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REFUGEES FROM THE 1ST THROUGH 4TH CENTURIES: RACIAL, ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, AND PRACTICAL ISSUES ALONG THE BORDERS

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Much like our modern world, ancient refugees sought out Rome as a land of wealth and security. The classical literary sources (e.g. Tacitus, Cassius Dio, Ammianus Marcellinus, etc.) have provided posterity with a wealth of descriptions of refugee incidents. Through these accounts of refugees to and from Rome, we can piece together an understanding of Rome's level of control over her borders, and more generally, over large population movements. This process will also shed light on other issues such as motives, biases, and economic factors amongst others. Based upon the incidents described by the classical historians throughout the 1st through 5th centuries, we see what appears to be an evident fluctuation in the level control exercised by the Romans. Furthermore, the contemporary awareness of the benefits and disadvantages of allowing refugees to in Rome will also be highlighted in this process. Most importantly among all of these issues, simple economic gains and losses tended to be the most significant motive behind the actions of both the refugees and the Romans.