

CLAH4006

**From Village to Empire: An
Introduction to the History of Rome**

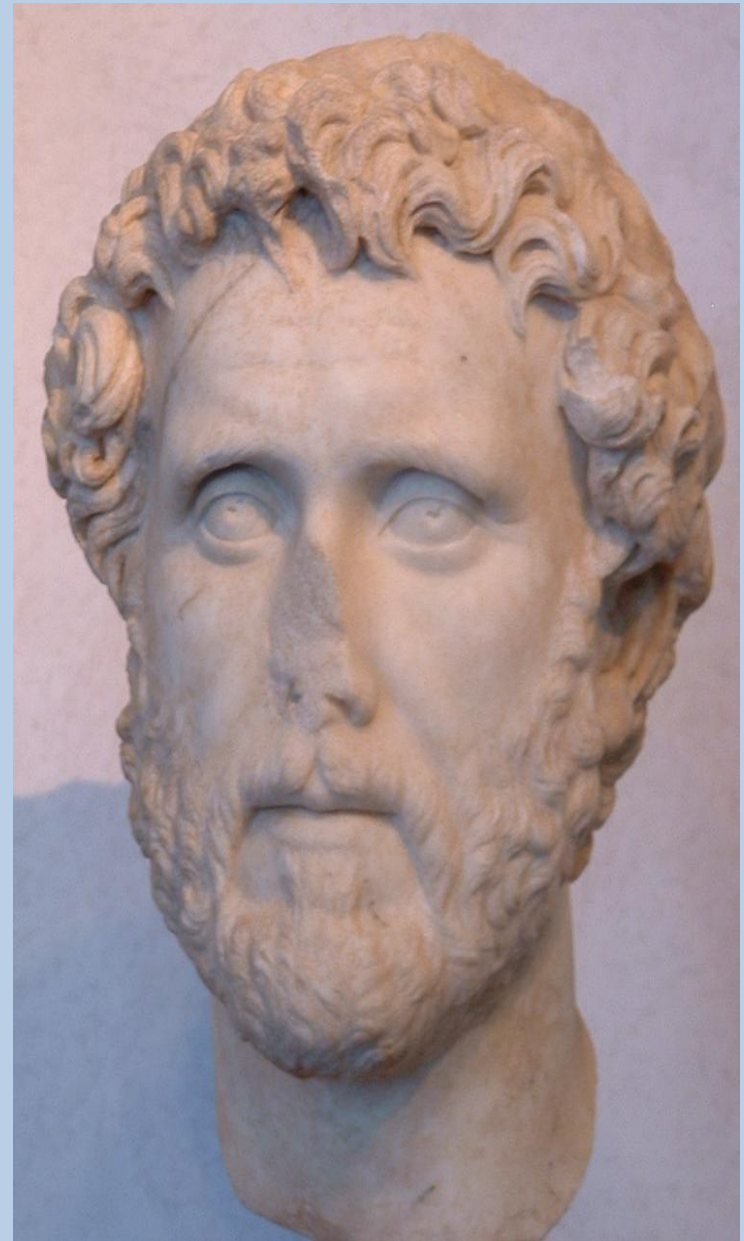
Antoninus Pius (AD 138-161)

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Sources

- ***Scriptores Historiae Augustae*** – collection of biographies of Roman emperors from Hadrian to Carinus and Numerianus (AD 284) – lacuna for mid-third century – surviving manuscripts claim works written by six different authors of early fourth century AD.
- **Aurelius Victor** (later fourth century AD) – *De Caesaribus* – brief biographies from Augustus to Constantius II (up to AD 361).
- **Cassius Dio** – up to AD 229 – increasingly fragmentary in form from later first century AD.

- Titus Aurelius Fulvus Boionius **Antoninus**.
- Born in AD 86, Lanuvium (near Rome).
- Reigns from 10th July AD 138 to 7th of March AD 161.
- Served as quaestor and praetor.
- Becomes “Ordinary Consul” in AD 120.
- Proconsul of Asia – AD 133-136.
- Becomes part of Hadrian’s *consilium*.
- Adopted by Hadrian in AD 138, adopts M. Annius Verus (M. Aurelius) and L. Ceionius Commodus (L. Verus).



“Pius”

“He was given the name of Pius by the senate, either because, when his father-in-law was old and weak, he lent him a supporting hand in his attendance at the senate (which act, indeed, is not sufficient as a token of great dutifulness, since a man were rather undutiful who did not perform this service than dutiful if he did), or because he spared those men whom Hadrian in his ill-health had condemned to death, or because after Hadrian's death he had unbounded and extraordinary honours decreed for him in spite of opposition from all, or because, when Hadrian wished to make away with himself, by great care and watchfulness he prevented him from so doing, or because he was in fact very kindly by nature and did no harsh deed in his own time.” – ***SHA Antoninus Pius 2.3-7.***

Rome's CM Anniversary

- One “traditional” date for the founding of Rome is 753 BC – “Varronian chronology”.
- AD 147 the “900th Anniversary” of Rome.



Antoninus Pius AV Aureus. 140-144 AD. ANTONINVS AVG PIVS P P, laureate, draped bust right / TR POT COS III, emperor as Romulus advancing right, holding spear with points at both ends & trophy over shoulder. **BMCRE 238 note, Strack 71, Cohen 910v.**

Deification of Faustina

- Dies c. AD 140.

“On the death of his wife Faustina, in the third year of his reign, the senate deified her, and voted her games and a temple and priestesses and statues of silver and of gold. These the Emperor accepted, and furthermore granted permission that her statue be erected in all the circuses...” - ***SHA Antoninus Pius 6.7.***



Antoninus Pius Denarius. ANTONINVS AVG PIVS P P TR P XXIII, laureate head right / PIETATI AVG COS III, Pietas (Faustina?), holding two children, with two at her side.
- RIC 313c, RSC 631, BMC 1013.

Rome and Imperial Administration

Clemency

“He besought the senate to pardon those men whom Hadrian had condemned, saying that Hadrian himself had been about to do so.” - *SHA Antoninus Pius 6.3*.

“In his dealings with the senate, he rendered it, as emperor, the same respect that he had wished another emperor to render him when he was a private man. When the senate offered him the title of Father of his Country, he at first refused it, but later accepted it with an elaborate expression of thanks.” – (6.5-6).

“This was Atilius Titianus, and it was the senate itself that conducted his prosecution, while the Emperor forbade any investigation about the fellow-conspirators of Atilius and always aided his son to attain all his desires. Priscianus did indeed die for aspiring to the throne, but by his own hand, and about his conspiracy also the Emperor forbade any investigation. (7.4).

Justice

“At the present day, however, no persons living under Roman rule are free to treat their slaves with excessive cruelty or without some grounds recognised in the statutes... as by an act of the Divine Antoninus...” ***Digest*** 1.6.1.2 (Gaius *Institutes* 1).

Continuity of Administration

“After his accession to the throne he removed none of the men whom Hadrian had appointed to office, and, indeed, was so steadfast and loyal that he retained good men in the government of provinces for terms of seven and even nine years...” – ***SHA Antoninus Pius 5.3.***

- Remaining in Rome? – “And yet he was regarded with immense respect by all nations, for, making his residence in the city, as he did, for the purpose of being in a central location, he was able to receive messages from every quarter with equal speed.” **(7.12).**

Governance

- Deferential to the Senate, but perhaps relied on advice of his *amici* and *consilium* to a greater degree.
- Abolishes board of consulars created by Hadrian to govern Italy.

“A number of legal principles were established by Antoninus with the aid of certain men, experts in jurisprudence, namely, Vindius Verus, Salvius Valens, Volusius Maecianus, Ulpius Marcellus, and Diavolenus.” – ***SHA Antoninus Pius 12.1.***

Building Programme

“Of the public works that were constructed by him the following remain to-day: the temple of Hadrian at Rome, so called in honour of his father, the *Graecostadium*, restored by him after its burning, the Amphitheatre, repaired by him, the tomb of Hadrian, the temple of Agrippa, and the Pons Sublicius, also the Pharos, the port at Caieta, and the port at Tarracina, all of which he restored, the bath at Ostia, the aqueduct at Antium, and the temples at Lanuvium. Besides all this, he helped many communities to erect new buildings and to restore the old; and he even gave financial aid to Roman magistrates and senators to assist them in the performance of their duties.” - ***SHA Antoninus Pius 8.2-4.***

Frontiers and Provinces

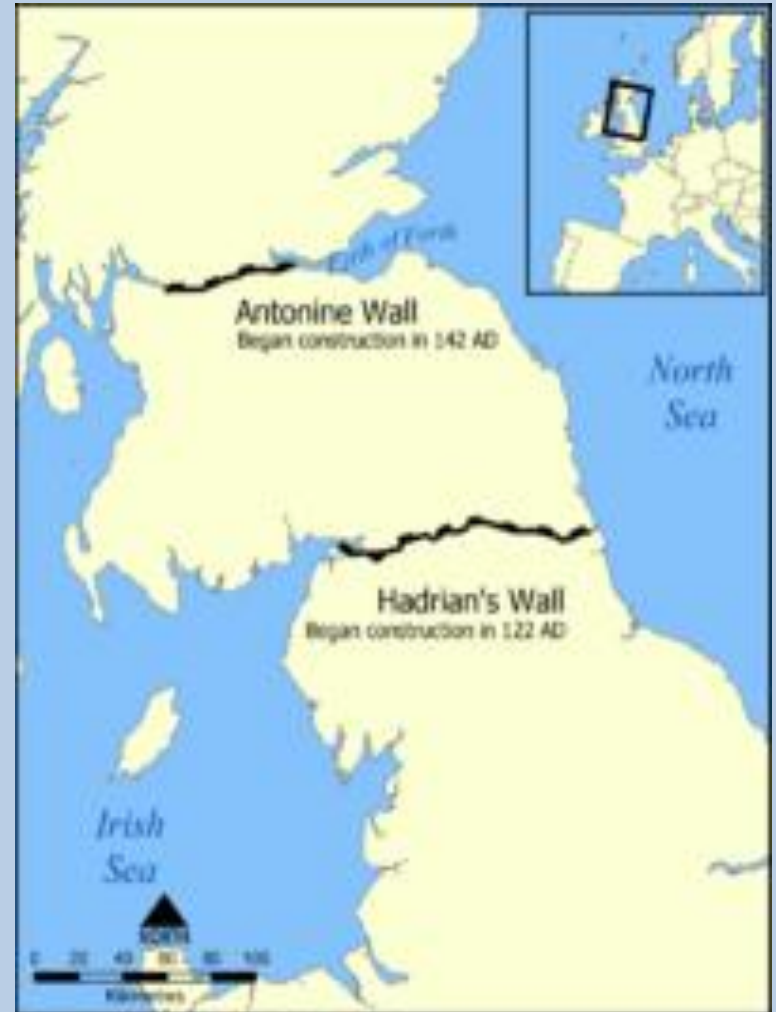
Provincial Taxes

“His procurators were ordered to levy only a reasonable tribute, and those who exceeded a proper limit were commanded to render an account of their acts, nor was he ever pleased with any revenues that were onerous to the provinces. Moreover, he was always willing to hear complaints against his procurators.” - ***SHA Antoninus Pius 6.1-2.***

Antonine Wall

“For Lollius Urbicus, his legate, overcame the Britons and built a second wall, one of turf, after driving back the barbarians...” - ***SHA Antoninus Pius 5.4.***

- Bringing of troops up from northern Britain to garrison the area.
- Subsequent revolt of the Brigantes – crushed by Julius Verus in AD 154 with reinforcements from Germany.
- Temporary abandonment of Antonine wall - reoccupied by c. 158 BC.



Revolts

“Through other legates or governors, he forced the Moors to sue for peace, and crushed the Germans and the Dacians and many other tribes... In Achaea also and in Egypt he put down rebellions and many a time sharply checked the Alani in their raiding.” - ***SHA Antoninus Pius 5.4-5.***



Armenia

- Dispute over Armenia with Vologeses IV in AD 155 – wanted to place a family member on the throne.

“...[Antoninus] induced the king of the Parthians to forego a campaign against the Armenians merely by writing him a letter.” –
SHA Antoninus Pius 9.6.



Death and Deification

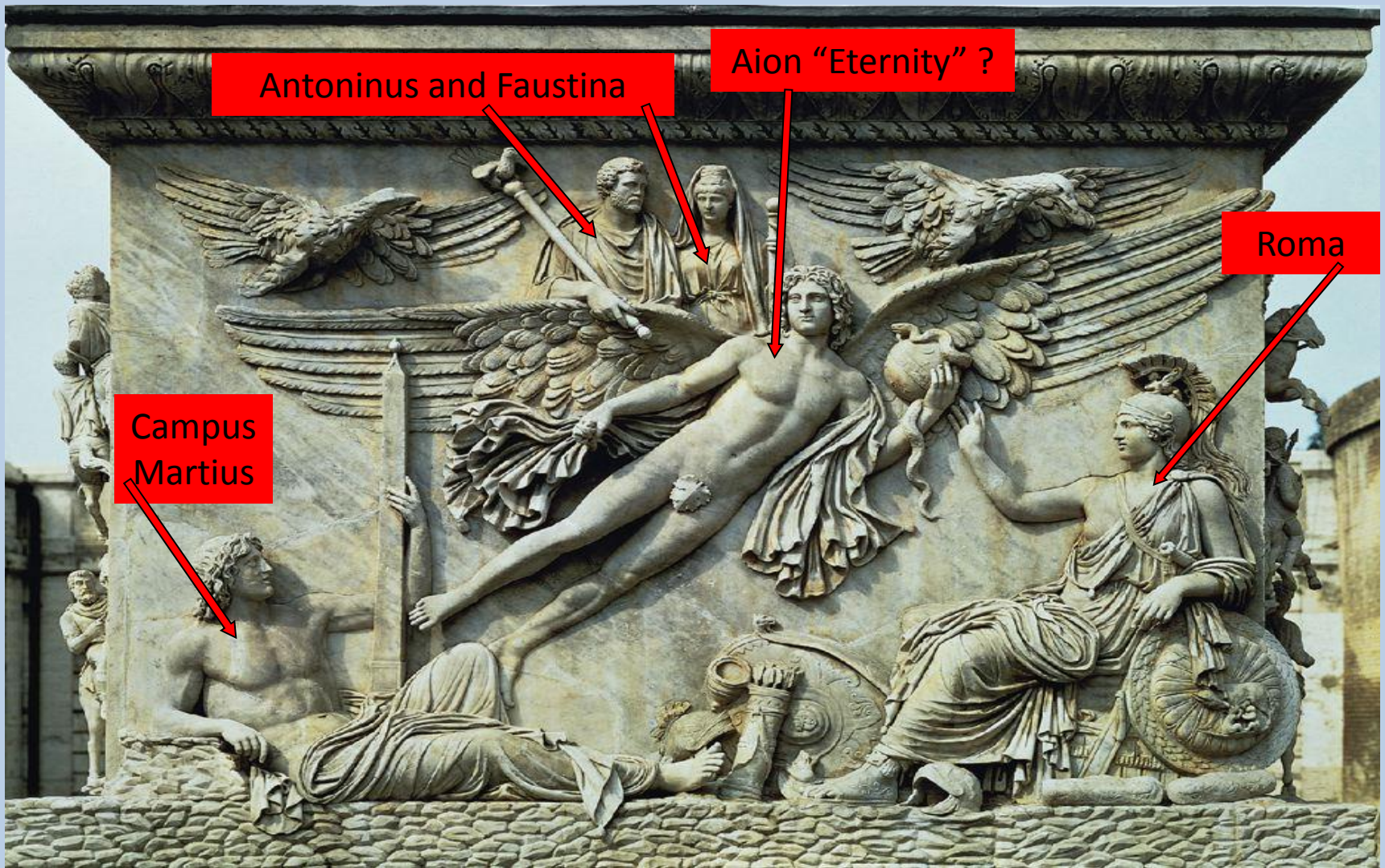
“He died in the seventieth year of his age, but his loss was felt as though he had been but a youth. They say his death was somewhat as follows: after he had eaten too liberally some Alpine cheese at dinner he vomited during the night, and was taken with a fever the next day. On the second day, as he saw that his condition was becoming worse, in the presence of his prefects he committed the state and his daughter to Marcus Antoninus [i.e. **Marcus Aurelius**], and gave orders that the golden statue of Fortune, which was wont to stand in the bed-chamber of the emperor, be given to him.” – *SHA Antoninus Pius 12.4-5.*

Deification



- Temple of Antoninus and Faustina – converted into church of San Lorenzo – Rome.

“He was deified by the senate, while all men vied with one another to give him honour, and all extolled his devoutness, his mercy, his intelligence, and his righteousness. All honours were decreed for him which were ever before bestowed on the very best of emperors. He well deserved the flamen and games and temple and the Antonine priesthood.” - ***SHA Antoninus Pius 13.3.***



Apotheosis of Antoninus Pius and Faustina, from the base of the Column of Antoninus Pius, Campus Martius, Rome, Antonine period, after 161 A.D.

- Column originally 14.75 m high.
- Shaft made of red granite.
- Coins show that the column was surmounted by a Corinthian capital and a statue.



Denarius. DIVVS ANTONINVS, bare head right / DIVO PIO, Statue on column with fence surrounding base of column - **RIC 439 [Marcus Aurelius], RSC 353a, BMC 67.**

Roman Culture

Flavian's to the Antonine's

Literature

- Vespasian established chairs of Latin and Greek Rhetoric at Rome.
- Hadrian establishes *Athenaeum* at Rome, an academy for rhetoricians and philosophers to give public recitals.
- Various municipalities in the provinces create chairs of rhetoric, libraries established, e.g. Pliny the Younger at Comum (northern Italy).
- “Silver Age” of Latin literature.
- Latin and Greek becomes the predominate written language in the West and East of Empire.

Greek Social and Moral Literature

- **Plutarch** *Moralia* – collection of writings on miscellaneous topics of an antiquarian or ethical nature.
- **Lucian** – various satirical and comic writings ranging from travellers accounts to popular superstitions.

Greek Historical Literature

- **Arrian** – writes history of Alexander the Great.
- **Appian** – An account of Roman history and the peoples they conquered.

Novel

- Prose fiction not always highly regarded among elite in antiquity. Often quite original and unencumbered by literary tradition.
- **Apuleius *Golden Ass*** – a variety of amorous and humorous incidents involving the main character Lucius who has been turned into an ass.
- **Achilles Tatius *The Adventures of Leucippe and Clitophon*** – Romantic novel in which protagonists go through a series of ordeals before being reunited.

Epigram and Satire

- Satirist often contrast themselves with “epic poets” – writers of witticism, often with a moral intent.
- **Martial** – active mainly under Domitian, wrote short witty poems – interesting reflection on Roman social values. Some of epigrams fairly obscene.
- **Juvenal** – late-first to early second century AD, does not reveal himself very much in his satires. Picks out the sordid and vulgar in human behaviour.

Second Sophistic

- Writers and professional rhetoricians – e.g. Aelius Aristides, Dio Chrysostom, Herodes Atticus, Lucian, Plutarch.

“For quite alike to theirs was the ideal which Apollonius pursued, and more divinely than Pythagoras he courted wisdom and soared above tyrants; and he lived in times not long gone by nor quite of our own day, yet men know him not because of the true wisdom, which he practiced as sage and sanely; but one man singles out one feature for praise in him and another; while some, because he had interviews with the wizards of Babylon and with the Brahmans of India, and with the nude ascetics of Egypt, put him down as a wizard, and spread the calumny that he was a sage of an illegitimate kind, judging of him ill.” – **Philostratus** *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* 1.2.

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