

The pax romana

People



The Pax Romana Great kings brought peace to Rome. The Pax Romana also called Pax Augusta is the long period of relative peace in the Roman Empire established by Caesar Augustus in the first two centuries AD after the Civil War was over when he defeated Mark Antony in the battle of Actium. The term "Pax Romana" means Roman Peace in Latin, though the word "pax" means also "treaty" or "accord". The concept was first described by Edward Gibbon in chapter two of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, he proposed a period of moderation under Augustus and his successors. The Pax Romana began with the ascension of Augustus, in 27BC which marked the end of the Roman Republic and it ended in 180AD at the death of Marcus Aurelius. There were five emperors that ruled during this period more well known as The Five Good Emperors, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius all from the Antonine Dynasty. Nevertheless the peace did not start immediately because the fighting continued in Spain and the Alps. The Pax Romana was not immediate, despite the end of the Civil War, because fighting continued in Spain and in the Alps. Nevertheless, Augustus closed the Gates of Janus (the Roman ceremony to mark world peace) three times, first in 29 BC and again in 25 BC, the third time was not very well documented but Inez Scott Ryberg and Gaius Stern dated the third closure to 13BC. Augustus had another problem, people in Rome did not see peace as a time of no wars, but as the rare situation when all the Empire's enemies had been defeated and lost the ability to resist. The challenge Augustus had was to persuade Romans that the prosperity they had in that time was better than the potential wealth and honor of fighting risky wars. Although all the period called Pax Romana was ruled by the Five Good Emperors none of them was inherited the throne, they were all

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adopted and selected by their predecessor, until Commodus son of Marcus Aurelius was born. Commodus was selected for the throne since he was born and also one of the worst emperors Rome had. He had very bad relations with the Senate which tried to make a coup several times. There were also serious threats from the Germanic Tribes after Marcus Aurelius death, this stretched the Roman financial and economic resources. This and the instability in Rome after Marcus Aurelius death were the main factor that causes the end of the Pax Romana. Concluding the Pax Romana was not exactly a full period of peace because of the several wars fought during Marcus Aurelius reign though it is considered as the golden age of Rome due to the deterioration Rome had right after being in its full swing in III AD.