What we do know about the Fayum region in that time period, is that it had an ethnically diverse population, in other words the mummy could be of Egyptian, Greek or Roman descent (Wisseman 2003:24). The mummy has been dated to approximately 100 AD, which puts it around a time when Egypt had been under Roman rule for quite some time already (Wisseman 2003). One of the reasons why I've included this mummy in my paper is that despite the fact that little is known about its origin it was one of the first mummies to be investigated in the United States using mainly non-destructive methods (Wisseman 2003:3).

Furthermore, the investigations of this mummy required interdisciplinary research, a team of experts in various fields had to be assembled (Wisseman 2003:x). Among the people working on the project were physicians and technicians from hospitals, researchers in fields like classics, anthropology, chemistry, veterinary medicine, entomology, supercomputing to

mention a few (ibid). In other words, a massive team was working together across disciplines to learn as much as possible about this mummy.

This mummy is decorated with a Roman style portrait which has been inserted into the mummies' wrappings that have been coated with a red-tinted stucco, although the portrait had been poorly preserved up until the museum bought it, some details are still visible (Wisseman 2003:22). The portrait depicts a youth with dark and curly hair that is crowned with a gold laurel wreath, more details of the face can only be seen with UV lights (Wisseman 2003:22). With the help of UV lights, it is possible to see a little more facial detail on the portrait like eyes and lips, without the aid of UV lights it is extremely difficult to see these details at all due to the poor condition of the portrait (see figure 3) (Wisseman 2003:22).

The youth in the portrait is wearing some form of garment in white and a himation which is a form of cloak typically worn in Greece in antiquity (Wisseman 2003:22). At first glance, it appears to be a male in the portrait primarily due to the clothing, however females have been known to be depicted in the same kind of outfit so one cannot determine sex based on the portrait alone (Wisseman 2003:22).

In addition to the portrait the mummy is decorated with several pictographic scenes of Egyptian gods as well as symbols that represent them, all these gods are usually associated with death or rather burial and rebirth (Wisseman 2003:22). Underneath the face portrait on the wrappings are eyes commonly called wadjet which are mostly associated with Horus the son of Isis and Osiris (Wisseman 2003:22). Wadjet were supposed to have protective powers as well as symbolizing health and revitalization in the afterlife, they also had another possible interpretation and that was that they symbolized the natural cycle of the sun and the moon (Wisseman 2003:22).

Underneath the Wadjet are two falcons which also symbolize Horus, specifically Horus in his falcon form (Wisseman 2003:22). Underneath the falcons is an image of Nut, she is the mother of Isis, Osiris, Nephthys and Seth, and she is like her grandson Horus a deity for the sky (Wisseman 2003:22). In this image of Nut, she is holding the feathers of Maat, who is the goddess of not only truth, but also balance as well as order (Wisseman 2003:22). The feather is important in Egyptian mythology, because Anubis would use the feathers of Maat to judge people. If your heart weighed more or less than the feather then you would be rejected and

denied entry to the afterlife, consequently you would be devoured by the Ammit also known as the devourer of souls.

The image of Osiris on the wrappings is near the feet of the mummy, Osiris was one of the more common gods associated with death as well as the afterlife (Wisseman 2003:22). In many ways Osiris was the first mummy known to the Egyptians, because Isis reassembled and wrapped his body after their brother Seth killed and dismembered him, it is probably due to this that Osiris often is depicted as a mummy on funerary art (Wisseman 2003:22).

The decorations on the Spurlock mummy are similar if not nearly identical to other known mummies from round about the same time period and area, the portrait is too degraded to be of any significant help in determining gender, identity, ethnicity or even who painted the portrait (Wisseman 2003:24).

The team responsible for examining the Spurlock mummy did a whole range of tests, the first of these were x-rays (Wisseman 2003:27). X-rays was a natural first choice, not only is it non-invasive and non-destructive, but it is also a quick way to see the body in its entirety. Any objects hidden in the wrappings would also show up on x-ray. The team took 14 x-rays alongside the entire length of the mummy, these x-rays were enough to determine that based on the teeth the mummy was most likely that of a child (Wisseman 2003:27). Furthermore, they could also see that the child had his or her arms stretched out with the hands resting on top of the thighs, this positioning of the arms have been found in male mummies before. The hands covered most of the genital area making determining the sex of the child difficult (Wisseman 2003:27).

The x-rays revealed no jewellery or amulets visible on the body, yet this is common with the mummies dated to the Roman period (Wisseman 2003:27). There were no signs of organ packages, which meant that some organs might still be inside the body in their original positions (Wisseman 2003:27). They could also see that the epiphyses were not fused, epiphyses are growth plates found at the ends of the long bones at the knees, wrists and hips (Wisseman 2003:28). The teeth, epiphyses and the short length of the mummy were enough for the team to determine that the mummy was a child around 7-9 years old (Wisseman 2003:28). This meant that the child was too young to be able to determine sex by analysing

the shape of the pelvic bone as that does not change shape based on sex until much later in life.

The x-rays revealed some fractures along the ribs as well as possible fractures to the jaw, however it was unclear if it was caused ante-mortem or if it was due to the mummification process (Wisseman 2003:28). There were also some indications on the bones that the child may have suffered from malnutrition or sickness at some point (Wisseman 2003:30).

Computerized tomography, better known as CT scans, is a technology that combines a series of X-ray images taken from several different angles, which are then processed by a computer to create cross-section images of bones and soft tissue in a body (Mayo Clinic 2012). In other words, it gives us a way of performing a virtual autopsy without damaging or compromising the human remains (Davey et al. 2013:657). This technology enables scientists to view detailed images of specific areas of the body, the images can be combined to make 3D images, this allows for more accurate information than ordinary X-ray images (Mayo Clinic 2012). CT-scanning was first attempted on Egyptian mummies during the 1970s (Wisseman 2003:31).

In the case of child mummies this technology has many applications, one is the possibility of determining the child's age by examining the stage of development of the dentition in the mandible (Davey et al. 2003:32). Furthermore, it is also possible to determine the sex of the deceased more accurately by using scan images, at least in cases where the remains are mummified, as the more traditional method of measuring the pelvic is much less accurate (Davey et al. 2013:661).

In the case of the Spurlock mummy, two scans were performed at two separate medical clinics (Wisseman 2003:31). One scan was a preliminary scan done to identify major features of the mummy, this was done at 10 mm intervals for the body and subsequently 5 mm intervals for the head (Wisseman 2003:31). The focus on the second scan was the head, this was imaged at 3 mm intervals, this was to make the chances for a 3D-reconstruction of the head more likely to succeed (Wisseman 2003:31). The CT-scans revealed that the jaw had not been fractured as previously thought due to the X-rays, but that it was merely tilted to one side and that it rested on the mummy's' chest (Wisseman 2003:31).

The rib fractures spotted on the x-rays were confirmed, and they could also see that the chest had collapsed (Wisseman 2003:31). The major organs had not been removed from the mummy, but appeared to be dried and moved inside the body (Wisseman 2003:31). There were also some fractures to the back of the skull, however it was deemed unlikely to be the cause of death due to the lack of traces of blood pooling in the skull (Wisseman 2003:31). The sex of the mummy could not be determined by CT-scan either, however the scans did reveal a surprise. Not only had the mummy been padded with extra linen (presumably to make the appearance more life-like), but there was a wooden board under the back (Wisseman 2003:31-32).

The wooden board ran the entire length of the mummy underneath the wrappings (Wisseman 2003:31). However, they would later discover that wooden boards had been found in several other mummies before, some of these other mummies showed evidence of the bodies being in poor condition prior to mummification (Wisseman 2003:39-40). The wooden board would in other words most likely have a practical role, although wood was in many ways considered a luxury in Egypt so if it did merely have a practical application then surely other material would have sufficed?

Not all the test performed on the Spurlock mummy were nondestructive, however it is important to note that all nondestructive tests were performed with the greatest care to not inflict further damage to the mummy. Tests were run on the wooden board; although, it was only on a part of the board that was already exposed so as to not ruin the integrity of the mummy (Wisseman 2003:41). They also sent away a sample of the wood to an expert to attempt to determine where the wood had originated from, it was determined that the wood was cedar commonly found in Morocco and North-Africa (Wisseman 2003:40). The wood sample collected from the board was carbon dated, however the results of this test showed that the wood was dated to around 190 BC +- 160 years, which meant that the wood predated the mummy by quite a lot at least if one were to base it on the dating of the portrait (Wisseman 2003:41).

Several possible explanations for this were offered up by the team conducting the tests, the wood may have been cut from a tree long before it was used, or it had possible come from wood being reused due to wood being a luxury as previously mentioned (Wisseman

2003:41). Another possible explanation was that the use of bitumen¹³ in the mummification process could have altered the dating, due to the fact that bitumen has ancient carbon in it (Wisseman 2003:41).

There was also run several tests on samples of the resin, however those did not reveal much other than that it did not contain plant or insect wax and that bitumen was used in this mummification (Wisseman 2003:42-43). Furthermore, tests were run on insects found in the resin samples, these tests showed that the insects had been present on the body previous to mummification (Wisseman 2003:43-45). The insects were beetles that feeds on decaying flesh, which would mean that the corpse would have been decomposing previous to the mummification (Wisseman 2003:43-45). In other words, the corpse may not have been in pristine condition before the mummification process started.

Tests were also run on fibers from the loose wrappings, this was done to try and identify what kind of fabric had been utilized. They determined that it was either immature flax or ramie¹⁴, which were both used for mummy wrappings (Wisseman 2003:48). If it was ramie, this could have been because of the decay of the body, because ramie has antibacterial properties (Wisseman 2003:48).

The team also tried to do a final attempt at determining the sex of the mummy by doing a DNA-test on a small sample of tissue, they were hoping to determine the sex by using ancient DNA (Wisseman 2003:48). The test was for the most part unsuccessful, DNA was found, but the sample was cloudy so sex could not be determined (Wisseman 2003:48). It was thought that the tissue might have been contaminated by the embalmment fluid, making successful DNA tests difficult (Wisseman 2003:48).

Although, most of the tests done on this mummy were considered nonintrusive and nondestructive some of the tests were definitively destructive in nature. However, the team, were careful to use bones or fabric that had already been compromised previous to the tests. One could argue that most of these tests were entirely unnecessary in nature, due to the lack of conclusive results from the tests in question. In other words, they had failed to find

¹³ Bitumen is a petroleum derivative sometimes used in mummification in Egypt.

¹⁴ Ramie is a type of nettle, that can be used to create a silk-like fabric.

answers to the two most obvious questions related to the mummy, was it a boy or a girl and how had the child died?

While neither of those questions had obvious answers even with the large amounts of tests ran on the mummy, some of the new information can still enable us to do an educated guess. Some things clearly point to the mummy being a boy, as mentioned previously the positioning of the hands has been found in male mummies before. However, the clothing depicted in the portrait is ambiguous when it comes to determining the sex so one cannot say for certain whether or not it is a boy or a girl.

Furthermore, when it comes to cause of death it seems to be unlikely that the fractures found had anything to do with the death. Most likely the fractures were caused by the mummification process itself. However, the signs of possible malnutrition or disease found on the bones, could be much more important. Seeing as this child was mummified, which has been established as a quite costly operation it seems unlikely that the child came from a poor family and most likely there would not have been starving or malnourished during its life.

Although one could argue that lack of knowledge about nutrition might have been a cause for some malnutrition, but for it to present itself on the bones it would have had to be over an extended period of time, which seems unlikely for a child from a wealthy family. It seems far more likely that it would have been caused by disease, such as cancer, tuberculosis or polio - mark the bones. Thus, one could speculate that the child died from some sort of disease or complications related to a previous disease. It is important to state that this is merely speculation, and that one cannot be a hundred percent certain about any of this. The state of decay of the body before mummification took place, could point to the family struggling to gather funds for the process.

4.1.3 Mummy of a Toddler – British Museum EA 22108

British museum purchased this mummy from Walter L. Lawson in 1889, and it has been in the museum's custody since then (Taylor et al. 2014:153). This mummy was discovered in 1888 in Hawara by William M. Flinders Petrie during his excavations in the area (Taylor et al. 2014:157). Hawara is located in the Fayum region, right at the entrance of the oasis (Taylor et al. 2014:158). This area was widely used as a cemetery for the nearby city of Arsinoe during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, and a large number of mummies, portraits and objects were found during excavations in this area (Taylor et al. 2014:158).

When Petrie found this mummy, it was entombed with several other mummies; two more child mummies and the mummy of a woman (see figures 4,5,6,7,8) (Taylor et al. 2014:158). The mummy has been dated to around 40-60 AD (Taylor et al. 2014; British Museum 2017c). One of the other child mummies found in this group is also at the British museum EA21809, however this mummy is in a different style with a portrait panel instead of the gilded cartonnage found on EA22108 (Taylor et al. 2014:158). Taylor et al. (2014:158), state that EA21809 has been identified as a boy, however at the British museum website it says that the sex of that mummy is uncertain, and it has been dated to 40-55 AD (British Museum 2017a).

The other child mummy found in this group was decorated with gilded cartonnage similar to that of EA22108, however this one did have decorations which indicate that this mummy was a girl, this mummy is currently located at The Museum of Manchester (Taylor et al. 2014:158-159). In the beginning, Petrie was determined that EA22108 was a girl (Taylor et al. 2014:157). Later studies on this mummy revealed some doubt around the sex of the mummy, this was mostly due to the lack of decorations which had been found on other female mummies in the same style (Taylor et al. 2014:157). The lack of distinctive decorations commonly associated with female mummies from the same period as well as CT scans has led to a re-evaluation of the sex of this mummy, and it has been concluded that in this case it is most likely the mummy of a boy and not a girl like Petrie had previously determined (Taylor et al. 2014:157).

The child's age at death has been estimated to around 2 years of age plus minus 9 months (Taylor et al. 2014:153,164). Of course, estimating age and sex of child remains can be exceedingly difficult, however given that the child was mummified which we assume was

rather costly we could further conclude that the child was most likely not malnourished. This means that we can assume that the age estimate; which is largely based on the development of the teeth and legs, is more or less accurate.

The fact that this mummy was found as part of a group, led to the theory that this could have been a family unit consisting of a mother and her children, however the differences in style makes this seem unlikely (Taylor et al. 2014:158). Furthermore, there were no names or other inscriptions found that could support this theory, one cannot however immediately claim that the mummies had no connection to each other at all, they were after all found together (Taylor et al. 2014:158). The mummies excavated in this area by Petrie, were not found in elaborate tombs or stone sarcophagi, instead they appeared to have been buried with little to no care in simple pits or chests made out of bricks (Taylor et al. 2014:158). Several of the mummies found show signs of being stored or displayed in a different location previous to being disposed of in a cemetery (Taylor et al. 2014:158). In other words, this means that mummies discovered together not necessarily belong together or at least that they may not all stem from the same original time and place.

EA22108 is wrapped up with great care and many layers of bandages, which were all bound very tightly around the body (Taylor et al. 2014:160). The gilded cartonnage on the face and chest of the mummy, as well as small details painted on the face and the little bouquet that is being held in the left hand shows that great care has been taken with the decoration of this mummy (Taylor et al. 2014:160). At the bottom of the mummy we can clearly see the feet which have not only been gilded, but they have also been decorated to look like real feet in sandals (Taylor et al. 2014:160).

Most of the cartonnage that covers this mummy is decorated with several scenes that depict rituals being performed, for instance there is one scene where a figure which could be either a priest or maybe even the deceased himself presenting offerings in front of the gods while holding a papyrus roll and what appears to be a libation vase (Taylor et al. 2014:160). Like in the case of the Spurlock mummy this mummy also has images of deities on it, several of the same gods which decorate the Spurlock mummy are present on this mummy. Even though some of the same gods are represented, the imagery is actually quite different from the Spurlock mummy.

On this mummy Osiris is shown sitting on a throne protected by Isis and Nephthys, there is a second image of Osiris on the mummy, this time showing him on a different type of throne alone (Taylor et al. 2014:160). Unlike the Spurlock mummy there is a clear depiction of the weighing of the heart on this mummy, while on the Spurlock mummy there were only symbols connected with it or hinting at it (Taylor et al. 2014:162). The weighing of the heart is as previously mentioned quite significant, the fact that it was clearly depicted on the mummy of a child like this, could indicate that even children were expected to prove their worth to the gods (Taylor et al. 2014:162). Keep in mind that this child was most likely around two years old, so clearly the choices it could have made in its life up until that point would have been severely limited, and yet the image was still viewed as important in connection to this child.

This mummy also has imagery of a mummification process on it, where it is Anubis himself who is performing the mummification (Taylor et al. 2014:162). There are also images of Isis and Nephthys performing protective rites present on the mummy, as well as an image of a boat, which most likely symbolizes the journey the child would take in the afterlife (Taylor et al. 2014:162). Also, Thoth and Horus are represented on this mummy, images where they are purifying the deceased by pouring liquid over him and holding his hands (Taylor et al. 2014:162). This scene is significant because it has been documented previously on mummies which are much older than this one, the British Museum has a mummy of an adult woman named Tamut which is almost 1000 years older than this mummy, also decorated with this scene (Taylor et al. 2014:162). Furthermore, the use of gold in decorating the mummy particularly on the face and head, is thought to be associated with granting a form of divine status to the deceased, in short bringing them closer to the gods (Taylor et al. 2014:162).

CT scans were performed on the mummy, and they revealed that not only was it most likely a boy, but that he had as previously mentioned died at a very young age (Taylor et al. 2014:163). The CT scan made it possible to see the teeth in great detail, most of which were still growing inside the jawbone, a closer study of the scans of the teeth did indeed reveal that the milk teeth had erupted but that his canines, permanent incisors and first molars were less than half-formed (Taylor et al. 2014:163). Being able to determine age based on dental development in young children is a method that is relatively precise, as there is little variation in the time frame of dental development in children, and therefore one can use the standards from modern populations as a base line (Taylor et al. 2014:163).

As previously stated the boy was about two years old give or take nine months at the time of his death, this was based on not only dental development but also the length of his long bones in the legs and arms (Taylor et al. 2014:164). Both the dental and skeletal development of this child seem to correspond nicely with that of a modern-day child around one and a half and two years of age (Taylor et al. 2014:164). In other words, this child was not malnourished, and therefore starvation would have been a very unlikely cause of death.

The child's remains have been well preserved, and it clearly speaks to great care having been taken during the mummification process (Taylor et al. 2014:164). Not only were most of the internal organs removed, but it also appears that the brain was left in place to preserve the skull, possibly because the skull and bones can be quite fragile in young children (Taylor et al. 2014:164). It is often the case with the child mummies that the brain is left inside the skull instead of being removed.

The scans further revealed an abnormality in the spine, which appeared to be curved, and that the ribs on the left side had been pushed up against the spine and rotated out of their position in some places (Taylor et al. 2014:164). However, it was deemed more likely that the abnormality of the spine and ribs was due to the mummification process (Taylor et al 2014:164). The scans also made it possible to see how the body had been positioned before being wrapped, the head has been tilted forward so the chin is almost resting upon the chest, which is a position that has been seen in other mummies from the same period (Taylor et al. 164-165).

The scans show no obvious signs of trauma on the body apart from the previously mentioned abnormalities to the ribs and spine, as well as a small hole in the back of the skull (Taylor et al. 2014:164-165). According to Taylor et al. (2014:164-165) there are not really anything in the bones that could point to cause of death, they postulate that cause of death could possibly be due to a gastrointestinal disease, as that was apparently a common cause of death for children during this time.

4.1.4 The Mummy of a young boy – British Museum EA6715

This mummy was acquired by British Museum in 1835, it was purchased from the archaeologist Henry Salt, through Sotheby's (British Museum 2017b). The original provenance of the mummy is unknown (Roberts 2008:93). This mummy is special because not only is the portrait painted on a shroud, and not directly onto the wrappings or on a wooden portrait, but it has also been dated to around 230-250 AD (British Museum 2017b; Roberts 2008:93). That means that this mummy is one of the latest known portrait mummies (Roberts 2008:93). The mummy is that of a male child which was most likely around seven or ten years old at the time of mummification (see figures 9 and 10) (British Museum 2017b; Roberts 2008:93). As with the Grottarossa mummy, there are traces of resin on this mummy (British Museum 2017b).

Not much is known about this mummy, other than what meets the eye as well as the results of CAT scans and interpretations of the portrait. I decided to include this mummy to show the stylistic changes from the other mummies I have chosen for this thesis.

4.1.5 Grottarossa Mummy

The district of Grottarossa is located in Italy on the outskirts of Rome. It was in this area that a mummy was discovered quite accidentally during construction work in 1964 (Ascenzi et al. 1996:205; Ascenzi and Bianco 2006:263; Ciuffarella 1998:201; Toynbee 1996:41). This mummy aptly nicknamed the Grottarossa mummy or the Roman mummy of Grottarossa was actually found in what appears to be a reasonably well preserved archaeological context, however it is widely regarded as an “anomaly”; or as Ascenzi et al. puts it “Mummification was never a Roman custom, and at present the Grottarossa mummy (see figure 11) must be considered a unique specimen” (1996:205).

However, it is important to point out that Ascenzi et al. (1996:205) is here referring to the fact that the mummy was found in Italy or more specifically “Rome” and not in any way dismissing the fact that a great number of the “Egyptian” mummies have been categorised as Roman or Graeco-Roman. Furthermore, cremation was also the most common form of mortuary ritual for the Romans at least in Italy, making this find even more surprising (Aufderheide 2010:202; Toynbee 1996). The fact that the mummy was that of a child and a girl was also another surprise as Roman child graves in general are rather rare. According to Toynbee (1996:42) the Grottarossa mummy was not the only mummy found in Roman territory that was not in Egypt. Two mummies were found during the Renaissance along the Via Appia, three mummies have been found in Pannonia¹⁵ in 1912, 1929 and 1962, and there was also found one in France¹⁶ in 1756 (Ciuffarella 1998:202; Toynbee 1996:42).

In regards to the archaeological context of the Grottarossa mummy, it was actually found in a sarcophagus made out of white marble and decorated with carvings (Ascenzi et al. 1996:205; Ascenzi and Bianco 2006:263; Ciuffarella 1998; Toynbee 1996:41). Whether or not the sarcophagus had been painted has not been determined, but as we know Romans in general often painted colours on top of marble surfaces so this could have been the case with this sarcophagus as well. There were several types of images carved into the sarcophagus one of the scenes depicted several hunting scenes which have been interpreted as being inspired by stories from the Aeneid, as well as images of Venus, a river deity and images connected to

¹⁵ A Roman province which stretched across these modern-day territories: Western Hungary, Eastern Austria, Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia.

¹⁶ In what was Gaul.

Africa (Ascenzi and Bianco 2006:263). The sarcophagus has been dated to around the second century AD, based on the material and style of it (Ciuffarella 1998:201).

Determining age and sex of ancient remains is difficult, especially when it is a prepubescent child, however if there are artefacts found with the remains then establishing age or sex is easier. This is also the case with the Grottarossa mummy as there were several artefacts found with the mummy that supported the determination of sex. The mummy was entombed with jewellery more suited for a younger female, several small items made of amber, and an ivory doll (Ascenzi and Bianco 2006:263). It has been determined that the mummy in question was a girl approximately 8 years old, the age estimate is for the most part based on analysis of the skeleton and the dental development (Ascenzi and Bianco 2006:263). The mummy was unwrapped after its discovery and although there has been some discussion on cause of death, the body did bear signs of rickets and a likely cause of death has been suggested to be tuberculosis (Ciuffarella 1998:202; Toynbee 1996:41).

Both the doll and the jewellery indicate that the mummy is female, the doll could also be seen as evidence of a young age. It was also not unknown for girls as young as 12 to be married, it was also likely that this girl was younger than that as there were nothing to support adult status found with the mummy. Furthermore, these funerary items have also been helpful in narrowing down the time frame of when the girl would have lived and died. Based on these objects she most likely lived sometime during the second century AD (Ascenzi and Bianco 2006:263). The mummy itself has been loosely dated to somewhere between 150 and 200 AD, and is thought to have been of Caucasian descent (Ciuffarella 1998:201).

The Grottarossa mummy was mummified using a technique which was commonly used in Egypt during the Roman period (Aufderheide 2010:202; Ascenzi and Bianco 2006:264; Ciuffarella 1998:201). Whether or not she was actually mummified in Egypt or around Rome is not known, however this has been the main focus of many of the analysis' done on this particular mummy. And while there has been done extensive research on the pollen in the resin found on some of the wrappings, the results have been inconclusive (Ciuffarella 1998). The pollen grains found in these resin samples, are from plants that are native to Africa, which could indicate that the mummy was mummified in Africa, probably Egypt if that was the case (Ciuffarella 1998). However, given the extensive trade routes Rome had access to

one cannot exclude the possibility of the mummification being done in Rome either as the pollen grains could have come from imported merchandise (Ciuffarella 1998).

Ciuffarella (1998:201), also explains that two kinds of pollen grains were found during the testing, they stem from plants that there has been no mention of in any of the descriptions of the mummification process that we have from ancient times. Ciuffarella (1998:201), further suggests that this in itself could make mummification outside of Egypt a likely explanation. Both Toynbee (1996) and Ciuffarella (1998), has one likely explanation to what could be the reason for mummification if it was mummified outside of Rome, and that is that the girl in question could have been a child of a Roman official who had been stationed in Egypt with family when the child died, and that they chose to bring the body home with them. Other possible explanations could also be that the parents were followers of one of the Egyptian cults, most likely the Isiac one and that this was the reason for the mummification. However, given the likelihood of the great popularity of the cult as I've previously mentioned this should have meant that there would have been more mummies in and around Rome. As of now, there are no numbers to support this theory.

4.1.6 Egyptian influences in the Empire

No matter what you want to study when it comes to Romans, Pompeii always seem to become relevant. The city was buried by volcanic ash after an eruption from Mt. Vesuvius in 79 AD, and it was rediscovered in 1748 and was consequently one of the first historic sites in the world to be excavated systematically (Beard 2009:1; Rowland 2014:1; Lazer 2010:6). The fact that it was buried under volcanic ash has led to remarkable preservation of the town as well as almost making it a time capsule or rather a city frozen in time. This makes it quite the unique location for study into numerous different aspects of Roman city life and culture. Furthermore, since the first excavation in 1748 by Abbot Giuseppe Martorelli, followed by excavations in the 1860s under the leadership of Giuseppe Fiorelli, Pompeii has been extensively excavated (Lazer 2010:6; Gates 2007:343; Rowland 2014:86). Today most of the city has been excavated, and now the main challenge and focus is instead the continued preservation of the site.

For the purpose of this thesis the main interest in Pompeii are the Egyptian influences in the town, I would suggest that Pompeii is one of the places in the Empire where the Egyptian influences are the most obvious in the archaeological material. However, that is as previously mentioned most likely due to the fact that it has been frozen in time and it does not mean that these influences were not visible or present elsewhere in the empire.

That is to say that the other cities in the empire continued to change and develop over the years, Rome for example went through many major changes, where temples and buildings were moved to different locations or changed to suit new uses and needs. In many ways one could say that time is our enemy and due to changes like the ones in Rome and other cities, figuring out the full extent of the influences Egypt had on the empire in the material culture is nearly impossible, but if one is to think that Pompeii was for all intents and purposes an example of a typical Roman city, then one can surely use it to at least indicate how influential the Egyptian culture could have been in any given Roman city.

The city of Pompeii was of modest size and is located near today's Naples in Campania, even though its then close location to the coast meant that trade would have been important to its economy, agriculture was even more so (Berry 2014:12; Gates 2007:343). The city seemed to prosper during the first century AD, and it is estimated to have had a population somewhere

around 10-20 000 (Berry 2014:12). Pompeii produced a multitude of goods like wool, flowers, perfume and garum¹⁷, which means that it had plenty of goods for the markets and for export (Gates 2007:344). Due to the city's close proximity to a volcano, the soil in the area would have been very fertile and farming would most likely have been much more successful and profitable in this area as opposed to other parts of today's Italy (Fisher 2017). The fact that the city also was close to the shoreline would have meant that not only did they have plenty of access to fish for garum-production, but they would also have had the use of excellent trade routes. There have been found artefacts in Pompeii, that most likely are from India which means that the trade routes could have been a lot more expansive and global in nature than what was previously assumed (Beard 2009:24).

Most Roman cities had quite a large selection of religious options for its inhabitants, foreign and local religions usually had a presence, and Pompeii was no exception to this (Beard 2009:302). For the most part what we today know about the practice of religion in the Roman Empire are based on various depictions of ritual activity, however, the various depictions were not limited to temples or other public spaces or buildings, religious images from this time can be found on just about anything (Smith 2012:276). In Pompeii alone there has been found thousands of images of several different deities and they come in all shapes and sizes on just about any kind of artefact or building (Beard 2009:276). Furthermore, there does not seem to be much discrimination in what kind of deities there can be found representations of in the same place, and it was quite common to find Lares¹⁸ and items like bronze rattles and cymbals which are commonly attributed to the worship of Isis in the same house (Smith 2012:276).

Romans had a long-standing tradition of adopting religion from others, most of the gods of the Roman State religion or rather Roman pantheon were similar or the same as the Greek Gods (Warrior 2006:10). For instance, Jupiter was for all intents and purposes the very same as the Greek god Zeus, and the same could be said for other deities like Venus¹⁹, Diana²⁰, Ceres²¹, Minerva²², Mars²³, and Juno²⁴ just to mention a few (Warrior 2006:10). Of course,

¹⁷ Fish sauce, a common condiment and cooking ingredient for the Romans, often referred to as their ketchup.

¹⁸ Roman house hold gods

¹⁹ Aphrodite

²⁰ Artemis

²¹ Demeter

²² Athena

²³ Ares

²⁴ Hera

the Romans did have some gods of their own like Janus or Vesta, and some deities did not receive a new name when adopted by the Romans like Apollo or Dionysus, however Dionysus and Bacchus are often referred to or seen as the deity (Warrior 2006:10-11). Even though the “Olympian gods” were the main deities, there were a lot of other forms of religious practice present in the empire like the previously mentioned Lares, family spirits, demigods²⁵ animals and even some locations like forests could be worshipped (Warrior 2006:9). Additionally, emperors or other mortals who had been deified or concepts like Hope, well as obvious foreign deities could be objects of worship (Warrior 2006:10). In Pompeii there were even inscriptions that could indicate that not only Judaism, but also Christianity could have had followers in the city (Beard 2009:309). In other words, Roman religion could at best be described as a patchwork.

When it comes to Egyptian influences in the city of Pompeii, the most obvious influence that can be found in the archaeological material are evidence of the Isiac cult. Isis was originally an Egyptian goddess, although the religion connected to her seemingly began to change already when the Greeks started settling in Egypt during the 7th century BC (Bommas 2012). By the time Alexander the Great had conquered Egypt, the Isiac cult had gone through several changes which made it more compatible with co-worshipping the Olympian gods, and as a result this changed form of worship started spreading to Greece (Bommas 2012:419). Romans also picked up this cult, but by the time it came to Rome, Isis no longer resembled the traditional Egyptian gods (Bommas 2012:431).

In the beginning before the worship of Isis changed she was married to her brother Osiris, and together they ruled Egypt. There are several different versions of the story about Isis and Osiris, but what follows is the gist of it (Bommas 2012:424). Osiris’ brother Seth was jealous of Osiris, and wanted to be king so he killed Osiris, dismembered him and threw him in the Nile. Isis found Osiris’ remains, put him back together and then she became pregnant with Horus (Beard 2009; Bommas 2012:424).

During the beginning of the first century BC, the worship of Isis was introduced to Campania and thus most likely to Pompeii as well, it has been suggested that the faith was spread by merchants (Warrior 2006:88). Although one cannot rule out other possibilities like that it was

²⁵ usually refers to half human half god, like Hercules.

Greeks or even Egyptian slaves who brought the faith with them, most likely it could have been a combination of both merchants and other groups. Other foreign cults were introduced to the Romans over the years, and most can be linked to the expansion of the empire's borders (Warrior 2006:88). The Isiac cult must have been quite popular when it first came to the Empire because it spread quickly from Campania to other parts of the Italic mainland and the practice spread to Rome itself already during the 50s BC (Warrior 2006:89).

However, it would appear that Rome did not welcome the Isiac cult and in fact during the 50s BC orders were made to have all the shrines connected to it destroyed (Beard 2009; Warrior 2006:89). Although, there are no records of other Roman cities having to follow these instructions, so whether or not this would have been the case in Pompeii as well is unknown. Nevertheless, it seems like the Isiac cult did become more accepted in time as the second triumvirate²⁶ ordered a temple dedicated to Isis and Serapis to be built in Rome during the late 40s BC (Warrior 2006:89-90). Construction on the temple was cancelled when the conflict between Mark Antony, Cleopatra and Octavian became inevitable when Antony and Cleopatra became allies (Warrior 2006:90).

It did not seem like the lack of a temple dedicated to Isis in Rome deterred the worship, and most likely the cult was still practiced in the privacy of the home (Warrior 2006:90). It is clear that the worship had continued in some shape or form, because Emperor Tiberius attempted to ban all Egyptian cults in 19 AD (Warrior 2006:90). Obviously, the ban did not stick because in the end Rome did get a temple to Isis and Serapis in 43 AD, it was built by orders of Emperor Claudius on the Campus Martius (Warrior 2006:90). This location was significant in some ways, because the temples to the Roman deities were placed elsewhere in the city. In other words, it was accepted enough to get a temple, but it was too foreign to have a temple near the more traditional Roman gods.

It has been established by now that it was likely the trade routes by sea that led to the worship of Isis reaching Pompeii, by that logic there are several other towns where the same process could have occurred. One example of a town like that is Ostia, although this might have been due to its close proximity to Rome. Although there have been found no temples or shrines

²⁶ Antony, Lepidus and Octavian

dedicated to the Isiac cult in Ostia, there have been found inscriptions and sculptures that indicate that the cult could have had a following there as well, and that there might have been a temple at some point (Mols 2007:227). Additionally, indications of Serapis being worshipped in Ostia are present, which would further support that Isis had a following there as well (Mols 2007:227). This is due to the fact that Serapis was the more Hellenised replacement for Osiris as the consort of Isis, meaning that one was rarely worshipped without the other. In comparison to Pompeii, there was little evidence of the Isiac cult in Ostia, enough has been found to support that some followers of the cult lived there, but they appear to have been a minority.

Not unlike the cult of Bacchus or the Greek mystery cult, the Isiac cult required some form of initiation of its followers, and it has been speculated that this might be the reason for its appeal to the Romans (Warrior 2006:89). In addition to the secrecy and mystery, Isis was also a deity who had power over several aspects of life and thus her appeal would have been even greater. She could among other things grant protection to sailors and other people who depended upon the sea, she also had the power to resurrect which was uncommon among the more traditional Roman gods, and she was in many ways the perfect example of what a woman should strive towards in that day and age, a perfect wife that was loyal and also a perfect mother (Beard 2009; Berry 2014:204,206).

When it comes to actual archaeological material that show the Egyptian influences in the Empire, the Isiac temple in Pompeii is a well-preserved example of exactly that (Beard 2009, Berry 2014:204). The temple itself is in many ways the result of a seemingly eclectic mix of styles, and it has both traditional portraits and sculptures in the Roman style of Roman gods like Venus, as well as Egyptian details like for example hieroglyphs (Beard 2009). One aspect that is even more interesting about the temple, is the fact that it had actually been damaged or even completely destroyed once during an earthquake in 63 AD (Berry 2014:206).

The temple must have had some importance to the people of Pompeii, because the cost of restoring the temple had been donated by a young boy who was merely six years old, nevertheless this boy received an official post in Pompeii in payment of his generosity to the city (Berry 2014:206). The boy in question was Numerius the younger and he was the son of

a freedman, and therefore he could not hold such a position himself so this was most likely a calculated move by the father to give his son a start in a political career (Berry 2014:206).

There was most likely several other buildings damaged in the earthquake at the time, so one could surmise that maybe Numerius' father had been a member of the cult, or maybe that the cult was so popular that it was the best building to pay to restore. There are indications that the Isiac cult was not only one of the best established cults in Pompeii, but that it was also enormously popular (Berry 2014:204). As for how the cult itself functioned, very little is known about it seeing as it was based on secrecy and initiation (Berry 2014:204). However, we do know that there were two ceremonies that were practised by the followers on a daily basis, and that there were several festivals and processions that took place throughout the year (Berry 2014:204).

In addition to the temple of Isis in Pompeii, there is also another good example of the presence of the Isiac cult in the city and that is the House of Loreius Tiburtinus (Berry 2014:176). The house has a portrait of a priest of the cult decorating one of the walls, and there is even a name written underneath the portrait: Amulius Faventinus Tiburs (Berry 2014:176). The fact that there is a name underneath the portrait could mean several things, either it is a depiction of an actual person who bears that name, it was a signature from the artist or maybe even graffiti.

There has also been found several statuettes of Isis in *lararias*²⁷ in several houses, in addition to findings of wall paintings, Egyptian motifs and figurines in more than twenty houses in Pompeii (Berry 2014: 191,204). Furthermore, the cymbals and rattles previously mentioned have been found several places not only in Pompeii, but also in the neighbouring town of Herculaneum²⁸ (Berry 2014:205).

²⁷ Shrine to household gods – lares

²⁸ Also buried by volcanic ash

5 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this thesis might seem like three extremely different theories, but they are actually interconnected and maybe even complimentary. One might wonder how globalisation theories which are mainly modern in nature and for the most part is used to explain modern phenomenon, can be applied to an ancient civilisation like the Roman Empire. Past research has used the expression ‘Romanisation/Romanization’ to describe the spread of Roman cultural identity (Hingley 2005:2). One must always keep in mind that cultural exchange is not a one-way street.

Therefore, the term Romanisation can in many ways be viewed as slightly outdated, and I will instead be applying theories of globalisation to achieve a more nuanced view of the cultural exchange that was happening between Egypt and Rome. Even if Romanisation can be seen as outdated, it is still one of the major theories that deal with cultural exchange in the Roman empire. This means that it cannot be excluded without a mention, and by combining some aspects of Romanisation with globalisation as well as hybridisation theory one might have a more balanced view of the entire picture.

5.1.1 1.Romanisation

When Romanisation theory was first introduced as a concept in the late 1800s and until the 1960s, it was not met with much criticism by historians and archaeologists during this time (Hingley 2014:6373,6374). It was the ancient historians Theodor Mommsen and Francis Haverfield that first defined Romanisation during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as a simple process of social evolution (Hingley 2014:6373).

The word Romanisation itself was building on the much earlier term Romanised which had been in use for quite some time before Mommsen and Haverfield established the ground work for the theory, the word Romanisation did not make it into the dictionaries until the final 15 years of the eighteenth century (Hingley 2014:6374). Later publications followed the logic of these two historians, and the basis of their understanding of Romanisation was the idea that social change was something that occurred in all societies, and that the end result was a change from a primitive society to civilised one (Hingley 2014:6373).

In other words, the opinion was that the Romans brought their culture and ideas to more primitive societies, and that they changed these societies for the better. Which in itself, is a fairly flawed view by today's standard, as this thought establishes that the Roman culture was better and more superior than the so-called other more primitive ones. The theory of Romanisation was commonly used during most of the twentieth century, its application was mostly to explain the gradual spread of not only Roman gods like amphoras, but also the urban life as well as the villas, during the end of the first century BC to the third century AD (Hingley 2014:6373). Furthermore, it was seen as a possible explanation for the fall of the empire, and that this so-called blossoming of civilisation that resulted from the spread of Roman culture, was later succeeded by a period of social decline, and that this in the end led to the fall of the Western Roman empire (Hingley 2014:6373,6374).

We are all children of our time, and we can probably contribute the more critical views on Romanisation that eventually surfaced to this fact, as they are usually connected to larger changes in the "modern day world". From the 1950s to the 1970s, massive changes swept over the world as the decolonisation movements gained momentum (Hingley 2014:6373). In the beginning most of the criticisms towards Romanisation was based on the fact that it seemingly did not take into account local resistance to the process, in other words early Romanisation made it seem like the locals welcomed the Romans and the change they brought (Hingley 2014:6373,6374). However, as history has taught us it is very rare indeed that natives embrace foreign culture without some form of resistance. We need not look long into the past to see examples of resistance to cultural change especially if the culture in question originated in another country. One example is the Soviet Union's apparent disgust at American culture and ideals, on the grounds of its inherent capitalistic and seemingly immoral nature (according to the Soviets at least).

Romanisation theory came under fire again during the 1990s, due to the fact that the concept behind Romanisation had been developed in Britain, which in turn was an empire at the time where the concept was conceived and that therefore the theory could be viewed as more of a defence of Britain's own actions as a coloniser rather than a neutral view on the cultural exchange that occurred in the Roman Empire (Hingley 2014:6373). Since then, it has been argued that Romanisation theory is flawed due to its inherent connection to Western Imperialism and that one could no longer view Romanisation as a useful term and that in the end the theory should be disregarded (Hingley 2010; Hingley 2014). If one is aware of these

critiques one might be able to use Romanisation theory efficiently if it is combined with theories that balance out its flaws.

Towards the end of the twentieth century attempts were made to moderate or revamp Romanisation theory to make it more usable despite its obvious flaws, this was the introduction of osmosis Romanisation also known as trickle-down Romanisation (Hingley 2014:6374). The point of this was to make adjustments to the original concept behind Romanisation so that also the less privileged natives would be represented, as it had originally focused mainly on the wealthy indigenous as most of the material culture salvaged from these periods seemed to originate from them (Hingley 2014:6374). The osmosis add-on suggested that those with less means would adopt the ways of the Romans in any way they could with their limited resources (Hingley 2010; Hingley 2014:6374-6375). Although, I find this view is also quite skewed when it comes to what value one places on different cultures, it is quite clear that this approach also paints the Roman culture as something that indigenous people strived to adopt.

Some, have rejected the theory and stopped using it altogether Hingley (2014:6375) states that some continue using it in a constructive manner and that others use it out of convenience as there has not really been introduced a thorough enough successor. Furthermore, Hingley (2014:6375) also specifies that Romanisation in itself could be considered an ambiguous term as it could be interpreted as a deliberate policy or process instigated by the Romans or as an unintentional consequence of adding to their empire, or even as a combination of the two. Even so, the fact that Romanisation in many ways can be seen as an incomplete or insufficient theory when analysing the Roman world, may have led to the adoption of more modern theories like globalisation.

When it comes to Egypt, the degree of its Romanisation has been debated quite a lot in the past. Even if the Romans kept much of the existing Ptolemaic terminology and institutions, it was clear that the Romans had little issue with adding new institutions or revamping the old ones to suit their needs (Gagos and Potter 2010:63-64).

5.1.2 2.Globalisation

The use of Globalisation in the social sciences has become more popular since the early 1900s, and its use has not gone by without discussion (Hingley 2010:1; Robertson and White 2007:54; Robinson 2001:157). I myself have heard arguments against the use of globalisation in archaeology from not only fellow students, but also from faculty, for example that one cannot apply globalisation to the ancient past due to the lack of the modern day global network. The fact that the theory has its origin in economics and capitalism and therefore it cannot be applied to other areas, has also been commented upon.

Also, that it is insensitive due to the regions that are left out if one applies it to for example the Roman Empire and the connections it had across the globe. Or that globalisation does not apply unless one actually takes the whole world into account. A more sensible criticism is the one that takes into account some opinions from people in developing countries, that are not keen on accepting the definitions of globalisation set forth by more privileged societal contexts (Robertson and White 2007:54). It has also been proposed that the Roman empire, was in fact the first “global” empire in history, as it stretched through several cultures as well as our modern time zones (Hingley 2010; Toner 2002).

In addition to the criticisms listed above there was also the question about the globalisation process, whether or not it should be plural instead of singular. After all the entire world has not developed at the same pace, and one could argue that there have been several globalisation processes previously and currently (Robertson and White 2007:54).

Nevertheless, it is also important to stress that there is a clear difference between the geographical world and the world that is known to people. For all intents and purposes most of the civilisations of antiquity most likely thought they knew most of what there was to know about the world and its countries and continents, therefore one could argue that globalisation definitely could apply to these civilisations. It all comes down to one’s definition of global.

Despite the criticisms, one cannot deny that globalisation has been a very important concept for academia because it not only represents the twenty-first century, but it also challenges older theories (Robinson 2001:157). Instead of focusing on one side of the coin, one nation or one culture, it focuses on the universalising tendencies as well as the transnational structural

transformations (Robertson and White 2007:54; Robinson 2001:157). The process itself is driven by international financial trade as well as by cultural exchanges, migration or even tourism (UNESCO 2017). Even so, the irony of this concept being a product of the twenty-first century is that most people instinctively know what globalisation mean, but there is a lack of a clear definition of globalisation in the academic community, most of the ones that have been put forward are quite similar in nature (Hingley 2010:1; Robertson and White 2007:54).

UNESCO (2017) defines globalisation as a process which links people, neighbourhoods, cities, regions and countries closer than they had previously been. They explain that the process itself intertwines people all over the world through for example the food that is consumed, the clothes that are popularly worn, the music that is popular, the information that is available as well as the ideas that dominate society (UNESCO 2017). Another explanation of globalisation describes it as a driving force behind rapid social, political and economic changes that reshape modern societies (Hsu 2014:195). Globalisation has been a very prominent issue since the latter half of the twentieth century, what it actually means remains unclear to many (Hingley 2005:1; Hsu 2014:192).

This is for the most part due to the lack of agreement between the globalisation theorists, who have tried and failed at formulating a uniform theory of globalisation (Hingley 2005:1; Hsu 2014:194). Simply put globalisation is a concept that has been used in several disciplines like sociology, politics, economics and social anthropology to discuss and try to explain the world we live in (Hingley 2005:1).

It has been suggested that the Roman Empire could be argued as the first 'global' empire, since it stretched over different time zones and cultures (Hingley 2005:1). Furthermore, the evidence gathered from shipwrecks and other information, indicates that the trade across the Mediterranean from about the second century BC to the first century AD rivalled any other cross-regional trade before the nineteenth century (Hingley 2005:5). Thus, it can be argued that the Roman Empire in a sense was a modern and global civilisation and that globalisation theory might help illuminate parts of a complex society and how cultural exchange took place in that society.

5.1.3 3.Hybridisation

Due to the biological origin of the meaning of the word hybrid, its use in studies that are not connected to biology have not gone by without discussion (Garcia-Canclini 2001:7095; Stockhammer 2012a:1). This can according to Garcia-Canclini (2001) be attributed mostly to the supposed inapplicability of such a sterile scientific word on such fluid things like society and culture. Garcia-Canclini further states that although the criticism is still very much present and up for debate, it is most likely an inherited belief stemming from the nineteenth-century, when hybridisation was viewed with suspicion on the grounds that it might harm social development (2001:7095).

Hybridity can be linked to social thoughts that indicate not only the separation of cultures, but also the mixing of cultures (Garcia-Canclini 2001:7095). This leads to hybridity sometimes being connected to terms like race, ethnicity, syncretism, identity, multiculturalism and transculturation to mention a few (Garcia-Canclini 2001:7095). The nature of the term is deeply connected to the views of the different authors who has written about the concept and who in the end are responsible for connecting it with theories and terms like for example tradition, contradiction, modernity or globalisation (Garcia-Canclini 2001:7095; Stockhammer 2012a). In other words, our understanding of hybridity is coloured by the presentation of the term and thus we can also postulate that it might have different meanings or connotations depending on which branch of science is utilising it at the moment.

Homi Bhabha is commonly viewed as one of the most important minds behind cultural hybridity as we know it today (García-Canclini 2001:7095; Stockhammer 2012a:1). In his book *The Location of Culture* (1994), Bhabha defines hybridity as a term for presence and its placement when it comes to relations of power, he related it to the relationship between the colonisers and the colonised. One often thinks of colonisation as a one-sided process where the ones doing the colonising are influencing the colonised, as has been the predominant idea behind Romanisation. Hybridity and globalisation have in many ways become interconnected, as within the context of globalisation cultural transformations are now frequently analysed as hybridisation processes (Stockhammer 2012a:1).

6 Methodology

I will be attempting to do a comparative analysis of several types of child burials, the basis for comparing the different cases will be scientific and archaeological data. I will be studying scientific data such as pollen analysis, CT scans, X-rays and other relevant data, and compare them. When one is to study human remains there is always the question of how one is to go about it without destroying part of the remains, a similar dilemma is familiar to most archeologists because archaeology in itself is a destructive process where one must ruin the context to uncover what lies beneath. However with technological and scientific development, the possibility for nonintrusive studies and tests are better than ever. I will however not be conducting any of the scientific tests myself, and instead be relying on data that has already been compiled by other scholars and scientists.

Computerised tomography, better known as CT scans, is a technology that combines a series of X-ray images taken from several different angles, which are then processed by a computer to create cross-section images of bones and soft tissue in a body (Mayo Clinic 2012). In other words it gives us a way of performing a virtual autopsy without damaging or compromising the human remains (Davey et al. 2013:657). This technology enables scientists to view detailed images of specific areas of the body, the images can be combined to make 3D images, this allows for more accurate information than ordinary X-ray images (Mayo Clinic 2012).

In the case of child mummies this technology has many applications, one is the possibility of determining the child's age by examining the stage of development of the dentition in the mandible (Davey et al. 2003:32). Furthermore it is also possible to determine the sex of the deceased more accurately by using scan images, at least in cases where the remains are mummified, as the more traditional method of measuring the pelvic is much less accurate (Davey et al. 2013:661).

Palynological analyses, known as pollen analysis is also a scientific method that can give us much information. This will be a very relevant method for me in analysing the case of the Grottarossa mummy, as this is the only one of the two mummies found in Italy that still exists today (Ciuffarella 1998:202). A lot of research has been done on this mummy since as it is such a special case. There has naturally been great interest in uncovering exactly where the

mummy was mummified, analysis of particles trapped in the wrappings of the mummy might give answers to that question (Ciuffarella 1998:201).

Needless to say, a great many things can be learned about human remains by analyzing scientific data, however there are still things that science cannot tell us. Therefore, it is also prudent to interpret the scientific data, and combine it with more archaeological methods. One challenge is dating the mummies, as mummification is a tradition that has a long history in Egypt. This can make it challenging to accurately date the mummies, however if one studies the typology of the mummies combined with the scientific data at least a relative dating should be possible.

6.1.1 1.Comparative analyses

To compare and contrast is critical to many branches of science, including archaeology. Most archaeologists already do comparative analysis of material intuitively. This is because it is in the nature of what archaeologists do to look for changes and variety in the material left behind by early mankind. Furthermore, studying and analysing new unseen material is almost impossible if one does not have anything to compare it to, otherwise how are you supposed to understand variations over time. The use of the comparative method Most of this is probably self-explanatory, however even comparative analysis can be done in different ways.

One way is to put large amounts of data into systems and applying methods from statistics, this is commonly used in anthropology and psychology. By utilising a large data set one can attempt to spot general tendencies or establish a base-line for whatever it is one is looking for, given that the data provides the answers. It is also a great method for spotting abnormalities in the data, if the data set is large enough, one can most definitely find the odd ducks in the material. This is known as a quantitative comparative analysis.

One example of this would be to gather data on, for instance all the found weapons from the Viking Age in Scandinavia, and compare them to each other or compare them to weapons from another period or another location. Establishing a typology of a certain kind of archaeological material is a perfect example of quantitative comparative analysis, as one can only establish a typology if one has studied a large amount of material.

Another way to approach comparative analysis is the method known as intensive studies, or rather qualitative comparative analysis. Also known as micro or case-oriented research, when one uses this method you focus on a smaller amount of material in-depth instead of using a large amount of data. This method is particularly important when there is not that much material to begin with, or even if the material available is so excessive that it is near impossible to use all of it in research. If one is to use my previous example of Scandinavian weapons you would with the qualitative method study only a few weapons of the same kind, or found in the same location, only the ones with decoration, or that are damaged in the same way or etc.

Sometimes a combination of the two methods can be utilised as well, one can start with the quantitative and then go into depth on the material that sticks out from the crowd by using the qualitative method on that. Or you start with finding a few similarities between a small amount of material, which can lead to the discovery of a larger material because of the established similarities. Even the opposite can occur, small differences or similarities found in a few objects from a large data pool, might lead to a new interpretation of the material in question.

I will be utilising a combination of these two approaches, as I will only go into depth on a few mummies and I will be comparing the mummies not only to each other as well as other mummies in general, but I will also be comparing them to a larger set of data as well. As I found it prudent to have more typical Roman burials as a contrasting material to make it easier to show the differences between different types of commemorating the dead.

6.1.2 2.Ethnographical comparison

In its nature ethnography is a comparative analysis, where one attempts to study people and cultures in a systematic manner. By doing this one can shed a light on cultural phenomena or material culture in a different way. This approach makes it possible to compare one culture with another, for example the Roman empire with the British empire. However, it is extremely important to always be aware of the differences when one does make such a comparison and to be clear on why such a comparison is made. It will not give you a definitive answer, but it could be helpful when interpreting archaeological material. One instance where this form of comparison can be very useful is when looking at funerary practices or mortality rates (Morris 2001; Ucko 1969).

7 Analysis/Discussion

7.1.1 Why were these children mummified in this “adult” fashion and not simply inhumed or cremated as was more usual in the Roman empire?

To answer this research question, we must first take another look at what I have established so far. There are no definitive answers to exactly why these children were treated as adults when they were buried. I purposefully put the age limit of my case subjects at around 12, because after they turned 12 some children were actually married. Regardless of what we might think today about children marrying, this was the reality for many children in antiquity. If we are to be perfectly honest with ourselves this is still happening around the world today, although thankfully not in such great numbers as what we have seen previously in history.

There are indications that it was alright to marry around the age of 12 at least for girls, but most were not married until they had turned 14 or older. Even if marrying at such a young age was not necessarily the norm, it was plausible and with marriage comes adult status of a sort for the girls at least. For the boys there are various ages suggested for adulthood, but we do know that in Roman Egypt boys were expected to pay some sort of tax after they had turned 14. This could also be seen as a sign of adult status.

There are some ancient sources that explain that one should not grieve or bury children that have not grown teeth yet, which means that there might have been a line drawn of sorts around the age of 1 or 2. Almost as if one expected a child to grow to adulthood if they lived beyond this age. If this was the case, and you had a child that passed this mile marker and lived for several more years, you might be more inclined to give it not only a proper burial, but perhaps a burial that reflected the life they could have had or you hoped they would have in the afterlife. Especially, if you were unable to have more children and had lost the only one you had. In Roman Egypt, the religion of the Ancient Egyptians was still practiced although Greek and Roman gods had also become prominent figures.

Even though, one could say that the Egyptian gods that were worshipped at this time was very different from the original pantheon the importance of the afterlife was probably still very much relevant. As previously mentioned, it has in fact been argued that one of the main reasons for the popularity of the Isis cult was her power to resurrect the dead. In order for that to be done it would surely require a body for the deceased to return. This could be one explanation for why it would have been so important to mummify even children. Even if one had many children in antiquity, the likelihood of them growing to adulthood was not very high. Several prominent historic figures from antiquity lost many of their children, not even the imperial family was safe from this fate.

We know that it was important to have children, not only was this a form of insurance, but it was also rewarded by the government. Fathers of more than five children received benefits in the form of not being required to do voluntary services for the state, and there were probably other benefits to fulfilling this requirement as well. Augustus would later also change several laws to grant more independence and rights to women who had several children.

So, it was clear that being fertile was rewarded, and most likely the ability to provide for a large family was something to be proud of. When it came to children being a form of insurance, it meant that not only would your family line continue, but you would also have someone to provide for you in your old age. It was also important to have someone who could perform the necessary rites at your funeral, as well as the rites that were performed regularly at the grave site. The fact that Romans placed such “importance” on having children, might have had an effect on the Egyptians. As, children were rarely mummified before the Romans annexed Egypt, but it became increasingly common during Roman rule.

Funerary customs and rituals is something that has proven to be very slow in development, and changes in customs are gradual and not something that happens overnight (Toynbee 1996; Morris 2001). That is to say, that as mummification was practiced before the Romans took control, therefore it was unlikely that this custom would have been discarded immediately. If this custom had been truly appalling to the Romans, they would have surely banned it, like they attempted to ban the Isis cult. It was also clear that until Caracalla made everyone who lived within the Empire citizens, the interest the Romans had in making Egyptians citizens was minimal at best. In many ways, it could seem like the Romans had little to no interest in what the Egyptians did as long as they paid their taxes.

As there are no indications to mummification being banned, it is no wonder that the Egyptians wished to continue with this practice. Not only because it would have been more compatible with their religion, but also because it was distinctly not “Roman”. As the restrictive laws indicate that there might have been some bad blood between the Egyptians and the Romans. Thus, having a funerary practice that was different may also have been a form of silent rebellion. This obviously does not explain the more “Roman” stylistic changes to the mummies, but EA 22108 and EA21809 were found at the same site and have similar dating but they are polar opposites when it comes to style.

Perhaps these two styles were contemporary, if we consider that the mummies might actually be from the same period of time. What could these two different styles tell us? EA 22108, is more similar to the traditional Egyptian style with its exaggerated shape and gold décor. The face does not seem to represent the true face of the deceased, but looks more standardised, especially if you compare it the other female child mummy that was found together with EA 22108 and EA 21809. Perhaps this was a style favoured by the more anti-Roman segment of the population?

In contrast EA 21809 has the more “Roman” style with a portrait that is clearly painted with Roman taste in mind. So, if we were to continue our thought experiment this could mean that the portrait mummy was favoured by the Roman-friendly population. This is of course merely speculation, but it is confusing why these two mummies with such different styles were found in the exact same location. When Petrie (1889;1892), first discovered these two mummies together with two other mummies, he thought that he had found a family buried together. The differences in style did not seem to bother him in the least, and he did not see any reason to keep the mummies together as a collection either.

Petrie, also made an observation about the state in which he found these mummies and several others that he discovered. He remarked upon the fact that there was damage at the feet of several mummies he found, and this particular group of mummies appeared to have been placed in this tomb rather haphazardly (Petrie 1889;1892). This led Petrie, to suggest that the mummies had been in another location before they had been buried, and that they might have previously been on display due to the damaged to the bottom of the mummies (1889;1892). If we suppose that there could be some merit to these suspicions, then that could also be a possible explanation as to why even children were mummified.

Exactly in what type of location the mummies could have been displayed in is not known, but there are two clear possibilities. The mummies could have previously been placed in a location similar to the mausoleums or tombs that we recognize from Rome. Especially if there were rituals connected with the mummies, like what we know from Rome, with libations and such on certain days of the year (Toynbee 1996).

Some of these places had family rooms for dining and were even equipped with kitchens to prepare meals in (Toynbee 1996). The other possible location would have been in the home of the family, we know that the Romans sometimes buried infants in their walls or floors (Norman 2002; Toynbee 1996). We also know that keeping portraits or busts of ancestors in the house was common (Toynbee 1996). Obviously, there is a clear difference between having images to remind you of relatives at home and actually having your dead relative in your house. If it was something they practiced, then this could certainly explain why so many different styles of mummies could have been found in the same location.

If one did have mummies of relatives displayed somewhere, then it would only be as long as the family felt a connection to that relative. After one or two generations passed, it might be necessary to make room for other relatives, and the memory of the deceased might have been lost with time as well. Even if children most certainly would not have granted the same honour as adults, it could be a possible explanation for why they were mummified. Especially in newer families of freedmen who lacked the family history that citizens or aristocrats often had.

These children received a treatment after death that was distinctly more adult in nature than what was typical for others in the Empire. If one is to use Yasmina cemetery as a comparison, then it is very clear that something different was going on in Egypt. Not only were child mummies and adult mummies found together, but there also appeared to be little stylistic differences between them. When it comes to Yasmina cemetery, the story is quite different. All the child remains were found in a separate area, and there were both cremations and inhumations in the same cemetery. Inhumations at Yasmina appeared to be more common for children around the fifth century AD, but most of the child graves are filled with cremated remains.

Even if the styles of decoration changed over time, the mummies from the Roman period have more in common than differences. The mummification process was quite similar throughout the period, with some exceptions of course.

Yasmina cemetery was located at Carthage, which was not that far away from Egypt. They buried their dead in a much more “Roman” fashion, so why did the Egyptians not do the same? One answer to this question could be stability, Carthage had been under several different reigns over the years, whilst also turbulent Egypt had a much longer span of stability. Before the Greeks took over, they had centuries of continued stability of sorts through their pharaohs. This was followed by centuries of stability under the Ptolemais and later on centuries under Roman rule. As, I also mentioned previously, it did not appear as if the Romans put so much pressure on the Egyptians to Romanise, as had been the custom elsewhere in the Empire.

Instead, the resulting cultural exchanges that occurred during the Roman control of Egypt, was probably what led to the evolution of the styles of these mummies. If you only take into account the material culture found in Egypt, it seems quite obvious that this was the result of a romanisation process. When you also include the material culture, found in the Italic mainland near Rome and Pompeii, another view appears. Egyptian culture obviously affected the Roman culture and vice versa, therefore it is much more relevant to be talking about a form of globalisation or more specifically a hybridisation process that resulted in a renewal of an old cultural phenomenon with new twists added to it. The very Egyptian funerary practice of mummification, combined with Roman stylistic elements.

7.1.2 Was this merely a local phenomenon or was this tradition spreading?

We know that mummies that are dated to the Roman period have been found outside of Egypt. At least 3 cases are known, but there might be more. I will however, mainly focus on the mummy of Grottarossa. Which was found not far from Rome. Several tests have been run on this mummy in an attempt to determine exactly where it was mummified. So far, the tests have been inconclusive, and it could have been either mummified in Rome or in Egypt. As the pollen that was analyzed could have come from imported goods or plants that were native to the mummification location.

The leading theories as to why this girl was mummified are that her parents were followers of the Isiatic cult, or that her father had been a senior member of the Egyptian government in some way. Therefore, if his child died while he was stationed in Egypt, he would have brought it home with him. This could most certainly have been the case as most of these postings lasted around 4 years if they were not renewed. Even if the parents themselves had not been followers of the Isiatic cult, the resurrection aspect may have been enough to tempt them to mummify their child.

Whether or not mummification was spreading is nearly impossible to answer definitely. What we do know about mummification is that it has certain requirements: You need someone who is capable of mummifying, you need funds, certain ingredients are also necessary and it is also a race against the clock. Egypt and the rest of the Mediterranean has a relatively hot climate, which means that one cannot dilly dally when it comes to disposing of the dead correctly. Decomposition would almost certainly start quickly, and as has been evident in several mummies from Roman Egypt the condition of the body was sometimes not the greatest before the mummification process began. This means that for mummification to take place, it was essential that people who had the necessary skills were nearby or it would have most likely been too late.

It is not unlikely that some of the priests that came with the Isiatic cult could have had some of the necessary knowledge to perform mummifications. This does not mean that it was a wide spread practice. The Isiatic cult was most likely a popular cult with many followers, that had the means to be mummified or to mummify their family members. Yet, there has been almost no findings of mummies from this time outside of Roman Egypt. Not to mention that there was another religion on the rise during this time, Christianity. This religion was more

inclined towards inhumation than cremation, and also had resurrection aspects in its religion. Though Christians did not welcome the pagan connotations often associated with mummification, there was nothing specific against it either. When Tacitus writes about the death of Nero's wife as I have mentioned previously, he actually hints at embalming being a Jewish or Christian practice. Still, there are little to no indications of large clusters of mummies outside of Roman Egypt.

If the argument of religion being a reason for mummification was to be considered legitimate, then surely there should have been mummies around the area of Pompeii, where the Isiac cult was immensely popular? Some evidence could obviously have been destroyed during the eruption of Vesuvius, but there is evidence of survivors of the eruption or people that fled due to the earthquakes that surely preempted the eruption. They could have possibly taken some mummies with them, if one is to believe the notion that they were often displayed before finally being buried. Though, there is nothing in the ancient literature to support the theory of mummies being displayed outside of Egypt.

This means, that I actually agree with the notion that for all intents and purposes the Grottarossa mummy must be viewed as an anomaly. I further do not believe that this form of burial was spreading outside of Roman Egypt. At least, not in great enough numbers to actually signify a cultural spread.

7.1.3 How useful or necessary are the methods of natural science when it comes to studying mummies?

During the research I have done for this thesis, I have read a lot of articles and books that deal with the natural sciences when it comes to mummy studies. On principle, I believe that natural sciences should be embraced in archaeology, because when combined with our methods and knowledge we can get great results. That being said, there is another danger to utilising these branches of science and that is the destructive nature of some of these methods.

One could argue that archaeology in its nature is a destructive method, as once something is excavated the context is destroyed unless it is very well documented, like today's excavations are. We all know that, that was not always the case in the past. I have personally read journals or diaries from early excavations, and some obviously document the excavation process whilst others not so much. This might change even more now that photogrammetry is something that can be used, with this method you can make 3D models of a excavation site, which can be reviewed later and stored for posterity.

Of course, there are non-destructive methods of natural science that are in use in archaeology and mummy studies. X-Rays and CAT-scans are among the less destructive ones, some palynological studies can be non-destructive as well. MRI- is not used as far as I have seen, this is due to the need of contrast fluids. Ancient DNA, is something that is becoming more usual. It was attempted with the Spurlock mummy, but the results were inconclusive. The belief was that something from the embalming process could have contaminated the DNA sample. DNA is a destructive method; the method has become less destructive in that there is no need for massive samples. The same can be said for C14 dating, which is also a destructive method, but this has also become much more precise and less destructive in the sense that the samples needed are now much smaller.

Strides are being made in natural sciences, and innovations like the 3D-printer might change a lot. CAT-scans can be converted into 3D-models on a computer which can then be printed. Which could mean that we could very soon have a reasonable way to examine the bones and touching them, without destroying anything. Natural sciences are opening up doors, and new venues of research are becoming available. Ancestry DNA has become popular among non-scholars as well, and DNA-databases are growing as the world's population contribute DNA

so they can learn about their ancestry. With the rate technology is developing, the techniques we use today might very well be outdated in under a decade.

Fortunately, most researchers take this seriously and samples are usually taken from parts that have already been dislodged from the mummy from wear and tear. Unwrapping mummies is also something that has fallen out of favour, as the pictures of the Grottarossa mummy showed unwrapping is not the answer.

One of the reasons for using these methods on the mummies is to discover cause of death, in most cases I have seen so far that has not been possible. Educated guesses can be made due to what is visible on the CAT-scans, but more often than not several possible causes of death are usually the results of tests like these. Though in the sense narrowing it down to a few choices is an accomplishment in and of itself, and should not be scoffed at.

I firmly believe that natural sciences are a boon to archaeology, and that they can be very useful. Still, I also think that we should let the technologies develop further and try to do as little destructive testing as possible. Or we could possibly risk damaging our test subjects before the technology is even able to tell us more. That being said, there was very recently a very successful Ancient DNA test run on remains from a Viking grave, which revealed quite a bit of new information. Obviously, this means that some risks are worth the reward, but it is important to consider the risks and the rewards before conducting some of the tests.

8 Conclusion

I hope that I have managed to answer the line of inquiry, at least to a certain degree. It is my belief that there is no single answer to why these children received such “adult” funerals, most likely it is a combination of several reasons. Though one thing is for certain, there are too many child mummies from this admittedly long period of time, for this to be merely the whim of one or two grieving families. There had to have been a larger picture, that we are not quite privy to. It most likely had something to do with the role the child played in the family, and maybe there is some merit to Petrie’s proposed idea of the mummies being on display somewhere. This would in that case probably mean that the more mummies a family had access to, the more powerful or important you were. Or something along those lines. Though the grief being worse the older the child was, is definitely a likely situation. We cannot underestimate human nature and our ability to grieve either, the mummies could also just be a way to grant your child the best possible burial and hopes for the afterlife.

As to whether or not this was a local phenomenon, I would say that yes, this was primarily an Egyptian custom. Even if there have been found cases outside of Egypt, there is not enough material to claim that it was spreading. Of course, I am also fully prepared to be proved wrong if a great number of mummies should be found. Additionally, it does seem more likely that the Grottarossa mummy was mummified in Egypt and brought back to Rome. The mummification could have been done for the simple reason of preserving the body for the journey home as well.

When it comes to the natural sciences, I would say they are very helpful in the study of mummies. That being said, I also think that they are not strictly necessary for each mummy as of yet. At least not until the methods can give us even more results.

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10 Figures

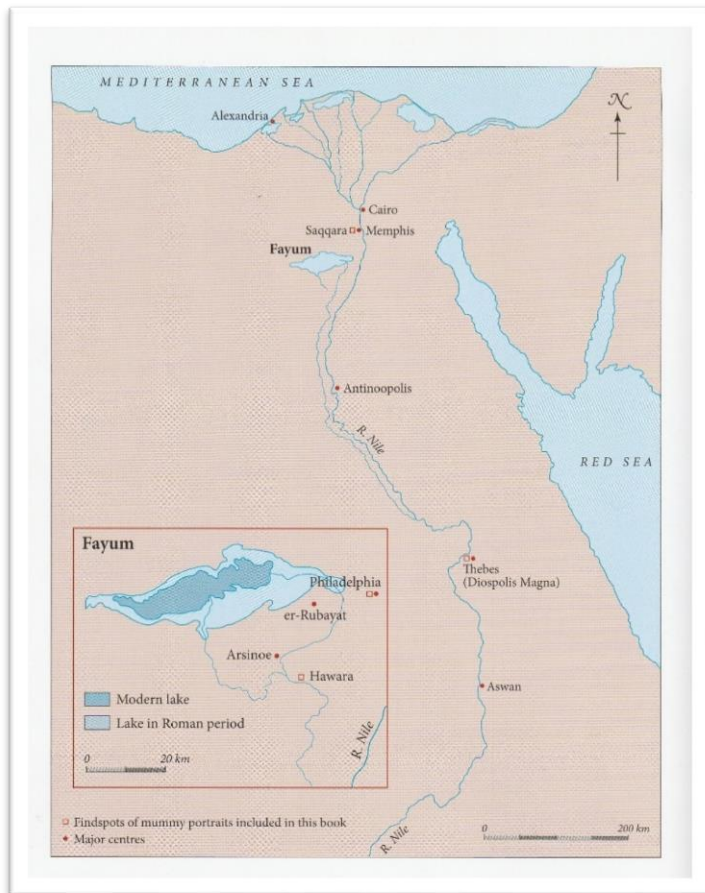


Figure 1: Map of Fayum

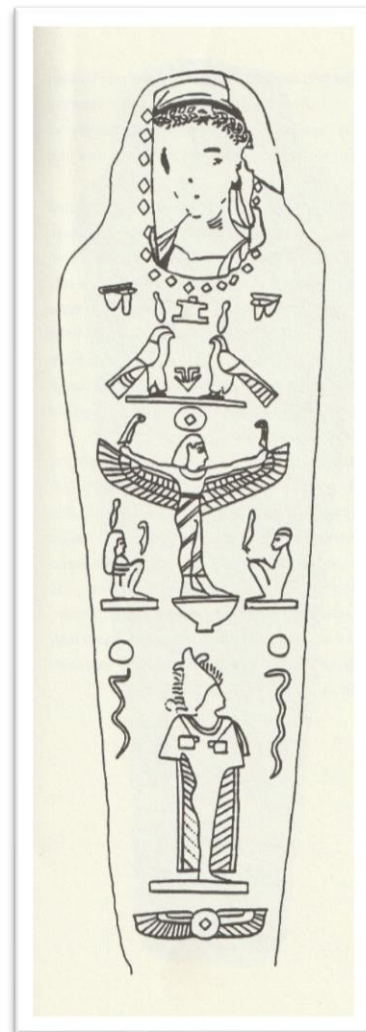


Figure 3: Sketch of decorations Lazarus Mummy UV-light



Figure 2: Spurlock Mummy



Figure 4: EA 22108



Figure 5: Female child mummy found with EA 22108

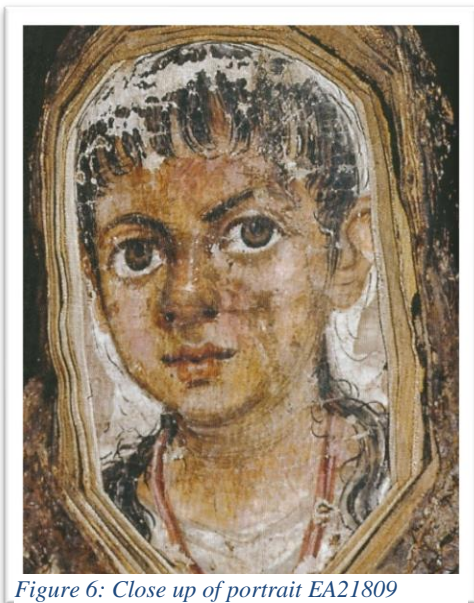


Figure 6: Close up of portrait EA21809



Figure 7: Close up decorations EA 22108

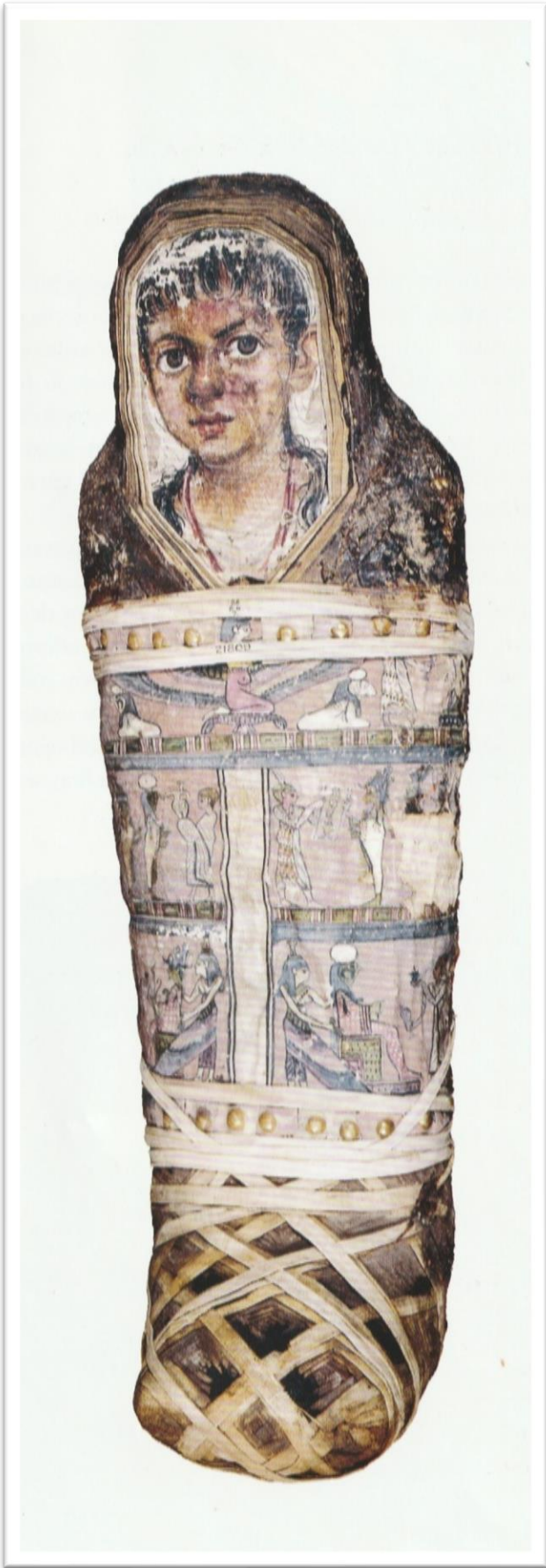


Figure 8 EA21809



Figure 9: EA6715

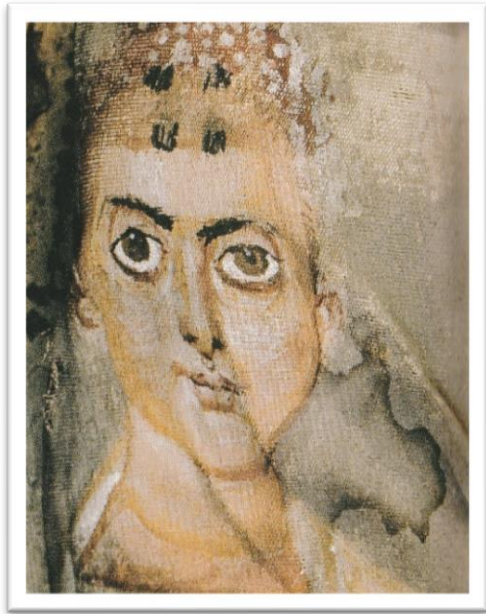


Figure 10: EA6715



Figure 11: Grottarossa mummy, directly after unwrapping and now

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Figure 3