



ANCIENTS

ANTONINUS PIUS (AD 138-161). AV AUREUS (20MM, 7.11 GM, 6H). NGC CHOICE XF 5/5 - 4/5



Antoninus Pius (Titus Aelius Hadrianus Antoninus Augustus Pius; 19 September 86 – 7 March 161) was Roman emperor from 138 to 161. He was one of the Five Good Emperors in the Nerva–Antonine dynasty.

Born into a senatorial family, Antoninus held various offices during the reign of emperor Hadrian, who adopted him as his son and successor shortly before his death.

Antoninus acquired the cognomen Pius after his accession to the throne, either because he compelled the Senate to deify his adoptive father, or because he had saved senators sentenced to death by Hadrian in his later years. His reign is notable for the peaceful state of the Empire, with no major revolts or military incursions during this time, and for his governing without ever leaving Italy. A successful military campaign in southern Scotland early in his reign resulted in the construction of the Antonine Wall. Antoninus was an effective administrator, leaving his successors a large surplus in the treasury, expanding free access to drinking water throughout the Empire, encouraging legal conformity, and facilitating the enfranchisement of freed slaves. He died of illness in 161 and was succeeded by his adopted sons Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus as co-emperors.

Roma, the female personification of Rome, was from Republican times shown as a tall woman in military garb, carrying a spear and shield. She incorporated aspects of Bellona, the Roman goddess of war, and her sister warrior goddess Minerva. The Palladium was an archaic wooden statue of Pallas Athena (Minerva's Greek guise) that was supposedly rescued from a burning temple in Troy by the hero Aeneas, and carried by him to Italy, eventually finding its way to the Temple of Vesta in Rome.

ANTONINVS-AVG PIVS P P, laureate head of Antoninus Pius right / TR PO-T-COS IIII, Roma enthroned left, palladium in right hand, spear in left; shield set on ground at side. RIC III 147c. Calicó 1655. Attractive portrait on flan with subdued luster.

