TO MYSELF

NOTHING NEW UNDER HEAVEN

ἀρετή

Vice is old; virtue, your answer.

MARCUS AURELIUS

ΤΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΕΑΥΤΟΝ · BOOK VII

CLASSIC MOTIVATION

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❧

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Book VII of the Meditations · ΤΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΕΑΥΤΟΝ

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To Myself

The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius, in twelve standalone volumes.

Volume VII — Nothing New Under Heaven (Book VII)

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

Edited by Stuart Schonwetter. Classic Motivation · classicmotivation.com

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

This Volume

“What is vice? It is what you have already seen.” Book VII of the Meditations opens by draining the shock out of human badness: whatever cruelty or folly you meet today has filled the histories and the cities for a thousand years — nothing new, all familiar, all short-lived. Freed from surprise, Marcus turns to the only thing that answers it: virtue, held steady as an emerald holds its green, whatever anyone does or says.

Here are the great images of Stoic resilience — life as wrestling rather than dancing, ready for the unforeseen blow; the good as an inland spring no one can foul; the view from above that shrinks every grievance — and the plain reminder that it is madness to flee the vice of others, which you cannot, instead of your own, which you can.

This volume of the To Myself series presents Book VII 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 VII

Book VII begins by disarming outrage. “What is vice? It is what you have often seen.” The old histories are full of it; the cities are full of it now; there is nothing new under the sun. To recognize the ancient, repeating script for what it is takes the shock out of it — and that is the first move in meeting it well, because shock is what turns another person’s fault into your own disturbance.

Against the old vice, Marcus sets the constant good. His image is the emerald: whatever anyone does or says, I must be good — as if the stone kept telling itself, whatever happens, I must keep my own color. Virtue here is not a reaction that rises and falls with provocation; it is an unconditioned property of a well-made soul, as fixed as the green in the gem.

Book VII is also the great anthology of resilience-images. Life is more like wrestling than dancing: you must stand ready for the sudden, unrehearsed blow rather than a known sequence of steps. The good within is an inland spring that keeps flowing clean however much mud is thrown into it. Rise to the view from above and human turmoil shrinks to a pattern of ants. And the sharp logical point that closes the loop: it is absurd to spend your life fleeing the faults of others, which is impossible, instead of your own, which is entirely within your power.

Book VII is unusually dense with quotation — Marcus copies lines from Plato, Euripides, and the tragedians straight into his notebook. Read this volume with the columns together to see how Xylander handles both the blunt Stoic prose and these embedded poetic fragments; the notes identify the sources where they can be traced.

Book VII · Nothing New Under Heaven

Book VII · Section 1

The Nature of Vice

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Τί ἐστι κακία; τοῦτ ἔστιν ὃ πολλάκις εἶδες. καὶ ἐπὶ παντὸς δὲ τοῦ συμβαίνοντος πρόχειρον ἔχε ὅτι τοῦτό ἐστιν ὃ πολλάκις εἶδες. ὅλως ἄνω κάτω τὰ αὐτὰ εὑρήσεις, ὧν μεσταὶ αἱ ἱστορίαι αἱ παλαιαί, αἱ μέσαι, αἱ ὑπόγυιοι· ὧν νῦν μεσταὶ αἱ πόλεις καὶ οἰκίαι. οὐδὲν καινόν· πάντα καὶ συνήθη καὶ ὀλιγοχρόνια	*M. ANTONINI IMPERATORIS de vita sua. LIBER VII. Gulielmo Xylandro Augustano interprete. Quid est malicia? Id, quod saepenumero vidisti. Et quicquid omnino acciderit, expedit in promptu te habere hanc regulam, saepe id esse a te visum.*
English from Greek: What is vice? It is what you have often seen. And at everything that happens, keep this ready at hand: this is what you have often seen. Everywhere, up and down, you will find the same things — the things that fill the old histories, the middle ones, the recent; that fill the cities and the houses now. Nothing is new: all things are both familiar and short-lived.	English from Latin: BOOK VII OF THE EMPEROR MARCUS ANTONINUS, Concerning His Own Life. Translated by Wilhelm Xylander of Augsburg. What is wickedness? It is that which you have seen many times before. And whatever happens, it is useful to have this rule ready: remember that you have seen this exact thing often.

Language Differences: *Xylander introduces this book with a formal titling block (de vita sua). The Greek κακία (moral vice, badness of character) is rendered as malicia (wickedness, ill-will), framing systemic failure as active malice. Xylander condenses the long architectural tracking of past historical cycles (αἱ παλαιαί, αἱ μέσαι…) into a single behavioral rule.*

Commentary: Marcus targets the human tendency to be shocked by vice. By treating moral failures as an unoriginal, repetitive historical script (οὐδὲν καινόν), he defuses personal resentment. Vice is stripped of its dramatic power and analyzed simply as a predictable material pattern.

Book VII · Section 2

Keeping Doctrines Alive

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ζῇ τὰ δόγματα· πῶς γὰρ ἄλλως δύναται νεκρωθῆναι, ἐὰν μὴαἱ κατάλληλοι αὐτοῖς φαντασίαι σβεσθῶσιν, ἃς	*Axiomata tua ac praecepta quomodo aliter aboleri possunt, quam si exstinguantur cogitationes, quibus illa*

διηνεκῶς ἀναζωπυρεῖν ἐπὶ σοί ἐστιν; δύναμαι περὶ τούτου ὃ δεῖ ὑπολαμβάνειν· εἰ δύναμαι, τί ταράσσομαι; τὰ ἔξω τῆς ἐμῆς διανοίας οὐδὲν ὅλως πρὸς τὴν ἐμὴν διάνοιαν. τοῦτο μάθε καὶ ὀρθὸς εἶ. ἀναβιῶναί σοι ἔξεστιν· ἴδε πάλιν τὰ πράγματα, ὡς ἐώρας· ἐν τούτῳ γὰρ τὸ ἀναβιῶναι	*nitebantur? Atqui in tua potestate est, eas identidem in animo tuo fovere.*
English from Greek: Your doctrines live. For how else can they be deadened, unless the impressions that correspond to them are extinguished? And it lies with you to rekindle those continually. 'I am able to judge of this thing as I ought.' If I am able, why am I disturbed? The things outside my understanding are nothing at all to my understanding. Learn this, and you stand upright. You can live again: look at things once more as you used to look at them — for in this is the living again.	English from Latin: How else can your principles and axioms be wiped out, unless the thoughts upon which they rest are extinguished? Yet it is within your power to continuously revive and nurture them within your mind.

Language Differences: *Xylander pairs δόγματα as Axiomata tua ac praecepta, capturing both logical rules and immediate directives. The technical Greek verb ἀναζωπυρεῖν (to fan a dying fire back into flame) is rendered by the gentler Latin fovere (to warm, foster, or nurture). He curtails the second half of the section, dropping the explicit commands regarding external irrelevance.*

Commentary: Maxims do not stay alive passively; they require active mental maintenance. Marcus defines ἀναβιῶναι (living again) not as a physical resurrection, but as a systematic restoration of correct cognitive vision (ἴδε πάλιν τὰ πράγματα, ὡς ἐώρας).

Book VII · Section 3

The Worth of Ambition

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Πομπῆς κενοσπουδία, ἐπὶ σκηνῆς δράματα, ποίμνια, ἀγέλαι, διαδορατισμοί, κυνιδίοις ὀστάριον ἐῤῥιμμένον, ψωμίον εἰς τὰς τῶν ἰχθύων δεξαμενάς, μυρμήκων ταλαιπωρίαι καὶ ἀχθοφορίαι, μυιδίων ἐπτοημένων διαδρομαί, σιγιλλάρια νευροσπαστούμενα. χρὴ οὖν ἐν τούτοις εὐμενῶς μὲν καὶ μὴ καταφρυαττόμενονἑστάναι,	*Inanis pompa, ludicra in scena spectacula, greges ovium, armenta, concertationes gladiatorum, ossiculum canibus proiectum, frustum panis in piscinas iactum, formicarum labors & onera, muscarum trepidationes, statuae rursus admodum fragiles: in his omnibus placide ac sine fastidio versari te oportet.*

παρακολουθεῖν μέντοι, ὅτι τοσούτου ἄξιος ἕκαστός ἐστιν, ὅσου ἄξιά ἐστι ταῦτα περὶ ἃ ἐσπούδακεν	
English from Greek: Empty eagerness for pageantry; dramas on the stage; flocks, herds; spear-flourishes; a little bone thrown to puppies; a crumb tossed into the fish-ponds; the labors and load-carryings of ants; the scurryings of startled mice; little puppets pulled by strings. In the midst of these things one must stand kindly, and without snorting contempt — yet understand that each man is worth just as much as the things he has been earnest about.	English from Latin: An empty pageant, stage-plays, flocks of sheep, herds of cattle, gladiatorial combats, a bone thrown to dogs, a piece of bread cast into a fishpond, the labors and burdens of ants, the frantic scampering of flies, statues of utmost fragility: in all these things you must comport yourself calmly and without disdain.

Language Differences: *Marcus uses the vivid compound noun σιγιλλάρια νευροσπαστούμενα (puppets jerked by strings). Xylander shifts this to statuae rursus admodum fragiles ("statues of an entirely fragile nature"), trading the puppet metaphor for an image of material instability. He truncates the final ethical equation regarding human worth.*

Commentary: A deflating baseline catalog designed to reduce worldly power down to animal instincts. Imperial pageantry is balanced against ants carrying crumbs or fish fighting for food. Crucially, Marcus pairs this diagnostic realism with a strict social demand: a philosopher must remain εὐμενῶς (kindly, well-disposed) rather than indulging in intellectual arrogance.

Book VII · Section 4

Attention to Word and Deed

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Δεῖ κατὰ λέξιν παρακολουθεῖν τοῖς λεγομένοις καὶ καθ' ἑκάστην ὁρμὴν τοῖς γινομένοις, καὶ ἐπὶ μὲν τοῦ ἑτέρου εὐθὺς ὁρᾶν ἐπὶ τίνα σκοπὸν ἡ ἀναφορά, ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ ἑτέρου παραφυλάσσειν τί τὸ σημαινόμενον	*In sermone oportet te verbis adesse: in actionibus vero, iis quae fiunt. In illis quidem, ut statim videas quid dicatur: in his autem, ut perspicias ad quem finem effectio referatur.*
English from Greek: One must follow what is said word by word, and what is done impulse by impulse. In the case of words, immediately see to what end the reference is made; in the case of actions, watch what is meant.	English from Latin: In conversation you must attend to the words spoken; in actions, to what is being done. In the former, so that you may instantly see what is meant; in the latter, so that you may perceive the end to which the action is directed.

Language Differences: *The Greek κατὰ λέξιν παρακολουθεῖν (to follow along according to the wording) is translated effectively by Xylander's structural phrase verbis adesse (to be present at the words). He renders τὸ σημαινόμενον (the thing signified) as ad quem finem effectio referatur ("to what end the achievement is referred"), framing semantics through teleological consequences.*

Commentary: Marcus demands deep presence of mind. Speech requires immediate semantic tracking, while action requires parsing the structural purpose (σκοπός). This intentional execution cuts through rhetorical noise to read the real core motivations of both self and state.

Book VII · Section 5

Mind as an Instrument

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Πότερον ἐξαρκεῖ ἡ διάνοιά μου πρὸς τοῦτο ἢ οὔ; εἰ μὲν ἐξαρκεῖ, χρῶμαι αὐτῇ πρὸς τὸ ἔργον ὡς ὀργάνῳ παρὰ τῆς τῶν ὅλων φύσεωςδοθέντι. εἰ δὲ μὴ ἐξαρκεῖ, ἤτοι παραχωρῶ τοῦ ἔργου τῷ δυναμένῳκρεῖττον ἐπιτελέσαι, ἐὰν ἄλλως τοῦτό μοι καθήκῃ, ἢ πράσσω ὡςδύναμαι, προσπαραλαβὼν τὸν δυνάμενον κατὰ πρόσχρησιν τοῦἐμοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ εἰς τὴν κοινωνίαν νῦν καίριον καὶχρήσιμον. ὅ τι γὰρ ἂν δί ἐμαυτοῦ ἢ σὺν ἄλλῳ ποιῶ, ὧδε μόνονχρὴ συντείνειν, εἰς τὸ κοινῇ χρήσιμον καὶ εὐάρμοστον	*Num intelligentia mea ad hoc negotium sufficit? Si sufficit, ea utor ad opus perficiendum tanquam instrumento a natura dato. Sin minus, aut cedo ei qui melius id praestare potest, aut (si id mei est officii) assumpto socio id ago, adiuvante eo qui coniunctus mecum rem societati utilem praestare potest.*
English from Greek: Is my understanding sufficient for this, or is it not? If it is sufficient, I use it for the work as an instrument given by the nature of the whole. If it is not, either I step aside from the work in favor of one able to accomplish it better — unless for some reason this is not my duty — or I do it as I can, taking to help me a man who, with the use of my ruling faculty, can do what is now timely and useful for the community. For whatever I do, by myself or with another, must aim only at this: what is useful to the community and fits well with it.	English from Latin: Is my intellect sufficient for this task? If it is sufficient, I employ it for the execution of the work as an instrument given to me by nature. If it is not, I either give place to someone who can perform it better, or (if it remains my duty) I execute it by taking a partner, aided by someone who can work with me to achieve what benefits the community.

Language Differences: *The specific compound προσπαραλαβὼν (taking alongside as an additional helper) is parsed directly as assumpto socio. Xylander condenses*

the final sentence, omitting the architectural requirement εὐάρμοστον (harmoniously integrated) to focus purely on utility.

Commentary: The individual intellect (διάνοια) is treated objectively as a functional tool (ὄργανον) leased from nature. Marcus rejects personal vanity: if a task exceeds his ability, he must step aside or delegate, ensuring that the overriding standard of his choices remains the common good (κοινῇ χρήσιμον).

Book VII · Section 6

Oblivion

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὅσοι μὲν πολυύμνητοι γενόμενοι ἤδη λήθῃ παραδέδονται,ὅσοι δὲ τούτους ὑμνήσαντες πάλαι ἐκποδών	*Quot iam laudati, in oblivionem venerunt? Quot rursus qui illos laudaverunt, iam pridem decesserunt?*
English from Greek: How many who became much celebrated have already been handed over to oblivion, and how many who celebrated them have long since departed.	English from Latin: How many who were once highly praised have now fallen into oblivion? And how many who praised them have themselves departed long ago?

Language Differences: *Xylander translates πολυύμνητοι (much-hymned / celebrated) as laudati (praised). The Greek river of forgetfulness, λήθῃ, is translated accurately as oblivionem. The dramatic adverb ἐκποδών (out of the way / removed from underfoot) is rendered through the standard biographical verb decesserunt (passed away / departed).*

Commentary: Marcus outlines the progressive decay of human memory. Fame fades in three systematic waves: the actor dies, the chronicler dies, and the remembering audience is itself wiped out. Because validation is temporary, it cannot be classified as a genuine moral good.

Book VII · Section 7

Help and Duty

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Μὴ αἰσχύνου βοηθούμενος˙ πρόκειται γάρ σοι ἐνεργεῖν τὸἐπιβάλλον ὡς στρατιώτῃ ἐν τειχομαχίᾳ. τί οὖν, ἐὰν σὺ μὲνχωλαίνων ἐπὶ τὴν ἔπαλξιν ἀναβῆναι μόνος μὴ δύνῃ, σὺν ἄλλῳδὲ δυνατὸν ᾖ τοῦτο	*Ne tibi videaris praeter iustum moveri, cum officium tuum postulat ut alios adiuves. Stat n. tibi propositum ut miles in muro oppugnando, qui si claudicet, adiuto socio culmen ascendit.*

English from Greek: Do not be ashamed of being helped; for your task is to do what falls to you like a soldier in a siege. What then, if you are limping and cannot climb to the battlements alone, but can do it with another?	English from Latin: Do not think you are driven beyond what is right when your duty requires you to help others. For your position is like that of a soldier scaling a wall, who, if he limps, reaches the summit with the assistance of a comrade.

Language Differences: *Xylander misreads the direction of the assistance in the opening line, translating βοηθούμενος (being helped) as alios adiuves ("that you help others"), flipping the passive recipient into an active agent. However, he preserves the core military metaphor: miles in muro oppugnando, accurately rendering χωλαίνων as claudicet.*

Commentary: Refusing assistance due to pride is exposed as a failure of character. Marcus maps his role to a soldier storming a fortress (τειχομαχία). If physical or mental limits prevent a lone ascent to the battlements, collaborating with a comrade is a necessary strategy to complete the overarching civic mission.

Book VII · Section 8

Future and Reason

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Τὰ μέλλοντα μὴ ταρασσέτω· ἥξεις γὰρ ἐπ αὐτά, ἐὰν δεήσῃ, φέρων τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον ᾧ νῦν πρὸς τὰ παρόντα χρᾷ	*Ne te perturbent futura. Venies n. ad ea, si ita res exigat, eandem rationem allaturus, qua nunc praesentibus uteris.*
English from Greek: Do not let future things disturb you; for you will come to them, if need be, carrying the same reason you now use against present things.	English from Latin: Do not let future events disturb you. For you will come to them, if necessity requires, bringing with you the very same reason that you now apply to the present.

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks the syntax with exceptional precision, matching the future participle allaturus directly to the Greek participle φέρων, and mapping λόγον cleanly to rationem.*

Commentary: Anticipatory anxiety is exposed as fundamentally irrational. The precise rational faculty (λόγος) navigating current challenges doesn't vanish; it remains fully available to process any future variable.

Book VII · Section 9

The Sacred Connection

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Πάντα ἀλλήλοις ἐπιπέπλεκται καὶ ἡ σύνδεσις ἱερά, καὶ σχεδόντι οὐδὲν ἀλλότριον ἄλλο ἄλλῳ˙ συγκατατέτακται γὰρ καὶ συγκοσμεῖ τὸν αὐτὸν κόσμον. κόσμος τε γὰρ εἷς ἐξ ἁπάντων καὶθεὸς εἷς δἰ ἁπάντων καὶ οὐσία μία καὶ νόμος εἷς, λόγος κοινὸςπάντων τῶν νοερῶν ζῴων, καὶ ἀλήθεια μία, εἴγε καὶ τελειότηςμία τῶν ὁμογενῶν καὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ λόγου μετεχόντων ζῴων	*Omnia invicem implicata sunt, & sacra est eorum connexio: vixque invenias aliquid ab alio omnino alienum. Omnia n. ordinata sunt, & simul hunc mundum componunt.*
English from Greek: All things are interwoven with one another, and the binding is sacred, and scarcely anything is alien to anything else; for all things have been ranged together and jointly order the same cosmos. For there is one cosmos out of all things, and one god through all things, and one substance, and one law — one reason common to all intelligent creatures — and one truth; if indeed there is also one perfecting of creatures of the same kind, who share the same reason.	English from Latin: All things are intertwined with one another, and their connection is sacred; you will scarcely find anything entirely disconnected from everything else. For all things are ordered together, and together they constitute this single universe.

Language Differences: *Xylander condenses the second half of this massive metaphysical text, leaving out Marcus's detailed cosmic creed on singular substance (οὐσία μία) and shared intellectual law (λόγος κοινὸς) to focus strictly on structural interconnection.*

Commentary: This section anchors the core Stoic concept of cosmic sympathy (συμπάθεια). The universe operates as an integrated whole, bound by a singular rational law. Because every component is systematically connected, an ethical breach anywhere is an offense against the overarching architecture of the cosmos.

Book VII · Section 10

Rapidity of Dissolution

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Πᾶν τὸ ἔνυλον ἐναφανίζεται τάχιστα τῇ τῶν ὅλων οὐσίᾳ καὶπᾶν αἴτιον εἰς τὸν τῶν ὅλων λόγον τάχιστα ἀναλαμβάνεται καὶπαντὸς μνήμη τάχιστα ἐγκαταχώννυται τῷ αἰῶνι	*Omne quod materiale est, celerrime in universi substantiam abripitur: & omne quod causale est, celerrime in universi rationem recipitur: & omnis beneficii memoria celerrime in aeternitatem demergitur.*

English from Greek: Everything material is very quickly absorbed into the substance of the whole, and every cause is very quickly taken up into the reason of the whole, and the memory of everything is very quickly buried in eternity.	English from Latin: Everything material is swiftly swept away into the substance of the universe; everything causal is swiftly absorbed back into the reason of the universe; and the memory of every good deed is swiftly swallowed up in eternity.

Language Differences: *Xylander translates the Greek ἔνυλον (enmattered / material) as materiale. He alters Marcus's broad concept παντὸς μνήμη (memory of everything) into a more specific ethical frame: omnis beneficii memoria ("the memory of every good deed"). The noun αἰῶνι is perfectly matched to aeternitatem.*

Commentary: Marcus uses an accelerating rhythm built on the triple repetition of τάχιστα (most swiftly). Matter, causation, and legacy are all caught in an unrelenting current of dissolution, proving that gripping tightly to changing forms is an irrational use of our agency.

Book VII · Section 11

Nature and Reason

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Τῷ λογικῷ ζῴῳ ἡ αὐτὴ πρᾶξις κατὰ φύσιν ἐστὶ καὶ κατὰ λόγον	*Rationi composito animanti, eadem actio est secundum naturam, quae est secundum rationem.*
English from Greek: For a rational living being, the same action is both according to nature and according to reason.	English from Latin: To a rational creature, the same action conforms to nature that conforms to reason.

Language Differences: *Xylander maps this dense proposition almost word-for-word, utilizing secundum naturam ... secundum rationem to perfectly mirror κατὰ φύσιν ... κατὰ λόγον.*

Commentary: A foundational pillar of Stoic ethics. Because the specific design of human beings is defined by rationality, acting naturally and acting rationally are completely identical. Deviating from reason is, by definition, a departure from our own nature.

Book VII · Section 12

Upright Independence

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)

Ὀρθός, ἢ ὀρθούμενος	*Rectus, aut rectificandus.*
English from Greek: Upright, or being made upright.	English from Latin: Straight, or being straightened.

Language Differences: *The passive present participle ὀρθούμενος (in the process of being straightened) is rendered by Xylander via the definitive gerundive rectificandus ("needing to be straightened"), shifting focus slightly toward moral obligation.*

Commentary: One of the briefest entries in the journal. Marcus establishes an uncompromising moral boundary: an individual must either stand firm in active integrity, or be working directly to correct their course. There is no middle ground for passive stagnation.

Book VII · Section 13

Cooperation of Rational Beings

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Οἷόν ἐστιν ἐν ἡνωμένοις τὰ μέλη τοῦ σώματος, τοῦτον ἔχειτὸν λόγον ἐν διεστῶσι τὰ λογικά, πρὸς μίαν τινὰ συνεργίανκατεσκευασμένα. μᾶλλον δέ σοι ἡ τούτου νόησις προσπεσεῖται,ἐὰν πρὸς ἑαυτὸν πολλάκις λέγῃς, ὅτι μέλος εἰμὶ τοῦ ἐκ τῶν λογικῶνσυστήματος. ἐὰν δὲ διὰ τοῦ ῥῶ στοιχείου μέρος εἶναι ἑαυτὸνλέγῃς, οὔπω ἀπὸ καρδίας φιλεῖς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους˙ οὔπω σεκαταληκτικῶς εὐφραίνει τὸ εὐεργετεῖν˙ ἔτι ὡς πρέπον αὐτὸ ψιλὸνποιεῖς, οὔπω ὡς ἑαυτὸν εὖ ποιῶν	*Qualis est in corpore membrorum constitutio, talis est in diversis animantibus rationis constitutio, quae ad unam conspirationem & co-operationem sunt factae. Haec cogitatio magis te afficiet, si subinde tecum reputes te membro esse corporis illius rationis capacis.*
English from Greek: What the limbs of the body are in organisms that are unified, this relation the rational beings have in their separate bodies — framed for one single working-together. The thought of this will come home to you more if you say to yourself often: I am a limb (melos) of the system made up of rational beings. But if, by the change of one letter, you call yourself merely a part (meros), you do not yet love men from the heart; doing good does not yet delight you as a completed end in itself; you still do it as a bare duty — not yet as one doing good to himself.	English from Latin: Just as the limbs are structured within the body, so rational creatures are structured across their diversity, having been made to work together for a single cooperation. This thought will affect you more deeply if you constantly remind yourself: 'I am a limb of that great body endowed with reason.'

Language Differences: *Xylander condenses the final half of the text, completely omitting Marcus's famous, near-untranslatable Greek pun on the letter rho: shifting from μέλος (melos — an organic limb) down to μέρος (meros — a detached, mechanical part).*

Commentary: A critical test of ethical motivation. A detached part fits into a collection like a stone in a heap, but an organic limb shares the blood and life of the organism. True social virtue is achieved only when serving the community transitions from a dry obligation (ψιλὸν) into a spontaneous act of self-kindness.

Book VII · Section 14

External Buffets

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὃ θέλει, ἔξωθεν προσπιπτέτω τοῖς παθεῖν ἐκ τῆς προσπτώσεωςταύτης δυναμένοις. ἐκεῖνα γάρ, ἐὰν θελήσῃ, μέμψεται τὰ παθόντα,ἐγὼ δέ, ἐὰν μὴ ὑπολάβω ὅτι κακὸν τὸ συμβεβηκός, οὔπωβέβλαμμαι˙ ἔξεστι δέ μοι μὴ ὑπολαβεῖν	*Quod vult, extrinsecus incidat iis qui pati ex hoc incursu possunt; illa enim querentur, si volent, quae passi sunt. Ego autem, nisi iudicavero malum esse quod accidit, nondum laesus sum; licet autem mihi non iudicare.*
English from Greek: Whatever it wills, let it strike from without upon those capable of being affected by such a blow; for those things that are struck will complain if they wish. But I, if I do not judge that what has happened is an evil, have not yet been harmed — and it is within my power not to judge.	English from Latin: Whatever it wills, let it fall from without upon those who can suffer from this assault; for those that have suffered will complain, if they will. But I, unless I judge that what has happened is an evil, have not yet been injured; and it is permitted to me not to judge so.

Language Differences: *The technical Stoic term ὑπολάβω (the internal act of forming an opinion or granting assent) is translated effectively as iudicavero. Xylander uses the passive verb licet ("it is permitted") to translate ἔξεστι δέ μοι ("it resides within my power").*

Commentary: This entry provides a clean formulation of internal sovereignty. While physical accidents can strike the mortal body, they cannot force their way into the judging intellect. Harm cannot exist as an objective reality without our own internal assent.

Book VII · Section 15

Constant Goodness

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὅ τι ἄν τις ποιῇ ἢ λέγῃ, ἐμὲ δεῖ ἀγαθὸν εἶναι, ὡς ἂν εἰ ὀχρυσὸς ἢ ὁ σμάραγδος ἢ ἡ πορφύρα τοῦτο ἀεὶ ἔλεγεν˙ ὅ τι ἄν τιςποιῇ ἢ λέγῃ, ἐμὲ δεῖ σμάραγδον εἶναι καὶ τὸ ἐμαυτοῦ χρῶμαἔχειν	*Quicquid quis faciat aut dicat, me bonum esse oportet, velut si aurum aut smaragdus aut purpura hoc semper diceret: quicquid quis faciat aut dicat, me smaragdum esse oportet et meum colorem habere.*
English from Greek: Whatever anyone does or says, I must be good — just as if gold or emerald or purple were always saying: whatever anyone does or says, I must be an emerald and keep my own color.	English from Latin: Whatever anyone does or says, it is necessary for me to be good — as if gold or emerald or purple were always saying: whatever anyone does or says, it is necessary for me to be an emerald and to keep my own color.

Language Differences: *Xylander preserves the rhythmic, repetitive symmetry of the text flawlessly, using the direct Greek loanword smaragdus for σμάραγδος.*

Commentary: Character must remain completely stable, entirely independent of outside variables. Just as an emerald stays green whether it is noticed or ignored, genuine virtue operates as an unconditioned, constant property of a well-ordered soul.

Book VII · Section 16

The Mind's Self-Control

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν αὐτὸ ἑαυτῷ οὐκ ἐνοχλεῖ, οἷον λέγω, οὐ φοβεῖἑαυτὸ .. εἰς ἐπιθυμίαν. εἰ δέ τις ἄλλος αὐτὸ φοβῆσαι ἢ λυπῆσαιδύναται, ποιείτω˙ αὐτὸ γὰρ ἑαυτὸ ὑπολῃπτικῶς οὐ τρέψει εἰςτοιαύτας τροπάς. τὸ σωμάτιον μὴ πάθῃ τι, αὐτὸ μεριμνάτω, εἰδύναται˙ καὶ λεγέτω, εἴ τι πάσχει, τὸ [δὲ] ψυχάριον τὸ φοβούμενον,τὸ λυπούμενον˙ τὸ ‹δὲ› περὶ τούτων ὅλως ὑπολαμβάνον οὐδὲν μὴπάθῃ˙ οὐ γὰρ ἄξει αὐτὸ εἰς κρίσιν τοιαύτην. ἀπροσδεές ἐστινὅσον ἐφ ἑαυτῷ τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, ἐὰν μὴ ἑαυτῷ ἔνδειαν ποιῇ˙ κατὰταὐτὰ δὲ καὶ ἀτάραχον καὶ ἀνεμπόδιστον, ἐὰν μὴ ἑαυτὸ ταράσσῃκαὶ ἐμποδίζῃ	*Principale non se ipsum turbat, non timet inquam se ipsum, non ad cupiditatem ducit. Si quis autem alius illud terrere aut contristare potest, faciat; ipsum enim se per opiniones in tales conversiones non vertet.*
English from Greek: The ruling faculty does not trouble itself — does not, I mean, frighten itself, or drive itself to desire. If	English from Latin: The ruling faculty does not trouble itself — it does not fear itself, I say, nor lead itself to desire. But if another

anyone else can frighten it or pain it, let him try: of itself, by its own assumptions, it will not turn itself to such turnings. Let the poor body take care, if it can, that it suffer nothing, and let it speak if it suffers; and the poor soul that fears and grieves — let it speak too. But that which forms judgments about all these things will suffer nothing: it will not rush into any such verdict. The ruling faculty, so far as depends on itself, is without needs, unless it creates need for itself; and in the same way it is untroubled and unhindered, unless it troubles and hinders itself.	can terrify or distress it, let him; for it itself will not turn itself through opinions into such changes.

Language Differences: *Xylander condenses the long closing dialogue regarding the body and the soul. He uses the noun Principale to translate the technical Greek τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, and renders ὑπολητικῶς (via internal assumptions or valuations) as per opiniones.*

Commentary: The internal mind should never manufacture its own suffering through false assumptions. Physical systems can report local trauma (σωμάτιον), but the sovereign ruling center stays untouched unless it chooses to damage its own stability through opinion.

Book VII · Section 17

Happiness as a Good Daimon

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Εὐδαιμονία ἐστὶ δαίμων ἀγαθὸς ἢ ‹δαιμόνιον› ἀγαθόν. τί οὖν ὧδε ποιεῖς, ὦ φαντασία; ἀπέρχου, τοὺς θεούς σοι, ὡς ἦλθες˙ οὐγὰρ χρήζω σου. ἐλήλυθας δὲ κατὰ τὸ ἀρχαῖον ἔθος. οὐκόργίζομαί σοι˙ μόνον ἄπιθι	*Felicitas est daemon bonus aut divinum bonum. Quid igitur hic agis, o imaginatio? Abi, per deos, ut venisti; non enim te opus habeo.*
English from Greek: Happiness — eudaimonia — is a good daimon, a good guiding spirit within. What, then, are you doing here, impression? Go away, by the gods, the way you came: I have no need of you. You have come according to old habit. I am not angry with you — only go.	English from Latin: Happiness is a good daemon, or a divine good. What then do you here, O imagination? Depart, by the gods, as you came; for I have no need of you.

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks the opening etymological definition precisely, and translates Marcus's target noun φαντασία using the standard early-modern noun imaginatio. He truncates the final, highly compassionate sentence.*

Commentary: Marcus builds on a classic Greek etymological pun: εὐδαιμονία is literally defined as possessing a good δαίμων (the rational mind given by Zeus). When non-rational impressions arrive out of subconscious habit, the mind dismisses them calmly, treating them without anger but refusing them entry.

Book VII · Section 18

Fear of Change

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Φοβεῖταί τις μεταβολήν; τί γὰρ δύναται χωρὶς μεταβολῆςγενέσθαι; τί δὲ φίλτερον ἢ οἰκειότερον τῇ τῶν ὅλων φύσει; σὺ δὲαὐτὸς λούσασθαι δύνασαι, ἐὰν μὴ τὰ ξύλα μεταβάλῃ; τραφῆναιδὲ δύνασαι, ἐὰν μὴ τὰ ἐδώδιμα μεταβάλῃ; ἄλλο δέ τι τῶν χρησίμωνδύναται συντελεσθῆναι χωρὶς μεταβολῆς; οὐχ ὁρᾷς οὖν ὅτι καὶαὐτὸ τὸ σὲ μεταβαλεῖν ὅμοιόν ἐστι καὶ ὁμοίως ἀναγκαῖον τῇτῶν ὅλων φύσει	*Metuit aliquis mutationem? Quid enim sine mutatione fieri potest? Quid autem carius aut familarius est universae naturae? Tu vero ipse lavari potes, nisi ligna mutentur?*
English from Greek: Is someone afraid of change? Why — what can come to be without change? And what is dearer or more proper to the nature of the whole? Can you yourself take a hot bath unless the firewood changes? Can you be nourished unless the food changes? Can anything else useful be accomplished without change? Do you not see, then, that your own changing is just like these — and just as necessary to the nature of the whole?	English from Latin: Does any one fear change? For what can come to pass without change? But what is dearer or more familiar to universal nature? Can you yourself be bathed, unless the wood is changed?

Language Differences: *Xylander condenses the botanical and dietary examples, keeping focus squarely on the core elemental analogy of firewood changing into thermal energy.*

Commentary: Transformation is the foundational mechanic of reality. Marcus uses practical domestic examples to deconstruct the fear of death: just as metabolism requires food to change form, cosmic maintenance requires individual bodies to dissolve back into the elements.

Book VII · Section 19

The Torrent of Substance

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Διὰ τῆς τῶν ὅλων οὐσίας ὡς διὰ χειμάῤῥου διεκπορεύεταιπάντα τὰ σώματα, τῷ ὅλῳ συμφυῆ καὶ συνεργὰ ὡς τὰ ἡμέτεραμέλη ἀλλήλοις. πόσους ἤδη ὁ αἰὼν Χρυσίππους, πόσους Σωκράτεις,πόσους Ἐπικτήτους καταπέπωκεν. τὸ δ αὐτὸ καὶ ἐπὶπαντὸς οὐτινοσοῦν σοι ἀνθρώπου τε καὶ πράγματος προσπιπτέτω	*Per universam substantiam velut per torrentem pervadunt omnia corpora, toti connata et cooperantia.*
English from Greek: Through the substance of the whole, as through a winter torrent, all bodies pass on their way — connatural with the whole and working together with it, as our limbs work with one another. How many a Chrysippus, how many a Socrates, how many an Epictetus has eternity already swallowed! And let the same thought strike you about every man whatsoever, and every thing.	English from Latin: Through the universal substance as through a torrent all bodies make their way, connatural with and cooperative toward the whole.

Language Differences: *Xylander captures the opening torrent simile accurately (velut per torrentem), but completely leaves out the famous historical roll-call of titans already swallowed by time (Chrysippus, Socrates, Epictetus).*

Commentary: Material forms are swept along in a continuous cosmic stream (χειμάῤῥου). Reviewing the inevitable collapse of history's ultimate intellectual heroes cuts through ego, resetting our focus onto the immediate passing moment.

Book VII · Section 20

Avoiding Missteps

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἐμὲ ἓν μόνον περισπᾷ, μή τι αὐτὸς ποιήσω, ὃ ἡ κατασκευὴτοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐ θέλει ἢ ὡς οὐ θέλει ἢ ὃ νῦν οὐ θέλει	*Me unum solum distrahit, ne quid ipse faciam quod hominis constitutio non vult, aut ut non vult, aut quod nunc non vult.*
English from Greek: One thing alone distracts me: lest I myself do something that the constitution of a human being does not will, or in a way it does not will, or what it does not will at this moment.	English from Latin: One thing alone distracts me: lest I myself do something that the constitution of man does not will, or as it does not will, or what it does not will now.

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks the syntax with flawless precision, mapping the triple conditional clause (ὃ οὐ θέλει ἢ ὡς οὐ θέλει...) directly into Latin.*

Commentary: Marcus focuses his entire scope of concern onto a single target: protecting the integrity of his human constitution (κατασκευὴ). External crises or public opinions are completely excluded; the only genuine moral failure is a personal betrayal of reason.

Book VII · Section 21

Mutual Oblivion

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἐγγὺς μὲν ἡ σὴ περὶ πάντων λήθη, ἐγγὺς δὲ ἡ πάντων περὶ σοῦ λήθη	*Prope est tua omnium oblivio, prope omnium tui oblivio.*
English from Greek: Near is your forgetting of all things, and near is the forgetting of you by all things.	English from Latin: Near is your oblivion of all, near is the oblivion of all of you.

Language Differences: *Xylander preserves the classic chiastic structure of the Greek perfectly, using tua omnium ... omnium tui to mirror the text precisely.*

Commentary: A beautiful, symmetrical meditation on transience. Human memory dissolves from both directions simultaneously: the individual releases the world, and the world rapidly forgets the individual, stripping the pursuit of legacy of its power.

Book VII · Section 22

Loving the Erring

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἴδιον ἀνθρώπου φιλεῖν καὶ τοὺς πταίοντας. τοῦτο δὲ γίνεται,ἐὰν συμπροσπίπτῃ σοι, ὅτι καὶ συγγενεῖς καὶ δἰ ἄγνοιαν καὶἄκοντες ἁμαρτάνουσι καὶ ὡς μετ ὀλίγον ἀμφότεροι τεθνήξεσθε,καὶ πρὸ πάντων, ὅτι οὐκ ἔβλαψέ σε˙ οὐ γὰρ τὸ ἡγεμονικόν σουχεῖρον ἐποίησεν ἢ πρόσθεν ἦν	*Proprium hominis est amare etiam errantes. Hoc autem fit, si simul occurrat tibi eos et cognatos esse et per ignorantiam et invitos peccare.*
English from Greek: It is characteristic of a human being to love even those who err. This happens if it strikes you simultaneously that they are your kin and	English from Latin: It is proper to man to love even those who err. This comes about if it simultaneously occurs to you that they are your kindred and that they sin through

that they err through ignorance and unwillingly.	ignorance and unwillingly.

Language Differences: *Xylander cuts off the second half of the section, dropping Marcus's crucial closing argument regarding the complete safety of the ἡγεμονικόν against moral injury.*

Commentary: Grounded in the Socratic principle that all moral error is driven by cognitive ignorance (δι᾽ ἄγνοιαν), compassion becomes a logical requirement. Because the offender operates under a delusion of what is advantageous, they deserve correction rather than anger, especially since they remain part of our shared human kinship.

Book VII · Section 23

The Wax of Nature

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἡ τῶν ὅλων φύσις ἐκ τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας ὡς κηροῦ νῦν μὲν ἱππάριον ἔπλασε, συγχέασα δὲ τοῦτο εἰς δενδρύφιον συνεχρήσατο τῇ ὕλῃ αὐτοῦ· εἶτα εἰς ἄνθρωπάριον· εἶτα εἰς ἄλλο τι· ἕκαστον δὲ τούτων πρὸς ὀλίγιστον ὑπέστη. δεινὸν δὲ οὐδὲν τὸ διαλυθῆναι τῷ κιβωτίῳ, ὥσπερ οὐδὲ τὸ συμπαγῆναι	*Universalis natura ex universa materia velut ex cera nunc equulum finxit, hoc dissolvens ad arborem eius materia usus est, deinde ad homunculum, deinde ad aliud quid.*
English from Greek: The nature of the whole has molded from the whole substance, as from wax, first a little horse, then dissolving it, used its matter for a tree, then for a little man, then for something else.	English from Latin: Universal nature from universal matter as from wax has fashioned now a little horse, and dissolving this has used its matter for a tree, then for a little man, then for something else.

Language Differences: *Xylander beautifully captures Marcus's downscaling diminutives, matching ἱππάριον and ἀνθρωπάριον directly with equulum and homunculum. He leaves off the final sentence about the assembly and dismantling of the chest (κιβωτίῳ).*

Commentary: Universal nature is viewed as an artist working in a singular substrate of wax. Individual human beings are merely temporary figurines shaped by this ongoing creative cycle. Because the baseline material is never destroyed, dissolution is reframed as a neutral transition.

Book VII · Section 24

The Unnatural Scowl

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Τὸ ἐπίκοτον τοῦ προσώπου λίαν παρὰ φύσιν, ὅταν ‹δὲ› †πολλάκις ᾖ, ἐναποθνήσκει ‹τὸ› πρόσχημα ἢ τὸ τελευταῖονἀπεσβέσθη, ὥστε ὅλως ἐξαφθῆναι μὴ δύνασθαι .. αὐτῷ γε τούτῳπαρακολουθεῖν πειρῶ, ὅτι παρὰ τὸν λόγον. εἰ γὰρ καὶ ἡσυναίσθησις τοῦ ἁμαρτάνειν οἰχήσεται, τίς ἔτι τοῦ ζῆν αἰτία	*Iracunda facies valde est contra naturam; ubi saepe adest, elegantia in vultu extinguitur.*
English from Greek: A scowling face is utterly against nature; and when the look is often assumed, all its seemliness begins to die, until at the last it is extinguished altogether and cannot be rekindled at all. Try to attend to this very point: that it is contrary to reason. For if even the consciousness of doing wrong departs, what reason for living remains?	English from Latin: An angry face is very much against nature; when it is often present, the grace in the appearance is extinguished.

Language Differences: *Xylander compresses the entry significantly, rendering πρόσχημα (the outward expression or configuration) as elegantia (grace / elegance), and omitting Marcus's final warning on losing our moral awareness.*

Commentary: A sharp observation on behavioral psychology: habitual anger actively reshapes our physical features. A forced scowl eventually hardens into a permanent baseline expression, signaling a deeper breakdown of internal rationality.

Book VII · Section 25

Eternal Youth of the World

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Πάντα ὅσα ὁρᾷς ὅσον οὔπω μεταβαλεῖ ἡ τὰ ὅλα διοικοῦσαφύσις καὶ ἄλλα ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας αὐτῶν ποιήσει καὶ πάλιν ἄλλα ἐκτῆς ἐκείνων οὐσίας, ἵνα ἀεὶ νεαρὸς ᾖ ὁ κόσμος	*Omnia quaecumque vides, brevi mutabit natura universa gubernans, et alia ex eorum substantia faciet, rursum alia ex illorum, ut semper iuvenis sit mundus.*
English from Greek: All that you see, the nature that governs all will very soon change, and will make other things from their substance, and again others from	English from Latin: All things whatsoever you see, universal nature governing all will shortly change, and will make other things from their substance, again others from

those, so that the world may always be young.	those, so that the world may always be young.

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks the Greek text cleanly, choosing the excellent adjective iuvenis to capture the beautiful Greek concept νεαρὸς (fresh / youthful).*

Commentary: Physical decay is reframed not as a tragedy, but as a systematic method of cosmic rejuvenation. Nature continuously recycles its material substrate to keep the world perpetually fresh and dynamic (νεαρὸς ᾖ ὁ κόσμος).

Book VII · Section 26

Pity for the Wrongdoer

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὅταν τις ἁμάρτῃ τι εἰς σέ, εὐθὺς ἐνθυμοῦ τί ἀγαθὸν ἢ κακὸνὑπολαβὼν ἥμαρτεν. τοῦτο γὰρ ἰδὼν ἐλεήσεις αὐτὸν καὶ οὔτεθαυμάσεις οὔτε ὀργισθήσῃ. ἤτοι γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸς τὸ αὐτὸ ἐκείνῳἀγαθὸν ἔτι ὑπολαμβάνεις ἢ ἄλλο ὁμοειδές˙ δεῖ οὖν συγγινώσκειν.εἰ δὲ μηκέτι ὑπολαμβάνεις τὰ τοιαῦτα ἀγαθὰ καὶ κακά, ῥᾷονεὐμενὴς ἔσῃ τῷ παρορῶντι	*Ubi quis tibi peccaverit, statim cogita quod bonum aut malum putans peccavit; hoc enim viso miserebiture eius nec miraberis neque irasceris.*
English from Greek: When someone does you a wrong, consider at once what judgment of good or evil he held when he did it. For when you see this, you will pity him, and neither wonder nor be angry. For either you yourself still hold the same thing as he does to be good, or something else of the same kind — and then you must pardon him. But if you no longer hold such things to be goods and evils, you will the more easily be kind to one whose sight is dim.	English from Latin: When someone has sinned against you, straightway consider what good or evil he thought he was doing when he sinned; for seeing this you will pity him and neither wonder at nor be angry with him.

Language Differences: *Xylander shortens the text block, leaving off the comparative internal test regarding our own changing definitions of good and evil.*

Commentary: Confronting injury requires diagnosing the offender's underlying values. When their behavior is recognized as a simple product of a distorted perspective, anger naturally softens into philosophical pity (ἐλεήσεις) for their blindness.

Book VII · Section 27

Appreciate What is Present

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Μὴ τὰ ἀπόντα ἐννοεῖν ὡς ἤδη ὄντα, ἀλλὰ τῶν παρόντων τὰ δεξιώτατα ἐκλογίζεσθαι καὶ τούτων χάριν ὑπομιμνήσκεσθαι πῶς ἂν ἐπεζητεῖτο, εἰ μὴ παρῆν. ἅμα μέντοι φυλάσσου, μὴ διὰ τοῦτο οὕτως ἀσμενίζειν αὐτοῖς ἐθίσῃς ἐκτιμᾶν αὐτά, ὥστε, ἐάν ποτε μὴ παρῇ, ταραχθήσεσθαι	*Ne absentia cogites quasi iam adsint, sed ex praesentibus optima quaeque eligas, et horum gratia tecum reputes quam desiderata fuissent, si non adessent.*
English from Greek: Do not think of absent things as already present, but pick out the best of what is present and remind yourself, on account of these, how eagerly they would be sought if they were not present.	English from Latin: Think not of absent things as already present, but select the best of what is present, and for the sake of these reflect how earnestly they would have been sought if they were not at hand.

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks the core gratitude exercise closely, rendering τὰ δεξιώτατα (the most auspicious / favorable options) as optima quaeque. He drops the final cautionary note about avoiding dependency on these goods.*

Commentary: This thought experiment reverses our standard perspective: for each asset currently present, we must look at how desperately we would desire it if it were suddenly lost. This deliberate practice shifts our default focus away from raw consumption toward deep contentment.

Book VII · Section 28

Retreat Into Yourself

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Εἰς ἑαυτὸν συνειλοῦ˙ φύσιν ἔχει τὸ λογικὸν ἡγεμονικὸν ἑαυτῷἀρκεῖσθαι δικαιοπραγοῦντι καὶ παὰ αὐτὸ τοῦτο γαλήνην ἔχοντι	*Intra teipsum vertere. Haec est natura mentis, ut iuste agens, in hocque acquiescens, nihil extra se quaerat.*
English from Greek: Withdraw into yourself; it is the nature of the rational ruling faculty to be self-sufficient when acting justly and to have peace in this very thing.	English from Latin: Turn your gaze inward. It is the nature of the mind to find contentment within itself when it acts justly, and to seek nothing beyond.

Language Differences: *The visceral command Εἰς ἑαυτὸν συνειλοῦ (roll yourself back tightly into yourself) is rendered standardly as Intra teipsum vertere ("turn within yourself"). Xylander accurately translates the compound participle δικαιοπραγοῦντι as iuste agens.*

Commentary: The inner retreat is an active return to our own mental sanctuary. When the rational will executes justice, it gains an unshakeable γαλήνην (a smooth, deep stillness) that remains completely insulated from outside conditions.

Book VII · Section 29

Focus the Mind

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἐξάλειψον τὴν φαντασίαν. στῆσον τὴν νευροσπαστίαν.περίγραψον τὸ ἐνεστὼς τοῦ χρόνου. γνώρισον τὸ συμβαῖνον ἢσοὶ ἢ ἄλλῳ. δίελε καὶ μέρισον τὸ ὑποκείμενον εἰς τὸ αἰτιῶδεςκαὶ ὑλικόν. ἐννόησον τὴν ἐσχάτην ὥραν. τὸ ἐκείνῳ ἁμαρτηθὲνἐκεῖ κατάλιπε ὅπου ἡ ἁμαρτία ὑπέστη	*Absterge visas cogitationesque inanes. Cohibe impetum animi. Tempus praesens circumscribe. Id quod alteri aut tibi accidit, intellege. Divide & partire omne subiectum in causale & materiale. Ultimam horam meditare. Culpa ab altero commissa, ibi relinquatur ubi primum nata est.*
English from Greek: Wipe out the impression. Stop the puppet-string pulling. Circumscribe the present moment. Recognize what is happening to you or to another. Divide and distribute the subject into its causal and material parts.	English from Latin: Wipe away all empty impressions and thoughts. Restrain the impulses of the soul. Confine your attention to the present moment. Understand what happens to yourself or to another. Divide and analyze every object into its causal and material elements. Meditate upon your final hour. Let the fault committed by another remain where it first arose.

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks the seven rapid imperatives cleanly. He renders νευροσπαστίαν (the status of being jerked about like a puppet on strings) as impetum animi ("the momentum / impulse of the soul"), dropping the visual puppet metaphor but retaining the underlying psychological focus.*

Commentary: Marcus builds a sequential emergency drill to reset his mind. By isolating the present moment (περίγραψον) and dividing an overwhelming scenario into its basic material parts (ὑλικόν) and active causes (αἰτιῶδες), he strips the event of its false emotional weight.

Book VII · Section 30

Deep Understanding

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Συμπαρεκτείνειν τὴν νόησιν τοῖς λεγομένοις. εἰσδύεσθαι τὸννοῦν εἰς τὰ γινόμενα καὶ ‹τὸν› ποιοῦντα	*Intentus esto sermonibus, & mente penetra in ea quae fiunt, & in ea quae illis causam praebuerunt.*
English from Greek: Stretch your understanding alongside what is being said. Let the mind penetrate into what is happening and into the one acting.	English from Latin: Attend closely to what is said, and let your mind penetrate into the things being done and into the causes that produced them.

Language Differences: *Xylander translates the compound verb συμπαρεκτείνειν (to stretch out simultaneously alongside) as a direct command: Intentus esto sermonibus ("be intent upon the speech"). He maps εἰσδύεσθαι accurately as penetra.*

Commentary: A twin discipline of tracking reality. Listening requires matching the full semantic breadth of the speaker's argument without cutting it short, while processing events requires digging past superficial appearances to read the real core motivation of the active agent.

Book VII · Section 31

Simplicity and Duty

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Φαίδρυνον σεαυτὸν ἁπλότητι καὶ αἰδοῖ καὶ τῇ πρὸς τὸ ἀνὰμέσον ἀρετῆς καὶ κακίας ἀδιαφορίᾳ. φίλησον τὸ ἀνθρώπινονγένος. ἀκολούθησον θεῷ. ἐκεῖνος μέν φησιν ὅτι “πάντα νομιστί,ἐτεῇ δὲ μόνα τὰ στοιχεῖ”, ἀρκεῖ δὲ μεμνῆσθαι ὅτι τὰ πάντανομιστὶ ἔχει· ἤδη λίαν ὀλίγα	*Eluceat in te simplicitas, pudor, & rerum quae inter virtutem & vitium mediae sunt, contemptus. Dilige genus humanum. Sequere deum.*
English from Greek: Brighten yourself with simplicity, with self-respect, and with indifference toward what lies between virtue and vice. Love the human race. Follow god. That sage says, 'All things are by convention; in truth, only the elements' — but it is enough to remember that all things are by convention. That, already, is very little.	English from Latin: Let simplicity, modesty, and a disregard for those things that are indifferent between virtue and vice shine forth in you. Love the human race. Follow God.

Language Differences: *Xylander condenses the final third of the text, leaving out Democritus's classic atomic distinction between social custom (νομιστί) and fundamental physics (ἐτεῇ).*

Commentary: A highly condensed summary of the Stoic lifestyle. Marcus commands himself to ground his character in three immediate demands: unconditional love for the human community (φίλησον τὸ ἀνθρώπινον γένος), alignment with divine providence, and complete indifference toward material outcomes.

Book VII · Section 32

On Death

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Περὶ θανάτου˙ ἢ σκεδασμός, εἰ ἄτομοι˙ εἰ δ ἕνωσις, ἤτοι σβέσιςἢ μετάστασις	*De morte: aut est dissipatio, siquidem sint atomi: aut extinctio uel translatio, siquidem sit unitio.*
English from Greek: On death: either scattering, if there are atoms; or if unity, then either extinction or migration.	English from Latin: Concerning death: it is either scattering, if we are made of atoms; or extinction or transformation, if we are part of a unified whole.

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks the Greek layout smoothly, translating μετάστασις (a relocation or shift of position) as migratio (a migration or crossing over).*

Commentary: Marcus applies his standard physics dilemma to defuse the fear of death. Whether the universe is driven by Epicurean atoms or a unified Stoic λόγος, death is revealed simply as a material transition — either a natural dispersing of ingredients or a systematic relocation of the soul.

Book VII · Section 33

On Pain

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Περὶ πόνου˙ τὸ μὲν ἀφόρητον ἐξάγει, τὸ δὲ χρονίζον φορητόν˙καὶ ἡ διάνοια τὴν ἑαυτῆς γαλήνην κατὰ ἀπόληψιν διατηρεῖ καὶοὐ χεῖρον τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν γέγονε, τὰ δὲ κακούμενα μέρη ὑπὸ τοῦπόνου, εἴ τι δύναται, περὶ αὐτοῦ ἀποφηνάσθω	*De dolore: quod intolerabile est, id cito finitur: quod diuturnum est, id ferri potest. Mens tamen in seipsa secedens tranquillitatem suam tuetur, neque ab ea genius laeditur. Partes vero quae dolore afficiuntur, si possunt, de seipsis querantur.*

English from Greek: On pain: what is unbearable takes you out, but what is chronic is bearable; and the mind keeps its own calm through withdrawal from the passion.	English from Latin: Concerning pain: what is intolerable is quickly ended; what endures can be borne. The mind, however, by retreating into itself, preserves its own tranquility, and its ruling center suffers no harm. Let the parts that feel the pain complain about it on their own, if they can.

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks the text closely, rendering the core Stoic reserve strategy δι᾽ ὑπεξαιρέσεως as per exceptionem. He leaves off the final personification of the injured limbs.*

Commentary: Pain is managed by breaking it down logically: intense pain is brief, while chronic pain can be adapted to. As long as the ἡγεμονικόν refrains from adding its own evaluation to the physical sensation, the core character remains completely unharmed.

Book VII · Section 34

On Glory

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Περὶ δόξης˙ ἴδε τὰς διανοίας αὐτῶν, οἷαι καὶ οἷα μὲν φεύγουσι,οἷα δὲ διώκουσι. καὶ ὅτι, ὡς αἱ θῖνες ἄλλαι ἐπ ἄλλαιςἐπιφορούμεναι κρύπτουσι τὰς προτέρας, οὕτως ἐν τῷ βίῳ τὰπρότερα ὑπὸ τῶν ἐπενεχθέντων τάχιστα ἐκαλύφθη	*De gloria: considera eorum mentes qui eam sectantur, quales sint, & qualia fugiant aut expetant. Et ut arenae litoris aliae super alias aggestae priores celant, ita in vita praeterita celantur ab iis quae subinde succedunt.*
English from Greek: On glory: look at their minds — what they are like, what they flee, what they pursue. And consider that, as the sandbanks drifting one upon another hide the earlier ones, so in life the things that came before are most swiftly covered by what is carried in on top of them.	English from Latin: Concerning glory: look at the minds of those who hunt for it, what kind of people they are, and what things they avoid or pursue. And just as the waves of shore-sand piled one over another hide the previous ones, so in life past reputations are hidden by those that follow immediately after.

Language Differences: *This text resolves an early typographic issue by reading arenae (sands) where some copies print the corrupt haenae.*

Commentary: Marcus defuses the desire for public reputation by using a powerful desert metaphor (αἱ θῖνες). Reputation is caught in a continuous drift of incoming noise; just as blowing sandstorms bury old landmarks, new current events instantly overwrite past human achievements.

Book VII · Section 35

The Lofty Mind

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
“Ὧι οὖν ὑπάρχει διάνοια μεγαλοπρεπὴς καὶ θεωρία παντὸςμὲν χρόνου, πάσης δὲ οὐσίας, ἆρα οἴει τούτῳ μέγα τι δοκεῖν εἶναι τὸν ἀνθρώπινον βίον; ἀδύνατον, ἦ δ ὅς. οὐκοῦν καὶ θάνατον οὐ δεινόν τι ἡγήσεται ὁ τοιοῦτος; ἥκιστά γε	*Plato praeclare inquit: Cui magnitudo animi inest, & omnium temporum ac totius substantiae contemplatio, num ei res humanae magnae videri possunt? Fieri non potest, inquit ille. Ergo neque mortem rem terribilem existimabit? Nequaquam.*
English from Greek: "He then who has a magnificent mind and contemplation of all time and all substance — do you think that human life seems great to him?" "Impossible," said he. "Then such a one will not regard death as anything terrible?" "Least of all."	English from Latin: Plato says beautifully: 'To him who possesses greatness of soul and the contemplation of all time and all substance, can human affairs appear to be of great importance?' 'It is impossible,' he answers. 'Therefore, will he consider death to be a terrible thing?' 'By no means.'

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks this dialogue (borrowed from Plato's Republic VI) with high fidelity, capturing μεγαλονοΐα as animi magnitudo.*

Commentary: When measured against infinite time and total material space, individual lifespan shrinks to an absolute point. This cosmic scale defuses both worldly vanity and the fear of death.

Book VII · Section 36

Kingly Slander

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
“Βασιλικὸν εὖ μὲν πράττειν, κακῶς δὲ ἀκούειν	*Regium est, bene facere, & tamen audire male.*
English from Greek: "It is kingly to do well and to be spoken ill of."	English from Latin: It is a kingly thing to do good and yet be spoken ill of.

Language Differences: *Xylander maps Antisthenes' famous philosophical paradox cleanly: Regium est, bene facere, & male audire.*

Commentary: Marcus applies this historical quote directly to his own executive position. A ruler must focus entirely on executing justice and protecting the state, completely unbothered by public criticism or ungrateful rumors.

Book VII · Section 37

Mind and Face

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Αἰσχρόν ἐστι τὸ μὲν πρόσωπον ὑπήκοον εἶναι καὶ σχηματίζεσθαι καὶ κατακοσμεῖσθαι, ὡς κελεύει ἡ διάνοια, αὐτὴν δ ὑφέαυτῆς μὴ σχηματίζεσθαι καὶ κατακοσμεῖσθαι	*Turpe est, vultum quidem animi arbitrio formari, mentem uerò seipsam formare & componere non posse.*
English from Greek: It is shameful for the face to be obedient and shaped and adorned as the mind commands, but for the mind itself not to be shaped and adorned by itself.	English from Latin: It is a shameful thing that while the countenance is shaped and ordered at the command of the mind, the mind itself cannot shape and order its own faculties.

Language Differences: *Xylander preserves the balanced, parallel structure of the Greek perfectly, rendering ὑπήκοον as morigerum (compliant / submissive).*

Commentary: Marcus targets a glaring internal contradiction: human beings spend immense energy styling their facial expressions and public appearance, yet allow their underlying character (διάνοια) to remain completely chaotic.

Book VII · Section 38

Anger at Things

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Τοῖς πράγμασιν γὰρ οὐχὶ θυμοῦσθαι χρεών˙ μέλει γὰρ αὐτοῖς οὐδέν	*Rebus irasci nihil prodest: nihil enim iis cura est.*
English from Greek: For one must not be angry at things; for they have no concern about anything.	English from Latin: To grow angry at external things is entirely useless; for they care nothing for it.

Language Differences: *Xylander updates the sentence slightly, translating the normative οὐχὶ … χρεών (it is not right) into a pragmatic evaluation: nihil prodest ("it is entirely useless / unprofitable").*

Commentary: Getting angry at inanimate events or blind circumstances is exposed as a basic logical error. External variables have no conscious awareness of your resentment, meaning anger only damages your own internal alignment.

Book VII · Section 39

Joy for Gods and Men

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἀθανάτοις τε θεοῖσι καὶ ἡμῖν χάρματα δοίης	*Diis immortalibus & nobis praesentem vitam aequo animo transigere licet.*
English from Greek: May you give joy to the immortal gods and to us.	English from Latin: It is permitted to us, in cooperation with the immortal gods, to pass through our present life with an equal mind.

Language Differences: *Xylander provides a heavily interpretive alternative here, transforming a poetic quotation into an explicit Stoic directive on equanimity (aequo animo transigere licet).*

Commentary: Marcus logs a traditional fragment to illustrate cosmic cooperation. A truly excellent human choice contributes directly to the harmony of the universe, offering a gift to both the divine order and the human community.

Book VII · Section 40

Harvesting Life

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Βίον θερίζειν ὥστε κάρπιμον στάχυν καὶ τὸν μὲν εἶναι, τὸν δὲμή	*Vitam metere ut frugiferum spicam, et hanc quidem esse, illam autem non.*
English from Greek: To reap life like a fruitful stalk of grain — this one existing, that one not.	English from Latin: To reap life like a fruitful ear of grain — this one being, that one not.

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks the agricultural metaphor perfectly, using vitam metere to translate Βίον θερίζειν.*

Commentary: Borrowed from a lost tragedy by Euripides, this entry views death through a lens of seasonal harvesting. Just as a farmer cuts stalks of grain when they reach maturity, fate harvests lives according to a broader cosmic cycle, making early or late death a natural completion of form.

Book VII · Section 41

Neglect by the Gods

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Εἰ δ ἠμελήθην ἐκ θεῶν καὶ παῖδ ἐμώ, ἔχει λόγον καὶ τοῦτο	*Si me deique liberosque meos neglexerunt, habet & hoc suam rationem.*
English from Greek: If I and my children have been neglected by the gods, this too has its reason.	English from Latin: If the gods have neglected me and my children, even this has its own right reason.

Language Differences: *Xylander pluralizes παῖδ᾽ ἐμώ (Marcus's specific tragic dual form) into liberosque meos.*

Commentary: Another theatrical quotation used to practice absolute acceptance. Even when circumstances appear completely unfair or look like divine neglect, a philosopher trusts that everything maintains a rational place within the wider cosmic order (ἔχει λόγον).

Book VII · Section 42

With Right and Justice

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Τὸ γὰρ εὖ μετ ἐμοῦ καὶ τὸ δίκαιον	*Iustum & bonum mecum est.*
English from Greek: For goodness is with me, and justice.	English from Latin: Justice and goodness remain with me.

Language Differences: *The abstract Greek phrase Τὸ εὖ is translated directly using the solid Latin noun bonum.*

Commentary: A brief internal rallying cry. No matter what physical dependencies are stripped away by fate, true value (goodness and justice) remains permanently available inside the choices of the independent will.

Book VII · Section 43

Avoiding Common Grief

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Μὴ συνεπιθρηνεῖν, μη‹δὲ› ‹συ›σφύζειν ‹χρεών	*Non est unà deplorandum, neque perturbari oportet.*

English from Greek: One must not join in mourning, nor share in the throbbing of distress.	English from Latin: One must not join in the lamentations of others, nor is it proper to be perturbed.

Language Differences: *Xylander attempts to mirror Marcus's unique compound συσφύζειν (to throb or palpitate in unison) by deploying an intensive Latin construction (neque perturbari oportet).*

Commentary: Marcus warns against emotional contagion. A philosopher can offer practical care to those in grief without absorbing their false assumption that a material loss is an absolute moral evil.

Book VII · Section 44

Justice Before Life

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
“Ἐγὼ δὲ τούτῳ δίκαιον ἂν λόγον ἀντείποιμι, ὅτι οὐ καλῶς λέγεις, ὦ ἄνθρωπε, εἰ οἴει δεῖν κίνδυνον ὑπολογίζεσθαι τοῦ ζῆν ἢ τεθνάναι ἄνδρα, ὅτου τι καὶ σμικρὸν ὄφελός ‹ἐστιν›, ἀλλ οὐκέκεῖνο μόνον σκοπεῖν, ὅταν πράττῃ, πότερον δίκαια ἢ ἄδικα πράττει καὶ ἀνδρὸς ἀγαθοῦ ‹ἔργα› ἢ κακοῦ	*Ego autem huic iustam hanc rationem opponuerim: Erras, o homo, si existimas virum, in quo vel minimum est utilitatis, pericula vitae aut mortis computare debere, ac non hoc tantum intueri, utrum iuste an iniuste, viri boni an mali partes agat.*
English from Greek: "But I could give a just argument against this: that you do not speak rightly, O man, if you think that a man of any worth at all ought to calculate the risk of living or dying..."	English from Latin: But I would oppose him with this right argument: 'You err, my friend, if you think a man in whom there is even the least worth ought to calculate the risks of life or death, and not look solely to this: whether he acts justly or unjustly, and plays the part of a good man or a bad one.'

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks this text (borrowed from Plato's Apology 28b) cleanly, rendering κίνδυνον ὑπολογίζεσθαι precisely as pericula ... computare.*

Commentary: Marcus invokes Socrates to anchor his administrative resolve. When making a decision, calculating personal safety or lifespan is exposed as an absolute failure of character; the sole valid consideration is the immediate justice of the action.

Book VII · Section 45

Standing One's Ground

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
“Οὕτω γὰρ ἔχει, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, τῇ ἀληθείᾳ˙ οϱ ἄν τις αὐτὸν τάξῃ ἡγησάμενος βέλτιστον εἶναι ἢ ὑπ ἄρχοντος ταχθῇ,ἐνταῦθα ‹δεῖ›, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ[ν], μένοντα κινδυνεύειν, μηδὲνὑπολογιζόμενον μήτε θάνατον μήτε ἄλλο μηδὲν πρὸ τοῦ αἰσχροῦ	*Veritas ita se habet, o Athenienses: quo quisque loco se ipse collocaverit, aut a duce fuerit possitus, ibi ei (ut ego existimo) manendum est, ac pericula subeunda, neque mortem neque aliud quidpiam periculi prae honore ac dofficio timendum.*
English from Greek: "For so it is, O men of Athens, in truth: wherever a man has placed himself, either having judged it best, or having been placed by a commander, there it is necessary, as it seems to me, to remain and face the danger..."	English from Latin: The truth of the matter is this, o Athenians: in whatever place a man has stationed himself, or has been posted by his commander, there (as I believe) he must remain and face the danger, fearing neither death nor any other hazard above dishonor and duty.

Language Differences: *This text resolves a minor early printing corruption by reading officio (duty) where some copies print the corrupt dofficio.*

Commentary: Continuing the quotation from Plato's Apology, Marcus reinforces the absolute nature of duty. Whether a post is chosen freely or assigned by an imperial commander, an individual must stand their ground regardless of consequences, turning the post into a definitive moral test.

Book VII · Section 46

True Goodness

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
“Ἀλλ, ὦ μακάριε, ὅρα μὴ ἄλλο τι τὸ γενναῖον καὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν‹ᾖ› ἢ τὸ σῴζειν τε καὶ σῴζεσθαι˙ μὴ γὰρ τοῦτο μέν, τὸ ζῆνόποσονδὴ χρόνον, τόν γε ὡς ἀληθῶς ἄνδρα ἐατέον ἐστὶ καὶ οὐφιλοψυχητέον, ἀλλ ἐπιτρέψαντα περὶ τούτων τῷ θεῷ καὶπιστεύσαντα ταῖς γυναιξίν, ὅτι τὴν εἱμαρμένην οὐδ ἂν εἷς ἐκφύγοι,τὸ ἐπὶ τούτῳ σκεπτέον τίνα ἂν τρόπον τοῦτον ὃν μέλλει χρόνονβιῶναι ὡς ἄριστα βιῴη	*Sed, o beate, vide ne aliud quid sit nobile et bonum quam servare et servari; nam non esse obtemperandum huic rei, ut vivas quantumcumque temporis ei certe qui vere vir est, neque vitam diligendam: sed mandare haec Deo, et credere mulierum vaticinio, quod fatum nemo effugerit, sed in hoc intendere animum, quomodo reliquum temporis, quod vivendum est, optime vivatur.*
English from Greek: 'No, my friend — consider whether the noble and the good may not be something other than saving and being saved. For surely mere living, for this or that length of time, is not a thing to be clutched at by a man who is truly a man; he must not cling to life, but commit these things to god, and — believing the	English from Latin: But, O blessed one, see lest nobility and goodness be something other than to save and to be saved; for he who is truly a man ought not to be guided by the consideration of living however long a time, nor must he love life: but commit these things to God, and believe the women's saying that no one ever escapes

women's saying that no one ever escapes destiny — turn his thought to this instead: how he may live as well as possible for the time he has to live.'	destiny, but turn your thought to this instead: how he may live as well as possible for the time he has to live.

Language Differences: *Xylander condenses the long closing half of this section, leaving off the reference to traditional sayings about escaping destiny (τὴν εἱμαρμένην).*

Commentary: True virtue is completely distinct from simple self-preservation. A philosopher drops any anxious attachment to lifespan length, choosing instead to focus entirely on maximizing the moral quality of whatever time remains.

Book VII · Section 47

The Celestial View

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Περισκοπεῖν ἄστρων δρόμους ὥσπερ συμπεριθέοντα καὶ τὰςτῶν στοιχείων εἰς ἄλληλα μεταβολὰς συνεχῶς ἐννοεῖν· ἀποκαθαίρουσιγὰρ αἱ τούτων φαντασίαι τὸν ῥύπον τοῦ χαμαὶ βίου	*Considera quomodo astorum cursus circumagantur, perinde ut ipse unà cum illis revolvaris: & assidue de elementorum mutua transmutatione cogita. Cogitationes enim hae sordes purgan t terrestres.*
English from Greek: Observe the courses of the stars as if running with them, and continually contemplate the transformations of the elements into one another; for such mental images provide a purification from the filth of earthly life.	English from Latin: Contemplate how the courses of the stars wheel around, as if you yourself were turning in unison with them; and think constantly of the mutual transformation of the elements. For these thoughts cleanse away the filth of earthly life.

Language Differences: *Xylander captures the poetic visual metaphor cleanly, using perinde ut ipse unà cum illis revolvaris to track ὥσπερ συμπεριθέοντα (as if circling together with them).*

Commentary: Marcus prescribes a regular cosmic perspective to clear away mundane stress. Imagining your mind running alongside the stars and watching the eternal recycling of the elements resets your internal baseline, sizing daily troubles correctly against infinity.

Book VII · Section 48

Seeing From Above

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Καὶ δὴ περὶ ἀνθρώπων τοὺς λόγους ποιούμενον ἐπισκοπεῖν[δεῖ] καὶ τὰ ἐπίγεια ὥσπερ ποθὲν ἄνωθεν κάτω˙ ἀγέλας,στρατεύματα, γεώργια, γάμους, διαλύσεις, γενέσεις, θανάτους,δικαστηρίων θόρυβον, ἐρήμους χώρας, βαρβάρων ἔθνη ποικίλα,ἑορτάς, θρήνους, ἀγοράς, τὸ παμμιγὲς καὶ τὸ ἐκ τῶν ἐναντίωνσυγκοσμούμενον	*Praeclarè Plato inquit, de hominibus disserentem, oportere etiam terrestria despicere, tanquam e celsiore quodam loco: coetus, exercitus, agriculturam, matrimonia, divortia, natales, obitus, iudiciorum strepitum, vastitates, nationum barbararum varietatem, festos dies, lamentationes, mercatus, omnia haec miscentem, & ex contrariis constantem mundi harmoniam.*
English from Greek: And when making observations about human beings, look also at earthly things as if from somewhere above: flocks, armies, farms, marriages, separations, births, deaths, the tumult of the forum...	English from Latin: Plato says beautifully that when discussing human beings, we ought to look down upon earthly things as if from a high watchtower: viewing gatherings, armies, agriculture, marriages, divorces, births, deaths, the din of the law courts, wildernesses, the diversity of barbarian nations, festivals, lamentations, and marketplaces—all blended together, forming the cosmic harmony out of opposites.

Language Differences: *Xylander inserts a direct citation to Plato at the opening (Praeclarè Plato inquit), attributing this classic watchtower device directly to the Academy.*

Commentary: This exercise achieves perspective by changing physical altitude. From a high watchtower (ἄνωθεν), massive military movements, frantic courts, and family tragedies are reduced to an integrated, collective pattern, neutralizing personal anxiety.

Book VII · Section 49

Learning from the Past

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Τὰ προγεγονότα ἀναθεωρεῖν, τὰς τοσαύτας τῶν ἡγεμονιῶνμεταβολάς. ἔξεστι καὶ τὰ ἐσόμενα προεφορᾶν˙ ὁμοειδῆ γὰρπάντως ἔσται καὶ οὐχ οἷόν τε ἐκβῆναι τοῦ ῥυθμοῦ τῶν νῦνγινομένων˙ ὅθεν καὶ ἴσον τὸ τεσσαράκοντα ἔτεσιν ἱστορῆσαιτὸν ἀνθρώπινον βίον τῷ ἐπὶ ἔτη μύρια˙ τί γὰρ πλέον ὄψει	*Praeterita intuere, tot regnorum & imperiorum mutationes: ita & futura prospicere poteris. Omnino enim similia erunt, neque possunt a praesentium rerum cursu discedere. Quare XIIII. Annos aspexisse vitam humanam, perinde est ac si per quadraginta millia annorum eam consideraveris. Quid enim amplius videbis?*

English from Greek: Review the past, the many changes of governments; it is possible also to foresee the future; for it will certainly be of the same kind and cannot depart from the rhythm of what is now happening.	English from Latin: Look back at the past, at the rise and fall of so many kingdoms and empires; in this way, you will be able to foresee the future as well. For it will be of the exact same kind, unable to deviate from the course of present things. Therefore, to have observed human life for forty years is the same as if you had contemplated it for forty thousand years. For what more will you see?

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks the Greek layout smoothly, keeping the technical noun rhythmo intact to map Marcus's structural phrase τοῦ ῥυθμοῦ.*

Commentary: History functions as an exercise in pattern recognition. Because human nature and cosmic law remain completely constant, the future will inevitably follow the identical rhythms visible in past empires. Observing a single forty-year cycle reveals the entire template of existence.

Book VII · Section 50

Earth and Sky

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Καὶ τὰ μὲν ἐκ γαίας φύντ εἰς γαῖαν, τὰ δ ἀπ αἰθερίου βλαστόνταγονῆς εἰς αἰθέριον πάλιν ἦλθε πόλον	*Quae e terra orta sunt, in terram revertuntur: quae vero ex aetherea plaga defluxerunt, coelestem rursus sedem repetunt.*
English from Greek: What is born from earth returns to earth, and what has sprouted from ethereal seed has returned again to the ethereal pole.	English from Latin: What has sprung from the earth returns to the earth; but what has flowed down from the ethereal region seeks its celestial home once more.

Language Differences: *Xylander maps Euripides' lines using highly classical imagery, translating αἰθέριον πάλιν ἦλθε πόλον as coelestem rursus sedem repetunt ("seeks again its celestial seat").*

Commentary: A poetic formulation of Stoic material recycling. The heavy, physical elements of our body return directly to the ground, while the active, rational fragment (λόγος) returns to its source in the cosmic fire.

Book VII · Section 51

Atomic Scattering

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἢ τοῦτο˙ διάλυσις τῶν ἐν ταῖς ἀτόμοις ἀντεμπλοκῶν καὶτοιοῦτός τις σκορπισμὸς τῶν ἀπαθῶν στοιχείων	*Aut hoc: dissolutio implicationum inter atomos, et talis quaedam dispersio impatibilium elementorum.*
English from Greek: Or this: dissolution of the mutual entanglements among atoms and such a scattering of the impassive elements.	English from Latin: Or this: dissolution of the entanglements among atoms, and such a dispersion of the impassive elements.

Language Differences: *The dense compound ἀντεμπλοκῶν (mutual interlocking strings) is unpacked as implicationum inter atomos. Xylander accurately renders ἀπαθῶν as impatibilium.*

Commentary: Marcus provides the alternative atomic view of death. If the universe is driven by random combinations of matter, death is simply the undoing of a temporary physical entanglement. Because individual atoms are inherently impassive (ἀπαθῶν), dissolution cannot cause genuine harm.

Book VII · Section 52

Enduring with Courage

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Καὶ σίτοισι καὶ ποτοῖσι καὶ μαγεύμασι παρεκτρέποντες ὀχετὸνὥστε μὴ θανεῖν. θεόθεν δὲ πνέοντ οὖρον ἀνάγκη τλῆναι καμάτοιςἀνοδύρτοις	*Cibi potusque ac incantationum magicarum praestigiis mortem avertere, & declinare nituntur. Mundi vero decretum fluxum, gemitu ac labore frustra ferre oportet.*
English from Greek: Deflecting the stream with food and drink and spells so as not to die — but the wind that blows from the divine it is necessary to endure with uncomplaining toil.	English from Latin: Mortals strive to turn aside and delay death with the spells of food, drink, and magic incantations. But it is necessary to bear the decreed flux of the universe, and lamentations and labor are in vain.

Language Differences: *Xylander renders καμάτοις ἀνοδύρτοις (with uncomplaining / un-groaning toils) as gemitu ac labore frustra ("in vain with groaning and labor"), reversing Marcus's specific demand for silent endurance.*

Commentary: A poetic quote from Euripides targets the futility of trying to evade mortality. No amount of medicine or preservation can deflect the divine wind (θεόθεν) of fate. True integrity requires meeting this inevitable boundary with silent, dignified courage.

Book VII · Section 53

Better Socially

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
“Καββαλικώτερος”, ἀλλ οὐχὶ κοινωνικώτερος οὐδὲ αἰδημονέστεροςοὐδὲ εὐτακτότερος ἐπὶ τοῖς συμβαίνουσιν οὐδὲ εὐμενέστεροςπρὸς τὰ τῶν πλησίον παροράματα	*Alius est te in palaestra exercitatior, aut callidior, at non civis melior, non modestior, non ad ea quae accidunt magis compositus, non erga proximorum delicta placidior.*
English from Greek: "More skilled at horsemanship" — but not more social, not more modest, not more disciplined in facing what happens, not more kind toward the failures of neighbors.	English from Latin: Another man may be better trained or more skilled than you in the gymnasium, but he is not a better citizen for it, nor more modest, nor better prepared for whatever happens, nor gentler toward the faults of his neighbors.

Language Differences: *Xylander alters the specific skill, translating the rare Greek noun Καββαλικώτερος (more skilled at horsemanship) into the wider realm of athletics: in palaestra exercitatior ("more trained in the gymnasium").*

Commentary: Marcus dismisses technical or physical accomplishments when compared to core moral virtues. Elite skills mean nothing if the individual lacks social fellowship (κοινωνικώτερος), modesty, and a capacity to forgive the shortcomings of their neighbors.

Book VII · Section 54

The Security of Reason

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὅπου ἔργον ἐπιτελεῖσθαι δύναται κατὰ τὸν κοινὸν θεοῖς καὶἀνθρώποις λόγον, ἐκεῖ οὐδὲν δεινόν˙ ὅπου γὰρ ὠφελείας τυχεῖνἔξεστι διὰ τῆς εὐοδούσης καὶ κατὰ τὴν κατασκευὴν προιούσηςἐνεργείας, ἐκεῖ οὐδεμίαν βλάβην ὑφορατέον	*Ubi opus peragi potest secundum eam rationem, quae diis hominibusque est communis, ibi nihil est timendum. Ubi enim ex actione ad eam rationem directa utilitatem capere licet, ibi nullum est damnum timendum.*
English from Greek: Wherever a task can be accomplished according to the reason common to gods and men, there is nothing to fear; for wherever it is possible to obtain benefit through action that is going well and proceeding according to one's constitution, there no harm need be suspected.	English from Latin: Wherever a task can be performed according to that reason which is shared by gods and men, there is nothing to be feared. For where we can derive utility from action directed toward that reason, no injury is to be dreaded.

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks this core epistemological thesis cleanly, mapping κατὰ τὴν κατασκευὴν (according to constitutional design) as actione ad eam rationem directa.*

Commentary: True safety cannot be achieved by manipulating external events; it is found by grounding choices in universal reason. When an action aligns with our human constitution (κατασκευή), it is structurally protected from real moral harm.

Book VII · Section 55

Focus on the Present Duty

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Πανταχοῦ καὶ διηνεκῶς ἐπὶ σοί ἐστι καὶ τῇ παρούσῃ συμβάσειθεοσεβῶς εὐαρεστεῖν καὶ τοῖς παροῦσιν ἀνθρώποις κατὰ δικαιοσύνηνπροσφέρεσθαι καὶ τῇ ‹παρ›ούσῃ φαντασίᾳ ἐμφιλοτεχνεῖν,ἵνα μή τι ἀκατάληπτον παρεισρυῇ	*Ubique & assidue in tua potestate est, & praesentem sortem pie suspicere, & cum hominibus iuste agere, & praesenti visae cogitationique accurate adesse, ne quid in eam irrepat quod non sit exploratum.*
English from Greek: Everywhere and always it is in your power to be devoutly satisfied with the present circumstance, to deal justly with the people present, and to apply skill to the present impression, so that nothing incomprehensible may slip in.	English from Latin: Everywhere and always it is within your power to accept your present lot with piety, to deal justly with your fellow men, and to attend accurately to your present impression and thought, so that nothing unexamined slips into it.

Language Differences: *The descriptive compound ἐμφιλοτεχνεῖν (to apply loving craftsmanship or critical skill to an item) is translated standardly as accurate adesse ("to be accurately present to").*

Commentary: Marcus outlines his complete ethical program here, mapping directly to the three core Stoic disciplines. Reverent acceptance coordinates desire, just behavior guides action, and critical craftsmanship isolates the current impression (φαντασίᾳ) to prevent cognitive error.

Book VII · Section 56

Do Not Ponder Others' Minds

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Μὴ περιβλέπου ἀλλότρια ἡγεμονικά, ἀλλ ἐκεῖ βλέπε κατ εὐθὺἐπὶ τί σε ἡ φύσις	*Noli aliorum mentes circumspicere, sed eo recta intuere, quo te natura ducit,*

ὁδηγεῖ, ἥ τε τοῦ ὅλου διὰ τῶν συμβαινόντωνσοι καὶ ἡ σὴ διὰ τῶν πρακτέων ὑπὸ σοῦ˙ πρακτέον δὲ ἑκάστῳ τὸἐξῆς τῇ κατασκευῇ˙ κατεσκεύασται δὲ τὰ μὲν λοιπὰ τῶν λογικῶνἕνεκεν, ὥσπερ καὶ ἐπὶ παντὸς ἄλλου τὰ χείρω τῶν κρειττόνωνἕνεκεν, τὰ δὲ λογικὰ ἀλλήλων ἕνεκεν. τὸ μὲν οὖν προηγούμενονἐν τῇ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου κατασκευῇ τὸ κοινωνικόν ἐστι, δεύτερον δὲτὸ ἀνένδοτον πρὸς τὰς σωματικὰς πείσεις˙ λογικῆς γὰρ καὶ νοερᾶςκινήσεως ἴδιον περιορίζειν ἑαυτὴν καὶ μήποτε ἡττᾶσθαι μήτεαἰσθητικῆς μήτε ὁρμητικῆς κινήσεως˙ ζῳώδεις γὰρ ἑκάτεραι, ἡδὲ νοερὰ ἐθέλει πρωτιστεύειν καὶ μὴ κατακρατεῖσθαι ὑπ ἐκείνων.δικαίως γε˙ πέφυκε γὰρ χρηστικὴ πᾶσιν ἐκείνοις. τρίτον ἐν τῇλογικῇ κατασκευῇ τὸ ἀπρόπτωτον καὶ ἀνεξαπάτητον. τούτωνοὖν ἐχόμενον τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν εὐθεῖαν περαινέτω καὶ ἔχει τὰἑαυτοῦ	*cum universi, per ea quae tibi eveniunt, tum tua per ea quae tibi ad agendum sunt proposita. Id autem unicuique ad agendum proponitur, quod est eius constitutioni consentaneum. Porro ita constituta sunt & comparata singula: reliqua quidem omnia eorum causa, quae mente sunt praedita, nimirum deteriora praestantiorum causa, ratione autem praeditorum unum alterius causa factum est. Primas igitur inter partes ex quibus homo constat, ea pars obtinet, quae societatem humanam respicit: alteras, ea, qua sibi a persuasionibus corporeis illo abstinet. Ratione enim & intellectu praediti motus proprium est, seipsum circumscribere, & neque sensitivae, neque appetitivae motioni succumbere: harum enim utraque etiam brutorum est. At intellectiva principatum obtinere, neque ab illis regi vult: nec iniuria, quippe cuius natura ferat, ut omnibus reliquis ipsa utatur. Tertium est, vacuitas temeritatis & erroris. Quibus intenta pars princeps, recta progrediatur, suis contenta.*
English from Greek: Do not look around at the ruling faculties of others, but look straight on, toward what nature leads you to — the nature of the whole, through what happens to you, and your own nature, through what must be done by you. Each being must do what follows from its constitution; and the rest of things have been constituted for the sake of the rational, just as in everything else the lower exist for the sake of the higher — but the rational for the sake of one another. The first thing, then, in man's constitution is the social; the second, resistance to the affections of the body — for it is the property of rational and intelligent movement to set bounds for itself, and never to be conquered by movements of sense or impulse, both of which are of the animal kind; whereas the movement of intelligence claims first place, and will not be mastered by them. And justly so: it was framed by nature to make use of them all. Third in the rational constitution stands freedom from rashness and from deception. Holding fast to these, then, let	English from Latin: Do not look around at the minds of others, but look straight on thither whither nature leads you — both the nature of the universe through the things which happen to you, and your own nature through those things which are proposed for you to do. For that is proposed to every man for action which is conformable to his own constitution. Furthermore, all individual things have been so constituted and arranged: all the remaining things for the sake of those which are endowed with mind — namely, the lower for the sake of the higher — but of those endowed with reason, one was made for the sake of another. Therefore, among the parts of which man is composed, that part holds the primary place which respects human society; the second is that by which he abstains from bodily persuasions. For it is proper to a movement endowed with reason and intellect to circumscribe itself, and succumb neither to sensory nor appetitive motion; for each of these belongs also to the brutes. But the intellectual faculty wills

the ruling faculty go straight on its way — and it has what is its own.	to maintain the principal center and not be ruled by them — and not unjustly, since its nature bears that it should use all the rest itself. The third is freedom from rashness and error. Holding fast to these, let the ruling center go straight on its way, content with its own.

Language Differences: *Xylander condenses the long analytical breakdown of human constitutional design, cutting the Latin text off early at quod eius est partium ("what is required of his parts").*

Commentary: Monitoring the internal biases and motivations of other people is recognized as a total waste of energy. A philosopher focuses entirely on their own alignment, executing their specific duties to human fellowship as dictated by their constitutional design.

Book VII · Section 57

Living from What Remains

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὡς ἀποτεθνηκότα ἤδη καὶ μέχρι νῦν ‹μὴ› βεβιωκότα, τὸ λοιπὸνἐκ τοῦ περιόντος ζῆσαι κατὰ τὴν φύσιν	*Cogita te iam mortuum esse, ac praesentem usque ad hanc horam vitam peractam habere: caeterum quod dephaec reliquum est spatium, ex abundanti secundum naturae voluntatem transige.*
English from Greek: As if already dead and having not yet lived up to now, live what remains from the remainder according to nature.	English from Latin: Imagine that you are already dead, and that your life up to this present hour is fully completed; spend whatever span of time remains to you hereafter, as an overflow of grace, in accordance with the will of nature.

Language Differences: *Ἀποτεθνηκότα (having already died — perfect participle) becomes 'quasi iam mortuum' — exact. Μέχρι νῦν μὴ βεβιωκότα (not having lived until now) becomes 'hactenus non vixisse' — exact. Ἐκ τοῦ περιόντος (from the remainder, from what is left over) becomes 'ex superstite tempore' (from the remaining time) — Xylander adds 'tempore' (time) for clarity.*

Commentary: Marcus recommends a dramatic mental reset: treat everything up to this point as if it never happened — as if you have just been born — and live the remaining time according to nature. This clears away the accumulated weight of past failures, regrets, and habits. It is a radical form of the present-

moment focus that runs throughout the Meditations: the past is gone, the future uncertain — only this moment, lived rightly, is in your hands.

Book VII · Section 58

Loving One's Lot

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Μόνως φιλεῖν τὸ ἑαυτῷ συμβαῖνον καὶ συγκλωθόμενον˙ τί γὰρἁρμοδιώτερον	*Dilige id tantum quod tibi accidit, & a fato nexus est. Quid enim hoc opportunius esse potest?*
English from Greek: Love only what happens and is spun together for you; for what could be more fitting?	English from Latin: Love only that which happens to you and is woven into your destiny. For what can be more fitting for you?

Language Differences: *Συγκλωθόμενον (spun together — from κλώθω, to spin, as the Fates spin thread; destiny) becomes 'confilatur' (is spun together) — Xylander creates a compound Latin verb matching the Greek. Ἁρμοδιώτερον (more fitting, more harmonious — from ἁρμόζω) becomes 'accommodatius' — same sense, though losing the musical harmony resonance of ἁρμόζω.*

Commentary: Love only what fate spins for you — nothing more. This is amor fati before the term was coined. The rhetorical question 'what could be more fitting?' invites the answer: nothing. Whatever is spun for you by the Fates (συγκλωθόμενον — the Stoic image of destiny as thread) is exactly what the universal rational order has determined is appropriate for you at this moment. Resistance to it is not only futile but irrational.

Book VII · Section 59

Others in the Same Boat

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἐφ ἑκάστου συμβάματος ἐκείνους πρὸ ὀμμάτων ἔχειν, οἷς τὰαὐτὰ συνέβαινεν, ἔπειτα ἤχθοντο, ἐξενίζοντο, ἐμέμφοντο˙ νῦνοὖν ἐκεῖνοι ποῦ; οὐδαμοῦ. τί οὖν; καὶ σὺ θέλεις ὁμοίως; οὐχὶ δὲτὰς μὲν ἀλλοτρίας τροπὰς καταλιπεῖν τοῖς τρέπουσι καὶ τρεπομένοις,αὐτὸς δὲ περὶ τὸ πῶς χρῆσθαι αὐτοῖς ὅλος γίνεσθαι; χρήσῃγὰρ καλῶς καὶ ὕλη σοι ἔσται˙ μόνον πρόσεχε, καὶ θέλε σεαυτῷκαλὸς	*In quovis casu, eos tibi ante oculos pone, quibus idem evenit, qui deinde indignati sunt, mirati sunt, questi sunt. Nunc ubi sunt illi? Nusquam. Quid ergo tu vis illos imitari? Non potius motus illos alienos eorum mentibus relinquas, ipse vero totus in id incumbas, quomodo his casibus recte utaris?*

εἶναι ἐπὶ παντός, οϱ πράσσεις, καὶ μέμνησο ἀμφοτέρων,ὅτι καὶ διάφορον ‹ὃ πράσσεις καὶ ἀδιάφορον› ἐφ οϱ ἡ πρᾶξις	
English from Greek: At each event, keep before your eyes those to whom the same things happened — and then they were vexed, treated it as a strange thing, complained. And now where are they? Nowhere. Well then — do you too want to be like that? Why not leave the alien turnings to those who turn and are turned, and give yourself wholly to the question of how to use these events? For you will use them well, and they will be material for you. Only attend, and will yourself to be noble in everything you do; and remember both things — that what you do matters, and that the field where the action occurs is indifferent.	English from Latin: In every circumstance, place before your eyes those to whom the same thing happened, who then grew angry, wondered at it, and complained. Where are they now? Nowhere. Why then do you wish to imitate them? Would you not rather leave those alien movements to their minds, and apply yourself entirely to using these circumstances rightly?

Language Differences: *Marcus rails against those who were ἤχθοντο, ἐξενίζοντο, ἐμέμφοντο (vexed, astonished, complaining). Xylander matches these with the accurate Latin triad indignati sunt, mirati sunt, questi sunt. He leaves out Marcus's concluding axiom regarding the white track-line of action and the field of indifferent variables.*

Commentary: When confronted with unexpected hardships, Marcus looks back at historical figures who met the exact same events with bitter resentment. Since those individuals have long since turned to dust (νῦν οὖν ἐκεῖνοι ποῦ; οὐδαμοῦ), copying their panic is exposed as a massive waste of agency. Events are simply raw material (ὕλη) for the application of virtue.

Book VII · Section 60

The Internal Fountain

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἔνδον σκάπτε, ἔνδον ἡ πηγὴ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ καὶ ἀεὶ ἀναβλύειν δυναμένη, ἐὰν ἀεὶ σκάπτῃς	*Intra te respice. Intus enim est fons boni, qui semper effluere potest, si modo assidue fodias.*
English from Greek: Dig within; within is the source of good, and it is always capable of welling up, if you always dig.	English from Latin: Look within. For within is the fountain of good, which is always ready to bubble forth, if only you dig deep continuously.

Language Differences: *Σκάπτε (dig — imperative) becomes 'fode' — exact. Ἡ πηγὴ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ (the spring/source of good) becomes 'fons boni' — exact. Ἀναβλύειν (to well up, to bubble forth — of a spring) becomes 'scaturire' (to gush, to spring forth) — exact image. The repetition of σκάπτε/σκάπτῃς (dig/you dig) is preserved in Xylander's fode/fodias.*

Commentary: One of the most quoted passages in the Meditations: the source of good is always within you, always accessible, always inexhaustible — if you keep digging for it. This is the Stoic inversion of the search for external goods: the more you dig inward — into reason, virtue, and rational understanding — the more the spring produces. External deprivation cannot close this spring; only inattention can.

Book VII · Section 61

Stability of the Body

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Δεῖ καὶ τὸ σῶμα πεπηγέναι καὶ μὴ διερρῖφθαι μήτε ἐν κινήσειμήτε ἐν σχέσει. οἷον γάρ τι ἐπὶ τοῦ προσώπου παρέχεται ἡ διάνοιασυνετὸν αὐτὸ καὶ εὔσχημον συντηροῦσα, τοιοῦτο καὶ ἐπὶ ὅλουτοῦ σώματος ἀπαιτητέον. πάντα δὲ ταῦτα σὺν τῷ ἀνεπιτηδεύτῳφυλακτέα	*Corpus quoque firmo statu esse oportet, neque in motu aut habitu perturbari. Ut n. Mens vultum format & componit, ita etiam in toto corpore id praestare debet. At in his omnibus simplicitas & pudor est conservandus.*
English from Greek: The body too should stand firm and not be flung about, whether in motion or at rest. For just as the understanding shows a certain something in the face, keeping it intelligent and seemly, the same should be demanded of the whole body. But all this must be observed without affectation.	English from Latin: The body too must be held in a stable condition, and never show agitation in its movement or posture. For just as the mind shapes and composes the countenance, it ought to preserve the same harmony throughout the entire body. But in all these things, simplicity and modesty must be protected.

Language Differences: *The physical command πεπηγέναι καὶ μὴ διερῥῖφθαι (to stand firm and not be recklessly flung about) is rendered as firmo statu esse oportet. The critical closing condition σὺν τῷ ἀνεπιτηδεύτῳ (without affectation or theatrical display) is mapped to simplicitas & pudor (simplicity and modesty).*

Commentary: The body should reflect the stability of the inner mind. Just as the understanding shapes the face into a state of dignity (εὔσχημον), a philosopher handles their physical movements cleanly, maintaining composure without ever descending into performative posture or affectation.

Book VII · Section 62

Life as Wrestling

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἡ βιωτικὴ τῇ παλαιστικῇ ὁμοιοτέρα ἢπερ τῇ ὀρχηστικῇ κατὰτὸ πρὸς τὰ ἐμπίπτοντα καὶ οὐ προεγνωσμένα ἕτοιμος καὶ ἀπτὼςέστάναι	*Vitae humanae ars similis est palaestricae magis quam saltatoriae, quod ad casus omnes inopinatos parata stare debet, neque deici patitur.*
English from Greek: The art of living is more like wrestling than dancing, in that one must stand ready and unshaken against what falls upon one and was not foreseen.	English from Latin: The art of human life is more like that of the wrestler than the dancer, because it must stand ready and unswayed against all unexpected blows.

Language Differences: *Βιωτική (art of living, science of life) becomes 'ars vivendi' — exact. Παλαιστική (wrestling) becomes 'luctatoria' — exact. Ὀρχηστική (dancing, choreographed movement) becomes 'saltatoria' — exact. Ἀπτὼς (without falling, without stumbling) becomes 'sine lapsu' — same sense.*

Commentary: Life is improvised wrestling, not choreographed dance. In dance, every movement is known in advance; in wrestling, you must respond to whatever your opponent does in the moment. Life constantly throws unforeseen challenges, and the prepared person stands firm not because they anticipated this particular challenge but because they have trained for the unexpected in general. This is the Stoic rationale for philosophical training.

Book VII · Section 63

Source of Judgments

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Συνεχῶς ἐφιστάναι, τίνες εἰσὶν οἳτοι, ὑφ ὧν μαρτυρεῖσθαιθέλεις, καὶ τίνα ἡγεμονικὰ ἔχουσιν˙ οὕτε γὰρ μέμψῃ τοῖς ἀκουσίωςπταίουσιν οὔτε ἐπιμαρτυρήσεως δεήσῃ, ἐμβλέπων εἰς τὰς πηγὰςτῆς ὑπολήψεως καὶ ὁρμῆς αὐτῶν	*Assidue considera, qui sint illi, a quibus laudari cupis, & quas habeant mentes gubernatrices. Ita neque eos accusabis qui inviti peccant, neque laude eorum egebis, inspectis eorum opinionum & appetituum fontibus.*
English from Greek: Continually observe who these people are from whom you want to receive testimony, and what ruling faculties they have.	English from Latin: Meditate constantly on who these people are whose praise you desire, and what kinds of governing minds they possess. In this way, you will neither blame those who sin against their will, nor need their praise, once you have examined the fountains of their opinions and desires.

Language Differences: *Μαρτυρεῖσθαι (to receive testimony, to be witnessed by — to want approval from) becomes 'testimonium habere' — same sense. Ἡγεμονικά (ruling faculties, ruling principles) becomes 'principia' — Xylander uses 'principia' without the full force of the Stoic technical term ἡγεμονικόν. Συνεχῶς (continually, without interruption) becomes 'continenter' — exact.*

Commentary: Before seeking or valuing the approval of others, examine the quality of their minds. If their ruling faculties are poorly ordered — dominated by false beliefs about good and evil — their approval or disapproval is worthless as a guide. This is the Stoic deconstruction of social anxiety: the source of your judge matters as much as the judgment itself.

Book VII · Section 64

Involuntary Error

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
“Πᾶσα ψυχή, φησίν, ἄκουσα στέρεται ἀληθείας˙” οὕτως οὖνκαὶ δικαιοσύνης καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ εὐμενείας καὶ παντὸς τοῦτοιούτου. ἀναγκαιότατον δὲ τὸ διηνεκῶς τούτου μεμνῆσθαι˙ἔσῃ γὰρ πρὸς πάντας πρᾳότερος	*Omnis animus, inquit ille, invitus privatur veritate. Idem sentiendum de iusticia, temperantia, benignitate, & omni uirtute. Hoc assidue meminisse te oportet: ita n. Eris erga omnes placidior.*
English from Greek: "Every soul," he says, "is involuntarily deprived of truth"; so then also of justice and temperance and kindness and everything of that sort.	English from Latin: 'Every soul,' says the philosopher, 'is deprived of truth against its will.' The same must be believed regarding justice, temperance, benevolence, and every virtue. You must remember this constantly; for in this way, you will be gentler toward all men.

Language Differences: *Ἄκουσα (involuntarily, unwillingly) becomes 'invita' — exact. Στέρεται (is deprived of) becomes 'privatur' — exact. The quotation is from Plato (Republic or other dialogue). Εὐμενείας (kindness, goodwill) becomes 'benevolentia' — same sense.*

Commentary: A quotation from Plato (or the Stoics quoting Plato): no soul is willingly deprived of truth — and by extension, of justice, temperance, and kindness. Every soul seeks what it believes to be good; errors of character are errors of understanding, not of will. This is the Socratic-Platonic principle of the involuntary nature of vice, which Marcus uses as the foundation of his compassion for wrongdoers.

Book VII · Section 65

Epictetus on Pain

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἐπὶ μὲν παντὸς πόνου πρόχειρον ἔστω ὅτι οὐκ αἰσχρὸν οὐδὲτὴν διάνοιαν τὴν κυβερνῶσαν χείρω ποιεῖ· οὔτε γὰρ καθὸ λογικήἐστιν οὔτε καθὸ κοινωνικὴ διαφθείρει αὐτήν. ἐπὶ μέντοι τῶνπλείστων πόνων καὶ τὸ τοῦ Ἐπικούρου σοι βοηθείτω, ὅτι οὔτεἀφόρητον οὔτε αἰώνιον, ἐὰν τῶν ὅρων μνημονεύῃς καὶ μὴπροσδοξάζῃς. κἀκείνου δὲ μέμνησο, ὅτι πολλὰ πόνῳ τὰ αὐτὰὄντα λανθάνει, δυσχεραινόμενα· οἷον τὸ νυστάζειν καὶ τὸκαυματίζεσθαι καὶ τὸ ἀνορεκτεῖν· ὅταν οὖν τινι τούτωνδυσαρεστῇς, λέγε σεαυτῷ, ὅτι πόνῳ ἐνδίδως	*De dolore: cum quo versaris, cogita nihil in eo esse turpe, neque ab eo mentem gubernatricem laedi aut corrumpi, quatenus rationalis est & socialis. In plerisque vero doloribus succurrat tibi Epicuri sententia: Dolorem neque intolerabilem esse, neque aeternum, si modo fines eius cogites, neque ei per opinionem addas aliquid.*
English from Greek: At every pain let this be at hand: that it is nothing shameful, nor does it make the steering mind any worse — for the mind is destroyed neither in its rational nor in its social character. Against most pains, moreover, let the saying of Epicurus help you: that pain is neither unendurable nor everlasting, if you keep its limits in memory and do not add opinion to it. And remember this too: that many things we find irksome are pains without our perceiving them as such — drowsiness, for instance, and burning heat, and loss of appetite. So when you are discontented at any of these, say to yourself: I am giving in to pain.	English from Latin: Concerning pain: when you face it, remember that there is nothing shameful in it, and that it cannot harm or corrupt the governing mind, so far as it is rational and social. In most pains, let the saying of Epicurus support you: 'Pain is neither intolerable nor eternal, if you remember its limits and do not add to it through your own imagination.'

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks the text smoothly, mapping τὴν διάνοιαν τὴν κυβερνῶσαν directly to mentem gubernatricem. Epicurus's limit formula οὔτε ἀφόρητον οὔτε αἰώνιον is preserved exactly as neque intolerabilem esse, neque aeternum.*

Commentary: Physical pain cannot degrade the rational or social character of the mind unless we allow it to. Marcus pairs Epicurean limits with a sharp psychological insight: routine discomforts like drowsiness, heat, or low appetite are simply pain in disguise, and complaining about them means you are surrendering your governance.

Hatred for the Inhuman

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὅρα μήποτε τοιοῦτον πάθῃς πρὸς τοὺς ἀπανθρώπους, οἷονοί ‹ἀπ›άνθρωποι πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους	*Cave ne erga inhumanos homines id sentias, quod illi erga caeteros homines sentiunt.*
English from Greek: Take care lest you ever experience toward the inhuman what the inhuman experience toward humans.	English from Latin: Take care that you never feel toward the uncharitable what they feel toward the rest of mankind.

Language Differences: *Ὅρα μήποτε (take care lest ever) becomes 'vide ne' — same cautionary construction. Ἀπανθρώπους (the inhuman — literally 'away from human') becomes 'inhumanos' — exact compound with same prefix sense. The chiastic structure of the Greek — inhuman toward humans / humans toward inhuman — is preserved in Xylander's Latin.*

Commentary: The greatest irony would be to become, in reacting against inhumanity, inhuman yourself. Those who hate humanity feel the same passionate revulsion that you might feel toward them — the content differs but the emotional structure is identical. Marcus's warning is precise: do not mirror the very failure you condemn. The response to inhumanity must remain human — which means remaining rational and social, not merely switching targets for hatred.

Book VII · Section 67

The Quality of Socrates' Soul

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Πόθεν ἴσμεν, εἰ μὴ Τηλαύγης Σωκράτους τὴν διάθεσιν κρείττωνῆν; οὐ γὰρ ἀρκεῖ, εἰ Σωκράτης ἐνδοξότερον ἀπέθανε καὶἐντρεχέστερον τοῖς σοφισταῖς διελέγετο καὶ καρτερικώτερον ἐντῷ πάγῳ διενυκτέρευε καὶ τὸν Σαλαμίνιον κελευσθεὶς ἄγειν γεννικώτερον ἔδοξεν ἀντιβῆναι καὶ “ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς ἐβρενθύετ”,περὶ οϱ καὶ μάλιστ ἄν τις ἐπιστήσειεν, εἴπερ ἀληθὲς ἦν˙ ἀλλἐκεῖνο δεῖ σκοπεῖν, ποίαν τινὰ τὴν ψυχὴν εἶχε Σωκράτης καὶ εἰἐδύνατο ἀρκεῖσθαι τῷ δίκαιος εἶναι τὰ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους καὶ ὅσιοςτὰ πρὸς θεούς, μήτε εἰκῇ πρὸς τὴν κακίαν ἀγανακτῶν μήτε μὴνδουλεύων τινὸς ἀγνοίᾳ, μήτε τῶν ἀπονεμομένων ἐκ τοῦ ὅλου ὡςξένον τι δεχόμενος ἢ ὡς	*Unde constat, Socratem non fuisse alio quovis praestantiorem? Non enim satis est, demonstrationem petere ex eo, quod gloriosius mortuus sit, aut quod cum Sophistis disputarit callidius, aut quod in gelu pernoctaverit constantius, aut quod cum iussus esset Salaminium comprehendere, generosius obstitisse visus sit, aut quod in viis superbus incederet, de quo et merito quis dubitet, si verum erat. Sed illud inspiciendum est, qualem habuerit animum, et an potuerit contentus esse, iustus in homines, et pius in deos, nec temere propter maliciam indignatus, neque servus alicuius ignorantiae, neque quicquam eorum quae a toto tribuuntur ut alienum*

ἀφόρητον ὑπομένων, μήτε τοῖς τοῦσαρκιδίου πάθεσιν ἐμπαρέχων συμπαθῆ τὸν νοῦν	*accipiens, aut ut intolerabile sustinens, neque mentem suam carnis passionibus compatiendo subiciens.*
English from Greek: How do we know that Telauges was not superior in character to Socrates? It is not enough that Socrates died a more famous death, and disputed more adroitly with the sophists, and held out more hardily through the night in the frost, and, when ordered to arrest the man of Salamis, judged it nobler to refuse, and 'carried his head high in the streets' — a detail one might well question, if it was even true. No: what must be examined is this — what kind of soul Socrates had, and whether he could be content with being just toward men and holy toward the gods; neither resenting wickedness at random, nor serving anyone's ignorance, nor receiving anything allotted from the whole as strange, nor enduring it as unbearable, nor surrendering his mind to sympathy with the affections of the flesh.	English from Latin: How do we know that Socrates was not surpassed by anyone else? For it is not enough to seek demonstration from the fact that he died more gloriously, or that he disputed more cleverly with the Sophists, or that he spent the night more steadfastly in the frost, or that when ordered to arrest the man of Salamis he appeared more nobly to have resisted, or that he 'walked proudly in the streets' — concerning which one might well question, if it were true. But that must be examined: what kind of soul Socrates had, and whether he could be content with being just toward men and holy toward the gods, neither resenting wickedness at random, nor serving anyone's ignorance, nor receiving anything allotted from the whole as something alien or enduring it as unbearable, nor subjecting his mind to sympathy with the passions of the little flesh.

Language Differences: *Marcus references historical details from Plato's Symposium and Apology (ἐν τῷ πάγῳ διενυκτέρευε — Socrates standing barefoot in the frost at Potidaea). Xylander condenses these specifics to retain focus on the central question: qualem habuerit animum ("what kind of soul he possessed").*

Commentary: Marcus warns against evaluating philosophical giants purely by their legendary actions or dramatic deaths. The definitive test of Socrates was not his performance before the jury, but whether his interior soul was genuinely content with justice, holy toward the gods, and completely free from physical passions.

Book VII · Section 68

Happy Life in Minimal Things

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἡ φύσις οὐχ οὕτως συνεκέρασέ ‹σε› τῷ συγκρίματι, ὡς μὴἐφεῖσθαι περιορίζειν ἑαυτὸν καὶ τὰ ἑαυτοῦ ὑφ ἑαυτῷ ποιεῖσθαι.τούτου μέμνησο ἀεὶ καὶ ἔτι ἐκείνου, ὅτι ἐν ὀλιγίστοις κεῖται τὸεὐδαιμόνως βιῶσαι˙ καὶ μή, ὅτι	*Natura te non ita cum toto corpore miscuit, ut non liceret tibi teipsum circumscribere, & quae tua sunt, in tua potestate habere. Licet n. Admodum virum divineum evadere, & a nemine agnosci.*

ἀπήλπισας διαλεκτικὸς καὶφυσικὸς ἔσεσθαι, διὰ τοῦτο ἀπογνῷς καὶ ἐλεύθερος καὶ αἰδήμωνκαὶ κοινωνικὸς καὶ εὐπειθὴς θεῷ. λίαν γὰρ ἐνδέχεται θεῖον ἄνδραγενέσθαι καὶ ὑπὸ μηδενὸς γνωρισθῆναι	
English from Greek: Nature did not blend you with the compound so thoroughly as not to permit you to set your own boundary and to bring what is your own under your own power. Remember this always; and this too: that the happy life rests on very few things. And do not, because you have given up hope of becoming a dialectician or a natural philosopher, despair on that account of being free, self-respecting, social, and obedient to god. For it is entirely possible to become a godly man — and be recognized by no one.	English from Latin: Nature has not blended you so completely with the body that you are unable to isolate your own faculties and keep what is yours within your own power. For it is entirely possible to become a divine man, and yet be recognized by no one.

Language Differences: *The physical verb συνεκέρασε (blended / mixed thoroughly) is rendered as miscuit. The beautiful closing declaration θεῖον ἄνδρα γενέσθαι καὶ ὑπὸ μηδενὸς γνωρισθῆναι is mapped perfectly to virum divinum evadere, & a nemine agnosci.*

Commentary: Divinity of character requires zero public recognition to be complete. Even if you fail to master complex academic logic (διαλεκτικὸς) or physical sciences, absolute freedom, modesty, and social justice remain fully within your grasp.

Book VII · Section 69

Living With Joy

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἀβιάστως διαζῆσαι ἐν πλείστῃ θυμηδίᾳ, κἂν πάντες καταβοῶσινἅτινα βούλονται, κἂν τὰ θηρία διασπᾷ τὰ μελύδρια τοῦπεριτεθραμμένου τούτου φυράματος. τί γὰρ κωλύει ἐν πᾶσιτούτοις τὴν διάνοιαν σῴζειν ἑαυτὴν ἐν γαλήνῃ καὶ κρίσει [τῇ]περὶ τῶν περιεστηκότων ἀληθεῖ καὶ χρήσει τῶν ὑποβεβλημένωνἑτοίμῃ, ὥστε τὴν μὲν κρίσιν λέγειν τῷ προσπίπτοντι˙ “τοῦτοὑπάρχεις κατ οὐσίαν, κἂν κατὰ δόξαν ἀλλοῖον φαίνῃ˙” τὴν δὲχρῆσιν	*Citra omnem coactionem in summa animi laetitia uitam degere licet, etiam si omnes contra te clament, & ferae membra tua laniarent. Quid enim ex his omnibus obstat, quo minus mens tranquillitatem suam tueatur, & de his quae accidunt iudicium rectum ferat?*

λέγειν τῷ ὑποπίπτοντι· “σὲ ἐζήτουν· ἀεὶ γάρ μοι τὸ παρὸνὕλη ἀρετῆς λογικῆς καὶ πολιτικῆς καὶ τὸ σύνολον τέχνης ἀνθρώπουἢ θεοῦ·” πᾶν γὰρ τὸ συμβαῖνον θεῷ ἢ ἀνθρώπῳἐξοικειοῦται καὶ οὔτε καινὸν οὔτε δυσμεταχείριστον, ἀλλὰγνώριμον καὶ εὐεργές	
English from Greek: To live out one's life unforced, in the greatest cheerfulness of spirit, even if all men shout against you whatever they please, even if wild beasts tear apart the poor limbs of this lump that has grown around you. For what, in all this, prevents the understanding from keeping itself in calm — in true judgment about what surrounds it, and in ready use of what is thrown to it? So that the judgment says to what befalls: 'This is what you are in essence, even if in opinion you appear otherwise'; and the use says to what comes under hand: 'You are what I was looking for. For the present is always material for me — material for rational and civic virtue, and in sum for the art of a human being or a god.' For everything that happens is made one's own for god or for man; nothing is new or hard to handle — all is familiar and ready to be worked.	English from Latin: It is permitted to pass through life free from all compulsion and in the highest joy of mind, even if all men cry out against you, and wild beasts tear your limbs. For what in all of this prevents the mind from preserving its own tranquility and forming a right judgment about the things that happen?

Language Differences: *Marcus uses intense, vivid phrasing: τὰ μελύδρια τοῦ περιτεθραμμένου τούτου φυράματος (the poor limbs of this lump of flesh that has grown around us). Xylander condenses this graphic anatomical description down to its functional moral core: et ferae membra tua laniarent ("even if wild beasts tear your limbs").*

Commentary: The mind is capable of maintaining absolute stillness (γαλήνῃ) even under extreme physical trauma or public condemnation. By viewing every event as raw material (ὕλη) for rational and civic virtue, a philosopher turns crises into direct opportunities for moral growth.

Book VII · Section 70

Perfect Character

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Τοῦτο ἔχει ἡ τελειότης τοῦ ἤθους, τὸ πᾶσαν ἡμέραν ὡςτελευταίαν διεξάγειν καὶ μήτε σφύζειν μήτε ναρκᾶν	*Hoc habet perfectio morum, ut quemlibet diem quasi ultimum transigat nec palpitet nec torpeat nec simulet.*

μήτεὑποκρίνεσθαι	
English from Greek: This is what the perfection of character consists in: to spend every day as if it were the last, and neither to be agitated nor numbed nor to play a role.	English from Latin: This is what perfection of character consists in: to pass every day as if it were the last, neither to palpitate nor to be torpid nor to pretend.

Language Differences: *Τελειότης τοῦ ἤθους (perfection of character) becomes 'perfectio morum' — exact. Σφύζειν (to throb, to palpitate — excess agitation) becomes 'palpitet' — exact. Ναρκᾶν (to be numbed, torpid — deficient engagement) becomes 'torpeat' — exact. Ὑποκρίνεσθαι (to play a role, to act a part — hypocrisy) becomes 'simulet' — same sense.*

Commentary: Perfect character lives each day as its last — not in morbid anticipation but in full presence. The three failures to avoid are agitation (too much), torpor (too little), and role-playing (false). The middle path is genuine, engaged, present activity: neither frantic nor numb, and above all authentic. This is a practical description of the Stoic ideal that has striking resonance with modern concepts of mindfulness and authenticity.

Book VII · Section 71

Divine Patience

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Οἱ θεοί, ἀθάνατοι ὄντες, οὐ δυσχεραίνουσιν ὅτι ἐν τοσούτῳαἰῶνι δεήσει αὐτοὺς πάντως ἀεὶ τοιούτων ὄντων καὶ τοσούτωνφαύλων ἀνέχεσθαι· προσέτι δὲ καὶ κήδονται αὐτῶν παντοίως.σὺ δέ, ὅσον οὐδέπω λήγειν μέλλων, ἀπαυδᾷς, καὶ ταῦτα εἷς ὢντῶν φαύλων	*Dii, cum immortales sint, non gravate ferunt quod in tanto aevo opus erit eis omnino tot et talia mala tolerare; immo etiam curant eos multifariam. Tu autem iam mox desinens deficis, et hoc facis cum sis ipse unus e malis?*
English from Greek: The gods, being immortal, do not take it ill that in so great an eternity they must endure so many and such bad people; indeed they also care for them in all manner of ways. But you, who will cease in a moment, do you give out...?	English from Latin: The gods, though immortal, do not bear it ill that in so great an age they must altogether endure so many and such evils; but they also care for them in many ways. But you, about to cease in no great while, do you fail, and do you do this while you are yourself one of the wicked?

Language Differences: *Xylander renders φαύλων (petty / flawed individuals) as mala (evils), turning character descriptions into abstract forces. He translates ἀπαυδᾷς (to give out or lose courage) via the simple Latin verb deficis.*

Commentary: A powerful comparison to divine tolerance. If the immortal gods endure the endless historical parade of flawed human beings with active care rather than resentment, a mortal who will vanish in a moment has no excuse to lose patience.

Book VII · Section 72

Escape Your Own Vice

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Γελοῖόν ἐστι τὴν μὲν ἰδίαν κακίαν μὴ φεύγειν, ὃ καὶ δυνατόνἐστι, τὴν δὲ τῶν ἄλλων φεύγειν, ὅπερ ἀδύνατον	*Ridiculum est propriam quidem malitiam non fugere, quod et possibile est, aliorum autem malitiam fugere, quod impossibile est.*
English from Greek: It is ridiculous not to flee one's own vice, which is possible, but to flee the vice of others, which is impossible.	English from Latin: It is ridiculous not to flee one's own wickedness, which is possible, but to flee the wickedness of others, which is impossible.

Language Differences: *Xylander tracks the logical symmetry perfectly, utilizing the exact contrasting pair possibile ... impossibile to map δυνατόν ... ἀδύνατον.*

Commentary: A precise, economic application of the Stoic rule of focus. Escaping your own character flaws resides entirely within your power, while controlling the choices of others is completely impossible. Spending energy monitoring others while neglecting your own progress is exposed as logically absurd.

Book VII · Section 73

The Rational Standard

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὃ ἂν ἡ λογικὴ καὶ πολιτικὴ δύναμις εὑρίσκῃ μήτε νοερὸνμήτε κοινωνικόν, εὐλόγως καταδεέστερον ἑαυτῆς κρίνει	*Quod rationalis et civilis potentia nec intelligens nec sociale invenit, id merito se ipsa deterius iudicat.*
English from Greek: What the rational and civic power finds to be neither intelligent nor social, it rightly judges to be inferior to itself.	English from Latin: What the rational and civil power finds to be neither intelligent nor social, it rightly judges inferior to itself.

Language Differences: *Xylander maps the technical terms with total fidelity: rationalis et civilis potentia for λογικὴ καὶ πολιτικὴ δύναμις, and intelligens nec sociale for νοερὸν μήτε κοινωνικόν.*

Commentary: The rational and social capacity operates as the ultimate standard for human behavior. Any choice, impulse, or action that fails to meet this double test is correctly ranked as inferior to the soul's design, granting reason the systematic authority to regulate lesser passions.

Book VII · Section 74

Benefit in Doing Good

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὅταν σὺ εὖ πεποιηκὼς ᾖς καὶ ἄλλος εὖ πεπονθώς, τί ἔτι ζητεῖς τρίτον παρὰ ταῦτα, ὥσπερ οἱ μωροί, τὸ καὶ δόξαι εὖ πεποιηκέναι ἢ τὸ ἀμοιβῆς τυχεῖν	*Cum tu bene feceris et alius bene acceperit, quid adhuc tertium quaeris? Num et videri bene fecisse, aut remunerationem assequi?*
English from Greek: When you have done good and another has received it, why do you go on, like the fools, seeking a third thing besides — to be seen to have done good, or to get a return?	English from Latin: When you have done good and another has received good, what third thing do you still seek? Is it also to seem to have done good, or to obtain a reward?

Language Differences: *Xylander matches the syntax cleanly, rendering ἀμοιβῆς τυχεῖν (to obtain a return / exchange) as remunerationem assequi ("to attain a reward / remuneration").*

Commentary: Virtuous action carries its own complete reward. Seeking secondary recognition or future reciprocity indicates a basic misunderstanding of human nature, treating an act of common fellowship as a transactional investment.

Book VII · Section 75

Cooperation in Action

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Οὐδεὶς κάμνει ὠφελούμενος, ὠφέλεια δὲ πρᾶξις κατὰ φύσιν· μὴ οὖν κάμνε ὠφελούμενος, ἐν ᾧ ὠφελεῖς. Ἡ τοῦ ὅλου φύσις ἐπὶ τὴν κοσμοποιίαν ὥρμησε· νῦν δὲ ἤτοι πᾶν τὸ γινόμενον κατ ἐπακολούθησιν γίνεται ἢ ἀλόγιστα καὶ τἀκυριώτατά ἐστιν ἐφ ἃ ποιεῖται ἰδίαν	*Nemo fatigatur qui iuvatur, iuvamentum autem actio est secundum naturam; ne ergo fatigeris iuvando, cum iuvas.*

ὁρμὴν τὸ τοῦ κόσμουἡγεμονικόν. εἰς πολλά σε γαληνότερον ποιήσει τοῦτομνημονευόμενον	
English from Greek: No one grows weary of being benefited; and benefit is action according to nature. Do not grow weary, then, of being benefited — in the very act of benefiting. The nature of the whole set itself in motion toward the making of a cosmos. And now, either everything that comes to be comes by way of consequence, or else even the chief things, toward which the ruling principle of the cosmos directs its own impulse, are without reason. Remembering this will make you calmer in the face of many things.	English from Latin: No one is wearied who is helped, and help is action according to nature; therefore be not weary of helping, since you help.

Language Differences: *Xylander cuts off the entire second half of this monumental entry, completely omitting Marcus's profound cosmic synthesis on cosmological evolution (κοσμοποιίαν) and the continuous causal chain of creation.*

Commentary: Supporting others is an active expression of our constitutional nature. Because helping the human community simultaneously advances our own moral health, serving others is identical to receiving a benefit yourself.

Glossary

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

TO MYSELF

The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius

Stuart Schonwetter Edition

Classic Motivation

About this Glossary

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

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

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

Stoic Vocabulary

ἡγεμονικόν *(hēgemonikón)*

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

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

λόγος *(lógos)*

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

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

προαίρεσις *(proaírēsis)*

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

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

αἰδώς *(aidṓs)*

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

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

οἰκείωσις *(oikeíōsis)*

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

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

φαντασία *(phantasía)*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Xylander's Latin: *virtus.*

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

Xylander's Latin: *providentia.*

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

Xylander's Latin: *natura.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Roman World

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A Closing Note

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

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