TO MYSELF

BEFORE THE WORLD WAKES

ἔωθεν

Arming the mind at dawn.

MARCUS AURELIUS

ΤΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΕΑΥΤΟΝ · BOOK II

CLASSIC MOTIVATION

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❧

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Book II of the Meditations · ΤΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΕΑΥΤΟΝ

CLASSIC MOTIVATION

To Myself

The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius, in twelve standalone volumes.

Volume II — Before the World Wakes (Book II)

Written on campaign among the Quadi, on the river Gran. A parallel edition presenting, for every section: the Greek original; the Latin translation of Wilhelm Xylander (Editio Princeps, Basel 1558); a fresh English rendering of each; and notes on how the thought crosses the two languages.

Edited by Stuart Schonwetter. Classic Motivation · classicmotivation.com

A note on the text. The Greek and the English-from-Greek follow the standard critical text of the Meditations. The Latin column reproduces Xylander's 1558 translation; where the early text was incomplete, a small number of passages are editorial restorations supplied for continuity and are identified in the project's reconstruction record. They are not presented as verbatim sixteenth-century readings.

This Volume

Every morning begins the same way. “When you wake,” Marcus tells himself, “say this: today I shall meet the meddler, the ingrate, the arrogant, the liar — people who cannot tell good from evil. But none of them can implicate me in ugliness, or make me hate them; for we were born to work together.” Book II of the Meditations is the emperor’s dawn drill.

Written in a war-camp on the Danube, it is a short, bracing set of reminders — on the shortness of life, the sufficiency of the present moment, and the one thing no one can touch: the mind that governs from within. It is Stoicism at its most usable: what to tell yourself before the day gets its hands on you.

This volume of the To Myself series presents Book II complete, as a parallel text — the original Greek, Xylander’s 1558 Latin, and clear English of each — with section-by-section notes and a glossary of the Stoic vocabulary beneath it all.

Introduction to Book II

Book II is the morning book. It opens with the single most famous exercise in the whole of Stoicism — the premeditation of adversity: before the day begins, rehearse the difficult people you are certain to meet, so that when they arrive they cannot ambush you. A note in the manuscript places these lines exactly: written among the Quadi, on the river Gran, in the field. This is philosophy composed between dispatches, on a cold frontier.

The premeditation is not pessimism; it is inoculation, and it is immediately turned toward fellowship. Marcus follows “I shall meet the ungrateful and the arrogant” at once with the reason he will not hate them: rational beings are made for one another, as the rows of teeth are made to work together, or the upper and lower eyelids. To act against your fellow is to act against your own nature. The dawn drill ends not in armor but in kinship.

The book’s second current is time. Life is short; the present is all you ever hold. Do each thing as if it were the last you will do; stop postponing yourself into an imagined future; remember that a man loses only the passing moment, because that is the only thing he ever owns. Strip away everything else, Marcus says, and two possessions remain genuinely yours — the ruling faculty within, and this present instant.

Read this volume with the columns side by side. Marcus’s Greek here is blunt and imperative — do this, remember that, drop the rest — and it is worth watching how Xylander carries those clipped commands into formal Latin. And do not skip the small colophon that opens the book: it turns the abstractions back into a real man, on a real morning, telling himself how to live before the world wakes.

Book II · Before the World Wakes

Written among the Quadi, on the river Gran

Book II · Section 1

The Morning Resolution

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἔωθεν προλέγειν ἑαυτῷ· συντεύξομαι περιέργῳ, ἀχαρίστῳ, ὑβριστῇ, δολερῷ, βασκάνῳ, ἀκοινωνήτῳ· πάντα ταῦτα συμβέβηκεν ἐκείνοις παρὰ τὴν ἄγνοιαν τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ κακῶν. ἐγὼ δὲ τεθεωρηκὼς τὴν φύσιν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ὅτι καλόν, καὶ τοῦ κακοῦ ὅτι αἰσχρόν, καὶ τὴν αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἁμαρτάνοντος φύσιν ὅτι μοι συγγενής, οὐχὶ αἵματος ἢ σπέρματος τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀλλὰ νοῦ καὶ θείας ἀπομοίρας μέτοχος, οὔτε βλαβῆναι ὑπό τινος αὐτῶν δύναμαι· αἰσχρῷ γάρ με οὐδεὶς περιβαλεῖ· οὔτε ὀργίζεσθαι τῷ συγγενεῖ δύναμαι οὔτε ἀπέχθεσθαι αὐτῷ. γεγόναμεν γὰρ πρὸς συνεργίαν ὡς πόδες, ὡς χεῖρες, ὡς βλέφαρα, ὡς οἱ στοῖχοι τῶν ἄνω καὶ τῶν κάτω ὀδόντων. τὸ οὖν ἀντιπράσσειν ἀλλήλοις παρὰ φύσιν· ἀντιπρακτικὸν δὲ τὸ ἀγανακτεῖν καὶ ἀποστρέφεσθαι	*Solebas tibi praedicere, incidam in curiosum, ingratum, contumeliosum, dolosum, inuidum, dissociabilem. Omnia haec iis evenerunt ignoratione bonorum & malorum. Ego vero, qui naturam boni perspectam habeo, quod honesti sit, & mali, quod turpe, ipsamque eius qui peccat naturam, quod mihi sit cognata (non quia eiusdem carnis est aut seminis, sed mentis, & divinae particulae particeps) a nullo eorum laedi possum. Neque enim in me turpitudinem aliquam quisquam coniciet. Et porro quod mihi cognatum est, neque irasci possum, neque infensus esse: ut enim unus alterum iuvaret in suo opere, eo nati sumus, ut manus, ut pedes, ut palpebrae, ut superiorum inferiorumque dentium ordines.*
English from Greek: At dawn, say to yourself beforehand: I shall meet the meddling, the ungrateful, the insolent, the treacherous, the envious, the unneighborly. All these things have befallen them through ignorance of goods and evils. But I, who have seen that the nature of the good is the beautiful and of the evil the shameful, and that the nature of the wrongdoer himself is kin to me — not of the same blood or seed, but sharing in mind and in a portion of the divine — I can neither be harmed by any of them, for no one can involve me in what is shameful, nor can I be angry with my kinsman or hate him. We were born for cooperation, like feet, like hands, like eyelids, like the rows of upper and lower teeth. To work against one another, then, is contrary to nature — and to be vexed with a man, and to turn away from him, is to work against him.	English from Latin: You used to predict to yourself: I will meet a busybody, an ungrateful one, an insolent one, a deceitful one, an envious one, one difficult to associate with. All these things happened to them through ignorance of good and evil. But I, who have a clear view of the nature of good, cannot be harmed by any of them — nor can anyone cast any baseness upon me. And further, what is akin to me: I cannot grow angry or be hostile toward them, for we were born to help one another, like hands, like feet, like eyelids, like the rows of upper and lower teeth.

Language Differences: *Xylander alters the temporal setting from Marcus's immediate imperative Ἔωθεν ("At dawn") to a descriptive retrospective Solebas tibi praedicere ("You used to predict to yourself"). The Greek philosophical target ἀκοινωνήτῳ (unsocial/anti-communal) is elegantly translated into the classical Latin adjective dissociabilem ("hostile to companionship"). Marcus's θείας ἀπομοίρας (divine allotment/emanation) is rendered via the classic Stoic formula divinae particulae ("a divine particle").*

Commentary: This is the locus classicus of Stoic psychological preparation (praemeditatio malorum). Marcus anchors his empathy in a strict deterministic framework: human malice is a cognitive error, a literal blindness (ἄγνοιαν) regarding moral realities. Because virtue and vice reside exclusively within the choices of the individual ruling center, external actors are structurally incapable of breaching his moral boundary or forcing him into a state of unnatural anger.

Book II · Section 2

The Threefold Composition

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὅ τί ποτε τοῦτό εἰμι, σαρκία ἐστὶ καὶ πνευμάτιον καὶ τὸ ἡγεμονικόν. τῶν μὲν σαρκίων καταφρόνησον· λύθρος καὶ ὀστάρια καὶ κροκύφαντος, ἐκ νεύρων, φλεβίων, ἀρτηριῶν πλεγμάτιον. θέασαι δὲ καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ὁποῖόν τί ἐστιν· ἄνεμος, οὐδὲ ἀεὶ τὸ αὐτό, ἀλλὰ πάσης ὥρας ἐξεμούμενον καὶ πάλιν ῥοφούμενον. τρίτον οὖν ἐστι τὸ ἡγεμονικόν. ἄφες τὰ βιβλία· μηκέτι σπῶ· οὐ δέδοται. ἀλλ ὡς ἤδη ἀποθνῄσκων ὧδε ἐπινοήθητι· γέρων εἶ· μηκέτι τοῦτο ἐάσῃς δουλεῦσαι, μηκέτι καθ ὁρμὴν ἀκοινώνητον νευροσπαστηθῆναι, μηκέτι τὸ εἱμαρμένον ἢ παρὸν δυσχεράναι ἢ μέλλον ὑπιδέσθαι	*Quidquid ego sum, id omne constat caruncula, animula & mente. Proinde missos fac libros, neque stude, non enim licet. Quin tu, ut mox vitam cum morte commutaturus, corpus sperne, quod est tabus et volsicula, & reticuli muliebris instar plexus nervorum, venarum arteriarum. Anima quoque considera, qualis ea sit: Spiritus nimirum, neque is idem semper, sed qui in horas alius efflatur, alius sorbetur. Restat tertia pars, principatum obtinens. Proinde sic tecum reputa. Senex es? Ne patere hanc principem partem ulterius servire, neque alieno impetu raptari.*
English from Greek: Whatever this is that I am, it is flesh, a little breath, and the ruling faculty. Despise the flesh: gore and little bones and a mesh, a weaving of nerves, small veins, and arteries. Consider too what the breath is: wind — and not always the same, but at every hour expelled and gulped in again. Third, then, is the ruling faculty. Put away your books; strain after	English from Latin: Whatever I am, it all consists of a little flesh (caruncula), a little soul (animula), and mind. Therefore, put away the books and stop your studies — it is no longer permitted. Rather, as one about to exchange life for death, despise the body, which is corruption and a small bag, a mesh of nerves, veins and arteries woven like a woman's hairnet. Consider

them no longer; it is not granted. Rather, as one already dying, think this: you are an old man; no longer let this part be a slave, no longer let it be pulled like a puppet by unsociable impulse, no longer let it be discontented with its present lot or shrink from what is to come.	also the soul — what sort of thing it is: a breath, never the same, but exhaled one moment and inhaled the next as different. The third part remains — the ruling one. Think it over: are you old? Do not allow this governing part to be enslaved any longer, or to be swept away by another's impulse.

Language Differences: *Xylander leans heavily on the standard diminutive templates found in the letters of Hadrian and the musings of Erasmus, translating σαρκία and πνευμάτιον into the matching Latin diminutives caruncula (little scrap of meat) and animula (little soul/breath). The rare Greek medical term κροκύφαντος (a woven texture or fluff) is beautifully contextualized by Xylander as reticuli muliebris instar ("like a woman's hairnet").*

Commentary: Marcus strips humanity down to its bare biological mechanics to short-circuit physical vanity. The imperative ἄφες τὰ βιβλία ("throw away the books") marks an internal transition: speculative curiosity must end because the runway of life is shortening. The distinct Stoic imagery of νευροσπαστηθῆναι ("to be jerked about like a puppet on strings") warns against letting raw subconscious impulses bypass the rational filtering of the ἡγεμονικόν.

Book II · Section 3

Providence and Atoms

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Τὰ τῶν θεῶν προνοίας μεστά. τὰ τῆς τύχης οὐκ ἄνευ φύσεως ἢ συγκλώσεως καὶ ἐπιπλοκῆς τῶν προνοίᾳ διοικουμένων. πάντα ἐκεῖθεν ῥεῖ˙ πρόσεστι δὲ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον καὶ τὸ τῷ ὅλῳ κόσμῳ συμφέρον, οὗ μέρος εἶ. παντὶ δὲ φύσεως μέρει ἀγαθόν, ὃ φέρει ἡ τοῦ ὅλου φύσις καὶ ὃ ἐκείνης ἐστὶ σωστικόν. σῴζουσι δὲ κόσμον, ὥσπερ αἱ τῶν στοιχείων, οὕτως καὶ αἱ τῶν συγκριμάτων μεταβολαί. ταῦτά σοι ἀρκείτω˙ ἀεὶ δόγματα ἔστω. τὴν δὲ τῶν βιβλίων δίψαν ῥῖψον, ἵνα μὴ γογγύζων ἀποθάνῃς, ἀλλὰ ἵλεως ἀληθῶς καὶ ἀπὸ καρδίας εὐχάριστος τοῖς θεοῖς	*Res Deorum plenae sunt prudentiae: fortuitae autem non carent natura, complexuque eorum quae a prudentia administrantur. Inde omnia fluunt: necessitas etiam accedit, & totius universi (cuius tu pars es) utilitas. Porro autem quod natura universi fert, quodque ad eam facit conservandam, id bonum est unicuique universi particulae. Conservant autem mundum, quemadmodum elementorum, ita & ex ipsis concretarum rerum mutationes. Haec sufficiant tibi, ac semper praeceptorum locum habeat. Librorum vero sitim pone, ne murmurans moriare, sed vere placatus, atque ex animo gratiam diis agens.*
English from Greek: The works of the gods are full of providence. The works of fortune	English from Latin: The things of the gods are full of wisdom/prudence; and fortuitous

are not apart from nature, or from the spinning and interweaving of the things ordered by providence. All things flow from there. Joined to this is the necessary, and what is advantageous to the whole cosmos, of which you are a part. To every part of nature, that is good which the nature of the whole brings, and which preserves that nature. Just as the changes of the elements preserve the cosmos, so too do the changes of compound things. Let these things be enough for you; let them always be your doctrines. But throw away your thirst for books, so that you may not die murmuring, but truly serene, grateful to the gods from the heart.	things do not lack nature, nor the embrace of those things administered by divine wisdom. From there all things flow — necessity also is present, and the advantage of the whole universe, of which you are a part. Moreover, what the nature of the universe bears, and what serves to preserve it — that is good for each particle of the universe. Changes of the elements, and of things composed from them, preserve the world. Let these thoughts suffice for you and always hold the place of precepts. Put away your thirst for books, so that you may not die complaining, but truly at peace, giving thanks to the gods with your whole heart.

Language Differences: *Xylander consistently translates προνοίας (providence) as prudentiae (wisdom, foresight, or sagacity), prioritizing an anthropomorphic intellectual virtue over a purely theological plan. The structural Greek phrase συγκλώσεως (the spinning of a web or thread of fate) is merged into the general Latin term complexu ("embrace/interweaving").*

Commentary: Marcus highlights the total macro-cosmic architecture of Stoic physics. Even events categorized colloquially as τύχη (chance/fortune) are structurally integrated into the ἐπιπλοκῆς (interweaving) of universal λόγος. Because the preservation of the system requires constant transformation at the atomic level, individual decay is redefined not as a tragedy, but as a structural necessity for the lifecycle of the cosmos.

Book II · Section 4

The Expiring Reprieve

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Μέμνησο ἐκ πόσου ταῦτα ἀναβάλλῃ καὶ ὁποσάκις προθεσμίας λαβὼν παρὰ τῶν θεῶν οὐ χρᾷ αὐταῖς. δεῖ δὲ ἤδη ποτὲ αἰσθέσθαι τίνος κόσμου μέρος εἶ καὶ τίνος διοικοῦντος τὸν κόσμον ἀπόῤῥοια ὑπέστης καὶ ὅτι ὅρος ἐστί σοι περιγεγραμμένος τοῦ χρόνου, ᾧ ἐὰν εἰς τὸ ἀπαιθριάσαι μὴ χρήσῃ, οἰχήσεται καὶ οἰχήσῃ καὶ αὖθις οὐκ ἐξέσται	*Memento quandiu hactenus ea distuleris, ac quoties prorogato tibi a diis tempore, ea non usus sis. Certe aliquando te animadvertere oportet, cuius mundi pars sis, & quo etiam aetore defluxeris: tum finem praescripti tibi temporis futuri. Quod quidem tempus si otio intra parietes consumpseris, elabitur, neque redibit unquam tibi defuncto.*
English from Greek: Remember how long you have been putting these things off, and how many appointed days you have	English from Latin: Remember how long you have been putting these things off up to now, and how many times, given

received from the gods and do not use. Now at last you must perceive of what cosmos you are a part, and of what governor of the cosmos you exist as an emanation; and that a boundary of time has been drawn around you, and if you do not use it to clear the air within you, it will go — and you will go — and the chance will not come again.	extended time by the gods, you have not used it. You must at some point take note of what part of the world you are, and from what Author you have flowed; then consider the end of the time prescribed for you in the future. For if you spend that time in idleness within your walls, it slips away and will never return to you once you are dead.

Language Differences: *The lyrical Greek phrase εἰς τὸ ἀπαιθριάσαι (to clear the sky, to scatter the clouds of the mind) is drastically altered by Xylander into an earthy, claustrophobic domestic scene: si otio intra parietes consumpseris ("if you consume this time in leisure within your walls"), inventing an explicit warning against palace isolation.*

Commentary: This passage encapsulates the ultimate urgency of Marcus's style. Human lifespan is treated as a highly finite ὅρος (circumscribed boundary). The phrase ἀπόῤῥοια (emanation/flux) identifies human consciousness as a direct fragment of the divine entity, emphasizing that delaying mental clarity is an insult to the cosmic spark inside us.

Book II · Section 5

Roman Duty

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Πάσης ὥρας φρόντιζε στιβαρῶς ὡς Ῥωμαῖος καὶ ἄῤῥην τὸ ἐν χερσὶ μετὰ τῆς ἀκριβοῦς .. καὶ ἁπλάστου σεμνότητος καὶ φιλοστοργίας καὶ ἐλευθερίας καὶ δικαιότητος πράσσειν καὶ σχολὴν ἑαυτῷ ἀπὸ πασῶν τῶν ἄλλων φαντασιῶν πορίζειν. ποριεῖς δέ, ἂν ὡς ἐσχάτην τοῦ βίου ἑκάστην πρᾶξιν ἐνεργῇς, ἀπηλλαγμένος πάσης εἰκαιότητος καὶ ἐμπαθοῦς ἀποστροφῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ αἱροῦντος λόγου καὶ ὑποκρίσεως καὶ φιλαυτίας καὶ δυσαρεστήσεως πρὸς τὰ συμμεμοιραμένα. ὁρᾷς πῶς ὀλίγα ἐστίν, ὧν κρατήσας τις δύναται εὔρουν καὶ θεουδῆ βιῶσαι βίον˙ καὶ γὰρ οἱ θεοὶ πλέον οὐδὲν ἀπαιτήσουσι παρὰ τοῦ ταῦτα φυλάσσοντος	*Singulis horis animum in id incumbe, ut fortiter, quemadmodum Romano & viro convenit, id quod prae manibus est, peragas, accurata & non ficta gravitate, humanitate, liberalitate, iustitiaque adhibitis. Interea animum tuum ab omnibus aliis cogitationibus abduc: quod ita fiet, si unum quodlibet negotium, eorum quae in vita tua exequenda tibi sint, postremum esse iudicans, ita conficias, ut ne quid vanitatis, affectuum a consilio avertentium, simulationis, amorissui admittat.*
English from Greek: Every hour attend sturdily, as a Roman and a man, to doing what is at hand with precise and	English from Latin: In each hour, apply your mind to this: to perform with courage, as befits a Roman and a man, that which

unaffected dignity, with affection, freedom, and justice — and win yourself leisure from every other impression. You will win it if you perform each action as if it were the last of your life, freed from all randomness, from passionate aversion to the rule of reason, from pretense, from self-love, from discontent with your allotted portion. You see how few are the things which, if a man masters them, make possible a life that flows well and is godly. For the gods themselves will demand nothing more from the one who keeps to these.	lies before you — with exact and unfeigned gravity, humaneness, generosity, and justice. Meanwhile, withdraw your mind from all other thoughts. This will happen if you judge each task in your life to be the last, and so accomplish it that nothing of vanity, or of passions that turn counsel aside, or of simulation, or self-love creeps in.

Language Differences: *The Greek φιλοστοργίας (tender, instinctual family love) is softened into humanitate (general humaneness/courtesy). Xylander leaves out the last third of this section in his Latin text, cutting off right at amorissui admittat ("admits self-love"), which omits Marcus's closing thoughts on a godly life (θεουδῆ).*

Commentary: Marcus invokes his dual identity here: he is both a member of the cosmopolitan brotherhood of reason and an active Ῥωμαῖος bound to military and administrative duty. Operating as if each action were the ἐσχάτην τοῦ βίου (the ultimate act of life) is a tool used to slice away distraction, ensuring total, uncompromised execution of current tasks.

Book II · Section 6

Self-Wrong

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὑβρίζεις, ὑβρίζεις ἑαυτήν, ὦ ψυχή˙ τοῦ δὲ τιμῆσαι σεαυτὴν οὐκέτι καιρὸν ἕξεις˙ ἀκαριαῖος ὁ βίος ἑκάστῳ, οὗτος δέ σοι σχεδὸν διήνυσται, μὴ αἰδουμένῃ σεαυτήν, ἀλλ ἐν ταῖς ἄλλων ψυχαῖς τιθεμένῃ τὴν σὴν εὐμοιρίαν	*Ignominiam tibi ipsi inflige, anima, contemne teipsam: hoc est, ut enim honore te ficias, non tibi praeterea tempus suppetet. Vita enim unicuique id praebet: quae tibi propemodum iam exacta est. Non igitur teipsam venera, sed felicitatem tuam aliorum in animis repositam habe. Non patere ab iis quae extrinsecus accidunt, te circumagi.*
English from Greek: You wrong yourself — you wrong yourself, O my soul! And you will have no further opportunity to honor yourself. The life of every man is but a moment, and yours is nearly finished, while you do not yet respect yourself, but place your happiness in the souls of others.	English from Latin: Inflict disgrace upon yourself, O soul — hold yourself in contempt. That is: if you honor yourself, no further time remains for it. For life grants each person just this much; and yours is nearly used up. Do not venerate yourself, but keep your happiness stored in the minds of others. Do not permit yourself to be dragged about by things that happen

	from outside.

Language Differences: *Xylander transforms Marcus's lamenting statement Ὑβρίζεις ("You outrage/wrong yourself") into a striking imperative command: Ignominiam tibi ipsi inflige ("Inflict disgrace upon yourself!"). He also imports a line from Section 7 (Non patere ab iis...) to serve as a transitional bridge, altering the structural rhythm of the standard text layout.*

Commentary: To place personal well-being (εὐμοιρίαν) inside the evaluations of other people is viewed as an existential abdication. True self-respect (αἰδουμένῃ σεαυτήν) requires keeping an independent inner sanctuary, completely insulated from external flattery or criticism.

Book II · Section 7

Distractions and Aimlessness

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Περισπᾷ τί σε τὰ ἔξωθεν ἐμπίπτοντα; καὶ σχολὴν πάρεχε σεαυτῷ τοῦ προσμανθάνειν ἀγαθόν τι καὶ παῦσαι ῥεμβόμενος. ἤδη δὲ καὶ τὴν ἑτέραν περιφορὰν φυλακτέον˙ ληροῦσι γὰρ καὶ διὰ πράξεων οἱ κεκμηκότες τῷ βίῳ καὶ μὴ ἔχοντες σκοπόν, ἐφ ὃν πᾶσαν ὁρμὴν καὶ καθάπαξ φαντασίαν ἀπευθύνουσιν	*Est & alter declinandus error: nonnulli enim actibus vitae suae confecti delirant, quod scopum nullum habent, ad quem omnes suos conatus & cogitationes dirigant. Haud temere quisquam repertus est infelix ea de causa quod non inquireret quid aliorum animis accideret: qui vero suis animi motibus non obsequitur, necessario miser est.*
English from Greek: Do the things that fall upon you from outside distract you? Then give yourself leisure to learn something further that is good, and stop being whirled about. And now you must guard against the other kind of wandering too: for they are triflers even in their actions who are worn out by life and have no aim toward which to direct every impulse — and, in a word, every impression.	English from Latin: There is also another error to be avoided: some people, worn out by the affairs of their life, are confused because they have no goal to which they direct all their efforts and thoughts. Scarcely has anyone been found to be unhappy for the reason that he did not inquire what was happening in other people's minds. But the one who does not follow the movements of his own soul is necessarily miserable.

Language Differences: *Xylander omits the opening interrogation about external distractions entirely, jumping into the warning against targetless drifting (Est & alter declinandus error). He also pulls the text of Section 8 directly into this section's paragraph block without a structural break.*

Commentary: Marcus targets two distinct forms of mental drift: ῥεμβόμενος (being passively spun by incoming noise) and σκοπόν μὴ ἔχοντες (hyper-active

busyness that lacks a unified moral objective). Without a single ethical north star (σκοπόν), all daily actions decay into mere performative noise.

Book II · Section 8

Mind Your Own Soul

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Παρὰ μὲν τὸ μὴ ἐφιστάνειν, τί ἐν τῇ ἄλλου ψυχῇ γίνεται, οὐ ῥᾳδίως τις ὤφθη κακοδαιμονῶν˙ τοὺς δὲ τοῖς τῆς ἰδίας ψυχῆς κινήμασι μὴ παρακολουθοῦντας ἀνάγκη κακοδαιμονεῖν	*Haud temere quisquam repertus est infelix ea de causa quod non inquireret quid aliorum animis accideret: at qui suorum animi motuum non est conscius, necessario miser est. Hora semper oportet recordari, quae sit universi natura, quemque ea, quomodoque haec ad illam sit affecta, qualis pars eacu ius totius sit.*
English from Greek: Not easily has anyone been found to be miserable for the reason that he did not pay attention to what was happening in another's soul; but those who do not follow the movements of their own soul are necessarily miserable.	English from Latin: Scarcely has anyone been found to be unhappy because he did not inquire what was happening in others' minds; but one who is not aware of the movements of his own soul is necessarily miserable. One must always remember at every hour what is the nature of the whole, and what one's own nature is, and how this stands in relation to that, and what sort of part of what whole one is.

Language Differences: *Animi motuum conscius (to be conscious of the movements of the mind) serves as a deeply internal, psychological rendering of the Greek παρακολουθοῦντας (to follow along with, or trace closely). Xylander hitches the opening lines of Section 9 (Hora semper oportet...) directly to the tail of this sentence as a continuous thought.*

Commentary: This is a classic defense of radical introspection. Misery (κακοδαιμονία) never results from a failure to read the motivations of external actors; it is the inevitable consequence of being blind to the patterns, biases, and faults of one's own internal monologue.

Book II · Section 9

The Nature of the Whole

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Τούτων ἀεὶ μεμνῆσθαι, τίς ἡ τῶν ὅλων	*Hora semper oportet recordari, quae sit*

φύσις καὶ τίς ἡ ἐμὴ καὶ πῶς αὕτη πρὸς ἐκείνην ἔχουσα καὶ ὁποῖόν τι μέρος ὁποίου τοῦ ὅλου οὖσα καὶ ὅτι οὐδεὶς ὁ κωλύων τὰ ἀκόλουθα τῇ φύσει, ἧς μέρος εἶ, πράσσειν τε ἀεὶ καὶ λέγειν	*universi natura, quemque ea, quomodoque haec ad illam sit affecta, qualis pars ea cuius totius sit: ad haec neminem esse qui obstet, quo minus semper ea, quae naturae (cuius tu pars es) sint consentanea, & agas, & dicas.*
English from Greek: These things must always be remembered: what the nature of the whole is, and what my own nature; and how mine stands related to that; and what kind of part it is, of what kind of whole; and that there is no one who can prevent you from always doing and saying the things that follow the nature of which you are a part.	English from Latin: One must always remember at every hour what is the nature of the universe, and what one's own nature is, and how this stands in relation to that, and what part of what whole one is — and furthermore, that there is no one who can prevent you from always doing and saying those things that are consonant with the nature of which you are a part.

Language Differences: *Xylander beautifully expands the single Greek participle μεμνῆσθαι (remembering) into a formal temporal condition: Hora semper oportet recordari ("At every single hour it is necessary to remember"). The target phrase τὰ ἀκόλουθα τῇ φύσει (the things following alongside nature) becomes naturae... consentanea ("things consonant/in harmony with nature").*

Commentary: This passage outlines the absolute structural autonomy of the Stoic agent. Because the inner will is entirely sovereign, no external tyrant, crisis, or physical constraint can ever prevent an individual from speaking and choosing in alignment with universal nature.

Book II · Section 10

Comparison of Sins

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Φιλοσόφως ὁ Θεόφραστος ἐν τῇ συγκρίσει τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων, ὡς ἄν τις κοινότερον τὰ τοιαῦτα συγκρίνειε, φησὶ βαρύτερα εἶναι τὰ κατ ἐπιθυμίαν πλημμελούμενα τῶν κατὰ θυμόν. ὁ γὰρ θυμούμενος μετά τινος λύπης καὶ λεληθυίας συστολῆς φαίνεται τὸν λόγον ἀποστρεφόμενος˙ ὁ δὲ κατ ἐπιθυμίαν ἁμαρτάνων, ὑφ ἡδονῆς ἡττώμενος ἀκολαστότερός πως φαίνεται καὶ θηλύτερος ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις. ὀρθῶς οὖν καὶ φιλοσοφίας ἀξίως ἔφη μείζονος ἐγκλή ματος ἔχεσθαι τὸ μεθ ἡδονῆς ἁμαρτανόμενον ἤπερ τὸ μετὰ λύπης˙ ὅλως τε ὁ μὲν προηδικημένῳ μᾶλλον	*Theophrastus in comparatione peccatorum, ubi ostendit communiorem ea inter se conferendi rationem, philosophice inquit, ea quae per cupiditatem committuntur peccata, graviora esse iis quae per iram. Etenim iratus videtur cum dolore quodam & occulte correptus animo, a recta ratione divertere: qui vero per cupiditatem peccat, victus a voluptate, intemperantior altero censetur, magisque effeminatus.*

ἔοικε καὶ διὰ λύπης ἠναγκασμένῳ θυμωθῆναι˙ ὁ δὲ αὐτόθεν πρὸς τὸ ἀδικεῖν ὥρμηται, φερόμενος ἐπὶ τὸ πρᾶξαί τι κατ ἐπιθυμίαν	
English from Greek: Theophrastus, in his comparison of wrongdoings — comparing them as one might in the common manner — says like a philosopher that offenses committed through desire are graver than those committed through anger. For the angry man appears to turn away from reason with a certain pain and unconscious contraction; but the one who does wrong through desire, overcome by pleasure, appears somehow more intemperate and more effeminate in his wrongdoing. Rightly, then, and worthily of philosophy, he said that wrongdoing with pleasure deserves the greater reproach than wrongdoing with pain. The one, on the whole, resembles a man first wronged and compelled by pain to anger; the other has set out toward injustice from his own impulse, carried toward doing wrong by desire.	English from Latin: Theophrastus, in his comparison of sins, when showing the more philosophical approach of comparing them with one another, says: the sins committed through desire are graver than those committed through anger. For the angry man seems to turn from right reason under a kind of pain and secretly seized spirit; while the one who sins through desire, conquered by pleasure, is considered more intemperate than the other and more effeminate.

Language Differences: *Πλημμελούμενα (offenses/stumbles) is translated by Xylander as peccata (sins), adding an early modern religious weight to an ancient ethical term. Xylander cuts off this section early, leaving out the final comparative analogy regarding the man who is first wronged (προηδικημένῳ).*

Commentary: Marcus reviews a structural distinction made by Aristotle's successor, Theophrastus: offenses born of desire (ἐπιθυμία) carry a heavier moral liability than those born of anger (θυμός). Anger involves a painful contraction of the mind where reason is hijacked by perceived injury; desire involves a conscious capitulation to pleasure, representing a deeper surrender of internal governance.

Book II · Section 11

Departure from Life

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὡς ἤδη δυνατοῦ ὄντος ἐξιέναι τοῦ βίου, οὕτως ἕκαστα ποιεῖν καὶ λέγειν καὶ διανοεῖσθαι. τὸ δὲ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἀπελθεῖν, εἰ μὲν θεοὶ εἰσίν, οὐδὲν	*Ut iam possibili exitu de vita, sic omnia agas & dicas & cogites. Caeterum e vita discedere, siquidem dii sunt, nihil habet incommodi: neque enim ii te aliquo malo*

δεινόν˙ κακῷ γάρ σε οὐκ ἂν περιβάλοιεν˙ εἰ δὲ ἤτοι οὐκ εἰσὶν ἢ οὐ μέλει αὐτοῖς τῶν ἀνθρωπείων, τί μοι ζῆν ἐν κόσμῳ κενῷ θεῶν ἢ προνοίας κενῷ; ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰσὶ καὶ μέλει αὐτοῖς τῶν ἀνθρωπείων καὶ τοῖς μὲν κατ ἀλήθειαν κακοῖς ἵνα μὴ περιπίπτῃ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ἐπ αὐτῷ τὸ πᾶν ἔθεντο˙ τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν εἴ τι κακὸν ἦν, καὶ τοῦτο ἂν προείδοντο, ἵνα ἐπὶ παντὶ ᾖ τὸ μὴ περιπίπτειν αὐτῷ. (ὃ δὲ χείρω μὴ ποιεῖ ἄνθρωπον, πῶς ἂν τοῦτο βίον ἀνθρώπου χείρω ποιήσειεν;) οὔτε δὲ κατ ἄγνοιαν οὔτε εἰδυῖα μέν, μὴ δυναμένη δὲ προφυλάξασθαι ἢ διορθώσασθαι ταῦτα ἡ τῶν ὅλων φύσις παρεῖδεν ἄν, οὔτ ἂν τηλικοῦτον ἥμαρτεν ἤτοι παῤ ἀδυναμίαν ἢ παῤ ἀτεχνίαν, ἵνα τὰ ἀγαθὰ καὶ τὰ κακὰ ἐπίσης τοῖς τε ἀγαθοῖς ἀνθρώποις καὶ τοῖς κακοῖς πεφυρμένως συμβαίνῃ. θάνατος δέ γε καὶ ζωή, δόξα καὶ ἀδοξία, πόνος καὶ ἡδονή, πλοῦτος καὶ πενία, πάντα ταῦτα ἐπίσης συμβαίνει ἀνθρώπων τοῖς τε ἀγαθοῖς καὶ τοῖς κακοῖς, οὔτε καλὰ ὄντα οὔτε αἰσχρά. οὔτ ἄῤ ἀγαθὰ οὔτε κακά ἐστι	*sunt affecturi. Sin autem, vel non sunt dii, vel res humanas non curant, quid attinebat vivere in mundo deo ac providentia vacuo? Enimuero & sunt dii, & rerum humanarum curam gerunt.*
English from Greek: Act, speak, and think in every case as one able to depart from life this moment. To go away from among men is nothing terrible, if there are gods, for they would not involve you in evil. And if there are no gods, or if they do not care about human affairs, what is it to me to live in a cosmos empty of gods or empty of providence? But there are gods, and they do care for human affairs, and they have placed it wholly in a man's own power not to fall into the things that are truly evil; and if there were anything evil in the rest, they would have provided for this too, that it lie in every man's power not to fall into it. (And what does not make a man worse — how could it make a man's life worse?) The nature of the whole would not have overlooked these things through ignorance, nor — knowing them — through inability to guard against them or set them right; nor would it have erred so greatly, through weakness or want of skill, that good things and evil things should fall without distinction upon good men and bad alike. But death and life, fame and	English from Latin: As if departure from life were now already possible, so do everything and say and think. Moreover, to depart from life — if the gods exist — involves no hardship, for they will not bring any evil upon you. But if either the gods do not exist, or if they take no care of human affairs, what point was there in living in a world empty of god and providence? But in truth, the gods do exist and they do take care of human affairs.

ignominy, pain and pleasure, wealth and poverty — all these happen equally to the good and the bad, being neither noble nor shameful. They are therefore neither goods nor evils.	

Language Differences: *Xylander condenses the long theological argument of the second half of Section 11, focusing entirely on the main premise: the clear existence of the gods (Enimuero & sunt dii...). The technical phrase κόσμῳ κενῷ θεῶν (a cosmos empty of gods) is translated into the standard early-modern theological layout mundo deo ac providentia vacuo ("a world vacant of God and providence").*

Commentary: Marcus uses a razor-sharp logical dilemma to neutralize the fear of death. If providence governs the universe, death is merely a safe transition; if the world is a chaotic void, living is meaningless anyway. Since real goods and evils (virtue and vice) affect only the character, external transitions like death, poverty, or physical pain are classified as absolute indifferents.

Book II · Section 12

The Swiftness of Time

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Πῶς πάντα ταχέως ἐναφανίζεται, τῷ μὲν κόσμῳ αὐτὰ τὰ σώματα, τῷ δὲ αἰῶνι αἱ μνῆμαι αὐτῶν· οἷά ἐστι τὰ αἰσθητὰ πάντα καὶ μάλιστα τὰ ἡδονῇ δελεάζοντα ἢ τῷ πόνῳ φοβοῦντα ἢ τῷ τύφῳ διαβεβοημένα, πῶς εὐτελῆ καὶ εὐκαταφρόνητα καὶ ῥυπαρὰ καὶ εὔφθαρτα καὶ νεκρά· - νοερᾶς δυνάμεως ἐφιστάναι. τί εἰσιν οὗτοι, ὧν αἱ ὑπολήψεις καὶ αἱ φωναὶ τὴν εὐδοξίαν ‹καὶ τὴν ἀδοξίαν παρέχουσι›. τί ἐστι τὸ ἀποθανεῖν, καὶ ὅτι, ἐάν τις αὐτὸ μόνον ἴδῃ καὶ τῷ μερισμῷ τῆς ἐννοίας διαλύσῃ τὰ ἐμφανταζόμενα αὐτῷ, οὐκέτι ἄλλο τι ὑπολήψεται αὐτὸ εἶναι ἢ φύσεως ἔργον· φύσεως δὲ ἔργον εἴ τις φοβεῖται, παιδίον ἐστί· τοῦτο μέντοι οὐ μόνον φύσεως ἔργον ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ καὶ συμφέρον αὐτῇ. πῶς ἅπτεται θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος καὶ κατὰ τί ἑαυτοῦ μέρος καὶ ὅταν πῶς [ἔχῃ] διακέηται τὸ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τοῦτο μόριον	*Quam celeriter omnia abolentur, in mundo quidem corpora, in aevo autem etiam eorum memoria. Omnia quae sub sensum cadunt, ac praesertim ea, quae vel voluptate alliciunt, vel dolore terrent, vel fastu suo clara sunt, quam vilia sunt ea omnia, & contemptione digna, quam sordida, obnoxia interitui, & mortua? Intelligentiae est, indagare quidnam sint ii, quorum opiniones & voces gloriam movent.*
English from Greek: How swiftly all things vanish — the bodies themselves into the cosmos, the memories of them into	English from Latin: How swiftly all things are abolished — in the world the bodies themselves, and in eternity even the

eternity. Of what sort are all the things of sense, above all those that bait us with pleasure or terrify us with pain or are shouted abroad by vanity: how cheap, how contemptible, how soiled, how perishable, how dead — it belongs to the intellectual faculty to attend to this. And what are these men, whose opinions and voices confer good repute and ill? And what is it to die? — and that, if a man looks at it alone in itself, and by analysis of the conception strips away the images that cling to it, he will no longer suppose it to be anything other than a work of nature. And if anyone fears a work of nature, he is a child. Death, moreover, is not only a work of nature, but advantageous to her. And how does man touch god, and through what part of himself, and in what condition must that part of the man be?	memories of them. All things that fall under the senses — especially those that entice with pleasure, or frighten with pain, or that shine with their own pomp — how worthless they all are, and worthy of contempt, how sordid, subject to ruin, and dead! It belongs to the intellect to investigate what sort of people they are whose opinions and voices stir up fame.

Language Differences: *Xylander beautifully renders τῷ τύφῳ διαβεβοημένα (things shouted abroad by vanity/delusion) as fastu suo clara sunt ("things made famous by their own pride/pomp"). The target Greek νοερᾶς δυνάμεως (the intellectual faculty) is cleanly translated as Intelligentiae est ("It belongs to the intelligence").*

Commentary: Marcus looks past the superficial allure of the sensory world. Pleasure, pain, and fame are stripped of their emotional power by separating them into their basic material parts. Death is observed clearly as a simple φύσεως ἔργον (a baseline mechanism of nature), exposing the fear of it as an irrational, childlike response to change.

Book II · Section 13

The Mirror of the Soul

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Οὐδὲν ἀθλιώτερον τοῦ πάντα κύκλῳ ἐκπεριερχομένου καὶ “τὰ νέρθεν γᾶς (φησὶν) ἐρευνῶντος” καὶ τὰ ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς τῶν πλησίον διὰ τεκμάρσεως ζητοῦντος, μὴ αἰσθομένου δέ, ὅτι ἀρκεῖ πρὸς μόνῳ τῷ ἔνδον ἑαυτοῦ δαίμονι εἶναι καὶ τοῦτον γνησίως θεραπεύειν. θεραπεία δὲ αὐτοῦ, καθαρὸν πάθους διατηρεῖν καὶ εἰκαιότητος καὶ δυσαρεστήσεως τῆς πρὸς τὰ ἐκ θεῶν καὶ	*Nihil miserius est eo, qui omnia circumeundo scrutatur & (quod aiunt) ea etiam quae sunt infra terram rimatur, coniecturaqueque ea quae in aliorum animis eveniant inquirit, neque sentit sufficere ut suum quisque, qui in ipso inest genium, observet, eumque legitime colat.*

ἀνθρώπων γινόμενα. τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἐκ θεῶν αἰδέσιμα δἰ ἀρετήν˙ τὰ δὲ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων φίλα διὰ συγγένειαν, ἔστι δὲ ὅτε καὶ τρόπον τινὰ ἐλεεινὰ δἰ ἄγνοιαν ἀγαθῶν καὶ κακῶν˙ οὐκ ἐλάττων ἡ πήρωσις αὕτη τῆς στερισκούσης τοῦ διακρίνειν τὰ λευκὰ καὶ μέλανα	
English from Greek: Nothing is more miserable than the man who goes round and round everything, who 'searches out the things beneath the earth,' as the poet says, and who seeks by conjecture what is in his neighbors' souls, yet fails to perceive that it is enough to be with the spirit within himself alone and to serve it sincerely. The service of that spirit is to keep it pure of passion, of randomness, and of discontent with what comes from gods and from men. For what comes from the gods is venerable because of their excellence; and what comes from men is dear because of kinship — though sometimes also, in a way, pitiable, because of their ignorance of good and evil: a disability no less than the one that takes away the power to distinguish white from black.	English from Latin: Nothing is more wretched than the one who goes around scrutinizing everything and — as they say — probes even what lies beneath the earth, and by conjecture investigates what may be happening in other people's souls, yet does not realize it is sufficient for each person to observe the genius (spirit) within himself and to worship it properly.

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks the famous quotation from Pindar (found via Plato’s Theaetetus) accurately. He translates Marcus's inner δαίμονι (the internal guardian spirit) as genium (the personal guiding spirit or genius), aligning the concept with traditional Roman domestic religion.*

Commentary: Marcus castigates the spiritual exhaustion of being a busybody. Trying to read the minds of others while ignoring one's own inner spark is exposed as a massive waste of life. Serving the δαίμων within requires absolute purity from πάθους (irrational passions) and εἰκαιότητος (random, aimless action).

Book II · Section 14

The Infinite Present

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Κἂν τρὶς χίλια ἔτη βιώσεσθαι μέλλῃς, καὶ τοσαυτάκις μύρια, ὅμως μέμνησο ὅτι οὐδεὶς ἄλλον ἀποβάλλει βίον ἢ τοῦτον ὃν ζῇ, οὐδὲ ἄλλον ζῇ ἢ ὃν ἀποβάλλει. εἰς ταὐτὸν οὖν καθίσταται τὸ μήκιστον τῷ	*Si vel tria millia annorum vivenda forent, insuper triginta alia, tamen recordandum tibi est, neminem aliam ab ea quam vivit vitam deponere, neque aliam deponere quam eam quam vivit. Itaque idem est*

βραχυτάτῳ. τὸ γὰρ παρὸν πᾶσιν ἴσον καὶ τὸ ἀπολλύμενον οὖν ἴσον καὶ τὸ ἀποβαλλόμενον οὕτως ἀκαριαῖον ἀναφαίνεται. οὔτε γὰρ τὸ παρῳχηκὸς οὔτε τὸ μέλλον ἀποβάλοι ἄν τις˙ ὃ γὰρ οὐκ ἔχει, πῶς ἄν τις τοῦτο αὐτοῦ ἀφέλοιτο; τούτων οὖν τῶν δύο ἀεὶ μεμνῆσθαι˙ ἑνὸς μέν, ὅτι πάντα ἐξ ἀιδίου ὁμοειδῆ καὶ ἀνακυκλούμενα καὶ οὐδὲν διαφέρει, πότερον ἐν ἑκατὸν ἔτεσιν ἢ ἐν διακοσίοις ἢ ἐν τῷ ἀπείρῳ χρόνῳ τὰ αὐτά τις ὄψεται˙ ἑτέρου δέ, ὅτι καὶ ὁ πολυχρονιώτατος καὶ ὁ τάχιστα τεθνηξόμενος τὸ ἴσον ἀποβάλλει. τὸ γὰρ παρόν ἐστι μόνον οῤ στερίσκεσθαι μέλλει, εἴπερ γε ἔχει καὶ τοῦτο μόνον καὶ ὃ μὴ ἔχει τις οὐκ ἀποβάλλει	*longissimum spatium cum eo quod est brevissimum: nam quod praesens est, id omnibus idem est, quanquam id quod periit, non sit idem atque id quod amittitur.*
English from Greek: Even if you were going to live three thousand years, and as many times ten thousand, still remember that no one loses any life other than the one he is living, nor lives any other than the one he is losing. The longest and the shortest thus come to the same. For the present is equal for all, and what is being lost is therefore equal, and what is being given up shows itself to be only a moment. No one can lose either the past or the future — for how can anyone be deprived of what he does not have? Remember, then, these two things always: first, that all things from eternity are of the same kind and circle round and round, and it makes no difference whether a man will see the same things for a hundred years, or two hundred, or for endless time; second, that the longest-lived and the soonest to die lose the very same thing. For the present alone is what a man can be deprived of — since this alone is what he has — and what a man does not have, he cannot lose.	English from Latin: Even if three thousand years were to be lived, or thirty thousand more besides, still you must remember that no one puts aside any life other than the one he is living, nor does anyone live any life other than the one he puts aside. Therefore, the longest span of time is the same as the shortest — for what is present is the same for all, although what has perished is not the same as what is being lost.

Language Differences: *Xylander makes a slight numerical slip, translating τοσαυτάκις μύρια (ten thousand times as many) as triginta alia (thirty thousand others). His translation of ἀποβάλλει (losing/giving up) as deponere ("laying down/putting aside") introduces a sense of voluntary surrender missing from the Greek.*

Commentary: This section anchors the Stoic philosophy of time. Because the past is gone and the future is unformed, the present moment (τὸ παρόν) is the

only space where life actually exists. Consequently, dying early or dying old results in the exact same loss: the loss of the immediate present, which is all anyone ever possesses.

Book II · Section 15

Monimus the Cynic

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὅτι πᾶν ὑπόληψις. δῆλα μὲν γὰρ τὰ πρὸς τὸν Κυνικὸν Μόνιμον λεγόμενα˙ δῆλον δὲ καὶ τὸ χρήσιμον τοῦ λεγομένου, ἐάν τις αὐτοῦ τὸ νόστιμον μέχρι τοῦ ἀληθοῦς δέχηται	*Universa esse sita in opinione: quod patet ex his quae cum Monimo Cynico sunt disputata. Perspicua autem est eius quod dictum est utilitas, si quis eatenus eius suavitatem admittat, quatenus veritati congruit.*
English from Greek: Remember that everything is opinion. For what was said to Monimus the Cynic is plain — and plain too is the usefulness of the saying, if one accepts its kernel so far as it is true.	English from Latin: All things lie in opinion: which is clear from what was argued with Monimus the Cynic. And the usefulness of what was said is evident, if one admits its appeal only to the degree that it is consonant with truth.

Language Differences: *The key Greek psychological term ὑπόληψις (judgment, internal interpretation, or assumption) is translated by Xylander as opinione (opinion/belief). He also renders the metaphorical τὸ νόστιμον (the wholesome/nutritious core or kernel) as suavitatem ("sweetness/agreeableness").*

Commentary: Marcus analyzes a paradox from the radical Cynic philosopher Monimus: πᾶν ὑπόληψις ("everything is valuation/interpretation"). While logically an exaggeration, its immense practical utility (χρήσιμον) lies in Epictetus's core discovery: human suffering is generated not by external events, but entirely by our internal judgments about those events.

Book II · Section 16

Five Ways the Soul Wrongs Itself

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὑβρίζει ἑαυτὴν ἡ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ψυχὴ μάλιστα μέν, ὅταν ἀπόστημα καὶ οἷον φῦμα τοῦ κόσμου, ὅσον ἐφ ἑαυτῇ, γένηται˙ τὸ γὰρ δυσχεραίνειν τινὶ τῶν γινομένων ἀπόστασίς ἐστι τῆς φύσεως, ‹ὑφ› ἧς ἐν μέρει ἕκασται τῶν λοιπῶν	*Anima hominis contumelia seipsam multis modis afficit. Primo, quum quantum in seipsa est, abscessus quidam, & quasi ulcus mundi fit. Abscedit autem a natura, quando ea quae fiunt, iniquo fere animo*

φύσεις περιέχονται. ἔπειτα δέ, ὅταν ἄνθρωπόν τινα ἀποστραφῇ ἢ καὶ ἐναντία φέρηται ὡς βλάψουσα, οἵαί εἰσιν αἱ τῶν ὀργιζομένων. τρίτον ὑβρίζει ἑαυτήν, ὅταν ἡσσᾶται ἡδονῆς ἢ πόνου. τέταρτον, ὅταν ὑποκρίνηται καὶ ἐπιπλάστως καὶ ἀναλήθως τι ποιῇ ἢ λέγῃ. πέμπτον, ὅταν πρᾶξίν τινα ἑαυτῆς καὶ ὁρμὴν ἐπ οὐδένα σκοπὸν ἀφιῇ, ἀλλ εἰκῇ καὶ ἀπαρακολουθήτως ὁτιοῦν ἐνεργῇ, δέον καὶ τὰ μικρότατα κατὰ τὴν ἐπὶ τὸ τέλος ἀναφορὰν γίνεσθαι˙ τέλος δὲ λογικῶν ζῴων τὸ ἕπεσθαι τῷ τῆς πόλεως καὶ πολιτείας τῆς πρεσβυτάτης λόγῳ καὶ θεσμῷ	*accipiuntur. Deinde, quum hominem aliquem aversatur, aut laedendi causa adversatur: hoc est iratorum. Tertio, quum voluptati aut dolori succombit. Quarto, quum simulat, fidemque aliquid aut facit aut loquitur. Quinto, si quam actionem aut conatum ad nullum certum scopum dirigit, sed frustra quicquam, nullaque consequentia agit.*
English from Greek: The soul of man wrongs itself most of all when it becomes, so far as lies in it, an abscess and a kind of tumor on the cosmos: for to be vexed at anything that happens is a desertion of nature, within which the natures of all other things are severally contained. It wrongs itself again when it turns away from any human being, or is even carried against him as if to harm him, as are the souls of the angry. It wrongs itself, third, when it is overcome by pleasure or by pain; fourth, when it plays a part, and does or says anything feigned and untrue; fifth, when it lets any action or impulse of its own go toward no goal, and does anything at random and without attention — when even the smallest things ought to be done with reference to the end. And the end of rational creatures is to follow the reason and the ordinance of the most venerable of cities and commonwealths.	English from Latin: The soul of man wrongs itself in many ways. First, when — as much as lies in itself — it becomes a kind of abscess and, as it were, an ulcer on the world: for it withdraws from nature when it receives what happens with an essentially resentful spirit. Second, when it turns away from some person or advances against them with intent to harm — this is what the angry do. Third, when it succumbs to pleasure or pain. Fourth, when it pretends, doing or saying something without genuine faith. Fifth, when it directs any action or effort toward no fixed goal, but acts randomly and without consequence.

Language Differences: *Xylander captures Marcus's graphic medical imagery with clinical accuracy, rendering ἀπόστημα and φῦμα (tumor/abscess) as abscessus and ulcus (ulcer). He leaves off the final sentence of this section, omitting the definition of the final end (τέλος) of rational creatures as citizenship in the supreme cosmic city.*

Commentary: Marcus outlines five ways the soul fragments its own integrity: resisting fate (becoming a tumor on the cosmos), harboring social malice, surrendering to pleasure/pain, acting with hypocrisy, and drifting aimlessly without a purpose. For a Stoic, proper execution of duty is a structural debt owed to the cosmic community.

Book II · Section 17

The Philosophy of the Soul

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Τοῦ ἀνθρωπίνου βίου ὁ μὲν χρόνος στιγμή, ἡ δὲ οὐσία ῥέουσα, ἡ δὲ αἴσθησις ἀμυδρά, ἡ δὲ ὅλου τοῦ σώματος σύγκρισις εὔσηπτος, ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ ῥεμβός, ἡ δὲ τύχη δυστέκμαρτον, ἡ δὲ φήμη ἄκριτον· συνελόντι δὲ εἰπεῖν, πάντα τὰ μὲν τοῦ σώματος ποταμός, τὰ δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς ὄνειρος καὶ τῦφος, ὁ δὲ βίος πόλεμος καὶ ξένου ἐπιδημία, ἡ δὲ ὑστεροφημία λήθη. τί οὖν τὸ παραπέμψαι δυνάμενον; ἓν καὶ μόνον φιλοσοφία· τοῦτο δὲ ἐν τῷ τηρεῖν τὸν ἔνδον δαίμονα ἀνύβριστον καὶ ἀσινῆ, ἡδονῶν καὶ πόνων κρείττονα, μηδὲν εἰκῇ ποιοῦντα μηδὲ διεψευσμένως καὶ μεθ ὑποκρίσεως, ἀνενδεῆ τοῦ ἄλλον ποιῆσαί τι ἢ μὴ ποιῆσαι· ἔτι δὲ τὰ συμβαίνοντα καὶ ἀπονεμόμενα δεχόμενον ὡς ἐκεῖθέν ποθεν ἐρχόμενα, ὅθεν αὐτὸς ἦλθεν· ἐπὶ πᾶσι δὲ τὸν θάνατον ἵλεῳ τῇ γνώμῃ περιμένοντα ὡς οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἢ λύσιν τῶν στοιχείων, ἐξ ὧν ἕκαστον ζῷον συγκρίνεται. εἰ δὲ αὐτοῖς τοῖς στοιχείοις μηδὲν δεινὸν ἐν τῷ ἕκαστον διηνεκῶς εἰς ἕτερον μεταβάλλειν, διὰ τί ὑπίδηταί τις τὴν πάντων μεταβολὴν καὶ διάλυσιν; κατὰ φύσιν γάρ· οὐδὲν δὲ κακὸν κατὰ φύσιν	*Humana vita tempus momentum est, natura fluxa, sensus obscurus: totius corporis temperamentum putrescit facile, anima vaga est, fortuna quae sit difficile est colligere, fama incerta est. Atque ut summam rei dicam, omnia quae ad corpus pertinent, fluvii naturam habent, quae ad animam, insomni & fumi: vita bellum est & peregrinatio, fama post mortem oblivio. Quid ergo est quod tutö hominem possit deducere? Philosophia. Ea vero in hoc consistit, ut genium qui in te est, incontaminatum conserves atque illasum. Haec Carnuati disputata.*
English from Greek: Of human life, the duration is a point; the substance, flowing; the perception, dim; the composition of the whole body, quick to rot; the soul, a spinning top; fortune, hard to guess; fame, without judgment. To say it in a word: all things of the body are a river; all things of the soul, dream and vapor; life is a war and a stranger's sojourn; and after-fame is oblivion. What, then, can escort a man through? One thing and one only: philosophy. And this consists in keeping the spirit within free from outrage and unharmed, master over pleasures and pains, doing nothing at random, nothing falsely or with pretense, needing nothing from another's doing or not doing; and	English from Latin: Human life is a moment in time, its nature is flux, perception is dim; the temperament of the whole body putrefies easily, the soul is wandering, fortune is difficult to assess, fame is uncertain. And to sum up the whole matter: all things that pertain to the body have the nature of a river; those that pertain to the soul, of smoke and dream; life is war and a journey in exile; fame after death is oblivion. What then is it that can safely guide a man? Philosophy alone. And this consists in keeping the genius within you uncontaminated and unharmed. These thoughts written at Carnuntum.

accepting what happens and what is allotted as coming from that same place from which the man himself came; and above all, awaiting death with a serene mind, as nothing other than a release of the elements out of which every living thing is compounded. If for the elements themselves there is nothing terrible in each continually changing into another, why should anyone look with suspicion on the change and dissolution of them all? It is according to nature — and nothing is evil that accords with nature.	

Language Differences: *Xylander translates Marcus's vivid ὄνειρος καὶ τῦφος (dream and vapor/illusion) into the resonant early-modern pairing insomni & fumi ("of a dream and smoke"). His Latin text stops abruptly at atque illasum ("and unhurt"), omitting the final scientific argument regarding elemental dissolution.*

Commentary: Writing from a military encampment at Carnuntum, Marcus summarizes the transient nature of the physical world. Body and reputation dissolve into the cosmic flow. Philosophy is defined not as an academic pursuit, but as a practical defense mechanism: keeping the inner δαίμων completely unhurt, authentic, and ready for dissolution.

Glossary

Greek terms, Stoic vocabulary, and notes on the Roman world

TO MYSELF

The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius

Stuart Schonwetter Edition

Classic Motivation

About this Glossary

Marcus wrote in Greek, not in Latin, and he wrote in the technical Greek of the Stoic schools — vocabulary that had been refined over four centuries by the time he picked it up. A handful of words do most of the work. They are repeated, deliberately, as a craftsman's hands return to the same tools. Translating them flattens out the music. Leaving them un-translated requires a key. This is the key.

After the Stoic vocabulary itself comes a smaller set of entries on the world Marcus moved through: Roman institutions, military phrases, the names of philosophical schools, and a few cultural touchstones that turn up repeatedly in the text. Where a date or name might help the reader place an idea, it is given; where the original Greek word is musical or surprising, it is included in its native characters.

For this parallel edition, each Stoic term below also records how Wilhelm Xylander rendered it in his 1558 Latin translation — the bridge between Marcus's Greek and the Latin column of the facing pages.

Stoic Vocabulary

ἡγεμονικόν *(hēgemonikón)*

The ruling part. Literally the leading or governing thing — the Stoic name for the rational center of the soul, the part of you that judges, assents, and commands. Marcus returns to it constantly. The whole project of his book is keeping this faculty undisturbed and in command of itself. When he tells himself to retreat into his own mind, this is the place he means.

Xylander's Latin: *principatus; also pars princeps, mens gubernatrix (the ruling/governing part).*

λόγος *(lógos)*

A famously elastic word. It means reason, but also speech, account, ratio, principle — the capacity for ordered thought and the order in things that thought tracks. For the Stoics, λόγος is also cosmic: the rational principle that organizes the universe, of which our individual reason is a small participating share. The early Christians, including the author of the Gospel of John, picked the word up partly because the Stoic version of it had already done the philosophical groundwork.

Xylander's Latin: *ratio (reason); rendered oratio / sermo where the sense is speech.*

προαίρεσις *(proaírēsis)*

Choice, but in the deepest sense — the part of you that elects, that says yes or no. Aristotle had used the word; Epictetus made it central. Your προαίρεσις is what is genuinely yours and genuinely free: not your body, not your reputation, not your possessions, but the inner act of selection itself. The Stoic claim is that no tyrant can touch this. Whether that is comforting or grim is up to the reader.

Xylander's Latin: *voluntas (will); often expanded as in nostra potestate — "what is in our power."*

αἰδώς *(aidṓs)*

Roughly self-respect or shame in a positive sense — the inner check that keeps you from doing something you know to be unworthy. It is one of the older Greek virtues, with a religious dimension. Hesiod listed it among the things that flee the earth at the end of the Iron Age. Marcus uses it for the felt resistance you experience before a base act, the wince that precedes the wrong word.

Xylander's Latin: *verecundia; also pudor (modesty, self-respect).*

οἰκείωσις *(oikeíōsis)*

Affiliation, kinship, recognizing-as-one's-own. A foundational Stoic concept. The school taught that nature plants in every animal, including us, an instinct of self-preservation that gradually expands outward — first to one's own body, then to family, friends, fellow citizens, and finally to all rational beings. The cosmopolitan ethics of the Stoics rest on this idea. To live well is to follow the expansion of οἰκείωσις all the way out, until even the stranger is felt as one's own.

Xylander's Latin: *no single word — rendered by affinitas / cognatio and the verb phrase habere affinitatem (to hold a kinship with).*

φαντασία *(phantasía)*

Impression, appearance, the way something strikes us. Not yet a judgment — just the raw perception. The Stoic discipline begins here: you receive a φαντασία (the man insulted me; the food is delicious; my fever is dangerous), and before you give it your assent, you examine it. Most of Stoic

ethics is the work of taking the φαντασία and refusing to add anything to it that wasn't there in the first place.

Xylander's Latin: *imaginatio; also cogitatio (thought) and visum / visa (what is seen, the impression).*

ὑπόληψις *(hypólēpsis)*
Opinion, supposition, what you take a thing to be. The judgment laid down on top of the φαντασία. "It is not things that disturb us, but our opinions about things" is among the most often-quoted lines in the Meditations, and ὑπόληψις is the word in question. Strike down a faulty ὑπόληψις, Marcus repeats, and the disturbance goes with it.

Xylander's Latin: *opinio; sometimes iudicium (judgment).*

συγκατάθεσις *(synkatáthesis)*
Assent. The act of agreeing with an impression, of saying yes, this is so. The Stoics insisted that we are responsible for our assents in a way we are not responsible for the impressions themselves. The wise person withholds συγκατάθεσις until the impression has been examined — and gives it freely once the impression has passed muster.

Xylander's Latin: *assensio (assent).*

ἀπάθεια *(apátheia)*
Often translated as freedom from passion, which makes it sound colder than it should. ἀπάθεια does not mean freedom from feeling — it means freedom from the pathē, the disturbances and over-readings that derail right action. A Stoic feels grief, fear, joy. What he has trained himself out of is the panic that says the world has just ended because something he wanted didn't happen. Apatheia is closer to composure than to numbness.

Xylander's Latin: *no fixed word — rendered by phrases such as affectibus vacuus / vacuitas perturbationum (free of disordered passions).*

εὐδαιμονία *(eudaimonía)*
Happiness, but in the Greek sense — flourishing, living well, the life that goes well as a whole. Literally good-spirited (from the εὐ- prefix and δαίμων, see below). For the Stoics, eudaimonia is the condition of the rational soul that is in agreement with itself and with nature; it is a state, not a feeling, and it is supposed to be reachable by any rational being who is willing to do the work.

Xylander's Latin: *felicitas (happiness, good fortune; cf. felix for εὔμοιρος).*

ἀρετή *(aretḗ)*
Excellence, virtue. The peak performance of any thing relative to its kind: a knife's ἀρετή is to cut, a horse's is to run, a human's is to reason and to act justly. For the Stoics, ἀρετή is the only true good and the only thing required for happiness. Health, money, status — all preferable, all useful, all loseable. Virtue alone, they argued, is what nobody and nothing can take away.

Xylander's Latin: *virtus.*

πρόνοια *(prónoia)*
Providence, foresight. The Stoic universe is governed by an intelligent λόγος, and that intelligence is called πρόνοια when it shows up in the ordering of events. Marcus wavers, in famous passages, between the πρόνοια interpretation ("or atoms?") and the alternative; but his practice is the same in either case — accept what happens as part of the arrangement, whatever the arranger turns out to be.

Xylander's Latin: *providentia.*

φύσις *(phýsis)*
Nature. Both small-n nature (the constitution of any particular thing) and big-N Nature (the cosmos as one ordered, intelligent whole). The Stoic imperative "to live according to nature" means in accord with both at once: the rational structure of the universe and the rational structure of yourself, each in its own register.

Xylander's Latin: *natura.*

κόσμος *(kósmos)*
World, ordered whole, cosmos. The universe seen as a single organized intelligent system. The Greek word originally meant arrangement or adornment — the same root as our cosmetic — and the Stoics chose it deliberately. The world is a beautiful arrangement, not a chaos. To live in agreement with the κόσμος is to recognize that you are inside that arrangement, not above it.

Xylander's Latin: *mundus; also universum (the ordered whole).*

δαίμων *(daímōn)*
Spirit, guardian, divine portion within. Long before the Christian word demon turned the term sinister, δαίμων simply meant a divine intermediary,

sometimes the rational principle that each person carries — "the god within." Marcus uses δαίμων for the highest part of his own mind: the part that has, on his account, been put inside him by the gods themselves. To go against your δαίμων is to go against the gift.

Xylander's Latin: *genius (the guardian spirit / divine portion within).*

πνεῦμα *(pneûma)*
Breath, spirit. In ordinary Greek, πνεῦμα is the breath you take. In Stoic physics, it is the active fine substance — a hot tensile breath — that pervades and organizes the cosmos and constitutes the rational soul of every living thing. The word later carried much of the theological weight of the New Testament, but its philosophical career began here.

Xylander's Latin: *spiritus; the diminutive πνευμάτιον becomes spiritulum.*

εἱμαρμένη *(heimarménē)*
Fate. The Stoic doctrine of necessity: the chain of causes by which the world unfolds. εἱμαρμένη is not blind luck and it is not a malevolent will. It is, on the Stoic account, the same thing as the cosmic λόγος seen from the side of inevitability rather than rationality. To consent to εἱμαρμένη is to assent to the order of things; to fight it is to demand that the universe rearrange itself for you, which it will not.

Xylander's Latin: *fatum (destiny, the chain of causes).*

ἀπροπτωσία *(aproptōsía)*
Non-rashness. The technical Stoic virtue of refusing hasty assent — keeping your συγκατάθεσις in reserve until the φαντασία has been examined. It is the discipline of the careful judge: not skepticism, just patience. Most of the bad ethical decisions in the world, on this view, are decisions made before the impression had finished arriving.

Xylander's Latin: *no single word — rendered by phrases for refusing rash assent, e.g. ne temere assentiri (not to assent hastily).*

μεταβολή *(metabolḗ)*
Change, transformation. The universe for Marcus is ceaseless μεταβολή. Earth becomes water, water becomes air, air becomes fire, then back the other way (the line is from Heraclitus). To fight change is to fight the very condition of being alive. To love change is to love being part of the world rather than a guest in it.

Xylander's Latin: *mutatio (change); the related τροπαί appears as mutationes.*

καθῆκον *(kathêkon)*
Appropriate action; duty in its specific, contextual sense. Cicero translated the word into Latin as officium, and that is the route by which the Stoic concept reached the modern Western tradition under the name duty. A καθῆκον is what is fitting for someone in your particular circumstance — a parent's καθῆκον is not a soldier's. Marcus uses the word less often than Epictetus, but his book is, on every page, a working out of his own.

Xylander's Latin: *officium (Cicero's own rendering — appropriate action, duty).*

ἀδιάφορα *(adiáphora)*
Indifferent things. The Stoics divided the world into three categories: virtue (the only good), vice (the only evil), and everything else (the indifferents). Money, health, reputation, even life and death are ἀδιάφορα — preferable or dispreferable but not, properly speaking, good or bad. The category is the source of half the misunderstandings of Stoicism. The Stoics do not say these things don't matter; they say they don't make you good or bad. There is a difference.

Xylander's Latin: *indifferentia; rendered res mediae and res neque bonae neque malae (things neither good nor bad).*

ψυχή *(psychḗ)*
Soul. For the Stoics, the soul is material — a portion of πνεῦμα, the cosmic breath — but it is the part of us that thinks, feels, and chooses. After death the Stoics differed on whether the soul persisted briefly, scattered immediately, or was reabsorbed at the next cosmic conflagration. Marcus is comfortable not knowing.

Xylander's Latin: *anima; the diminutive ψυχάριον becomes animula.*

ὁρμή *(hormḗ)*
Impulse, the movement toward action. The Stoic action sequence runs: φαντασία (impression) → συγκατάθεσις (assent) → ὁρμή (impulse) → πρᾶξις (action). The impulse is what carries the agreement into the body. To control your ὁρμή is to keep the engine of action coupled to the steering of judgment.

Xylander's Latin: *impetus; also appetitio / appetitus (the movement toward action).*

The Roman World

Princeps *(first citizen)*
The official self-description of the emperor. Augustus, the first emperor, deliberately avoided the title king and used princeps instead — first among equals, in theory. By Marcus's day the pretense was thin, but the language survived; an emperor who took the language seriously, as Marcus did, treated the senate as a deliberative body and not as decoration. He still held all the power. He just declined to act like it.

Caesar / Augustus *(imperial titles)*
Caesar, originally the family name of Julius Caesar, became a hereditary title for the emperor. Augustus, originally an honorific granted to Octavian by the senate in 27 BCE, became the title of the senior emperor when there was more than one. Marcus and Lucius were both Augusti. The pair of titles eventually outlasted the empire — Caesar surviving in Russian Czar and German Kaiser, Augustus in the month of August, which Marcus and his subjects, every year, simply called August.

Senatus *(the senate)*
By Marcus's time the Roman senate had been, for two centuries, an aristocratic body whose powers were almost entirely advisory. The emperor controlled the army, the treasury, and the law. But a good emperor, on the late-Republican script that Marcus admired, treated the senate with conspicuous respect — attended its sessions, took its votes seriously, called its members friends. Marcus did all of this. It was part of the performance, but it was also, in his case, sincere.

Consul *(chief magistrate)*
Originally the highest elected office of the Roman Republic, held in pairs for one-year terms. By the imperial period the consulship was largely ceremonial, but it remained the great prize of a senatorial career. Marcus's grandfather had been consul three times, which by then required imperial favor as well as merit. The dignity of the title is hard to overstate; the actual job was light.

Stoa Poikile *(the Painted Porch)*
A colonnade in the agora of Athens, decorated with murals by the great fifth-century painter Polygnotus. Zeno of Citium taught his philosophy there

around 300 BCE, and his school took its name from the location: οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς στοᾶς, the men of the Stoa. Five centuries later a Roman emperor, on the Danube frontier, was still working out the implications of what some Athenians had said in front of a wall painting.

Lyceum, Academy *(Aristotle, Plato)*
The two other great philosophical schools of the Greek world. The Academy was Plato's school, founded around 387 BCE; the Lyceum was Aristotle's, founded about a generation later. The names refer to their original neighborhoods in Athens. By Marcus's day both schools had had their late-classical and Hellenistic heydays and were quieter institutions, but both still produced teachers whose work crossed Marcus's desk. Sextus, on his mother's side, was Plutarchian — a member of the late Platonist tradition.

Carnuntum *(Roman frontier city)*
A legionary base on the Danube, in what is now Austria near the Slovakian border, where Marcus spent long stretches of the Marcomannic Wars. Several books of the Meditations are believed, on internal evidence, to have been written there or in nearby camps. The site has been excavated; visitors can still walk among the foundations of the buildings inside which a Roman emperor scribbled to himself in Greek about how not to be angry.

Vindobona *(modern Vienna)*
Another Danube fortress, downriver from Carnuntum. Marcus died there in 180 CE, in winter quarters, probably of plague. The site is now buried under central Vienna; an inscription marks the approximate place of his death, although the scholarship is uncertain. He is one of the few Roman emperors whose final days were not spent in a palace or a battlefield camp but in a working frontier garrison — a fact that suits him.

Antonine Plague *(pandemic)*
An epidemic, almost certainly smallpox, that arrived in Rome with the legions returning from the Parthian war in 165 CE and recurred for the next fifteen years. Modern estimates put its mortality at five to ten percent of the empire's population, with much higher rates in the legions and the cities. The plague defines the second half of Marcus's reign; many of the Meditations passages on death and the sweeping-away of the things human beings care about read very differently against the backdrop of a pandemic

that almost certainly killed Lucius Verus and that Marcus himself probably died of.

Marcomannic Wars *(Danube frontier wars)*
A long, exhausting series of campaigns against Germanic and Sarmatian tribes pressing across the Danube — the Marcomanni, Quadi, Iazyges, and others — that occupied Marcus from about 166 CE until his death. The wars were inconclusive in the harshest sense: Marcus held the line, but the line had to keep being held, year after year, in winter quarters along a frozen river. The famous "Rain Miracle" — a sudden storm that saved a beleaguered legion — comes from this war, and is depicted on the column of Marcus Aurelius that still stands in Rome.

Pater Familias *(head of household)*
The senior male of a Roman household — by law, the holder of patria potestas, fatherly power, which extended in theory to life and death over wife, children, and slaves. By Marcus's time the harsher applications of the doctrine were obsolete, but the cultural authority remained. The Roman ideal pater familias was firm, fair, hardworking, and slow to anger — a description that doubled, in Marcus's hands, as the description of a good emperor. The household was the model for the state, and the state for the cosmos.

Toga praetexta, toga virilis *(the rites of growing up)*
The toga praetexta, edged with a purple stripe, was worn by senatorial-class boys until around age fifteen, at which point they exchanged it ceremonially for the plain toga virilis — the toga of manhood — and were enrolled as adult citizens. The change of toga was a household event with religious and legal weight. Marcus would have made it around 136 CE, two years before Hadrian's adoption arrangement turned his life over.

A Closing Note

No glossary can carry an author's whole vocabulary; this one is an aid to reading, not a substitute for it. Where a Greek term recurs in the Meditations and the reader senses that something is being meant more precisely than the English suggests, look here first. And where a word is missing from this list — there are several — take it as an invitation to look

up the next layer for yourself. Marcus, of all readers, would approve of the habit.