

## Answer Key for Visual Association in Trajan-Hadrianic and Antonine Coinage Worksheet

- 1a.) Why might Trajan choose to associate himself with Felicitas?
- To emphasize his good luck and prosperity on his campaigns.
  - To emphasize happiness and well being in the state.
  - Link himself to earlier emperors who also associated themselves with Felicitas (ex. Sulla).
- 1b.) Why might Trajan have been given the titles Germanicus, Dacicus, and Parthicus?
- Victorious titles for his campaigns in Germania, Dacia, and Parthia.
- 1c.) How does the association of Trajan and Felicitas give more meaning to his titles?
- Attributes successes on campaign to Felicitas.
  - Emphasizes Trajan's blessedness and happiness on account of his victories.
  - To demonstrate his luck in warfare.
  - Prosperity and well being of the state on account of successful campaigns.
  - May invoke memory of Sulla's successful military campaigns in the East.
- 2a.) How do the coins above depict the emperors in a way that links them to their predecessors?
- Their hair is depicted as very similar despite their adopted relation.
  - Hadrian was the first emperor to grow a beard, but his successors continued this new trend.
- 2b.) Why might the emperors choose to depict themselves in this way?
- To create a sense of continuity and link themselves to their predecessors; the Antonines succeeded based on adoption, so this helped to create a sense of dynastic rule.
  - This is not unprecedented—the Julio-Claudians looked very similar on their coinage, with the exception of Nero. However the Antonines do not have the same hereditary link, therefore their visual association was likely forced through their iconography.
- 3a.) What aspects of Mars, the Roman god of war, might Marcus Aurelius wish to associate himself with?
- Strength, military prowess
  - Antoninus Pius celebrated the 900<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rome by minting a series of coins depicting the foundation myths. As Mars is the father of Romulus and Remus Marcus Aurelius may be continuing his father's tradition by promoting the divine ancestry of Rome founders'.

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3b.) Why might this association be beneficial?

- There was a series of wars (Marcomannic Wars) during his reign and Marcus Aurelius was often on campaign so this association would emphasize his military prowess and strength as a military leader
- Military skill was a necessary characteristic of Roman emperors
- Continuing his father's tradition by promoting the divine ancestry of Rome founders' may have linked Marcus Aurelius to his father Antoninus Pius, and Rome.

4.) Why might Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, adopted brothers and co-emperors, have displayed themselves as above?

- Emphasize their concord in the political realm
- Show they were not in competition or opposition, to ensure stability

## Background Reading for Answers to Visual Association Coinage Worksheet

**1a&c)** Chapter 2.2 pages 193-199 discuss Felicitas on coinage and potential interpretations. Though this book uses coinage from later emperors many of the same conclusions may be applied to the Antonine emperors.

Manders, Erika. *Coining Images of Power: Patterns in the Representation of Roman Emperors on Imperial Coinage, A.D. 193-284*. Leiden: Brill, 2012.

**2a.)** Discussion of Hadrian and his successors' beards page 189.

Hannestad, Niels. *Roman Art and Imperial Policy*. Aarhus: Jutland Archaeology Society, 1986.

For discussion about the style of Antonine portraiture and Hellenistic influences see pages 47-50.

Lee, Sherman E. "A Roman Imperial Portrait of Lucius Verus." *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 40, no. 3 (1953): 47-50.

Many of the same techniques highlighted in Lee's 1953 article on Antonine portraiture are also highlighted in Breglia's 1968 book. See pages 122-163 for discussion of coinage from Trajan to Commodus, especially pages 152, 156, 160 regarding depiction of Antonine hairstyles and beards.

Breglia, Laura. *Roman Imperial Coins: Their Art and Technique*. Translated by Peter Green. London: Thames & Hudson, 1968.

**2b.)** The use of visual association to emphasize continuity in the imperial house is discussed by Hekster 2015, see pages 81-83.

Hekster, Olivier. *Emperors and Ancestors: Roman Rulers and the Constraints of Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

**3a&b.)** See chapter 6 section "Mars Pater?" especially pages 262-264 for discussion of Antonine use of Mars as the divine father of Romulus.

Hekster, Olivier. *Emperors and Ancestors: Roman Rulers and the Constraints of Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

**4.)** See Chapter 5 "The Adoptive Emperors" for references to concordia and dextrarum iunctio in art from Nerva to Commodus. Especially page 214 (note 273 suggests further reading into motive and use) and page 218.

Hannestad, Niels. *Roman Art and Imperial Policy*. Aarhus: Jutland Archaeology Society, 1986.