

ROMAN IVORY (BONE ?) PLAQUE WITH THE HEAD OF AN AFRICAN

Ro-Imperial, 2nd-3rd Century A.D.

Ivory or Bone

Height: 2.8 cm

Reference: 16172



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This minuscule triangular ivory fragment was probably a decorative element on a box, a chest or some other object of woodwork; its back is flat. The three quarter view is perfectly rendered by the compression of the left half of the face. The figure sculpted in low relief is clearly meant to be an African (large round face, broad nose, curly hair, full lips), and wearing an ivy-diadem would designate him as a cupbearer at a symposium.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

MAIURI A., *La casa del Menandro e il suo tesoro di argenteria*, Rome, 1932, pp. 146-147, fig. 68 (black attendant with an ivy-diadem, holding two askoi for the service of the wine).