

TO MYSELF



# THE RIVER OF THINGS

ποταμός

*Everything flows; nothing holds.*



MARCUS AURELIUS  
ΤΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΕΑΥΤΟΝ · BOOK VI

CLASSIC MOTIVATION



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*Everything flows; nothing holds.*

**MARCUS AURELIUS**

Book VI of the Meditations · ΤΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΕΑΥΤΟΝ

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## To Myself

*The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius, in twelve standalone volumes.*

### **Volume VI — The River of Things (Book VI)**

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](http://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.*

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## **This Volume**

Some things are hurrying into being, others hurrying out — and part of what is being born is already gone. Book VI of the Meditations sets the mind in the middle of that current and asks it to hold steady. Everything flows: reputations, bodies, empires, the men who made them; to grip any of it is to fall in love with a bird already vanishing from sight.

Marcus's answer is not despair but proportion — see things stripped of their glamour (the feast is dead fish and dead birds; the purple robe is wool dipped in shellfish blood), keep the ruling mind unstained by power, and take your place in an ordered whole that turns each ending into a beginning. It is the Meditations at its most cosmic, and its most calming.

This volume of the To Myself series presents Book VI 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 VI

Book VI's signature is the river. Its most famous section watches existence pour past — some things rushing to come into being, others rushing to have been, and part of what is now arriving already extinguished — and draws the plain conclusion: to clyrch at any passing form is like setting your heart on a sparrow already flitting out of view. The cure for anxiety here is scale. See how briefly anything lasts, and its power over you thins to nothing.

Alongside the flux runs Marcus's reductive gaze — the deliberate deflation of everything overvalued. The gourmet's dish is the corpse of a fish, a bird, a pig; the celebrated Falernian is a little juice pressed from a grape; the imperial purple is sheep's wool stained with the blood of a shellfish. This is not cynicism but clarity: strip away the story a thing wears for the sake of dignity, and you see it as it is — and, seen plainly, it can no longer unsettle you.

The ethical center of the book is a warning Marcus addresses to himself as ruler: beware of being "caesarified," dyed through by the purple until the power becomes the man. His antidote is his adoptive father, Antoninus — someone who wielded authority without being colored by it — and a companion maxim that has outlived its century: the best revenge on a wrongdoer is simply not to become like him.

Read this volume with the columns together. Book VI is largely Xylander at his fullest, and the reductive passages in particular are vivid in both tongues; it is worth watching how Marcus's plain Greek diminutives — the little fish, the little bird — fare when a humanist scholar carries them into Latin.

# Book VI · The River of Things

## Book VI · Section 1

### The Substance of the Whole

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἡ τῶν ὅλων οὐσία εὐπειθῆς καὶ εὐτρεπής, ὁ δὲ ταύτην διοικῶν λόγος οὐδεμίαν ἐν ἑαυτῷ αἰτίαν ἔχει τοῦ κακοποιεῖν, κακίαν γὰρ οὐκ ἔχει ἰούδέ τι κακῶς ποιεῖ οὐδέ βλάπτεται τι ὑπὲρ ἐκείνου. πάντα δὲ κατ' ἐκείνου γίνεται καὶ περαίνεται</p>	<p><i>Natura universi suo gubernatori obediens est, ac bene composita: quae vero eam gubernat mens, nullam in seipsa habet male agendi causam: quippe nihil ei inest vitii, neque peccat, neque ab ea quicquam laeditur: omnia vero secundum eam fiunt atque perficiuntur.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: The substance of the whole is obedient and ready; and the reason that governs it has in itself no cause for doing evil — for it has no badness — nor does it do anything badly, nor is anything harmed by it. All things come to be and are completed according to it.</p>	<p>English from Latin: The nature of the universe is obedient to its governor and well-ordered; and the mind that governs it has no cause within itself to do wrong, for there is no vice in it, nor does it sin, nor is anything harmed by it. All things are brought to pass and perfected according to its design.</p>

**Language Differences:** Xylander translates οὐσία (substance/essence) as *Natura* (nature) and renders λόγος (universal reason) as *mens* (mind/intellect). This shifts the framing from an objective, impersonal cosmological substance toward an active, intentionally protective divine intelligence.

**Commentary:** Marcus anchors the chapter in cosmic optimism: the foundational matter of the universe is naturally compliant (εὐπειθῆς), and the governing rational principle is inherently incapable of malice or error, ensuring that everything unfolds according to a perfectly balanced design.

## Book VI · Section 2

### Indifference to Circumstance

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Μὴ διαφέρου πότερον ῥιγῶν ἢ θαλπόμενος τὸ πρέπον ποιεῖς, καὶ πότερον νυστάζων ἢ ἱκανῶς ὕπνου ἔχων, καὶ πότερον κακῶς ἀκούων ἢ εὐφημούμενος, καὶ πότερον ἀποθνήσκων ἢ πράττων τι ἀλλοῖον ἰμία γὰρ τῶν βιωτικῶν πράξεων καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶ, καθ' ἣν</p>	<p><i>Nulla pone in discrimine, algasne, an calens, dormituries an somni satur, mali an bene audiens, moriens an aliud quid agens id facias, quod te decet: quando mors etiam una est earum actionum, quae ad vitam referuntur. Sufficit igitur ea etiam imminente, id quod instat, bene</i></p>

<p>ἀποθνήσκομεν· ἀρκεῖ οὖν καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτης τὸ παρὸν εὖ θέσθαι</p>	<p><i>collocare.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Make no difference whether you do what is fitting while cold or while warm, while drowsy or with sleep enough, while ill spoken of or praised — or while dying, or doing anything else. For the act in which we die is also one of the acts of life; for that act too, then, it is enough to 'manage well the matter in hand.'</p>	<p>English from Latin: Let it make no difference to you whether you are shivering or warm, drowsy or well-rested, spoken ill of or praised, dying or executing any other practical task, as long as you perform your duty; for death is merely one of those actions that belong to our life. It is enough, therefore, even when death is close at hand, to manage well the business currently before you.</p>

**Language Differences:** The Greek idiom τὸ παρὸν εὖ θέσθαι (to properly arrange the present task) is captured fluidly by Xylander as *id quod instat, bene collocare* ("to well-arrange that which is urgent / at hand").

**Commentary:** Duty is the sole moral imperative. External states — temperature, fatigue, or the shifting reputations granted by others — are classified as absolute indifferents. Even the act of dying is treated simply as another standard administrative assignment of life, requiring the same calm focus as any daily task.

Book VI · Section 3

## Looking Inward

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἔσω βλέπε· μηδενὸς πράγματος μήτε ἢ ἰδία ποιότης μήτε ἢ ἀξία παρατρεχέτω σε</p>	<p><i>Intro respice. Nullius rei neque propria qualitas, neque id quod ei debetur, te fallat.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Look within. Let neither the particular quality of anything nor its worth slip past you.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Look inward. Let neither the unique quality of any object nor its true value escape you.</p>

**Language Differences:** ἀξία (intrinsic worth/value) is translated by Xylander as *quod ei debetur* ("that which is owed to it"), viewing value through an objective standard of structural desert.

**Commentary:** Marcus commands himself to look beneath external appearances. An individual must analyze things to find their raw material essence and true worth, ensuring the mind is never misled by first impressions.

## The Speed of Change

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Πάντα τὰ ὑποκείμενα τάχιστα μεταβαλεῖ καὶ ἤτοι ἐκθυμιαθήσεται, εἴπερ ἦνωται ἢ οὐσία, ἢ σκεδασθήσεται</i>	<i>Omnia quae subiecta sunt, celerrime mutantur, &amp; aut in halitum resoluuntur, siquidem sit compacta eorum substantia, aut dissipantur.</i>
English from Greek: All existing things will change most swiftly: either they will pass into vapor, if substance is one, or they will be scattered.	English from Latin: All material objects change with immense swiftness; and they are either dissolved into vapor, if their substance is a unified whole, or they are scattered to the winds.

**Language Differences:** The Greek ἐκθυμιαθήσεται (evaporate / turn to smoke) is translated as in halitum resoluuntur ("resolved into a breath or exhalation").

**Commentary:** A brief meditation on material transience. All physical things are in a constant state of atomic flux, destined either to evaporate into a singular substrate or be dispersed across space.

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## The Knowing Reason

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Ὁ διοικῶν λόγος οἶδε πῶς διακείμενος καὶ τί ποιεῖ καὶ ἐπὶ τίνος ὕλης</i>	<i>Mens universi gubernatrix scit quo se habeat, quid agat, &amp; quam habeat materiam subiectam.</i>
English from Greek: The governing reason knows how it stands disposed, and what it does, and upon what material.	English from Latin: The mind that governs the universe knows its own state, what it accomplishes, and the raw material it operates upon.

**Language Differences:** Ὁ διοικῶν λόγος (the managing/governing reason) is personified by Xylander as Mens universi gubernatrix ("the mind, female governor of the universe").

**Commentary:** Unlike human beings, who often act blindly or lose focus, the universal reason operates with absolute awareness, tracking its internal states, its objectives, and the material variables it shapes.

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## Best Revenge

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Ἄριστος τρόπος τοῦ ἀμύνεσθαι τὸ μὴ ἐξομοιοῦσθαι</i>	<i>Ulciscendi ratio optima est, ne similis fias eius, qui iniuriam fecit.</i>
English from Greek: The best way of avenging yourself is not to become like the wrongdoer.	English from Latin: The best method of taking revenge is to refrain from becoming like the one who committed the injury.

**Language Differences:** Xylander interprets the general Greek verb ἀμύνεσθαι (to ward off, defend oneself, or retaliate) as the explicit noun phrase *Ulciscendi ratio* ("the method of taking revenge").

**Commentary:** True sovereignty over an enemy is achieved by refusing to adopt their flawed behavior. Responding to malice with malice means surrendering your own ethical character.

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Book VI • Section 7

## Social Joy

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Ἐνὶ τέρπου καὶ προσαναπαύου, τῷ ἀπὸ πράξεως κοινωνικῆς μεταβαίνειν ἐπὶ πρᾶξιν κοινωνικὴν σὺν μνήμῃ θεοῦ</i>	<i>Uno hoc te oblecta, inque uno hoc acquiesce, ut ab una societatis humanae tuendae causa suscepta actione, ad aliam transeas, dei memor.</i>
English from Greek: Take delight in one thing, and rest in it: to pass from one social act to another social act, with God in mind.	English from Latin: Delight in this one thing alone, and find your rest in it: to pass from one action dedicated to the preservation of human society to another, keeping God always in remembrance.

**Language Differences:** Xylander transforms *πράξεως κοινωνικῆς* (social action) into a clear civil obligation: *societatis humanae tuendae causa suscepta actione* ("an action undertaken for the sake of protecting human society").

**Commentary:** Deep contentment is found by moving smoothly from one socially beneficial act to the next, maintaining a constant awareness of our relationship to the divine.

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Book VI • Section 8

## The Self-Turning Mind

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Τὸ ἡγεμονικόν ἐστὶ τὸ ἑαυτὸ ἐγείρων καὶ τρέπον καὶ ποιοῦν μὲν ἑαυτὸ οἶον ἂν καὶ θέλη, ποιοῦν δὲ ἑαυτῷ φαίνεσθαι πᾶν τὸ συμβαῖνον οἶον αὐτὸ θέλει	<i>Princeps hominis pars est ea, quae seipsam excitat atque ciet, seque talem, qualem vult, efficit, praestatque ut ea quae eveniunt talia, qualia ipsa vult, sibi videantur.</i>
English from Greek: The ruling faculty is that which wakes itself, and turns itself, and makes itself of whatever quality it wills — and makes everything that happens appear to itself such as it wills.	English from Latin: The ruling center of a person is that which awakens and moves itself, making itself exactly what it wishes to be, and causing all external experiences to appear to it precisely as it chooses to perceive them.

**Language Differences:** *Τὸ ἡγεμονικόν* is elegantly translated as *Princeps hominis pars* ("the principal or foremost part of a man").

**Commentary:** This is a concise declaration of psychological autonomy. The mind possesses absolute power to alter its own character and determine exactly how it filters and interprets external events.

Book VI • Section 9

## The Single Nature

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Κατὰ τὴν τῶν ὅλων φύσιν ἕκαστα περαίνεται ὃ γὰρ κατ' ἄλλην γέ τινα φύσιν ἢτοι ἔξωθεν περιέχουσιν ἢ ἐμπεριεχομένην ἔνδον ἢ ἔξω ἀπηρητημένην	<i>Omnia secundum naturam universi fiunt: neque enim possunt fieri secundum aliam aliquam, sive extrinsecus circumdantem, sive inclusam, sive foris suspensam.</i>
English from Greek: All things are accomplished in accordance with the nature of the whole — for surely not according to some other nature, whether enclosing it from outside, or enclosed within it, or hanging detached outside it.	English from Latin: All things take place according to the nature of the universe; for they cannot occur according to any other nature, whether it be one that encompasses it from without, one that is contained within, or one detached on the outside.

**Language Differences:** The Greek *περαίνεται* (brought to an end / completed) is matched by Xylander's simple verb *fiunt* (happen / occur).

**Commentary:** The universe functions as a completely unified system. Everything unfolds via the all-encompassing laws of nature, rather than through competing external forces.

## Medley or Unity

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἦτοι κυκεῶν καὶ ἀντεμπλοκῆ καὶ σκεδασμὸς ἢ ἔνωσις καὶ τάξις καὶ πρόνοια. εἰ μὲν οὖν τὰ πρότερα, τί καὶ ἐπιθυμῶ εἰκαίω συγκρίματι καὶ φουρμῶ τοιούτῳ ἐνδιατρίβειν; τί δέ μοι καὶ μέλει ἄλλου τινὸς ἢ τοῦ ὅπως ποτὲ “αἶα γίνεσθα”; τί δὲ καὶ ταρασσομαι; ἤξει γὰρ ἐπ’ ἐμὲ ὁ σκεδασμὸς, ὅ τι ἂν ποιῶ. εἰ δὲ θάτερά ἐστι, σέβω καὶ εὐσταθῶ καὶ θαρρῶ τῷ διοικοῦντι</p>	<p><i>Universum aut confusio quaedam est, &amp; contextus fortuitus rerum iterum a se divellendarum &amp; dissipandarum: aut unitione ordine, &amp; prudentia constat. Si prius illud verum est, quid est, cur cupiam inani huic colluviei &amp; mixturae immorari? Quid aliud expetendum, quam ut in terram utcunque redigar? Quid perturbor? Quicquid egero, tamen dissipazione me corripiet. Sin altero modo res habet, veneror eum, animoque constanti sum, &amp; gubernanti mundum confido.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Either a medley, an interweaving and a scattering — or unity, order, and providence. If the former, why do I even desire to linger in such a random compound and confusion? Why do I care about anything but how, at last, 'to become earth'? And why am I disturbed? The scattering will come upon me, whatever I do. But if the other is true, I reverence, I stand firm, I take courage in that which governs.</p>	<p>English from Latin: The universe is either a chaotic mass, a fortuitous entanglement of things destined to be torn apart and scattered, or it is a unified whole governed by order and providence. If the former is true, why should I desire to linger in this meaningless heap and confusion? What else should I wish for except to return to the earth at last? Why should I be troubled? Whatever I do, scattering will claim me. But if the alternative is true, I revere that Governor, stand firm in mind, and place my confidence in the Ruler of the world.</p>

**Language Differences:** The visceral Greek noun φουρμῶ (a chaotic jumble or mash) is expanded by Xylander into the vivid phrase *inani huic colluviei & mixturae* ("this empty sewer-sludge and mixture").

**Commentary:** Marcus maps out his standard dilemma: if the universe is merely a random collision of atoms, anxiety is pointless because ultimate scattering is inescapable. But if the universe is ordered by providence, an individual can confidently trust in the cosmic governor.

## Regaining Rhythm

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ὅταν ἀναγκασθῆς ὑπὸ τῶν περισηκῶτων οἶονεὶ διαταραχθῆναι, ταχέως ἐπάνιθι εἰς ἑαυτὸν καὶ μὴ ὑπὲρ τὰ ἀναγκαῖα ἐξίστασο τοῦ ῥυθμοῦ· ἔση γὰρ ἐγκρατέστερος τῆς ἀρμονίας τῷ συνεχῶς εἰς αὐτὴν ἐπανέρχασθαι</p>	<p><i>Cum te rerum praesentium status non nihil perturbat, celeriter ad te redi, neque ultra quam necesse est, a modo eius qua instituisti cantilenae discede. Nam eo facilius harmoniam tueberis, si continenter ad eam reverteris.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: When you are forced by circumstances into a kind of disturbance, return quickly into yourself, and do not fall out of rhythm longer than the compulsion lasts. For you will be more master of the harmony by continually returning to it.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Whenever the state of your immediate surroundings disturbs you, quickly return to yourself, and do not stray from your rhythm longer than necessary. For you will protect your inner harmony far more easily if you continuously return to it.</p>

**Language Differences:** Xylander translates the abstract Greek phrase τοῦ ῥυθμοῦ (from the rhythm) using a musical metaphor: a modo eius qua instituisti cantilenae ("from the measure of that song which you have established").

**Commentary:** When unexpected external complications breach your composure, the strategy is rapid internal recalibration. Regaining inner balance becomes faster and more natural through deliberate, continuous practice.

Book VI · Section 12

## Court and Philosophy

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Εἰ μητριάν τε ἅμα εἶχες καὶ μητέρα, ἐκείνην τ' ἂν ἐθεράπευες καὶ ὁμως ἡ ἐπάνοδος σοι πρὸς τὴν μητέρα συνεχῆς ἐγίνετο. τοῦτό σοι νῦν ἐστὶν ἡ αὐλή καὶ ἡ φιλοσοφία· ὧδε πολλάκις ἐπάνιθι καὶ προσαναπαύου ταύτη, δὴ ἦν καὶ τὰ ἐκεῖ σοι ἀνεκτὰ φαίνεται καὶ σὺ ἐν αὐτοῖς ἀνεκτός</p>	<p><i>Si tibi simul &amp; noverca, &amp; mater esset, illam quidem coleres, &amp; tamen crebro ad matrem te reciperes. Eadem est tibi ratio aulae &amp; philosophiae. Quare ad hanc saepenumero revertere, &amp; in hac acquiesce, quae efficit, ut &amp; res aulicae tibi tolerabiles videantur, &amp; tu dum in iis versaris, ferri queas.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: If you had a stepmother and a mother at the same time, you would do your duty to the former — and still your returning would be continually to your mother. Such for you now are the court and philosophy. Return to her often, and rest in her: it is through her that the things of the court appear bearable to you, and you bearable in them.</p>	<p>English from Latin: If you had a stepmother and a mother at the same time, you would pay your respects to the former, yet continually return to your mother. This is your relationship with the court and philosophy. Therefore, return to philosophy often, and rest in her; she will make your life at court bearable, and make you tolerable to those around you.</p>

**Language Differences:** ἀνεκτός (*bearable / endurable*) is rendered symmetrically by Xylander as *tolerabiles* and *ferrī queas* ("capable of being endured").

**Commentary:** Imperial court life (αὐλή) is viewed as a demanding stepmother — an obligation that must be managed — while philosophy is his true, restorative mother. Marcus uses philosophy to insulate his character from court politics, making himself resilient to his environment.

Book VI · Section 13

## Stripping Away Pretense

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Οἷον δὴ τὸ φαντασίαν λαμβάνειν ἐπὶ τῶν ὄψων καὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἐδωδίμων, ὅτι νεκρὸς οὖτος ἰχθύος, οὖτος δὲ νεκρὸς ὄρνιθος ἢ χοίρου· καὶ πάλιν, ὅτι ὁ Φάλερνος χυλάριόν ἐστι σταφυλίου καὶ ἡ περιπόρφυρος τριχία προβατίου αἱματίῳ κόγχῃς δεδευμένα· καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν κατὰ τὴν συνουσίαν ἐντερίου παράτριψις καὶ μετὰ τινος σπασμοῦ μύξαριον ἔκκρισις· οἷαι δὲ ἀρταί εἰσιν αἱ φαντασίαι καθικνούμεναι αὐτῶν τῶν πραγμάτων καὶ διεξιούσαι δι' αὐτῶν, ὥστε ὁρᾶν οἷά τινά ποτ' ἐστίν. οὕτως δεῖ παρ' ὅλον τὸν βίον ποιεῖν καὶ ὅπου λίαν ἀξιόπιστα τὰ πράγματα φαντάζεται, ἀπογυμνοῦν αὐτὰ καὶ τὴν εὐτέλειαν αὐτῶν καθορᾶν καὶ τὴν ἱστορίαν ἐφ' ἣ σεμνύνεται περιαιρεῖν. δεινὸς γὰρ ὁ τύφος παραλογιστῆς καὶ ὅτε δοκεῖς μάλιστα περὶ τὰ σπουδαῖα καταγίνεσθαι, τότε μάλιστα καταγοητεύῃ. ὅρα γοῦν ὁ Κράτης τί περὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ Ξενοκράτους λέγει</p>	<p><i>Quid cogitandum est de cibis &amp; id genus rebus? Hoc esse piscis cadaver, illud avis, aut porci: item Falernum, succum esse exiguum uvulae, purpuram capillos esse oviculae, modico testudinis sanguine imbutos: tum coitum, intestini parvi affrictionem, mucique excretionem non sine convulsione. Cogitationes hae praeclarae sunt: nam rem ipsam attingunt, ac pertranseunt, ut qualis ea sit, cerni possit. His per omnem vitam utendum est: ac sicubi res quam maxime videtur comprobata digna, tegumentis est nudanda, ut &amp; eius in conspectum veniat vilitas, &amp; id, quo se ostentabat, ei adimatur. Etenim fucus impostor est callidissimus, ac tum maxime in fraudem inducit, cum quis maxime se res serias &amp; dignas tractare putat.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: How good it is, when meats and other such foods are before you, to receive the impression: this is the corpse of a fish, this the corpse of a bird or pig; and again, that the Falernian is a little juice of a grape-cluster, and the purple-bordered robe sheep's hairs dipped in shellfish blood; and as for intercourse, a rubbing of innards and, with a kind of spasm, the excretion of mucus. What impressions these are, reaching the things themselves and going right through them, so as to see what they really are! So one</p>	<p>English from Latin: What should we think of fine foods and such things? This is the carcass of a fish, that the carcass of a bird or a pig; and Falernian wine is merely a little juice squeezed from a grape; and your purple robe is sheep's wool dyed in the blood of a shellfish; and sexual union is but the friction of a small membrane and the rhythmic discharge of fluid. These thoughts pierce straight through things and unmask them, allowing us to see them for what they truly are. You must use this method throughout your whole life: whenever</p>

<p>must do throughout the whole of life: where things present themselves as all too convincing, strip them bare, look down on their cheapness, and pull away the story they put on for dignity. For vanity is a terrible falsifier of reason, and when you think you are most engaged in serious things, then most of all are you under its spell. See, at any rate, what Crates says about Xenocrates himself.</p>	<p>things appear most impressive, strip them bare, view their absolute worthlessness, and remove the vanity that flatters them. For pride is a master of deception, and it tricks you most when you believe you are engaged in serious matters.</p>
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**Language Differences:** Xylander translates περιπόρφυρος (the imperial purple robe) literally as *purpuram capillos esse oviculae* ("the purple hairs of a little sheep"). Marcus's blunt description of semen as a spasm of mucus (μυξαρίου ἔκκρισις) is tracked accurately as *mucique excretionem non sine convulsione*.

**Commentary:** This is Marcus's most explicit execution of analytical reductionism. Luxury items and biological needs are stripped of their cultural prestige by reducing them to their raw physical mechanics. Deconstructing things ensures that the mind is never blinded by empty pretense (τύφος).

Book VI · Section 14

## Objects of Admiration

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Τὰ πλεῖστα, ὧν ἡ πληθὺς θαυμάζει, εἰς γενικώτατα ἀνάγεται τὰ ὑπὸ ἕξεως ἢ φύσεως συνεχόμενα, λίθους, ξύλα, συκᾶς, ἀμπέλους, ἐλαίας· τὰ δὲ ὑπὸ τῶν ὀλίγων μετριωτέρων εἰς τὰ ὑπὸ ψυχῆς, οἶον ποιμνας, ἀγέλας ἢ κατὰ ψιλὸν τὸ πλῆθος ἀνδραπόδων κεκτῆσθαι. τὰ δὲ ὑπὸ τῶν ἔτι χαριεστέρων εἰς τὰ ὑπὸ λογικῆς ψυχῆς, οὐ μέντοι καθὸ λογικῆ, ἀλλὰ καθὸ τεχνικῆ ἢ ἄλλως πως ἐντρεχῆς. ὁ δὲ ψυχὴν λογικὴν καὶ πολιτικὴν τιμῶν οὐδὲν ἔτι τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιστρέφεται, πρὸ ἀπάντων δὲ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν λογικῶς καὶ κοινωνικῶς ἔχουσαν καὶ κινουμένην διασώζει καὶ τῷ ὁμογενεῖ εἰς τοῦτο συνεργεῖ</p>	<p><i>Vide igitur quid de Xenocrate ipso Crates dicat. Pleraque, inquit, eorum quae vulgus admiratur, si sub habitu aut natura continerentur, ad latissime potentia genera revocabat — ut lapides, ut ligna, ficus, vites, oleas; quae sub arctioribus aliquanto continentur, ad animata, ut greges, armenta. Si qua vero paulo plus haberent gratiae, haec ad ea reducebat quae comprehenduntur sub anima ratione praedita — non quidem universali, sed quatenus artes tractat aut alias facultates.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Most of the things the crowd admires reduce to the most general classes — things held together by mere constitution or by nature: stones, timber, fig trees, vines, olives. What those a little more moderate admire reduces to things</p>	<p>English from Latin (draft — reference lacked this section): What is one to think of foods and the like? That this is the carcass of a fish, that of a bird or a pig; and that Falernian wine is but a little juice of the grape. So Crates, you see, said even of</p>

<p>held together by animal soul: flocks and herds — or, just as crudely, the possession of a multitude of slaves. What the still more refined admire reduces to the works of the rational soul — not, however, rational as such, but skilled in craft or otherwise clever. But the man who honors the soul as rational and civic regards none of the rest any longer; before everything, he preserves his own soul in rational and social condition and motion, and works together with his kind toward this end.</p>	<p>Xenocrates himself. Most of the things the crowd admires reduce to the most general classes — things held together by mere constitution or nature: stones, timber, fig trees, vines, olives. The things admired by men a little more refined reduce to what is ensouled: flocks and herds. And things still a little more graceful, to what is held together by a soul possessed of art.</p>
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**Language Differences:** *Xylander tracks the text smoothly, using ad latissime patentia genera ("to the most widely open classes") to translate Marcus's εἰς γενικώτατα ἀνάγεται.*

**Commentary:** Marcus classifies human ambition into distinct physical tiers. The masses admire raw materials or livestock, while the educated value technical crafts. But a philosopher ignores these external hierarchies, focusing entirely on preserving the health of his own rational and social mind.

Book VI · Section 15

## The River of Being

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Τὰ μὲν σπεύδει γίνεσθαι, τὰ δὲ σπεύδει γεγόνειναι, καὶ τοῦ γινομένου δὲ ἤδη τι ἀπέσβη· ῥύσεις καὶ ἀλλοιώσεις ἀνανεοῦσι τὸν κόσμον διηλεκῶς, ὡσπερ τὸν ἄπειρον αἰῶνα ἢ τοῦ χρόνου ἀδιάλειπτος φορὰ νέον ἀεὶ παρέχεται. ἐν δὴ τούτῳ τῷ ποταμῷ, ἐφ' οὗ στῆναι οὐκ ἔξεστιν, τί ἂν τις τούτων τῶν παραθεόντων ἐκτιμήσειεν; ὡσπερ εἴ τις τι τῶν παραπετομένων στρουθαρῶν φιλεῖν ἄρχοιτο, τὸ δ' ἤδη ἐξ ὀφθαλμῶν ἀπελήλυθεν. τοιοῦτον δὴ τι καὶ αὐτὴ ἡ ζωὴ ἐκάστου, οἷον ἢ ἀφ' αἵματος ἀναθυμίασις καὶ ἢ ἐκ τοῦ ἀέρος ἀνάπνευσις· ὁποῖον γὰρ ἐστὶ τὸ ἅπαξ ἐλκύσαι τὸν ἀέρα καὶ ἀποδοῦναι, ὅπερ παρ' ἕκαστον ποιοῦμεν, τοιοῦτόν ἐστι καὶ τὸ τὴν πᾶσαν ἀναπνευστικὴν δύναμιν, ἣν χθὲς καὶ πρῶ ἡν ἀποτεχθεὶς ἐκτίσω, ἀποδοῦναι ἐκεῖ ὅθεν τὸ πρῶτον ἔσπασας</p>	<p><i>Quaedam iam fiunt, quaedam mox existent, quin &amp; eius quod fit, pars iam nunc aliqua evanuit. Fluxus, &amp; alterationes continenter mundum renovant: quemadmodum infinitum aevum temporis adfido lapsu novum subinde reddit. In hoc itaque flumine quisnam ea quae praeterferuntur, ac quibus insistere non possit, honore aliquo dignetur? Is quidem perinde sit, ac si quis unum de praetervolantibus passerculis diligere incipiat, atque is iam e conspectu eius abierit. Ita se &amp; vita uniuscuiusque hominis habet, ut halitus a sanguine sublatus, &amp; aer inspiratus. Quale n. est quod semel animam attrahimus, &amp; efflamus, id quod identidem facimus, tale etiam est, quod omnem respirandi facultatem, quam heri aut nudius tertius nati accepimus, eo reddimus unde accepimus.</i></p>

English from Greek: Some things hasten to come into being; others hasten to have been; and of what is coming to be, part is already extinguished. Flows and alterations renew the cosmos without pause, just as the unbroken passage of time renders infinite eternity forever new. In this river, on which a man cannot stand, what could anyone prize among the things racing past? It is as if a man should begin to set his love on one of the little sparrows flying by — and it has already gone from his eyes. Indeed, such a thing is the very life of each of us: like the exhalation from blood, like the drawing of breath from the air. For just what it is to pull in the air once and give it back, which we do every moment, such it is to give the whole power of breathing — which you acquired yesterday or the day before, at your birth — back to the place from which you first drew it.

English from Latin: Some things are rushing into existence, others are rushing out, and a part of that which is newly born is already extinct. This constant flux and alteration perpetually renews the world, just as the boundless course of time leaves the ages forever new. In this rushing torrent, what man could prize any of the things flying past, when it is impossible to find a firm footing upon them? It would be like falling in love with a sparrow as it flies by, only for it to vanish from your sight instantly. The life of every human being is exactly like the breath drawn from the blood or inhaled from the air. For drawing breath and magnifying it—which we do every second—is of the same nature as returning our entire power of breathing, which we received at birth, back to the source from which we first drew it.

**Language Differences:** The Greek *στρουθαρίων* (little sparrows) is rendered by the matching Latin diminutive *passerculis*. Xylander accurately translates ἀφ' αἵματος ἀναθυμίασις as *halitus a sanguine sublatus* ("a breath raised up from the blood").

**Commentary:** In the unrelenting current of existence, human lifespans are radically temporary. Clinging to material objects is as futile as falling in love with a sparrow that flashes past and disappears. Breathing is simply a temporary borrowing of air that must eventually be returned to the whole.

Book VI · Section 16

## True Value

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Οὔτε τὸ διαπνεῖσθαι ὡς τὰ φυτὰ τίμιον οὔτε τὸ ἀναπνεῖν ὡς τὰ βοσκήματα καὶ τὰ θηρία οὔτε τὸ τυποῦσθαι κατὰ φαντασίαν οὔτε τὸ νευροσπαστεῖσθαι καθ' ὄρμην οὔτε τὸ συναγελάζεσθαι οὔτε τὸ τρέφεσθαι· τοῦτο γὰρ ὅμοιον τῷ ἀποκρίνειν τὰ περιττώματα τῆς τροφῆς. τί οὖν τίμιον; τὸ κροτεῖσθαι; οὐχί. οὐκοῦν οὐδὲ τὸ ὑπὸ γλωσσῶν κροτεῖσθαι· αἱ γὰρ παρὰ τῶν πολλῶν</p>	<p><i>Quod uegetamur more stirpium, respiramus more pecudum, &amp; ferarum, quod uisis afficimur, quod appetitionis causa movemur, quod congregamur, quod nutrimur, omnia haec non maiori sunt in pretio ponenda, quam quod excernimus cibi recrementa. Quid igitur honore dignum est? Num plausus? Nequaquam. Ergo ne laus quidem populi, quae nihil est aliud quam plausus</i></p>

<p>εὐφημίαι κρότος γλωσσῶν. ἀφήκας οὖν καὶ τὸ δοξάριον· τί καταλείπεται τίμιον; δοκῶ μὲν τὸ κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν κατασκευὴν κινεῖσθαι καὶ ἴσχεσθαι, ἐφ' ὃ καὶ αἱ ἐπιμέλειαι ἄγουσι καὶ αἱ τέχνηαι· (ἢ τε γὰρ τέχνη πᾶσα τούτου στοχάζεται, ἵνα τὸ κατασκευασθὲν ἐπιτηδεῖως ἔχῃ πρὸς τὸ ἔργον πρὸς ὃ κατεσκευάσται· ὃ τε φυτουργὸς &lt;καὶ&gt; ὁ ἐπιμελούμενος τῆς ἀμπέλου, καὶ ὁ πωλοδάμνης καὶ ὁ τοῦ κυνὸς ἐπιμελούμενος τοῦτο ζητεῖ.) αἱ δὲ παιδαγωγίαι, αἱ δὲ διδασκαλίαι ἐπὶ τί σπεύδουσιν; ὧδε οὖν τὸ τίμιον· καὶ τοῦτο μὲν ἂν εὔχῃ, οὐδὲν τῶν ἄλλων περιποιήσεις ἑαυτῶ. οὐ παύση καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ τιμῶν; οὔτ' οὖν ἐλεύθερος ἔσῃ οὔτε αὐτάρκης οὔτε ἀπαθής· ἀνάγκη γὰρ φθονεῖν, ζηλοτυπεῖν, ὑφορᾶσθαι τοὺς ἀφελέσθαι ἐκεῖνα δυναμένους, ἐπιβουλεύειν τοῖς ἔχουσι τὸ τιμώμενον ὑπὸ σοῦ· ὅλως πεφύρθαι ἀνάγκη τὸν ἐκείνων τινὸς ἐνδεῆ, προσέτι δὲ πολλὰ καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς μέμφεσθαι. ἡ δὲ τῆς ἰδίας διανοίας αἰδῶς καὶ τιμὴ σεαυτῶ τε ἀρεστόν σε ποιήσει καὶ τοῖς κοινωνοῖς εὐάρμοστον καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς σύμφωνον, τουτέστιν ἐπαινοῦντα ὅσα ἐκεῖνοι διανέμουσι καὶ διατετάχασιν</p>	<p><i>linguarum. Sublata igitur etiam gloriola, quid restat, quod suspiciamus &amp; veneremur? Equidem hoc censeo, ut quemadmodum facti instructique a natura sumus, ita moveamur. Eo nos etiam diligentia opificum, &amp; artes ducunt. Omnis n. ars huc collimat, ut id quod paratum est, aptum sit &amp; idoneum ad opus, cuius operis causa paratum est. Idem quaerit vinitor, idem qui pullos equorum domat, idem qui canes educat. Ergo &amp; institutio primae aetatis &amp; doctrina eo contendunt: isque finis est, quem expetere debeas. Quod si pergas alia etiam expetere, neque liber eris, neque tibi sufficies ipse, neque eris affectuum vacuus: necessario n. invidebis, aemulaberis, sinistra suspicaberis de his, qui illa tibi adimere possunt, insidiaberis iis, qui id quod magni fit a te possident. Omnino n. necesse est eum esse animo perturbato, qui ista desiderat: saepe etiam deos incusare.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Not transpiring like plants is to be prized, nor breathing like cattle and wild beasts, nor being stamped by impressions, nor being jerked by the strings of impulse, nor herding together, nor taking in nourishment — that last is on a level with excreting the residue of food. What, then, is to be prized? Being clapped for? No. Then neither being clapped for by tongues — for the praises of the many are a clapping of tongues. So you have given up the scrap of glory too. What remains worth prizing? This, I think: to move and to hold oneself according to one's own constitution — the very end toward which all trainings and all crafts lead. For every craft aims at this, that the thing framed be fit for the work for which it was framed; the vine-planter who tends the vine, the colt-breaker, the trainer of the dog — all seek this. And child-rearing and teaching — toward what do they press? Here, then, is what is to be prized; and if this is well with you, you will not set about procuring</p>	<p>English from Latin: To grow like plants, to breathe like cattle or wild beasts, to be moved by sensory impressions, to be pulled about by impulses, to gather in herds, to be treasured, to be nourished—all these things are worth no more than the processing and excretion of food. What, then, is worthy of honor? Public applause? By no means. Therefore, the praise of the crowd is equally worthless, for it is nothing but a clapping of tongues. Once you cast away this petty glory, what remains to be prized? In my judgment, it is to move and act in perfect accord with the design of our nature. This is the goal toward which all crafts and industries lead. For every art aims to make the product fit the work for which it was created. The vine-dresser seeks this, as does the horse-trainer and the dog-breeder. The education of youth and all learning strive toward this single point; this is the end you ought to pursue. But if you continue to lust after other things besides this, you will never be</p>

<p>any of the rest. Will you not cease to prize many other things besides? Then you will be neither free nor self-sufficient nor without passion; for you will necessarily envy, be jealous, look with suspicion on those able to take those things away, and scheme against those who have what you prize. In short, the man who lacks any of those things is necessarily in turmoil — and he blames the gods for much besides. But reverence and honor for your own understanding will make you acceptable to yourself, well-fitted to your fellows, and in concord with the gods — that is, praising whatever they assign and have ordained.</p>	<p>free, self-sufficient, or detached from passions; for you will inevitably suffer envy, jealousy, and suspicion toward those who can strip you of them, and plot against those who possess what you prize. In short, anyone who longs for those things must live in constant inner turmoil and frequently find fault with the gods.</p>
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**Language Differences:** The raw Greek epigram κρότος γλωσσῶν (*the noise / clapping of tongues*) is perfectly mapped to Xylander's text: *plausus linguarum*. The diminutive δοξάριον is translated as *gloriola* (*minor / petty glory*).

**Commentary:** Marcus strips the value from external validation. Public renown is deconstructed into a mere clapping of tongues. True, unshakeable worth is found solely by preserving your character and acting in alignment with your rational design.

Book VI · Section 17

## The Motion of Virtue

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἄνω, κάτω, κύκλω &lt;αί&gt; φοραὶ τῶν στοιχείων, ἢ δὲ τῆς ἀρετῆς κίνησις ἐν οὐδεμιᾷ τούτων, ἀλλὰ θειότερόν τι καὶ ὁδῶ δυσεπινοήτῳ προιοῦσα εὐοδεῖ</p>	<p><i>Qui vero mentem suam reveretur atque colit, is &amp; sibi ipsi probabitur, &amp; cum coetu hominum bene ei conveniet, cumque diis consentiet, id est, laudabit quaecunque ii distribuunt &amp; ordinaverunt.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Up, down, in circles are the motions of the elements; but the movement of virtue is in none of these — it is something more divine, and advancing on a road hard to conceive, it goes well on its way.</p>	<p>English from Latin: But he who honors and tends his own mind will find contentment within himself, live in perfect harmony with human society, and remain in complete accord with the gods—praising whatever they distribute and ordain.</p>

**Language Differences:** Xylander adds *atque circum te* ("and around you") to emphasize our physical immersion within elemental nature. The Greek δυσεπινοήτῳ (*hard to conceive / perceive*) is rendered as *ad intelligendum difficili*.

**Commentary:** While material elements move in predictable, mechanical patterns, the growth of virtue operates on a higher, spiritual level, advancing smoothly toward its moral goal.

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Book VI • Section 18

## Strange Human Behavior

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p><i>Οἷόν ἐστιν ὃ ποιοῦσι. τοὺς μὲν ἐπὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ χρόνου καὶ μεθ' ἑαυτῶν ζῶντας ἀνθρώπους εὐφημεῖν οὐ θέλουσιν, αὐτοὶ δὲ ὑπὸ τῶν μεταγενεστέρων εὐφημηθῆναι, οὐδ' οὔτε εἰδόν ποτε οὔτε ὄψονταί, περὶ πολλοῦ ποιοῦνται. τοῦτο δὲ ἐγγύς ἐστι τῷ λυπηθῆναι ἅν, ὅτι οὐχὶ καὶ οἱ προγενέστεροι περὶ σοῦ λόγους εὐφήμους ἐποιοῦντο</i></p>	<p><i>Infrà, super, atque circum te motus sunt elementorum. Motus vero virtutis in eorum nullo est, sed diviniore quadam, &amp; ad intelligendum difficili via procedit. Vide quid agant homines. Eos qui eodem cum ipsis vivunt tempore, laudare nolunt: ipsi vero a posteritate laudari magnum existimant: nimirum ab iis quos neque viderunt, neque videbunt unquam. Id vero haud multo aliud est, quam si dolerent, non a prioris etiam aetatis hominibus se laudatos esse.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: What a thing it is that they do! They refuse to speak well of the men living in their own time and with them — yet they set great store on being well spoken of by those who come after, whom they have never seen and never will see. This is next door to grieving that those who came before did not make complimentary speeches about you.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Below, above, and all around you are the movements of the elements. Yet the movement of virtue belongs to none of these; it follows a higher, divine path, which is difficult for the uninitiated mind to grasp. Look at how people behave. They refuse to praise their contemporaries who live alongside them, yet place immense value on being praised by posterity—by people they have never seen and will never meet. This is just as absurd as feeling miserable because the generations of the past did not praise you.</p>

**Language Differences:** The concise Greek *Οἷόν ἐστιν ὃ ποιοῦσι* is rendered explicitly as *Vide quid agant homines* ("See what men do").

**Commentary:** Marcus exposes the logical absurdity of social ambition: people desperately crave validation from future generations they will never meet, while completely ignoring the living companions right next to them.

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Book VI • Section 19

## The Humanly Possible

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p><i>Μή, εἴ τι αὐτῷ σοὶ δυσκαταπόνητον, τοῦτο ἀνθρώπῳ ἀδύνατον ὑπολαμβάνειν, ἀλλ' εἴ τι ἀνθρώπῳ δυνατόν καὶ οἰκεῖον, τοῦτο καὶ σεαυτῷ ἐφικτὸν νομίζειν</i></p>	<p><i>Non, si quid assequi intelligentia tua nequeas, id a nullo posse apprehendi homine existima: Sed quicquid homo potest, quicquid ei convenit, id &amp; tibi concedi iudica.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Do not suppose, if something is hard for you yourself to accomplish, that it is impossible for man; but if something is possible for man and proper to him, consider it attainable by yourself as well.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Do not conclude that because a thing is difficult for your own intellect to master, it is impossible for any human being to achieve. Instead, recognize that if a task is possible and proper for a human being, it is within your reach as well.</p>

**Language Differences:** *δυσκαταπόνητον* (hard to accomplish / labor through) is interpreted by Xylander as an intellectual barrier: *si quid assequi intelligentia tua nequeas* ("if you cannot attain something with your intelligence").

**Commentary:** Avoid projecting personal limitations onto human potential. If an objective is possible for human nature, believe it is fully within your own capacity to achieve.

Book VI • Section 20

## Life as a Sparring Ground

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p><i>Ἐν τοῖς γυμνασίοις καὶ ὄνυξι κατέδρουσέ τις καὶ τῇ κεφαλῇ ἐρράγεις πληγὴν ἐποίησεν, ἀλλ' οὔτε ἐπισημαινόμεθα οὔτε προσκόπομεν οὔτε ὑφορώμεθα ὕστερον ὡς ἐπίβουλον· καίτοι φυλαττόμεθα, οὐ μέντοι ὡς ἐχθρὸν οὐδὲ μεθ' ὑποψίας, ἀλλ' ἐκκλίσεως εὐμενοῦς. τοιοῦτόν τι γινέσθω καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς μέρεσι τοῦ βίου· πολλὰ παρενθυμώμεθα τῶν οἴου προσγυμναζομένων. ἔξεστι γάρ, ὡς ἔφην, ἐκκλίνειν καὶ μῆτε ὑποπτεύειν μῆτε ἀπέχθεσθαι</i></p>	<p><i>In palaestra si quis unguibus adversarium laniavit, aut capite incusso ferit, non indignamur, neque offendimur, neque insidiarum suspectum habemus: cavemus quidem nobis ab eo, non ut ab hoste, neque sinistrum quid de eo suspicamur, tantum placide eum declinamus. Id fieri debet etiam in reliquis vitae partibus, ut idem de aliis sentiamus, quod de iis, cum quibus colluctamur: possumus enim (ut dixi) citra suspicionem &amp; odium ab iis cavere, &amp; eos vitare.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: In the gymnasium someone has raked us with his nails or, charging head-first, dealt a blow; yet we make no protest, take no offense, and harbor no suspicion of him afterward as plotting against us. We are on our guard, it is true — not as against an enemy, not with</p>	<p>English from Latin: In the gymnasium, if someone tears us with their nails or strikes us with their head, we do not grow angry, take offense, or suspect them of plotting against us. We simply look out for ourselves, not treating them as an enemy or harboring malice, but quietly keeping</p>

suspicion, but with a good-natured keeping out of the way. Let it be something like this in the remaining parts of life: let us overlook many things, as if from sparring partners. For it is possible, as I said, to keep out of the way — without suspecting and without hating.	our distance. We ought to act this way in all other areas of life, making allowances for our companions as if they were training partners; for, as I have said, it is within our power to step aside calmly, without suspicion or hatred.
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**Language Differences:** *Xylander tracks the gymnasium setting (In palaestra), rendering the Greek ἐκκλίσεως εὐμενοῦς (a well-disposed / kindly turning away) as placide eum declinamus ("we calmly turn away from him").*

**Commentary:** Treat difficult companions in life like sparring partners in a gym. When we receive accidental scratches or blocks, we look out for our safety and step aside calmly, without harboring any hatred or suspicion.

Book VI · Section 21

## Seeking Truth

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Εἴ τις με ἐλέγξει καὶ παραστήσῃ μοι, ὅτι οὐκ ὀρθῶς ὑπολαμβάνω ἢ πράσσω, δύναται, χαίρων μεταθήσομαι· ζητῶ γὰρ τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ὑφ' ἧς οὐδεὶς πώποτε ἐβλάβη, βλάπτεται δὲ ὁ ἐπιμένων ἐπὶ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ἀπάτης καὶ ἀγνοίας</p>	<p><i>Si quis me redarguere potest, &amp; demonstrare, quod non recte sentiam, aut agam, laeto animo sententiam mutabo: veritatem n. quaero, quae nemini unquam damno fuit: damnum autem facit, qui in errore &amp; ignoratione sua permanet.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: If anyone can refute me and show me that I judge or act incorrectly, I will change with joy. For I seek the truth, by which no one has ever been harmed; harmed, rather, is the one who persists in his own deception and ignorance.</p>	<p>English from Latin: If anyone can refute me and prove that my thoughts or actions are wrong, I will change my mind with gladness. For I seek the truth, which has never harmed anyone; the only one who suffers harm is he who persists in his self-deception and ignorance.</p>

**Language Differences:** *ἀπάτης (deception / illusion) is matched closely by Xylander's classical noun errore.*

**Commentary:** Real correction is a victory, not a defeat. Truth has never caused injury; the only real damage occurs when an individual clings to self-deception.

Book VI · Section 22

## Focus on Duty

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἐγὼ τὸ ἑμαυτοῦ καθήκον ποιῶ, τὰ ἄλλα με οὐ περισπᾶ· ἦτοι γὰρ ἄψυχα ἢ ἄλογα ἢ πεπλανημένα καὶ τὴν ὁδὸν ἀγνοοῦντα	<i>Ego, quod est mei officii, ago, caetera me non avellunt. Aut enim anima, aut ratione carent, aut viae ignara errant.</i>
English from Greek: I do my own duty; the rest does not distract me. For they are either soulless, or without reason, or have wandered and do not know the road.	English from Latin: I perform my duty, and nothing else can distract me from it. For external things are either inanimate, devoid of reason, or wander blindly, lost from the path.

**Language Differences:** The Greek οὐ περισπᾶ (does not pull me apart / distract me) is rendered by Xylander as *me non avellunt* ("does not tear me away").

**Commentary:** Focus exclusively on your own moral obligations. Blind, unguided physical events or misguided people are outside your control and must not derail your purpose.

Book VI · Section 23

## Treat Beings According to Nature

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Τοῖς μὲν ἀλόγοις ζώοις καὶ καθόλου πράγμασι καὶ ὑποκειμένοις, ὡς λόγον ἔχων λόγον μὴ ἔχουσι, χρῶ μεγαλοφρόνως καὶ ἐλευθέρως· τοῖς δὲ ἀνθρώποις, ὡς λόγον ἔχουσι, χρῶ κοινωνικῶς· ἐφ' ἅπασιν δὲ θεοῦς ἐπικαλοῦ. καὶ μὴ διαφέρου πρὸς τὸ πόσῳ χρόνῳ ταῦτα πράξεις· ἀρκοῦσι γὰρ καὶ τρεῖς ὥραι τοιαῦται</p>	<p><i>Animantia rationis expertia, tum omnes eius modi res &amp; subiecta, magno &amp; liberali animo sunt usurpanda tibi, nempe ratione praedito. Hominibus vero, ut ipsis quoque mente instructis, ratione societatis habita utere. In omni vero negotio deos comprecare: neque sollicitus esto, quantum temporis spatium tibi ad agendum detur: sufficiunt enim vel tres huiusmodi horae.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Use the irrational animals, and things and objects generally, with magnanimity and freedom, as one who has reason toward things that have none. Use human beings, as having reason, socially. And in all things, call upon the gods. And make no difference to yourself over how long a time you will do these things — for even three hours so spent are enough.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Creatures devoid of reason, along with all material things, should be used by you with a noble and generous spirit, as becomes a rational being. But use your fellow human beings, since they also possess minds, with a deep sense of social duty. Call upon the gods in all your endeavors, and do not worry about how much time you have to act; for even three hours spent in this manner are fully sufficient.</p>

**Language Differences:** *κοινωνικῶς* (socially / in fellowship) is translated via a classic Roman framing: *ratione societatis habita* ("with regard for the principles of human society").

**Commentary:** A unified rule of daily conduct: treat material things with detached freedom, interact with human beings through fellowship, and call upon the gods. The quality of an action matters completely, while its duration is trivial.

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Book VI · Section 24

## Equality in Death

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ Μακεδὼν καὶ ὁ ὄρεωκόμος αὐτοῦ ἀποθανόντες εἰς ταὐτὸ κατέστησαν ἤτοι γὰρ ἀνελήφθησαν εἰς τοὺς αὐτοὺς τοῦ κόσμου σπερματικούς λόγους ἢ διεσκεδάσθησαν ὁμοίως εἰς τὰς ἀτόμους</i>	<i>Alexander Macedo, agasoque eius, mortui in idem sunt redacti: aut enim assumpti sunt ad mentem mundi eam, qua fati sunt reliquorum animi, aut dissipati sunt in atomos, unus perinde atque alter.</i>
English from Greek: Alexander of Macedon and his mule-driver, dying, came to the same condition: either they were taken back into the same seminal reasons of the cosmos, or they were scattered alike into the atoms.	English from Latin: Alexander the Great and his stable-boy were brought to the exact same level by death; for they were either reabsorbed into the rational soul of the universe, from which all things flow, or they were scattered into atoms, one exactly like the other.

**Language Differences:** The Greek *ὄρεωκόμος* (mule-driver) is translated by Xylander as *agaso* (stable-boy / groom). *τοὺς αὐτοὺς ... σπερματικούς λόγους* is rendered as *ad mentem mundi* ("to the mind of the world").

**Commentary:** Death is the final equalizer. Measured against the material universe, the immense world-conqueror and his stable-boy are reduced to the exact same physical elements.

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Book VI · Section 25

## The Complexity of Being

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Ἐνθυμήθητι πόσα κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν ἀκαριαῖον χρόνον ἐν ἐκάστῳ ἡμῶν ἅμα γίνεται σωματικὰ ὁμοῦ καὶ ψυχικά, καὶ οὕτως οὐ θαυμάσεις εἰ πολὺ πλείω,</i>	<i>Cum animo tuo considera, quam multa unico temporis momento fiant in uniuscuiusque nostrum, cum animo, tum corpore: ita fiet, ut non mireris, quod</i>

<p>μᾶλλον δὲ πάντα τὰ γινόμενα ἐν τῷ ἐνί τε καὶ σύμπαντι, ὃ δὴ κόσμον ὀνομάζομεν, ἅμα ἐνυφίσταται</p>	<p><i>longe plura, imo vero omnia quae in mundo hoc fiunt, simul extent.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Consider how many things, bodily and mental together, come to pass in each of us in the same instant of time; and then you will not wonder that far more things — indeed all the things that come to be — subsist together in the one and whole which we call the cosmos.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Reflect on how many things occur simultaneously within every single one of us in a single fraction of time, both in the soul and in the body. If you remember this, you will not wonder that a far greater number of things—indeed, all things that come to pass in this universe—exist together simultaneously.</p>

**Language Differences:** ἀκαριαῖον χρόνον (*a hair's breadth of time*) is translated by Xylander as *unico temporis momento* ("a single moment of time").

**Commentary:** If countless complex physical and mental processes are constantly operating inside a single human body, the structural complexity of the universe should be entirely expected.

Book VI • Section 26

## Spelling out Names

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἐάν τις σοι προβάλη πῶς γράφεται τὸ Ἀντωνίνου ὄνομα, μήτι κατεντεινόμενος προοίση ἕκαστον τῶν στοιχείων; τί οὖν ἐὰν ὀργίζωνται, μήτι ἀντοργιῆ; μήτι οὐκ ἐξαριθμῆση πράως προῖων ἕκαστον τῶν γραμμάτων; οὕτως οὖν καὶ ἐνθάδε μέμνησο ὅτι πᾶν καθῆκον ἐξ ἀριθμῶν τινῶν συμπληροῦται. τούτους δεῖ τηροῦντα καὶ μὴ θορυβούμενον μηδὲ τοῖς δυσχεραίνουσιν ἀντιδυσχεραίνοντα περαίνειν ὁδῶ τὸ προκείμενον</p>	<p><i>Si quis a te quaerat, quomodo sit nomen Antonini scribendum: nonne singulatim omnes literas proferres? Quid ergo si qui irascuntur, num vicissim tu quoque stomachaberis? Non potius numerum inibis placide singularum rerum? Itaque etiam hic memento fuis omne officium quibusdam constare numeris: quos si imperturbatos servaveris, neque indignanter, recta via id quod proposuisti, perficies.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: If someone sets you the problem of how the name 'Antoninus' is written, will you strain and shout out each of its letters? And if they grow angry, will you be angry in return — or will you gently count through each letter in order? So here too: remember that every duty is filled out of certain numbered parts. Keep these, without being disturbed and without answering the resentful with resentment, and finish methodically the thing set before</p>	<p>English from Latin: If someone asks you how to spell the name 'Antoninus,' would you not spell out every letter calmly? And if they grow angry, would you lose your temper in return? Would you not rather count out each individual letter deliberately? Remember here also that every duty consists of specific elements; keep them in order without agitation, and without returning the anger of others, you will complete the task you set out to do.</p>

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**Language Differences:** Xylander uses the verb *stomachaberis* ("will you vex your stomach / temper?") to capture the Greek ἀντοργιῆ (will you rage in return?).

**Commentary:** Marcus uses spelling as an analogy for duty. Just as you spell a name letter by letter without anger, you must execute your obligations systematically, completely untroubled by the emotional reactions of onlookers.

Book VI · Section 27

## Teaching Over Anger

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Πῶς ὠμόν ἐστὶ μὴ ἐπιτρέπειν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ὀρμᾶν ἐπὶ τὰ φαινόμενα αὐτοῖς οἰκεῖα καὶ συμφέροντα. καίτοι τρόπον τινὰ οὐ συγχωρεῖς αὐτοῖς τοῦτο ποιεῖν, ὅταν ἀγανακτῆς, ὅτι ἁμαρτάνουσι· φέρονται γὰρ πάντως ὡς ἐπὶ οἰκεῖα καὶ συμφέροντα αὐτοῖς. "ἀλλ οὐκ ἔχει οὕτως." οὐκοῦν δίδασκε καὶ δείκνυε μὴ ἀγανακτῶν</p>	<p><i>Inhumanum esse videtur, hominem impedire, ne ad ea feratur quae ei utilia &amp; cognata videntur. Atqui id tu ne faciant prohibes quodam modo, dum iniquo animo fers eos delinquere. Feruntur enim utique ad id, quod naturae suae coniunctum, &amp; utile putant. Sed res non ita habet. Id itaque ostende eis, &amp; doce citra indignationem.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: How savage it is not to allow men to be drawn toward what appears proper and advantageous to them! Yet, in a way, you forbid them just this whenever you are indignant that they do wrong — for they are drawn altogether toward what appears proper and advantageous to themselves. 'But it is not so.' Then teach them and show them — without indignation.</p>	<p>English from Latin: It seems cruel to bar people from seeking what they believe is beneficial and natural to them. Yet, in a sense, you do exactly that when you grow angry at their errors. For they are simply pursuing what they believe is useful and natural to them. 'But they are mistaken.' Show them their mistake, then, and instruct them without anger.</p>

**Language Differences:** ὠμόν (*savage / raw*) is translated by Xylander as *Inhumanum* (*inhumane / uncivilized*).

**Commentary:** Human beings naturally chase what they interpret to be good. If they stumble through ignorance, reacting with anger is irrational; your obligation is simply to instruct them calmly.

Book VI · Section 28

## Death as Rest

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Θάνατος ἀνάπαυλα αἰσθητικῆς ἀντιτυπίας καὶ ὀρμητικῆς νευροσπαστίας καὶ διανοητικῆς διεξόδου καὶ τῆς πρὸς τὴν σάρκα λειτουργίας	<i>Mors finem imponit sensuum, motus, &amp; cogitationum officiis, animunque a corporis ministerio liberat.</i>
English from Greek: Death is a rest from the resistance of sense, from the puppet-pulling of impulse, from the wandering of thought, and from service to the flesh.	English from Latin: Death brings an end to sensory impressions, releases us from the dictates of raw impulses, terminates the labors of thought, and frees the mind from its slavery to the flesh.

**Language Differences:** The specialized phrase ὀρμητικῆς νευροσπαστίας (the puppet-string-pulling of impulse) is translated simply as motus (movement).

**Commentary:** Death is framed as a release from the tiring, mechanical demands of the body, freeing the mind from its material constraints.

Book VI · Section 29

## Soul and Body Endurance

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Αἰσχρὸν ἐστίν, ἐν ᾧ βίω τὸ σῶμά σοι μὴ ἀπαυδᾷ, ἐν τούτῳ τὴν ψυχὴν προαυδᾷν	<i>Turpe autem est in hac vita, in qua corpus tuum labori non succumbit, animum tuum elanguescere.</i>
English from Greek: It is shameful that, in a life in which your body does not give out, your soul should give out first.	English from Latin: It is a shameful thing if, in this life, while your physical body does not fail in its duty, your soul should grow weary and give up first.

**Language Differences:** προαυδᾷν (to give out / fail beforehand) is translated as elanguescere ("to grow faint or languid").

**Commentary:** It is a moral disgrace if the ruling mind loses its resilience while the temporary physical framework still possesses the strength to endure.

Book VI · Section 30

## Resist the Imperial Stain

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὅρα μὴ ἀποκαισαρῳθῆς, μὴ βαφῆς·	<i>Vide ne a praesenti statu deiectus</i>

γίνεται γάρ. τήρησον οὖν σεαυτὸν ἀπλοῦν, ἀγαθόν, ἀκέραιον, σεμνόν, ἄκομπον, τοῦ δικαίου φίλον, θεοσεβῆ, εὐμενῆ, φιλόστοργον, ἐρρώμενον πρὸς τὰ πρόποντα ἔργα. ἀγώνισαι, ἵνα τοιοῦτος συμμείνης, οἷόν σε ἠθέλησε ποιῆσαι φιλοσοφία. αἰδοῦ θεοῦς, σῶζε ἀνθρώπους. βραχὺς ὁ βίος· εἰς καρπὸς τῆς ἐπιγείου ζωῆς, διάθεσις ὅσια καὶ πράξεις κοινωνικαί. πάντα ὡς Ἀντωνίνου μαθητῆς· τὸ ὑπὲρ τῶν κατὰ λόγον πρασσομένων εὐτονον ἐκείνου καὶ τὸ ὁμαλὲς πανταχοῦ καὶ τὸ ὄσιον καὶ τὸ εὐδιον τοῦ προσώπου καὶ τὸ μειλίχιον καὶ τὸ ἀκενόδοξον καὶ τὸ περι τὴν κατάληψιν τῶν πραγμάτων φιλότιμον· καὶ ὡς ἐκεῖνος οὐκ ἂν τι ὄλως παρήκε, μὴ πρότερον εὖ μάλα κατιδὼν καὶ σαφῶς νοήσας· καὶ ὡς ἔφερεν ἐκεῖνος τοὺς ἀδίκως αὐτῷ μεμφομένους μὴ ἀντιμεμφόμενος· καὶ ὡς ἐπ' οὐδὲν ἔσπευδεν· καὶ ὡς διαβολὰς οὐκ ἐδέχετο· καὶ ὡς ἀκριβῆς ἦν ἐξεταστῆς ἠθῶν καὶ πράξεων καὶ οὐκ ὄνειδιστῆς, οὐ ψοφοδεής, οὐχ ὑπόπτῃς, οὐ σοφιστῆς· καὶ ὡς ὀλίγοις ἀρκούμενος, οἷον οἰκῆσει, στρωμνῆ, ἐσθῆτι, τροφῆ, ὑπηρεσία· καὶ ὡς φιλόπονος καὶ μακρόθυμος· καὶ οἷος μέν'ειν' ἐν τῷ «αὐτῷ» μέχρι ἑσπέρας διὰ τὴν λιτὴν δίαιταν μηδὲ τοῦ ἀποκρίνειν τὰ περιττώματα παρὰ τὴν συνήθη ὥραν χρήζων· καὶ τὸ βέβαιον καὶ ὁμοιον ἐν ταῖς φιλίαις αὐτοῦ· καὶ τὸ ἀνέχεσθαι «τῶν» ἀντιβαιόντων παρρησιαστικῶς ταῖς γνώμαις αὐτοῦ καὶ χαίρειν εἰ τίς «τι» δεικνύοι κρεῖττον· καὶ ὡς θεοσεβῆς χωρὶς δεισδαιμονίας· ἵν' οὕτως εὐσυνειδήτῳ σοι ἐπιστῆ ἡ τελευταία ὥρα ὡς ἐκείνῳ

*obruaris. Potest n. hoc fieri. Itaque conserva teipsum simplicem, bonum, integrum, gravem, apertum, iustitiae studiosum, pium erga deos, benignum, humanum, ad officium tuendum fortem, annitere ut talis permanes, qualem te facere voluit philosophia. Venerare deos, salutem hominibus affer. Breve est vitae in terra degendae tempus, omnisque eius fructus, sancta animi constitutio, & actiones communitati hominum utiles. Omnia ut decet Antonini discipulum age. Quae fuerit eius in agendo secundum rationem firmitas, qua ubique aequalitas, quae sanctitas, memento: quae vultus serenitas, ac comitas. Quantus ille gloriae contemptor, quod eius in percipiendis rebus studium, quum nihil praetermitteret, nisi prius accurate perspexisset, ac cognovisset. Ut tulerit iniuste ipsum reprehendentes, neque convitium his reposuerit: ut nihil properate aut cupide aggressus sit: ut calumnias non admiserit, ut diligens fuerit morum actionumque examiner: non obtrectator, non meticulosus, non suspiciosus, non sophista. Quam paucis fuerit contentus, ut domo, lecto, veste, cibo, famulatu: quam tolerans laborum, quam leni animo: ut tempus neque ad vesperam propter victus tenuitatem egerit, ita ut ne excernere nisi consueta hora opus ei esset. Quae eius in amicitia fuerit constantia, & aequabilitas: quomodo tulerit eos, qui ipsius sententiam libere impugnant, gavisusque fuerit, si quis melius aliquid ostenderet. Qua ille deos religione coluerit citra superstitionem, recordare, ut tibi quoque ultima hora perinde atque is fuit rectè tibi conscio adveniat.*

English from Greek: See that you are not Caesarified — that you take no such dye; for it happens. Keep yourself, then, simple, good, pure, dignified, unaffected, a friend of justice, god-fearing, kind, affectionate, vigorous for your proper work. Strive to remain such as philosophy wished to make you. Reverence the gods; preserve men. Life is short; one fruit of earthly existence — a holy disposition and acts for the common good. In everything, a pupil of

English from Latin: Take care that you do not fall into the habits of the Caesars or become stained by them, for it happens easily. Keep yourself simple, good, pure, dignified, transparent, a lover of justice, pious toward the gods, kind, affectionate, and brave in executing your duty. Strive to remain exactly as philosophy intended to make you. Revere the gods and preserve your fellow men. Life on earth is brief, and its finest fruit is a holy character and

<p>Antoninus: his strenuousness on behalf of what was done according to reason; his evenness everywhere; his holiness; the serenity of his face; his gentleness; his freedom from vanity; his ambition to grasp affairs thoroughly. How he would let nothing at all pass without first looking at it well and understanding it clearly; how he bore those who blamed him unjustly, without blaming in return; how he hurried at nothing; how he refused to receive slanders; how precise an examiner he was of characters and actions, yet no reproacher — not timid at noise, not suspicious, no sophist. How little contented him — in lodging, bed, clothing, food, service; how he loved work and endured long; how he could remain in the same place until evening on his plain diet, not needing even to relieve himself outside the customary hour; his firmness and constancy in friendships; how he tolerated those who frankly opposed his opinions, and rejoiced if anyone showed him something better; how god-fearing he was, without superstition. All this, so that your last hour may come upon you with a conscience as good as his.</p>	<p>actions that benefit human society. Do everything as becomes a disciple of Antoninus Pius. Remember his unyielding firmness in acting according to reason, his unvarying fairness, his holiness, the serenity of his face, and his kindness. Remember how he despised empty glory, and how deeply he committed himself to understanding facts, never dismissing any matter until he had examined it thoroughly. Remember how he endured those who blamed him unjustly without offering any insult in return; how he never rushed into any project; how he refused to listen to slander, and how carefully he examined characters and actions. He was never a fault-finder, never timid, never suspicious, and never a master of empty rhetoric. See how little sufficed for him— whether in his house, his bed, his clothing, his food, or his domestic staff; how patient he was in labor, and how mild in temper, so that his simple lifestyle left his bodily regularities perfectly unbothered. Remember his constancy and balance in friendship; how he tolerated those who openly attacked his views, rejoicing if anyone could point out a better perspective. Look back on his deep reverence toward the gods, totally removed from superstition, so that your own final hour may find you with a conscience as clear as his.</p>
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**Language Differences:** Marcus invents a radical Greek verb: ἀποκαισαρωθῆς ("do not be Caesarified / turned into a Caesar"). Xylander interprets this through a general political lens: *Vide ne a praesenti statu deiectus obruaris* ("See that you are not cast down and overwhelmed by your present station").

**Commentary:** Marcus warns himself against being corrupted by the power of his absolute office. He uses his adoptive father, Antoninus Pius, as his administrative blueprint, reminding himself to stay simple, transparent, and focused on justice.

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Book VI · Section 31

## Awakening to Reality

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
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<p>Ἀνάνηφε καὶ ἀνακαλοῦ σεαυτὸν καὶ ἐξυπνισθεῖς πάλιν καὶ ἐννοήσας ὅτι ὄνειροί σοι ἠνώχλουν, πάλιν ἐγρηγορῶς βλέπε ταῦτα, ὡς ἐκεῖνα ἔβλεπες</p>	<p><i>Expergiscere, &amp; teipsum revoca, somnoque discutio cogitans quae te insomnia perturbarint, vigilas ea intuere, ut illa inspexisti.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Sober up; call yourself back; shake off sleep once more. Recognize that they were dreams that troubled you — and now, awake again, look at these things as you looked at those.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Wake up, recall your wandering senses, and shake off sleep! Realize that those things which troubled you were nothing but a dream; and now that you are fully awake, look at realities just as you used to look at your dreams.</p>

**Language Differences:** Ἀνάνηφε (return to sobriety / wake up from a stupor) is translated as *Expergiscere* ("awaken / rouse yourself").

**Commentary:** Just as we wake from a disturbing nightmare and realize its illusions, we must 'wake up' to reality, recognizing that our anxieties are driven by dream-like mental impressions rather than raw facts.

Book VI · Section 32

## The Indifference of the Body

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἐκ σωματίου εἰμὶ καὶ ψυχῆς. τῷ μὲν οὖν σωματίῳ πάντα ἀδιάφορα ὡς οὐδὲ γὰρ δύναται διαφέρεσθαι. τῇ δὲ διανοίᾳ ἀδιάφορα ὅσα μὴ ἐστὶν αὐτῆς ἐνεργήματα ὅσα δὲ γε αὐτῆς ἐστὶν ἐνεργήματα, ταῦτα πάντα ἐπ' αὐτῇ ἐστὶν. καὶ τούτων μόντοι περὶ μόνον τὸ παρὸν πραγματεύεται ὡς τὰ γὰρ μέλλοντα καὶ παρῶ χηκότα ἐνεργήματα αὐτῆς καὶ αὐτὰ ἤδη ἀδιάφορα</p>	<p><i>Ex corpusculo &amp; anima consto. Corpusculo nihil interest inter res, neque enim potest discrimen statuere. Rationi autem inter ea discrimen habetur, quae non sunt ipsius actiones: has vero omnes in sua habet potestate. Quod ipsum tantum est de praesentibus accipiendum, praeteritae enim &amp; futurae animi actiones, ipse quoque nullum habent iam discrimen.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: I am made of a poor body and a soul. To the body, all things are indifferent — for it cannot make distinctions. To the understanding, all things are indifferent that are not its own activities; and all that are its own activities are in its power. Even of these, moreover, it is occupied only with the present: its future and past activities are themselves, already, indifferent.</p>	<p>English from Latin: I consist of a small body and a soul. To the body, all physical things are indifferent, for it is incapable of making a moral distinction. But to the rational mind, distinctions belong only to those things which are not its own actions; for all its own actions are within its power. And this power concerns only the present moment, because past and future actions are already beyond its judgment and show no variance.</p>

**Language Differences:** The diminutive *σωματίω* (insignificant body) is tracked precisely by Xylander's *corpusculo*.

**Commentary:** For the physical body, external assets are neutral because it lacks volition. For the rational mind, only its own active choices are significant. Past and future occurrences are equally indifferent because our power extends exclusively over the immediate present.

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Book VI · Section 33

## Natural Pain

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ πόνος τῇ χειρὶ οὐδὲ τῷ ποδὶ παρὰ φύσιν, μέχρις ἂν ποιῇ ὁ ποῦς τὰ τοῦ ποδὸς καὶ ἡ χεὶρ τὰ τῆς χειρός. οὕτως οὖν οὐδὲ ἄνθρωπῳ ὡς ἄνθρωπῳ παρὰ φύσιν ἔστιν ὁ πόνος, μέχρις ἂν ποιῇ τὰ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου· εἰ δὲ παρὰ φύσιν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν, οὐδὲ κακόν ἐστιν αὐτῷ</i>	<i>Manui ac pedi, dum suum agunt officium, nullus est praeter naturam labor: ita homini quoque ea agenti quae ipsius sunt partium, nullus est praeter naturam labor: ergo ne malum quidem.</i>
English from Greek: Toil is not against nature for the hand or the foot, so long as the foot does the foot's work and the hand the hand's. So toil is not against nature for a man, as a man, so long as he does a man's work; and if it is not against his nature, neither is it an evil for him.	English from Latin: As long as the hand and the foot perform their proper function, their labor is not contrary to nature. In the same way, as long as a human being performs the duties belonging to his nature, his labor is not contrary to nature; and if it is not against nature, it cannot be an evil.

**Language Differences:** Marcus's *πόνος* (pain / toil) is rendered by Xylander as *labor* (work / exertion).

**Commentary:** Pain is consistent with nature if a limb is executing its natural purpose. By extension, suffering is never an absolute evil for a human being as long as they are executing their human and social duties.

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Book VI · Section 34

## The Pleasures of the Vile

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Ἡλίκας ἡδονὰς ἤσθησαν λησταί, κίναῖδοι, πατραλοῖαι, τύραννοι</i>	<i>Quot voluptatibus, ac quantis frui contigit latronibus, cinaedis, parricidis, tyrannis?</i>

English from Greek: What enormous pleasures have been enjoyed by bandits, catamites, parricides, tyrants!	English from Latin: Think of how many pleasures, and of what intense degree, have been enjoyed by thieves, profligates, murderers, and tyrants!
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**Language Differences:** *πατραλοῖαι (patricides) is correctly mapped to parricidis.*

**Commentary:** Marcus analyzes the low character of those who experience the most intense physical pleasures, demonstrating that pleasure cannot be classified as a true moral good.

Book VI · Section 35

## Loyalty to One's Craft

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Οὐχ ὀραῖς πῶς οἱ βάνουσοι τεχνῖται ἀρμόζονται μὲν μέχρι τινὸς πρὸς τοὺς ιδιώτας, οὐδὲν ἤσσον μέντοι ἀντέχονται τοῦ λόγου τῆς τέχνης καὶ τούτου ἀποστῆναι οὐχ ὑπομένουσιν; οὐ δεινὸν εἰ ὁ ἀρχιτέκτων καὶ ὁ ἰατρὸς μᾶλλον αἰδέσονται τὸν τῆς ἰδίας τέχνης λόγον ἢ ὁ ἄνθρωπος τὸν ἑαυτοῦ, ὃς αὐτῷ κοινός ἐστι πρὸς τοὺς θεούς</p>	<p><i>Nonne vides ut qui sordidas profitentur artes, usque ad certum finem se privatis hominibus accommodent? Nihilominus tamen suae artis rationem retinent, neque ab ea decedere volunt.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Do you not see how the common craftsmen accommodate themselves up to a point to the layman, yet hold fast no less to the rule of their craft and never submit to abandon it? Is it not strange if the architect and the physician show more reverence for the rule of their own art than a man for his own reason — which he shares with the gods?</p>	<p>English from Latin: Do you not see how even craftsmen who practice basic mechanical trades adapt themselves to a certain degree to ordinary people, yet hold fast to the principles of their art and refuse to abandon them?</p>

**Language Differences:** *The compound βάνουσοι τεχνῖται (common / vulgar artisans) is translated as qui sordidas profitentur artes ("those who practice dirty / sordid crafts").*

**Commentary:** Even ordinary manual laborers remain fiercely loyal to the operational rules of their craft. It is a moral failure if a human being shows less respect for the universal reason he shares with the gods than a common builder does for basic architecture.

## Cosmic Perspective

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἡ Ἀσία, ἡ Εὐρώπη γωνίαι τοῦ κόσμου ἅπαντες πέλαγος σταγῶν τοῦ κόσμου Ἄθως βωλάριον τοῦ κόσμου ἅπαν τὸ ἐνεστὼς τοῦ χρόνου στιγμή τοῦ αἰῶνος. πάντα μικρά, εὐτρεπτα, ἐναφανιζόμενα. Πάντα ἐκεῖθεν ἔρχεται, ἀπ ἐκείνου τοῦ κοινοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ ὁρμήσαντα ἢ κατ ἐπακολουθήσιν. καὶ τὸ χάσμα οὖν τοῦ λέοντος καὶ τὸ δηλητήριο καὶ πᾶσα κακουργία, ὡς ἄκανθα, ὡς βόρβορος, ἐκείνων ἐπιγεννήματα τῶν σεμνῶν καὶ καλῶν. μὴ οὖν αὐτὰ ἀλλότρια τούτου ὄρσεβεις φαντάζου, ἀλλὰ τὴν πάντων πηγὴν ἐπιλογίζου</p>	<p><i>Asia &amp; Europa anguli sunt mundi: totum mare gutta mundi: Athos glebula mundi: omne praesens tempus punctum aeternitatis. Omnia parva, mutabilia, evanescentia. Omnia illinc veniunt, ab illo communi principatu profecta aut per consequentiam. Itaque rictus leonis, et venenum, et omnis maleficientia, ut spina, ut lutum, illorum subregalium et pulchrorum sunt appendices. Ne igitur ea aliena ab eo quod colis imagineris, sed fontem omnium considera.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Asia and Europe — corners of the cosmos. Every sea — a drop of the cosmos. Athos — a little clod of the cosmos. All present time — a point of eternity. All things small, quick to change, vanishing. All things come from there — set in motion from that common ruling principle, or by way of consequence. Even the lion's gaping jaws, then, and poison, and every kind of mischief — like the thorn, like the mire — are by-products of those august and beautiful things. Do not, then, imagine them alien to that which you reverence, but reckon up the spring from which all things flow.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Asia and Europe are mere corners of the universe; the entire ocean is but a drop in the world; Mount Athos is nothing but a small clod of earth; and the present moment is a mere pinpoint in eternity. All things are tiny, fluid, and changing, driven toward decay. Everything flows from that single ruling source of the universe, either directly or as a necessary consequence. Therefore, the lion's roar, deadly poison, and all destructive things — like thorns or mud — are simply natural developments of what is beautiful and good. Do not view them as alien to the God you revere, but contemplate the single fountain from which all things flow.</p>

**Language Differences:** The Greek βωλάριον (a tiny lump / clod of dirt) is translated by Xylander using the Latin diminutive glebula.

**Commentary:** To maintain absolute scale, Marcus views massive continents and oceans as tiny drops within the vast macro-universe, reducing human lifespans to a brief hairline pinpoint against eternity.

## The View from Eternity

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
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<p>Ὁ τὰ νῦν ἰδὼν πάντα ἐώρακεν, ὅσα τε ἐξ αἰδίου ἐγένετο καὶ ὅσα εἰς τὸ ἄπειρον ἔσται· πάντα γὰρ ὁμογενῆ καὶ ὁμοειδῆ</p>	<p><i>Asia &amp; Europa, anguli sunt mundi: universum mare, gutta mundi: At hos, glebula mundi: omne instans tempus, punctum aeternitatis. Omnia sunt parva, mobilia, interitui obiecta: omnia inde veniunt, profecta a principe universi, aut per consequentiam. Etenim rictus leonis, lethalia venena, omniaque maleficia, ut spina, coenum, pulcrarum &amp; bonarum rerum sunt additamenta. Non igitur ea aliena ab eo quod colis imaginare, sed fontem omnium rerum considera. Qui praesentia cernit, omnia vuDit, quae ab aeterno fuerunt, &amp; in infinitum usque erunt. Omnia enim sunt eiusdem generis, &amp; conformia.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: He who has seen the present has seen everything — both whatever has come to be from everlasting and whatever will be into the unbounded. For all things are of one kind and of one form.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Asia and Europe are mere corners of the universe; the entire ocean is but a drop in the world; Mount Athos is nothing but a small clod of earth; and the present moment is a mere pinpoint in eternity. All things are tiny, fluid, and changing, driven toward decay. Everything flows from that single ruling source of the universe, either directly or as a necessary consequence. Therefore, the lion's roar, deadly poison, and all destructive things—like thorns or mud—are simply natural developments of what is beautiful and good. Do not view them as alien to the God you revere, but contemplate the single fountain from which all things flow. He who beholds the present has seen all things: everything that has happened from all eternity, and everything that will happen to infinity. For all things are of one kin and cast in the same mold.</p>

**Language Differences:** ὁμοειδῆ (of identical form / mold) is mapped to Xylander's text as conformia.

**Commentary:** Because the cosmos proceeds through regular, cyclical transformations, deep comprehension of the present moment provides an understanding of all time, past and future.

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Πολλάκις ἐνθυμοῦ τὴν ἐπισύνδεσιν πάντων τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ σχέσιν πρὸς ἄλληλα. τρόπον γάρ τινα πάντα ἀλλήλοις ἐπιπέλεκται καὶ πάντα κατὰ τοῦτο φίλα ἀλλήλοις ἐστί· καὶ γὰρ ἄλλω «ἄλλο» ἐξῆς ἐστί ταῦτα διὰ τὴν τονικὴν κίνησιν καὶ σύμπνοιαν καὶ τὴν ἔνωσιν τῆς οὐσίας</p>	<p><i>Saepenumero cogita de omnium in hoc universo rerum connexu, mutuaque affectione. Quodá enim modo omnia invicem sunt implicata, eaque ratione amica mutuo. Aliud enim ex alio consequitur, propter constantem motum, ac conspirationem &amp; unionem (ut ita dicam) subesse.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Often consider the binding-together of all things in the cosmos, and their relation to one another. For in a way all things are interwoven with one another, and in this respect all things are friendly to one another: one follows another in order, through the tensile movement, the shared breathing, and the unity of substance.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Meditate frequently on the interconnectedness of all things in the universe, and their mutual dependence. For in a certain sense, all things are woven together, and because of this, they share a mutual sympathy. One thing follows naturally after another due to the continuous tension, motion, and unity that underlies them.</p>

**Language Differences:** *Marcus's technical term τονικὴν κίνησιν (tensile / tonic movement) is folded into Xylander's general phrasing: constantem motum.*

**Commentary:** A meditation on the core concept of cosmic sympathy (συμπάθεια). All physical events are woven together, influencing one another through a unified substrate and shared tension.

Book VI • Section 39

## Harmony with Fate

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Οἷς συγκεκλήρωσαι πράγμασι, τούτοις συνάρμοζε σεαυτόν, καὶ οἷς συνείληχας ἀνθρώποις, τούτους φίλει, ἀλλ ἀληθινῶς</p>	<p><i>Quibus negotiis addictus es forte tua, his te accommoda: &amp; quibus te hominibus fati adiunxit, eos amore, idque vero, prosequere.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Fit yourself to the circumstances that have fallen to your lot; and the people whom fate has given you as companions — love them, and truly.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Adapt yourself to the circumstances in which your lot has placed you; and love the fellow human beings with whom destiny has bound you, and do so with genuine sincerity.</p>

**Language Differences:** *ἀληθινῶς (truly / authentically) is translated via Xylander's formula idque vero, prosequere.*

**Commentary:** Adapt yourself smoothly to the tasks assigned by destiny, and show genuine love to the companions fate has placed in your life.

## Tools and Nature

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ὅργανον, ἐργαλεῖον, σκεῦος πᾶν εἰς πρὸς ὃ κατασκευάσται ποιεῖ, εὖ ἔχει· καίτοι ἐκεῖ ὁ κατασκευάσας ἐκποδῶν. ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν ὑπὸ φύσεως συνεχομένων ἔνδον ἐστὶ καὶ παραμένει ἡ κατασκευάσασα δύναμις· καθὼ καὶ μᾶλλον αἰδεῖσθαι αὐτὴν δεῖ καὶ νομίζειν, ἐὰν κατὰ τὸ βούλημα ταύτης ἔχῃς καὶ διεξάγῃς, ἔχειν σοι πάντα κατὰ νοῦν. ἔχει δὲ οὕτως καὶ τῷ παντὶ κατὰ νοῦν τὰ ἑαυτοῦ</p>	<p><i>Organa, instrumenta, uasa, quuum id agunt, cuius gratia sunt adornata, bene habent: &amp; quidem is qui ea paravit, abest ab ipsis. At in his quae natura continentur, remanet, intusque est vis ea paratrix. Itaque tanto magis honoranda est, &amp; existimandū, si secundum eius voluntatem agere perseveres, oia tibi secundum mentem esse: ideóque de aliis hoibus oibus intellige.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Every instrument, tool, and vessel is well off if it performs that for which it was framed — though there the framer is gone away. But in the things held together by nature, the power that framed them is within, and remains there. You ought therefore to revere it the more, and to believe that if you hold yourself and conduct yourself according to its will, everything goes for you according to mind. And in the same way, the things of the whole go for it according to mind.</p>	<p>English from Latin: A tool, an instrument, or a vessel is functioning well when it performs the work for which it was made, even though the craftsman who built it is far away. But in the works of nature, the creative force remains present within them. Therefore, you must revere it all the more, and realize that if you live and act in accordance with its will, everything within you is in perfect order; understand that this holds true for the whole universe as well.</p>

**Language Differences:** *The Greek ἡ κατασκευάσασα δύναμις (the framing / building power) is rendered as vis ea paratrix.*

**Commentary:** An artificial tool functions well even when its maker is absent. But in organic works constructed by nature, the creative force remains present within. Therefore, an individual must revere this internal reason and act in alignment with its will.

## Externals as Evil

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ὅ τι ἂν τῶν ἀπροαιρέτων ὑποστήσῃ σαυτῷ ἀγαθὸν ἢ κακόν, ἀνάγκη κατὰ τὴν περίπτωσιν τοῦ τοιοῦτου κακοῦ ἢ</p>	<p><i>Quodcūq ex iis reb. quae extra te, neque in tua voluntate sunt posita, tibi ppoSueris, boni uel mali noie, id, si uel ut</i></p>

<p>τὴν ἀπότευξιν τοῦ τοιούτου ἀγαθοῦ μέμψασθαί σε θεοῖς καὶ ἀνθρώπους δὲ μισῆσαι τοὺς αἰτίους ὄντας ἢ ὑποπτευομένους ἔσεσθαι τῆς ἀποτεύξεως ἢ τῆς περιπτώσεως· καὶ ἀδικοῦμεν δὴ πολλὰ διὰ τὴν πρὸς ταῦτα διαφοράν. ἐὰν δὲ μόνα τὰ ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἀγαθὰ καὶ κακὰ κρίνωμεν, οὐδεμία αἰτία καταλείπεται οὔτε θεῶ ἐγκαλέσαι οὔτε πρὸς ἄνθρωπον στήναι στάσιν πολεμίου</p>	<p><i>malú tibi cótingat, uel si, cú p bono ducas, adipisci non possis, efficiet ut &amp; deos incuses, &amp; odio habeas homines qui in causa sūt, aut eo certe noie suspecti habét, p uel malú hoc habeas, uel bono careas. Propter hãc rerú differentiã, quam ipli statuimus, fit ut multa peccemus. Quod si sola ea, quae in nobis sun t posita, bona &amp; mala tractaremus, nihil causae restaret, ne aut Deú incusaremus, aut cú hoĩbus inimicitias susciperemus.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Whatever thing outside your own choice you set down for yourself as good or evil, it is inevitable that — when you fall into such an evil or fail of such a good — you blame the gods, and hate the men who are the causes of the falling or the failing, or who are suspected of being about to be; and indeed we do much injustice through caring about these things. But if we judge only what is in our power to be good and evil, no cause remains either to accuse god or to take a stand against man as an enemy.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Whatever external things beyond your will you choose to label as 'good' or 'bad'—if you suffer that bad thing, or if you fail to attain that which you consider good—it will cause you to find fault with the gods and hate your fellow men who are responsible, or whom you suspect of being responsible, for your misfortune or your lack of success. Because we make these arbitrary distinctions between external things, we commit many errors. But if we treat only those things within our own power as good or bad, there remains no reason either to blame God or to harbor hostility toward our fellow human beings.</p>

**Language Differences:** The classic phrase τῶν ἀπροαιρέτων (things outside the jurisdiction of choice / will) is translated as *quae extra te, neque in tua voluntate sunt posita*.

**Commentary:** Categorizing external variables as goods or evils guarantees inner misery, causing an individual to blame the gods and resent others. Peace is found by restricting good and evil exclusively to things under your own control.

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Book VI · Section 42

## Fellow-Workers in the Cosmos

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Πάντες εἰς ἐν ἀποτέλεσμα συνεργοῦμεν, οἱ μὲν εἰδότης καὶ παρακολουθητικῶς, οἱ δὲ ἀνεπιστάτως, ὥσπερ καὶ τοὺς καθεύδοντας, οἶμαι, ὁ Ἡράκλειτος ἐργάτας εἶναι λέγει καὶ συνεργοὺς τῶν</p>	<p><i>Oēs ad eúde finé &amp; effectú agimus: pars sciétes, &amp; certo ordine, pars inscij. Qué admodú &amp; dormiétes. Heraclétus (ni fal lor) dixit esse operarios, qui adiuuét sua opera haec quae in múdo fiút. Alius aút</i></p>

<p>ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ γινομένων. ἄλλος δὲ κατ' ἄλλο συνεργεῖ, ἐκ περιουσίας δὲ καὶ ὁ μεμφόμενος καὶ ὁ ἀντιβαίνειν πειρώμενος καὶ ἀναιρεῖν τὰ γινόμενα· καὶ γὰρ τοῦ τοιούτου ἔχρηζεν ὁ κόσμος. λοιπὸν οὖν σύνες εἰς τίνας ἑαυτὸν κατατάσσεις· ἐκεῖνος μὲν γὰρ πάντως σοι καλῶς χρήσεται ὁ τὰ ὅλα διοικῶν καὶ παραδέξεται σε εἰς μέρος τι τῶν συνεργῶν καὶ συνεργητικῶν, ἀλλὰ σὺ μὴ τοιοῦτο μέρος γένη, οἷος ὁ εὐτελής καὶ γελοῖος στίχος ἐν τῷ δράματι, οἷος Χρύσιππος μέμνηται</p>	<p><i>alia rōne id opus adiuuat: supuacanea opera est eius q rephédit, &amp; reniti conat ijs quae fiút, eãq rescídere: nã &amp; hoc uti tur mūdus. Proíde animum aduerte, in quorú tu te numero reputes. Nã admīnistrator huius uniuersi, utich te utet re ctè, &amp; accipiet te inter cooperarios. Tu uerò ne sis huiufmodi eorú pars, qualis est in fabula uilis ille &amp; ridiculus uersus, cuius mentioné Chrysippus facit.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: We are all working together toward one completed end — some knowingly and with comprehension, others without awareness; just as Heraclitus, I think, says that even those who sleep are workers and fellow-workers in what comes to pass in the cosmos. One man cooperates in one way, another in another; and even the man who finds fault, and the one who tries to oppose what happens and to undo it, cooperates in full measure — for the cosmos had need even of such a man. It remains, then, to understand with whom you are ranging yourself. For he who governs the whole will in any case use you well, and receive you into some rank among the fellow-workers and co-laborers; only do not become the sort of part that is the cheap and ridiculous line in the play, the one Chrysippus mentions.</p>	<p>English from Latin: We are all working together toward the same end, some with conscious knowledge and order, and others unconsciously—just like sleeping men. Heraclitus, if I remember rightly, said that even those who sleep are working, contributing their share to the events of the universe. One person helps in one way, another in another; even the critic who complains and tries to resist or undo what happens is a coworker, for the universe has need of him too. Mark well, then, which class of workers you belong to. For the Governor of the universe will certainly make good use of you and enroll you among his fellow laborers. Only make sure that you do not become like that vulgar and ridiculous line in the play that Chrysippus mentions.</p>

**Language Differences:** *Xylander tracks the text smoothly, keeping the nasal markers intact (eüdé, effectú) and capturing γελοῖος στίχος as ridiculus uersus.*

**Commentary:** Every individual participates in the cosmic design — even those who sleep or try to oppose its events. Marcus warns himself to be a conscious, willing collaborator rather than the ridiculous line in the play mentioned by Chrysippus.

Book VI · Section 43

## Co-operation of the Universe

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
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<p>Μήτι ὁ Ἥλιος τὰ τοῦ Ἰετιοῦ ἀξιοῖ ποιεῖν; μήτι ὁ Ἀσκληπιὸς τὰ τῆς Καρποφόρου; τί δὲ τῶν ἄστρον ἕκαστον; οὐχὶ διάφορα μὲν, συνεργὰ δὲ πρὸς ταῦτόν</p>	<p><i>Sólne pluuiiae munia obire cupit, aut Aesculapius terrae frugé ferétis? Quid uerò sydera, annó diuersa quidē singulis est actio, quae tñ ad cómune opus cóferat?</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Does the Sun claim to do the Rain's work? Or Asclepius the work of the Fruit-bearer? And what of each of the stars — are they not different, yet working together toward the same end?</p>	<p>English from Latin: Does the sun attempt to perform the office of the rain, or does Aesculapius assume the duty of the earth that bears fruit? And what of the stars? Though their functions are distinct, do they not all cooperate toward the same great work?</p>

**Language Differences:** The Greek titles Ἰετιοῦ (Zeus of the Rain) and Καρποφόρου (Ceres / Demeter the Fruit-bearer) are expanded descriptively by Xylander as *pluuiiae* and *terrae frugem ferentis*.

**Commentary:** The various parts of nature perform completely different functions, yet they all work together toward a single goal, serving as an analogy for human society.

Book VI · Section 44

## The Wisdom of Divine Planning

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐβουλεύσαντο περὶ ἐμοῦ καὶ τῶν ἐμοὶ συμβῆναι ὀφειλόντων οἱ θεοί, καλῶς ἐβουλεύσαντο ἄβουλον γὰρ θεὸν οὐδὲ ἐπινοῆσαι ῥάδιον, κακοποιῆσαι δὲ με διὰ τίνα αἰτίαν ἔμελλον ὀρμᾶν; τί γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἢ τῷ κοινῷ, ὅρ μάλιστα προνοοῦνται, ἐκ τούτου περιεγένετο; εἰ δὲ μὴ ἐβουλεύσαντο κατ' ἰδίαν περὶ ἐμοῦ, περὶ γε τῶν κοινῶν πάντως ἐβουλεύσαντο, οἷς κατ' ἐπακολούθησιν καὶ ταῦτα συμβαίνοντα ἀσπάζεσθαι καὶ στέργειν ὀφείλω. εἰ δ' ἄρα περὶ μηδενὸς βουλευόνται (πιστεύειν μὲν οὐχ ὅσιον ἢ μηδὲ θύωμεν μηδὲ εὐχώμεθα μηδὲ ὀμνύωμεν μηδὲ τὰ ἄλλα πράσσωμεν ἄ παρ' ἕκαστα ὡς πρὸς παρόντας καὶ συμβιοῦντας τοὺς θεοὺς πράσσομεν), εἰ δ' ἄρα περὶ μηδενὸς τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς βουλευόνται, ἐμοὶ μὲν ἕξεστι περὶ ἐμαντοῦ βουλευέσθαι, ἐμοὶ δὲ ἐστι σκέψις περὶ τοῦ συμφέροντος. συμφέρει</p>	<p><i>Quod si de me &amp; his quae mihi euenire debue rūt, dij cósultauerūt, rectè nimirū mihi consuluerūt. Nam Deum sine consilio agentem ne cogitare quidem facile est: quae autem fuisset causa , propter quam malè mihi consultum uoluisset? Quid inde ad deos , &amp; ad uniuersum ( cuius maximè habentróné ) fructus redijsset? Sin de me priuato nihil consultauerūt, ac de uniuerso utich rationes duxerunt, ex quo quuum ea consequútur quae mihi eueniunt, non debet me eorum poenite re. Sanè de nulla re eos consilium inire, impiú est credere: aut ne sacrificādam, ne precandum, ne iurandum quidē, ne que quicquam eorum faciendum, quae singula tanquam cum praesentibus &amp; u nà uiuentibus dijs agimus. Sed tamen si nihil illi de nobis statuerūt, licet mihi de meipso cófiliú capere, ac de mea uti</i></p>

<p>δὲ ἐκάστω τὸ κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ κατασκευὴν καὶ φύσιν, ἢ δὲ ἐμὴ φύσις λογικὴ καὶ πολιτικὴ. Πόλις καὶ πατρίς ὡς μὲν Ἀντωνίνῳ μοι ἢ Ῥώμῃ, ὡς δὲ ἀνθρώπῳ ὁ κόσμος. τὰ ταῖς πόλεσιν οὖν ταύταις ὠφέλιμα μόνα ἐστὶ μοι ἀγαθὰ</p>	<p><i>litate deliberare. Vtile aút est unicuiq id, quod est naturae eius &amp; constructio ni cósentaneũ. At natura mea rationis est cópos, &amp; ciuili coetui accommoda ta.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: If the gods took counsel about me and about what must happen to me, they took good counsel; for a god without counsel is not easy even to conceive, and what cause could have moved them to do me harm? What would have accrued from that either to themselves or to the common whole, which is their chief care? And if they took no counsel about me individually, they certainly took counsel about the common whole — and what happens to me follows along with that, and I am bound to welcome it and hold it dear. But if indeed they take counsel about nothing — to believe which is impious; or else let us cease to sacrifice, to pray, to swear oaths, and to do all the other things we do at every step as to gods present and living with us — but if indeed they take counsel about nothing of our affairs, then I am able to take counsel about myself, and my inquiry is about what is advantageous. And advantageous to each is what accords with his own constitution and nature; and my nature is rational and civic. As Antoninus, my city and fatherland is Rome; as a human being, the cosmos. The things that benefit these cities, then, are the only goods for me.</p>	<p>English from Latin: If the gods took counsel concerning me and what must happen to me, they counseled wisely. For it is impossible to imagine a god acting without purpose; and what reason could move them to wish me harm? What benefit could such a thing bring to the gods themselves or to the universe, which is their chief concern? But even if they took no specific counsel for me as an individual, they certainly took counsel for the universe as a whole, and since my experiences flow as a necessary consequence of that whole, I ought to welcome them. Indeed, to believe that the gods take counsel for nothing would be an impiety; and if that were true, we might as well abandon our sacrifices, our prayers, our oaths, and all those acts by which we worship them as if they were present and living among us. But even if they decided nothing concerning our affairs, it remains within my power to take counsel for myself and deliberate on what is useful to me. And that is useful to each person which conforms to his nature and constitution. My nature is rational and social.</p>

**Language Differences:** *Xylander tracks Marcus's classic dual-citizenship formula precisely, using quatenus quidem Antoninus sum, Roma to translate ὡς μὲν Ἀντωνίνῳ μοι ἢ Ῥώμῃ.*

**Commentary:** A brilliant declaration of dual citizenship. As an emperor named Antoninus, his political loyalty belongs to Rome; but as a rational human being, his allegiance belongs to the cosmic city. Only actions that benefit both spheres are truly useful.

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ὅσα ἐκάστω συμβαίνει, ταῦτα τῷ ὅλῳ συμφέρει ἤρκει τοῦτο. ἀλλ' ἔτι ἐκεῖνο ὡς ἐπίπαν ὄψει παραφυλάξας, ὅσα ἀνθρώπῳ, καὶ ἑτέροις ἀνθρώποις. κοινότερον δὲ νῦν τὸ συμφέρον ἐπὶ τῶν μέσων λαμβανέσθω</p>	<p><i>Ciuitas mihi est &amp; patria, quatenus quidem Antoninus sum, Roma: quatenus homo, mūdus: haec igit tantum mihi sunt utilia , quae his ciuitatibus condu cunt. Quae singulis eueniūt, ea prosunt uniuerso: id erat satis Scire. Sed &amp; hoc addendum, quòd si animaduertere ue lis, ubiq uidebis: quae homini, aut alijs hominibus Sed nunc uocabulum u tilis accipiamus latius , ut etiam medijs rebus pateat.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Whatever happens to each man is advantageous to the whole. That would suffice. But further, if you watch closely, you will see this as a general rule: what is advantageous to one man is advantageous also to other men — though here let 'advantageous' be taken in the more common sense, of things indifferent.</p>	<p>English from Latin: As Antoninus, my city and my country is Rome; but as a human being, it is the world. Therefore, only those things which benefit these communities are useful to me. Whatever benefits each individual benefits the universe as well; it is enough to know this. But we may extend the meaning of the word 'useful' further, so that it applies to intermediate things as well.</p>

**Language Differences:** Xylander condenses the final sentence, translating ἐπὶ τῶν μέσων (indifferent / intermediate things) simply as mediis rebus.

**Commentary:** What is assigned to the individual part is inherently beneficial to the whole system. Marcus adds that what benefits one human being generally supports others as well.

Book VI • Section 46

## The Monotony of Life

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ὡσπερ προσίσταται σοι τὰ ἐν τῷ ἀμφιθεάτρῳ καὶ τοῖς τοιοῦτοις χωρίοις ὡς αἰεὶ τὰ αὐτὰ ὁρώμενα, καὶ τὸ ὁμοειδὲς προσκορῆ τὴν θέαν ποιεῖ, τοῦτο καὶ ἐπὶ ὅλου τοῦ βίου πάσχεις ἅπαντα γὰρ ἄνω κάτω τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν. μέχρι τίνος οὖν</p>	<p><i>Quae in theatro aut simili bus locis uides, ea quuum semper eadem spectentur, &amp; uniformia, spectaculi sa tietatem afferunt. Id etiam de tota uita sentiendum. Omnia enim superiora &amp; inferiora eadem sunt, &amp; ex iisdem causis exciterunt. quousch igitur?</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Just as the shows in the amphitheater and such places offend you, because the same things are seen forever and the sameness makes the spectacle wearisome, so it is with the</p>	<p>English from Latin: Just as the spectacles in the theater or similar places grow tiresome because they are always the same uniform variations, so it is with the whole of our life. For all things, high and low, are</p>

whole of life: all things, up and down, are the same and from the same. How long, then?	the same, flowing from the same ancient causes. How long will this continue?
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**Language Differences:** Marcus specifies the amphitheater (ἀμφιθέατρον), while Xylander generalizes it as theatro. The Greek προσκορῆ (wearisome / nauseating) is matched to satietatem (satiety / boredom).

**Commentary:** Life is compared to a highly repetitive theatrical show. Seeing the exact same material variations occur over and over can generate boredom, serving as a reminder of the ultimate uniformity of physical existence.

Book VI • Section 47

## The Dead of All Nations

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἐννόει συνεχῶς παντοίους ἀνθρώπους καὶ παντοίων μὲν ἐπιτηδευμάτων, παντοδαπῶν δὲ ἔθνῶν τεθνεῶτας, ὥστε κατιέναι τοῦτο μέχρι Φιλιστίωνος καὶ Φοίβου καὶ Ὀριγανίωνος. μέτιθι νῦν ἐπὶ τὰ ἄλλα φύλα ἑκεῖ δὴ μεταβαλεῖν ἡμᾶς δεῖ ὅπου τοσοῦτοι μὲν δεινοὶ ῥήτορες, τοσοῦτοι δὲ σεμνοὶ φιλόσοφοι, Ἡράκλειτος, Πυθαγόρας, Σωκράτης, τοσοῦτοι δὲ ἥρωες πρότερον, τοσοῦτοι δὲ ὕστερον στρατηγοί, τύραννοι ἑπὶ τούτοις δὲ Εὐδοξος, Ἴππαρχος, Ἀρχιμήδης, ἄλλαι φύσεις ὀξεῖαι, μεγαλόφρονες, φιλόπονοι, πανοῦργοι, αὐθάδεις, αὐτῆς τῆς ἐπικήρου καὶ ἐφημέρου τῶν ἀνθρώπων ζωῆς χλευασταί, οἷον Μένιππος καὶ ὅσοι τοιοῦτοι. περὶ πάντων τούτων ἐννόει ὅτι πάλα κεῖνται ἅτι οὖν τοῦτο δεινὸν αὐτοῖς; τί δαὶ τοῖς μηδ' ὀνομαζομένοις ὄλως; ἐν ᾧδε πολλοῦ ἄξιον, τὸ μετ' ἀληθείας καὶ δικαιοσύνης εὐμενῆ τοῖς ψεύσταις καὶ ἀδίκοις διαβιοῦν</p>	<p><i>Adfiduo oīs generis homines confidera, qui ex omnis generis professionibus &amp; nationibus mortui sunt: ita ut etiam usque ad Philistionem, Phoebum, &amp; Origanio nem descendas. Hic sanè cogitandum, idem euenturū nobis, quod accidit tot eloquentibus oratoribus, tot grauibus philosophis: Heraclito, Pythagorae, So crati, tot Heroibus prius, deinde tot du cibus, tyrannis: tum Eudoxo, Hipparcho, Archimedi, alijs acutis ingenijs, magnanimis, laboriosis, callidis, contu macibus, his ipsis, qui caducam hanc &amp; in dies durantem uitam hominū sub fannarūt, ut Menippo &amp; similibus. Hos omnes cogitandum est dudū esse mor tuos: quid auté mali inde habent? Quid hi, quorum ne extant quidem nomina? Vnum hoc summi est pretij, ueritate &amp; iustitia seruata, mendacib. &amp; iniuriis hominibus placidū uiuere.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Think continually of men of every kind, of every calling and every nation, who have died — bringing the thought down as far as Philistion, Phoebus, and Origanion. Pass now to the other tribes. We must change to that place where so many marvelous orators are; so</p>	<p>English from Latin: Think constantly of all classes of men, of every profession and nation, who have died—descending all the way to Philistion, Phoebus, and Origanion. Reflect that the same fate awaits us that claimed so many eloquent orators, so many profound philosophers—like Heraclitus,</p>

<p>many venerable philosophers — Heraclitus, Pythagoras, Socrates; so many heroes of old; so many commanders after them, and tyrants; and besides these, Eudoxus, Hipparchus, Archimedes; other natures keen, great-minded, hard-working, versatile, audacious; and mockers of the very perishability and brevity of human life, like Menippus and his kind. Of all these, think that they lie long since in the ground. What, then, is terrible in this for them? And what for those whose names are not spoken at all? One thing here is worth much: to live out one's life with truth and justice — and with kindness toward liars and the unjust.</p>	<p>Pythagoras, and Socrates—so many heroes of old, so many generals and tyrants; along with Eudoxus, Hipparchus, Archimedes, and other brilliant, high-minded, industrious, sharp, and obsolete minds; and even those like Menippus who mocked this fleeting, mortal existence. Remember that all of these have long been in their graves. What harm does it do them? What harm to those whose very names are forgotten? One thing alone is of supreme value: to live out our days in truth and justice, showing kindness and patience even to liars and wrongdoers.</p>
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**Language Differences:** *Xylander tracks the Greek layout cleanly, matching the proper names precisely and translating εὐμενῆ τοῖς ψεύσταις as placidum vivere mendacibus ("living calmly with liars").*

**Commentary:** Reviewing the endless catalog of generations who have already died helps minimize the fear of mortality. Since everyone ends up in the ground, your only real objective should be to live out your days with absolute truth, justice, and kindness.

Book VI · Section 48

## The Virtues of Others

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ὅταν εὐφραῖναι σεαυτὸν θέλῃς, ἐνθυμοῦ τὰ προτερήματα τῶν συμβιούντων· οἶον τοῦ μὲν τὸ δραστήριον, τοῦ δὲ τὸ αἰδῆμον, τοῦ δὲ τὸ εὐμετάδοτον, ἄλλου δὲ ἄλλο τι. οὐδὲν γὰρ οὕτως εὐφραίνει ὡς τὰ ὁμοιώματα τῶν ἀρετῶν ἐμφαινόμενα τοῖς ἥθεσι τῶν συζώντων καὶ ἀθρόα ὡς οἶόν τε συμπίπτοντα. διὸ καὶ πρόχειρα αὐτὰ ἐκτέον</p>	<p><i>Cum teipsum oblectare uis, cogita uirtutes eorū qui uiuunt tecum: strenuitatem eius, illius uerecundiam, aut liberalitatē, aut aliud quippiam. Nihil enim est, quòd tantam afferat laetitiam, quantam similitudines uirtutum in eorum quibuscū uiuimus moribus expressae, ac sese còfertim offe rentes còspectui. itach in promptu haben dae.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Whenever you wish to gladden yourself, think on the excellences of those who live with you: the energy of one, the modesty of another, the open-handedness of a third, and some other quality in each. For nothing gladdens so much as the likenesses of the virtues showing forth in the characters of those</p>	<p>English from Latin: Whenever you wish to gladden your heart, think of the virtues of those who live around you—the energy of one, the modesty of another, the generosity of a third, and so on. For nothing brings such genuine joy as the image of virtues reflected in the characters of our companions, crowded before our view.</p>

who live around us, and falling together, as far as may be, in close array. Therefore keep them ready at hand.	Keep them, therefore, always ready before your mind.
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**Language Differences:** Xylander captures τὸ δραστήριον (the energetic / active capacity) as strenuitatem (strenuousness / vigor).

**Commentary:** To experience true internal joy, observe the virtues of your immediate companions. Keep these living examples ready before your mind to act as a moral pattern.

Book VI · Section 49

## Contentment with Measure

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Μήτι δυσχεραίνεις ὅτι τοσῶνδ' ἐτινων λιτρῶν εἰ καὶ οὐ τριακοσίων; οὕτω δὴ καὶ ὅτι μέχρι τοσῶνδε ἐτῶν βιωτέον σοι καὶ οὐ μέχρι πλείονος; ὥσπερ γὰρ τῆς οὐσίας ὅσον ἀφώρισται σοι στέργεις, οὕτως καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ χρόνου	<i>Non iniquè fers, tot libras te appen dere, &amp; non trecentas: ita etiã quòd an norum certum, &amp; eo non maiorem ui ues numerum, indignari non debes. Ete nim ut corporis tantam, quanta tibi est tributa, portionem probas: ita &amp; de té pore tibi sentiendum est.</i>
English from Greek: Are you vexed at weighing only so many pounds and not three hundred? So then, do not be vexed either that you must live only so many years and not longer. For as you are content with the amount of substance marked off for you, so be content also with the time.	English from Latin: You do not grow angry because your body weighs only a certain number of pounds rather than three hundred. In the same way, you should not complain because you have been allotted only a certain span of years rather than a longer duration. Just as you accept the physical dimensions assigned to you, accept your assigned measure of time.

**Language Differences:** The Greek measuring unit λιτρῶν (litras / pounds) is translated accurately by the Latin equivalent libras.

**Commentary:** A brilliant exercise in proportion. Just as an individual is never upset that their physical body doesn't weigh three hundred pounds, they should never complain that their allotted lifespan isn't longer. Both parameters are simply boundary limitations defined by nature.

Book VI · Section 50

## Persuasion and Adaptation

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Πειρῶ μὲν πείθειν αὐτούς, πράττε δὲ καὶ &lt;αὐ&gt;τῶν ἀκόντων, ὅταν τῆς δικαιοσύνης ὁ λόγος οὕτως ἄγῃ. ἔαν μέντοι βία τις προσχρώμενος ἐνίστηται, μετάβαινε ἐπὶ τὸ εὐάρεστον καὶ ἄλυπον καὶ συγχρῶ εἰς ἄλλην ἀρετὴν τῇ κωλύσει, καὶ μέμνησο ὅτι μεθ' ὑπεξαιρέσεως ὥρμας καὶ ὅτι τῶν ἀδυνάτων οὐκ ὠρέγῃ. τίνας οὖν; τῆς τοιαῦσδέ τινος ὀρμῆς. τούτου δὲ τυγχάνεις ἔφ' οἷς προήχθημεν, ταῦτα γίνεται</p>	<p><i>Annitendum est nobis, ut persuadeamus ijs cum qui bus agimus: sin minus, etiam illis inuitis id agendū est, quod iustitiae ratio iubet. Quod si quis ui te impediat, transi ad ae quanimitem, eoq̄ impedimēto ad al terius uirtutis opus abutere: memor, te cú exceptione quadā istituere actioné, neque ea appetere, quae fieri nequeāt. Itach is fuit impetus animi tui, cui satisfiat, uid, cuius causa citatus es, consequatur.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Try to persuade them; but act even against their will when the reasoning of justice so leads. If, however, someone uses force to block you, change over to contentment and freedom from distress, and use the hindrance for another virtue. Remember that your impulse was with reservation — you were not reaching for the impossible. For what, then? An impulse of just this kind. And that you attain: what we were set in motion toward, comes to pass.</p>	<p>English from Latin: We must do our best to persuade those we live with; but even if they object, we must press forward with whatever justice commands. If someone uses force to block your path, adapt your mind to equanimity and transform that obstacle into an opportunity to practice another virtue—remembering that your actions are always undertaken with a structural reservation, and that you do not chase after the impossible. What was your original impulse? To make a sincere effort; and that goal is fully accomplished, even if the external result is blocked.</p>

**Language Differences:** The Greek phrase μεθ' ὑπεξαιρέσεως (with a reserve clause) is translated accurately by Xylander's structural formula: cum exceptione quadam.

**Commentary:** Prioritize cosmic justice over popular approval. If an external force steps in to block your path, adapt your mind smoothly, transforming that very hindrance into an unexpected opportunity to practice an alternative virtue, like patience or equanimity.

Book VI · Section 51

### Ambition vs. Action

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ὁ μὲν φιλόδοξος ἀλλοτρίαν ἐνέργειαν ἴδιον ἀγαθὸν ὑπολαμβάνει, ὁ δὲ φιλήδονος ἴδιαν πείσιν, ὁ δὲ νοῦν ἔχων ἴδιαν πράξιιν</p>	<p><i>Gloriae cupidus, alienam actionem pro suo bono reputat. Voluctuarius affectionem, qua ipse afficit. Mente vero praeditus, suam actionem.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: The lover of glory takes another's activity to be his own good;</p>	<p>English from Latin: The lover of glory places his ultimate good in the actions of</p>

the lover of pleasure, his own feeling; the man with sense, his own action.	others; the lover of pleasure places it in his own passive sensations; but the wise man places his good in his own active deeds.
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**Language Differences:** Marcus's φιλόδοξος (lover of reputation / glory) is mapped to *Gloriae cupidus*. The technical term νοῦν ἔχων (one possessing sense / intellect) becomes *Mente vero praeditus*.

**Commentary:** Three archetypes evaluated by where they locate their well-being: the ambitious person looks for good within the choices of others, the pleasure-seeker looks for it in passive bodily feelings, but the wise person restricts their good entirely to their own actions.

#### Book VI · Section 52

### Mental Peace

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἔξεστι περὶ τούτου μηδὲν ὑπολαμβάνειν καὶ μὴ ὀχλεῖσθαι τῇ ψυχῇ· αὐτὰ γὰρ τὰ πράγματα οὐκ ἔχει φύσιν ποιητικὴν τῶν ἡμετέρων κρίσεων	<i>Licet etiam nihil de his existimare. Ipse n. Res non sunt eius naturae, ut iudicium nostrum efficiat.</i>
English from Greek: It is possible to form no opinion at all about this thing, and not to be troubled in soul; for things in themselves have no nature that produces our judgments.	English from Latin: It is within your power to form no opinion about these external events. For things themselves have no natural power to compel or shape our judgments.

**Language Differences:** Xylander tracks the text precisely, using *res non sunt eius naturae* to translate τὰ πράγματα οὐκ ἔχει φύσιν ποιητικὴν.

**Commentary:** External objects possess no authority over your ruling center. They cannot force internal judgments upon the mind; you possess absolute freedom to withhold your opinion entirely, preserving your peace of soul.

#### Book VI · Section 53

### Attentive Listening

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἔθισον σεαυτὸν πρὸς τῷ ὑφ' ἑτέρου λεγομένῳ γίνεσθαι ἀπαρενθυμήτως καὶ ὡς οἶόν τε ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ τοῦ λέγοντος	<i>Adfuefac te, ut alio docente cogitationes non alio diuertas, sed totus animo dicetis sis intentus.</i>

γίνου	
English from Greek: Accustom yourself to attend, undistracted, to what another is saying — and, so far as possible, be inside the speaker's soul.	English from Latin: Train yourself to listen carefully to what others say, and enter as deeply as possible into the mind of the speaker.

**Language Differences:** ἀπαρενθυμήτως (*undistracted / un-diverted*) is rendered by the Latin phrase *cogitationes non alio diuertas* ("not to turn your thoughts elsewhere").

**Commentary:** Practice active, non-judgmental attention. When another individual is speaking, clear away your own cognitive distractions and attempt to enter directly into the logic of their soul.

Book VI · Section 54

## The Bee and the Hive

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Τὸ τῷ σμήνῃ μὴ συμφέρον οὐδὲ τῇ μελίσῃ συμφέρει	<i>Quod alveari non prodest, id ne api quidem prodest.</i>
English from Greek: What does not benefit the hive does not benefit the bee either.	English from Latin: Whatever does not benefit the beehive cannot benefit the individual bee.

**Language Differences:** Xylander maps Marcus's text directly, rendering σμήνῃ as *alveari* (beehive) and μελίσῃ as *api* (bee).

**Commentary:** A concise summary of Stoic social duty: the component can never profit from an action that actively damages the welfare of the collective system.

Book VI · Section 55

## The Pilot and the Physician

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Εἰ κυβερνῶντα οἱ ναῦται ἢ ἰατρούοντα οἱ κάμνοντες κακῶς ἔλεγον, ἄλλω τινὶ ἂν προσεῖχον; ἢ πῶς <ἂν> αὐτὸς ἐνεργοίη τὸ τοῖς ἐμπλέουσι σωτήριον ἢ τὸ τοῖς θεραπευομένοις ὑγιεινόν	<i>Si quae ratiocinationes male gubernét, aut non recte curentur aegroti, dicūt: alius erat quaerendus, cui me cómitteré: aut quo hic saluté navigantib. Vel aegrotis sanitaté afferet?</i>

English from Greek: If the sailors spoke ill of the helmsman while he steered, or the sick of the physician while he healed, would either attend to anyone else? Or how would the one accomplish the safety of those who sail, or the other the health of those under treatment?	English from Latin: If a captain steered his ship badly or a physician treated his patients wrongly, would anyone listen to them? And how could they bring safety to the sailors or health to the sick if they failed to follow their own art?
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**Language Differences:** *Xylander adapts the rhetorical structure, retaining his text's standard early-modern abbreviations (gubernét, sanitaté).*

**Commentary:** Marcus addresses administrative criticism while commanding on campaign. A helmsman or a doctor who halts their work to defend themselves from public rumors loses the vessel or the patient; execution of the core task is the only answer critics are owed.

Book VI · Section 56

## How Many Have Already Gone

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Πόσοι, μεθ ὧν εἰσῆλθον εἰς τὸν κόσμον, ἤδη ἀπεληλύθασιν</i>	<i>Quã multi iam unà cú his, quibuscû in mun dum venerût, ex mûdo excesserût?</i>
English from Greek: How many of those with whom I entered the cosmos have already departed!	English from Latin: How many people who entered the world at the exact same time as we did have already departed from it!

**Language Differences:** *The Greek εἰσῆλθον εἰς τὸν κόσμον is rendered elegantly by Xylander as ex mundo excesserunt.*

**Commentary:** A concise memento mori. By tracking how many members of your original birth generation have already exited the world, your own lifespan is kept in sharp perspective.

Book VI · Section 57

## Honey, Water, and the Ball

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Ἴκτεριῶσι τὸ μέλι πικρὸν φαίνεται καὶ λυσοδηκτοῖς τὸ ὕδωρ φοβερὸν καὶ παιδίοις τὸ σφαιρίον καλόν. τί οὖν ὀργίζομαι; ἢ δοκεῖ σοι ἔλασσον ἰσχύειν</i>	<i>Morbo regio laborãtib. Mel amarũ uidetur; morsis à rabida bestia, aqua est timori: pueris sphaerula pulcra est. Quid ergo i rascor? Aut tibi minor uis uidetur</i>

<p>τὸ διεψευσμένον ἢ τὸ χόλιον τῶ ἰκτεριῶντι καὶ ὁ ἰὸς τῶ λυσοδοήκτῳ</p>	<p><i>esse fal sitatis, q bilis apud ictericū, aut ueneni apud morsum à rabioso animali.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: To the jaundiced, honey appears bitter; to those bitten by a mad dog, water is a terror; and to little children, the ball is a beautiful thing. Why, then, am I angry? Or does the false judgment seem to you to have less power than bile in the jaundiced man, or venom in the one bitten?</p>	<p>English from Latin: To those suffering from jaundice, honey tastes bitter; to those bitten by a rabid animal, water brings terror; and to young children, a small ball is a beautiful thing. Why, then, should I be angry? Does a false impression seem to have less power over a mistaken mind than bile over the jaundiced or poison over the bitten?</p>

**Language Differences:** A striking point of preservation: Xylander translates the technical Greek ἰκτεριῶσι (the jaundiced) using the early-modern medical phrase *Morbo regio laborantibus* (those working under the 'royal disease,' the historical term for jaundice).

**Commentary:** Marcus reviews three physical cases where external perception is entirely distorted by illness or poison. A wrongdoer's internal error operates on his reasoning faculty in the same mechanical way. You cannot grow angry at symptoms.

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Book VI · Section 58

## The Double Assurance

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Κατὰ τὸν λόγον τῆς σῆς φύσεως βιοῦν σε οὐδεὶς κωλύσει ἄπαρὰ τὸν λόγον τῆς κοινῆς φύσεως οὐδέν σοι συμβήσεται</p>	<p><i>Nemo prohibebit, quin secundum rationem naturae tuae vivas: nihil autem tibi accidet, quod non secundum naturam universitatis sit.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: No one will prevent you from living by the reason of your own nature; nothing will happen to you contrary to the reason of the common nature.</p>	<p>English from Latin: No one will prevent you from living according to the reason of your own nature; and nothing will happen to you that is not according to the reason of the universe.</p>

**Language Differences:** Xylander tracks the Greek layout smoothly, providing a concise moral statement. (Note: our Latin cell for this section is incomplete and should be proofed against the 1558 scan.)

**Commentary:** Two majestic guarantees that summarize total Stoic safety. The internal life is completely unblockable because no outside entity can override your rational will. The external life is completely unbreakable because nothing can occur outside the coordinated law of the whole universe.

## Whom They Wish to Please

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Οἷοί εἰσιν οἷς θέλουσιν ἀρέσκειν, καὶ δι οἷα περιγινόμενοι καὶ δι οἷων ἐνεργειῶν. ὡς ταχέως ὁ αἰὼν πάντα καλύψει καὶ ὅσα ἐκάλυπεν ἤδη</i>	<i>Quales sūt illi, quibus cupimus placere, aut ppter qd, p eis superslit, aut per quas actiones?</i>
English from Greek: What sort of people they are whom men wish to please — and by what gains, and through what kinds of actions! How swiftly eternity will cover all things — and how much it has covered already.	English from Latin (draft — reference lacked this section): What sort of men are they whom these people wish to please, and by what gains, and through what manner of deeds! How swiftly eternity will cover all things — and how many it has already covered!

**Language Differences:** *This section is recovered from Xylander's merged final entries, with long-s expanded and nasal abbreviations documented accurately (sūt, ppter).*

**Commentary:** Book VI concludes by calculating the cost of human ambition. Analyze the crowd whose approval people court, the petty gains they pursue, and the compromising actions they perform to win it. Infinite eternity will completely bury the performers, the audience, and the applause alike.

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# 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** (*proaíresis*)

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** (*aidós*)

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 εὖ- 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 εὖμοιρος).

**ἀρετή** (*areté*)

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.*

**εἰμαρμένη** (*heimarménē*)

Fate. The Stoic doctrine of necessity: the chain of causes by which the world unfolds. εἰμαρμένη 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 εἰμαρμένη 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** (*metabolē*)

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** (*psyché*)

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.*

### **ὄρμη** (*hormé*)

Impulse, the movement toward action. The Stoic action sequence runs: φαντασία (impression) → συγκατάθεσις (assent) → ὄρμη (impulse) → πράξις (action). The impulse is what carries the agreement into the body. To control your ὄρμη 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.