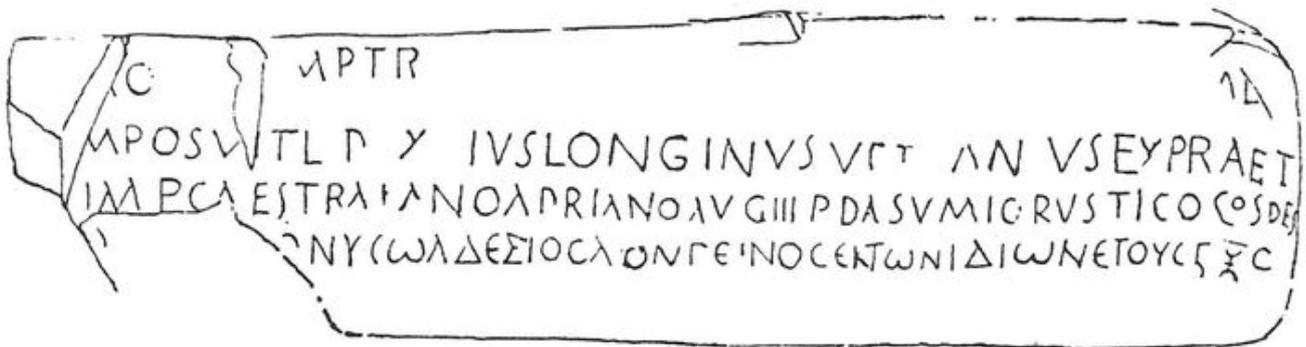


On January AD 119, Hadrian celebrated the new year (year 872 *Ab urbe condita*) in Rome as consul for the third time (*COS III*) and appointed Publius Dasumius Rusticus as ordinary consul.

Rusticus is known only from his consulship and the reason why he received this prestigious honour is not known. It may be that he was a childhood friend or associate of Hadrian's. The *Dasumii* family originated from Hispania Baetica, the home province of Hadrian. Together with the *Aelli* (Hadrian's family) and the *Ulpii* (Trajan's family), the *Damusii* were part of the intellectual, economic and political elite of the Empire.



Janus.



Inscription from Stobi (Macedonia) mentioning the consulship of Publius Dasumius Rusticus. AD 119.

[P]ro [sal(ute) I]mp(eratoris) Tra[iani Hadriani Aug(usti) Libero statu]/[a]m posuit L(ucius) Dexsius(!) Longinus vet(e)ranus ex praet(orio) / Imp(eratore) Caes(are) Traiano (H)adriano Aug(usto) III P(ublio) Dasumio Rustico co(n)s(ulibus) de s/[uis]

© Epigraphik-Datenbank Clauss / Slaby EDCS

Hadrian also chose two new Praetorian Prefects, Gaius Septicius Clarus and Marcius Turbo who replaced Servius Sulpicius Similis and Attianus. Being a Praetorian Prefect was one of the most powerful positions in the Roman administration.

Gaius Septicius Clarus is best known for his literary connections. He was the friend of the historian Suetonius, who dedicated part of his famous collection of biographies of the early emperors, 'De vita

Caesarum’, to him. He was also a friend and correspondant of Pliny the Younger and encouraged him to publish his letters. The intimate friendship between the two is evident in a letter where Pliny playfully chides Septicius for not appearing at a lavish dinner party.

What a fellow you are! You promise to come to dinner and then fail to turn up! Well, here is my magisterial sentence upon you. You must pay the money I am out of pocket to the last farthing, and you will find the sum no small one. *Plin., Epist. 1.15*

In another letter, to Apollinaris, Pliny writes of Septicius Clarus: “I never met anyone more sterling, simple, frank, and trustworthy.” However, a few years later (c. AD 122), Septicius was to be dismissed from his post as prefect after Hadrian alleged he had been treating the empress Vibia Sabina “in a more informal fashion than the etiquette of the court demanded.” ([HA Hadr. 11.3](#)) His friend Suetonius was dismissed for the same reason.

The second prefect was Hadrian’s close friend, Marcius Turbo who had been in charge of two important frontier garrisons provinces, Dacia and Pannonia Inferior. He had a very significant military reputation. Under Trajan, Turbo was commanding the imperial fleet at Misenum and quelled the Jewish revolt in Egypt and Cyrene (read more [here](#)). Turbo was to take charge during Hadrian’s absences, together with Marcus Annius Verus, a Senator of Spanish origin, linked by kingship to Hadrian.



Aureus of Hadrian with the two-faced deity Janus (god of beginnings and ends and the namesake of January) on the reverse. AD 119-122. RIC II 62

*Obverse: IMP CAESAR TRAIAN HADRIANVS AVG: Bust of Hadrian, laureate, draped, cuirassed, right
Reverse: P M TR P COS III: Janus standing front, holding sceptre*

With Hadrian taking his third and last consulship, his coinage would now be dated only by COS III before his acceptance of the title Pater Patriae in AD 128. Most of the gold and silver coins minted in 119-125 would have the legend IMP CAESAR TRAIAN HADRIANVS AVG on the obverse (abbreviated to HADRIANVS AVGVSTVS in late 125) and P M TR P COS III on the reverse (abbreviated to COS II in late 125). The special types which can be attributed to 119 referred to a number of events: the remission of debt to the state, the second largesse, the consecration of Matidia and the victory in Northern Britain.

Except for a trip to Campania (attested by inscriptions found in various towns) to “aid all the towns of the region with benefactions and gifts” (*HA Hadr. 9.6*), Hadrian would remain in the capital the whole year of 119. Preparations for a six-day-long gladiatorial show would also be planned to celebrate Hadrian’s forty-third birthday on the 24th of January.

Sources & references:

- The Cambridge ancient history. Vol. 11, The high Empire, A.D. 70-192. by Alan K Bowman; Peter Garnsey; Dominic Rathbone;. Print book. English. 2008.
- Birley, A. R. (1997) – *Hadrian: The Restless Emperor*, London: Routledge. (p. 100-105)
- The Dating and Arrangement of Hadrian’s COS III Coins of the Mint of Rome, ed. R. A. G. Carson. London, 1971 (p. 39-56)



FOLLOWING HADRIAN

#Hadrian1900

Share this: