



Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus 10 BC - AD 54

Born in Lugdunum (today's Lyon, France), of neither the greatest physical or mental disposition, an ill child, hence, his family, father Drusus Maior, and mother, Antonia Minor, did their best to keep him out of sight (Strobl, 2016, online; Darvill, 2008, online; Sue. Div. Claud. 2. 1). According to his mother Antonia, Claudius was an unfinished monster of a human-being (Sue. Claud. 3. 2).

A myriad of factors came together for Claudius, somewhat accidentally, becoming Emperor of Rome, but ultimately, it was the assassination of his nephew Gaius (Caligula), then Emperor, that left Claudius as his successor. Claudius became the fourth Emperor of Rome that belonged to the Julio-Claudian dynasty and reigned from January AD 41 to October AD 54 (Cannon & Crowcroft, 2015, online; Darvill, 2008, online). Emperor Claudius is credited with expanding the Roman Empire through Thrace, Noricum Pamphylis, Lycia, Judea and across the channel to Britannia (Darvill, 2008, online; Tac. Agr. 6. 3).

It is believed that the death of Claudius came about through poisoning, though just by who is debated. It is believed that one of the perpetrators could have been his wife, Agrippina, mother of Nero, and was the final act in her plan of positioning her son to take over as Emperor of Rome (Darvill, 2008, online; Sue. Div. Claud. 43-46; Sen. Apoc. 1-3).

The painting 'A Roman Emperor (Claudius)', oil on canvas, (bottom right), by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema depicts an episode described in Suetonius' life of the *Divine Claudius*. The painting shows Claudius (before he was Emperor of Rome) hiding behind some curtains in fear for his life during the assassination of the Emperor Gaius (Caligula), the mob, baying for blood on the left and in-between them and Claudius, lie the murdered bodies of Gaius and his wife Caesonia (Sue. Div. Claud. 9-10; victorianweb.org, online). Top Left is a photograph of a statue of Claudius c. AD 42, which stands in the Vatican Museum, it portrays Claudius as Jupiter, with youthful, muscular (god-like) body, garlanded, holding aloft the *sceptrum Augusti*, telling of his rank as Emperor, and in the other hand, a plate for libations suggesting divine status (Lowinger, 2017, online). The two depictions of the same man are poles apart, perhaps, with the carved representation, we have Claudius' own idea of himself (or perhaps his subjects' idea), and, in the painting, an episode told by Suetonius, how he was viewed long after his reign, or at least by the sources used by Suetonius.

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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sir_Lawrence_Alma-Tadema,_RA,_OM_-_A_Roman_Emperor_\(Claudius\)_-_Walters_37165.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sir_Lawrence_Alma-Tadema,_RA,_OM_-_A_Roman_Emperor_(Claudius)_-_Walters_37165.jpg)

<https://discoveringancienthistory.wordpress.com/2017/03/01/broken-of-body-sound-of-mind-the-emperor-claudius/>

<http://www.victorianweb.org/painting/tadema/paintings/16.html>

