

TO MYSELF



# CHARACTER IS DESTINY

ἦθος

*Stop performing; start being.*



MARCUS AURELIUS

ΤΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΕΑΥΤΟΝ · BOOK VIII

CLASSIC MOTIVATION



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Book VIII of the Meditations · ΤΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΕΑΥΤΟΝ

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## **To Myself**

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

### **Volume VIII — Character Is Destiny (Book VIII)**

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

Edited by Stuart Schonwetter. Classic Motivation · [classicmotivation.com](http://classicmotivation.com)

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

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## **This Volume**

You have missed your chance to be thought a philosopher — so stop performing, and simply be good. Book VIII of the *Meditations* opens with Marcus letting go of his reputation, and finds a strange freedom in it: with nothing left to prove, the only thing that matters is what he actually is.

What follows is the book's most bracing writing on character as the one thing wholly ours — the ruling mind that no insult, accident, or tyrant can touch. Weigh every action against a single question: shall I regret this? Set the conquerors beside the philosophers and see who was truly free. Take each hardship as material for virtue, as fire takes whatever is thrown on it. Reputation is smoke; character is fate.

This volume of the *To Myself* series presents Book VIII 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 VIII

Book VIII opens with a humiliation quietly turned into freedom. Marcus admits what he can no longer claim — a whole life lived, from youth, as a philosopher. The reputation is gone; others see it, and so does he. Instead of grieving the loss, he uses it. With appearance forfeit, only reality is left to work on: be just, be temperate, be courageous, be free. The performance ends, and the person begins. That pivot is the book's title in miniature — character, not reputation, is what a life actually comes to.

From there Marcus presses the same point from many angles. Weigh each act by whether you will regret it. Set the great conquerors — Alexander, Caesar, Pompey — beside the thinkers — Diogenes, Heraclitus, Socrates — and ask honestly which of them was in command of himself, and which was a servant to fortune and appetite. And remember that people will act as they act whether or not you rage about it; your one province is your own response.

The book's deep subject is the autonomy of the ruling mind, and its images are unforgettable. The severed hand that, alone among the body's parts, can rejoin what it cut itself from — so reconciliation always remains open to us. The sunbeam that reaches a wall and rests against it, extending without spilling or breaking. The anti-anxiety drill of shrinking time to the present moment, which, taken alone, is always small enough to bear. Take every obstacle as material, Marcus says, the way a bright fire masters whatever is thrown into it.

Read this volume with the columns together. Book VIII is where “character is destiny” is argued rather than merely asserted; watch Marcus's key Greek terms — ἡγεμονικόν, the ruling faculty, and ἦθος, character — find their Latin equivalents, and see how the vivid concrete passages, the sunbeam and the severed limb, survive the crossing into a scholar's Latin.

# Book VIII · Character Is Destiny

## Book VIII · Section 1

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Καὶ τοῦτο πρὸς τὸ ἀκενόδοξον φέρει, ὅτι οὐκέτι δύνασαι τὸν βίον ὅλον ἢ τὸν γε ἀπὸ νεότητος φιλόσοφον βεβιωκέναι, ἀλλὰ πολλοῖς τε ἄλλοις καὶ αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ δῆλος γέγονας πόρρω φιλοσοφίας ὦν. πέφυρσαι οὖν, ὥστε τὴν μὲν δόξαν τὴν τοῦ φιλοσόφου κτήσασθαι οὐκέτι σοι ῥάδιον· ἀνταγωνίζεται δὲ καὶ ἡ ὑπόθεσις. εἶπερ οὖν ἀληθῶς ἐώρακας ποῦ κεῖται τὸ πρᾶγμα, τὸ μὲν τί δόξεις ἄφες, ἀρκέσθητι δέ, εἰ κἂν τὸ λοιπὸν τοῦ βίου ὅσον δήποτε, &lt;ἢ&gt; ἢ [σῆ] φύσις σοῦ θέλει, βιώσῃ. κατανόησον οὖν τί θέλει, καὶ ἄλλο μηδὲν σε περισπάτω· πεπεύρασαι γὰρ περὶ πόσα πλανηθεῖς οὐδαμοῦ εἴρηες τὸ εὖ ζῆν, οὐκ ἐν συλλογισμοῖς, οὐκ ἐν πλούτῳ, οὐκ ἐν δόξῃ, οὐκ ἐν ἀπολαύσει, οὐδαμοῦ. ποῦ οὖν ἐστίν; ἐν τῷ ποιεῖν ἃ ἐπιζητεῖ ἢ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου φύσις. πῶς οὖν ταῦτα ποιήσει; ἐὰν δόγματα ἔχῃ ἀφ' ὧν αἱ ὁρμαὶ καὶ αἰπράξεις. τίνα δόγματα; τὰ περὶ ἀγαθῶν καὶ κακῶν, ὡς οὐδενὸς μὲν ἀγαθοῦ ὄντος ἀνθρώπῳ ὃ οὐχὶ ποιεῖ δίκαιον, σώφρονα, ἀνδρεῖον, ἐλεύθερον, οὐδενὸς δὲ κακοῦ ὃ οὐχὶ ποιεῖ τὰναντία τοῖς εἰρημένοις</p>	<p><i>Id quoque ad minuendam gloriae cupiditatem facit, quod non licet tibi adhuc totam vitam, quae prima tua aetate fuit, philosophice vivere; sed cum multis aliis, tum vero tibi ipsi manifestum est factum, te procul a philosophia abesse. Conturbatae igitur sunt tuae rationes, cum neque ipse iam nomen philosophi facile possis adipisci, et tuum institutum repugnet. Si itaque vere perspexisti in quo sit res posita, omitte curare quis habearis: satis autem sit tibi si reliquum vitae arbitrio naturae exigas. Quid ea velit cogita, hinc te nihil divellat. Expertus enim es, circum quot res vagatus, nusquam vitam beatam invenisse: non in ratiocinationibus, non in divitiis, non in gloria, non in voluptate, nullibi. Ubi vero est? In agendo ea quae hominis natura requirit. Quomodo ita aget? Si ea habeat dogmata, a quibus consentaneae appetitiones et actiones veniant. Quae sunt illa? De bonis et malis: scilicet, nihil esse bonum homini quod non reddit iustum, temperantem, fortem, liberalem; nihil malum, nisi quod horum contrarium efficiat.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: This too tends against vainglory: that you can no longer claim to have lived your whole life as a philosopher, or even your life since youth; to many others, and to yourself as well, it has become plain that you are far from philosophy. You have been muddled, then — so that to acquire the reputation of a philosopher is no longer easy for you; and your station in life fights against it too. If, then, you have truly seen where the matter lies, put away the question of how you will appear, and be content if you live the remainder of your life, whatever its length, as your nature wills. Consider, then, what it wills, and let nothing else distract you. For you have made trial and wandered through how many things without finding the good life anywhere — not in syllogisms,</p>	<p>English from Latin: This too helps to lessen the lust for glory: that it is no longer open to you to have lived your whole life as a philosopher, the life that was yours from your earliest years; rather, it has become plain to many others, and to yourself, that you are far from philosophy. Your accounts, then, are thrown into confusion, since you can no longer easily win the name of philosopher, and your station in life fights against it. If, therefore, you have truly seen where the matter lies, give up caring how you are reputed, and be content if you live out the rest of your life as nature wills. Consider what she wills, and let nothing pull you from it. For you have learned by experience, having wandered through so many things, that nowhere did you find the happy life — not</p>

not in wealth, not in reputation, not in enjoyment — nowhere. Where, then, is it? In doing what man's nature seeks. And how will a man do this? If he holds doctrines from which his impulses and actions flow. What doctrines? Those concerning goods and evils: that nothing is good for a man which does not make him just, temperate, courageous, free; and nothing evil which does not produce the opposites of these.	in reasonings, not in riches, not in glory, not in pleasure, nowhere. Where is it then? In doing what man's nature requires. How will he do this? If he holds the doctrines from which fitting impulses and actions flow. What are they? Concerning goods and evils: namely, that nothing is good for a man which does not make him just, temperate, brave, and liberal; and nothing evil but what produces the contrary of these.
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**Language Differences:** Marcus utilizes the rare compound ἀκενόδοξον (freedom from vainglory), which Xylander renders as *ad minuendam gloriae cupiditatem* ("to diminish the desire for glory"). The Greek ὑπόθεσις (station in life, baseline premise, or public role) is translated by Xylander as *institutum* (purpose, design, or lifestyle).

**Commentary:** Book VIII opens with an empirical humiliation accepted and converted directly into spiritual freedom. Marcus concedes that his public reputation as a pure philosopher is structurally forfeit due to his position as Emperor. This clears away the performative trap of appearance; with vanity gone, he limits his moral focus to the four primary cardinal virtues: justice, temperance, fortitude, and freedom.

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#### Book VIII · Section 2

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Καθ' ἐκάστην πράξιν ἐρώτα σεαυτόν· πῶς μοι αὕτη ἔχει; μὴ μετανοήσω ἐπ' αὐτῇ; μικρὸν καὶ τέθνηκα καὶ πάντ' ἐκ μέσου· τί πλέον ἐπιζητῶ, εἰ τὸ παρὸν ἔργον ζώου νοεροῦ καὶ κοινωνικοῦ καὶ ἰσονόμου θεῶ</p>	<p><i>In omni actione a teipso quaere, qualis ea tibi sit. Nec poenitentia eius movere: parum abest ut moriaris, et omnia e medio sint. Quid praeterea requiro, si praesens actio animalis est mente praediti, societatis hominum studiosi, et deo aequalis?</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: At every action ask yourself: how does this stand with me? Shall I not repent of it? A little while and I am dead, and everything is gone from the scene. What more do I seek, if the present work is that of an intelligent and social creature, under the same law as god?</p>	<p>English from Latin: At every action ask yourself: how does this stand with me? Shall I not repent of it? A little while, and I am dead, and all things are out of the way. What more do I seek, if my present action is that of a living being endowed with mind, devoted to the fellowship of men, and equal to God?</p>

**Language Differences:** The precise Greek compound ἰσονόμου θεῶ (subject to the same law as God) is translated by Xylander as *deo aequalis* ("equal to God"),

introducing a transcendent, almost matching status where the Greek structures a shared constitutional submission.

**Commentary:** Marcus commands an immediate moral audit before undertaking any action. Regret (μετάνοια) is the ultimate internal signal of an unnatural choice. Because biological existence is short-lived, the passing moment must be harvested through actions that reflect our shared citizenship in the universal city of reason.

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**Book VIII · Section 3**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἀλέξανδρος [δὲ] καὶ Γάιος καὶ Πομπήιος τί πρὸς Διογένη καὶ Ἡράκλειτον καὶ Σωκράτην; οἱ μὲν γὰρ εἶδον τὰ πράγματα καὶ τὰς αἰτίας καὶ τὰς ὕλας, καὶ τὰ ἡγεμονικὰ ἦν αὐτῶν αὐτά&lt;ρκη&gt;, ἐκεῖ&lt;νων&gt; δὲ ὅσων πρόνοια καὶ δουλεία πόσων</p>	<p><i>Alexander, Caius, et Pompeius, quid hi ad Diogenem, Heraclitum, vel Socratem? Hi enim noverant res, earum causas, materias: ita erant ipsarum mentes instructae. Illic vero, quibus in rebus esset prudentia, et servitus.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Alexander and Gaius and Pompey — what are they beside Diogenes and Heraclitus and Socrates? These men saw things, and their causes, and their materials, and their ruling faculties were sufficient to themselves; but as for those others — how much there was to provide for, and of how many things they were slaves!</p>	<p>English from Latin: Alexander, Gaius, and Pompey — what are these beside Diogenes, Heraclitus, or Socrates? For these men knew things, their causes, and their materials; their minds were so furnished. But in the others — in how many matters there was both their cleverness and their slavery!</p>

**Language Differences:** Xylander corrects his base text's typography in his final proofs, rendering πρόνοια (anxiety, concern, or planning) as providentia / anxietas, capturing the mental baggage required to support material empires.

**Commentary:** A sharp inversion of historical prestige. Military autocrats like Julius Caesar or Pompey are diagnosed as structural slaves to external variables, anxieties, and logistical metrics. True self-mastery belongs exclusively to the thinkers who managed their own ἡγεμονικόν independent of chance.

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**Book VIII · Section 4**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ὅτι οὐδὲν ἤπτον τὰ αὐτὰ ποιήσουσι, κἂν σὺ διαρράγῃς</p>	<p><i>Nihilominus eadem facient, etiam si tu te ruperis.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Remember that men will do the very same things nonetheless,</p>	<p>English from Latin: None the less they will do the very same things, even if you burst</p>

even if you burst with protest.	with protest.
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**Language Differences:** The visceral Greek verb διαρραγῆς (to snap, burst, or rupture from intense strain) is perfectly translated by the reflexive Latin construction *etiam si tu te ruperis*.

**Commentary:** Marcus targets his own internal frustration with court sycophants and political friction. Getting angry because irrational people act irrationally is a basic error. A philosopher must accept external human behavior as an immutable property of nature, saving their internal peace from empty, destructive complaints.

Book VIII · Section 5

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Τὸ πρῶτον μὴ ταρασσου· πάντα γὰρ κατὰ τὴν τοῦ ὅλου φύσιν, καὶ ὀλίγου χρόνου οὐδεὶς οὐδαμοῦ ἔσῃ, ὥσπερ οὐδὲ Ἀδριανὸς οὐδὲ Αὐγούστος. ἔπειτα ἀτενίσας εἰς τὸ πρᾶγμα ἴδε αὐτὸ καὶ συμνημονεύσας ὅτι ἀγαθὸν σε ἄνθρωπον εἶναι δεῖ καὶ τί τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἢ φύσις ἀπαιτεῖ, πρᾶξον τοῦτο ἀμεταστρεπτι καὶ εἰπέ, ὡς δικαιοτάτου φαίνεται σοι· μόνον εὐμενῶς καὶ αἰδημόνως καὶ ἀνυποκρίτως</p>	<p><i>Primum est hoc, ne perturberis: omnia secundum universi naturam eveniunt; et paulo post nusquam eris, ut nunc nusquam sunt Adrianus et Augustus. Deinde, in rem ipsam considera, recordatusque debere te esse bonum virum, ac quod hominis natura velit; age id quod propositum est constanter ac iustissime; teque egisse bene puta, modo placide, verecunde, et citra simulationem egeris.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: First: be not disturbed; for all things follow the nature of the whole, and in a little while you will be no one and nowhere — as Hadrian is not, and Augustus is not. Next: fix your gaze on the matter and see it as it is; and remembering that you must be a good man, and what man's nature demands, do it without looking back — and speak as appears to you most just. Only: with kindness, with modesty, without pretense.</p>	<p>English from Latin: First is this: be not disturbed; for all things come to pass according to the nature of the universe; and in a little while you will be nowhere, as now Hadrian and Augustus are nowhere. Next, look to the thing itself, and remembering that you must be a good man, and what man's nature wills, do what is set before you steadfastly and most justly; and hold that you have done well — provided you have acted calmly, modestly, and without dissembling.</p>

**Language Differences:** The precise adverb ἀμεταστρεπτι (without turning around, without vacillating or looking back) is rendered as *constanter* (steadfastly / resolutely). Marcus's closing triad — εὐμενῶς καὶ αἰδημόνως καὶ ἀνυποκρίτως — maps to Xylander's *placide, verecunde, et citra simulationem*.

**Commentary:** This section functions as an immediate tactical manual for handling geopolitical or administrative crises. Step one isolates the internal will

by reminding the agent that past emperors like Hadrian and Augustus have completely vanished, shrinking current concerns down to size. Step two directs the execution of duty with absolute, uncompromised transparency.

Book VIII · Section 6

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἡ τῶν ὅλων φύσις τοῦτο ἔργον ἔχει, τὰ ὧδε ὄντα ἐκεῖ μετατιθέναι, μεταβάλλειν, αἴρειν ἔνθεν καὶ ἐκεῖ φέρειν. πάντα τροπαί· ἀλλὰ ἴσαι καὶ αἱ ἀπονεμήσεις. πάντα συνήθη· οὐχ ὥστε φοβηθῆναι, μή τι καινόν</p>	<p><i>Universi natura hoc agit, ut quae hoc modo habent alio mutet, et ex uno loco in alium res transferat. Omnia constant mutationibus; neque quicquam metue: nihil enim novi, omnia usitata eveniunt, et aequaliter dispensantur.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: The nature of the whole has this work: to transfer what is here to there, to change it, to lift it hence and carry it yonder. All things are turnings — but equal, too, are the apportionings. All things are familiar; there is no ground to fear anything new.</p>	<p>English from Latin: The nature of the universe does this work: it changes the things that are in one state into another, and transfers them from one place to another. All things consist in changes; and fear nothing: nothing is new, all things come to pass as familiar, and are dispensed in equal measure.</p>

**Language Differences:** The Greek τροπαί (turnings, transformations, or systemic rotations) is simplified by Xylander into mutationibus (changes). He translates ἀπονεμήσεις (fair distributions or allocations) as dispensantur.

**Commentary:** Universal nature functions as an active system of material recycling. Because every single event is structurally integrated into this balanced cycle of change, unexpected variations are impossible, stripping away any logical foundation for fear.

Book VIII · Section 7

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἀρκεῖται πᾶσα φύσις ἑαυτῇ εὐοδούσῃ, φύσις δὲ λογικὴ εὐοδεῖ ἐν μὲν φαντασίαις μήτε ψευδεῖ μήτε ἀδήλω συγκατατιθεμένῃ, τὰς ὁρμὰς δὲ ἐπὶ τὰ κοινωνικὰ ἔργα μόνα ἀπευθύνουσα, τὰς ὀρέξεις δὲ καὶ τὰς ἐκκλίσεις τῶν ἐφ ἡμῖν μόνων περιποιουμένη, τὸ δὲ ὑπὸ τῆς κοινῆς φύσεως ἀπονεμόμενον πᾶν ἀσπαζομένη· μέρος γὰρ αὐτῆς ἐστὶν ὡς ἡ τοῦ φύλλου φύσις τῆς τοῦ φυτοῦ φύσεως· πλὴν ὅτι ἐκεῖ μὲν ἡ τοῦ φύλλου φύσις</p>	<p><i>Ceterum unaquaeque natura, si recta via ingrediatur, sibi ipsi sufficit. Natura autem intellectiva id facit, si in cogitationibus id observet, ne falso aut obscuro astipuletur; impetus animi ad eas solum actiones dirigat quae faciunt ad societatem hominum; ea tantum appetat et vitet quae in nobis sunt posita; omnia quae a communi natura tribuuntur grata habeat. Huius enim pars est, sicut natura folii naturae stirpis pars est —</i></p>

<p>μέρος ἐστὶ φύσεως καὶ ἀναισθήτου καὶ ἀλόγου καὶ ἐμποδίζεσθαι δυναμένης, ἡ δὲ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου φύσις μέρος ἐστὶν ἀνεμποδίστου φύσεως καὶ νοεραῆς καὶ δικαίας, εἶγε ἴσους καὶ κατ' ἀξίαν τοὺς μερισμοὺς χρόνων, οὐσίας, αἰτίου, ἐνεργείας, συμβάσεως ἐκάστοις ποιεῖται. σκόπει δέ, μὴ εἰ τὸ &lt;ἐν&gt; πρὸς τὸ ἐν ἴσον εὐρήσεις ἐπὶ παντός, ἀλλὰ εἰ συλλήβδην τὰ πάντα τοῦδε πρὸς ἀθροα τὰ τοῦ ἑτέρου</p>	<p><i>nisi quod haec est eius naturae quae, et sensu et intellectu carens, impediri possit; hominis natura pars est naturae quae impediri non possit, intelligat, et iusta sit; siquidem aequaliter et pro dignitate uniuscuiusvis tempora, substantiam, actionem, et eventa dividit. Considera autem aequalitatem: eam inventurum te si singulas res examines; si unam cum universis conferas, non item.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Every nature is content with itself when it goes well on its way; and a rational nature goes well on its way when it gives assent to nothing false or unclear among its impressions, directs its impulses only to acts for the common good, confines its desires and aversions to what is in our power, and welcomes everything assigned by the common nature. For it is a part of that nature, as the leaf's nature is part of the plant's — except that there the leaf's nature is part of a nature without sense or reason and capable of being hindered, while man's nature is part of a nature unhindered, intelligent, and just; seeing that it gives to each, equally and according to worth, its shares of time, substance, cause, activity, and circumstance. But look not for equality between one thing and one thing in every case; look rather at the whole of this one taken together against the whole of that other.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Moreover, every nature is content with itself when it goes well on its way; and an intelligent nature goes well on its way when, in its thoughts, it assents to nothing false or obscure, directs the soul's impulses only to those actions that serve the fellowship of men, desires and avoids only the things in our power, and welcomes all that the common nature assigns. For it is a part of that nature, as the nature of the leaf is part of the nature of the plant — save that the leaf's nature is one that, lacking sense and understanding, can be hindered; whereas man's nature is part of a nature that cannot be hindered, that understands and is just, since it distributes equally and according to worth the times, the substance, the action, and the events of each. But look for this equality not by comparing one thing with the whole, but by examining things one by one.</p>

**Language Differences:** The structural Greek participle εὐοδόουση (faring well, mapping a smooth path) is translated by Xylander as *si recta via ingrediatur* ("if it enters by the straight road"). Marcus's epistemic restriction μήτε ψευδεῖ μήτε ἀδήλω (neither to the false nor the unclear) maps directly to *ne falso aut obscuro*.

**Commentary:** This entry defines the exact operational metrics of a healthy rational consciousness. Rationality succeeds when it actively filters incoming impressions, guides actions toward human fellowship, and embraces fate. While a leaf is passively subject to physical obstruction, human intention retains absolute internal autonomy, entirely free from external blockages.

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Book VIII · Section 8

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
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<p>Ἀναγινώσκειν οὐκ ἔξεστιν· ἀλλὰ ὕβριν ἀνείργειν ἔξεστιν· ἀλλὰ ἡδονῶν καὶ πόνων καθυπερτερεῖν ἔξεστιν· ἀλλὰ τοῦ δοξαρίου ὑπεράνω εἶναι ἔξεστιν· ἀλλὰ ἀναισθητοῖς καὶ ἀχαρίστοις μῆθυμοῦσθαι, προσέτι κήδεσθαι αὐτῶν ἔξεστιν</p>	<p><i>Atqui licet libidinem arcere, voluptatibus et doloribus superiorem esse, item gloriolae; licet etiam stupidis et ingratis non irasci.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: You cannot read. But you can hold back insolence; you can rise above pleasures and pains; you can be superior to the scrap of fame; you can refrain from anger at the unfeeling and the ungrateful — and, more, you can care for them.</p>	<p>English from Latin: And yet it is in your power to ward off lust, to be superior to pleasures and pains, and likewise to petty glory; it is even in your power not to be angry with the stupid and the ungrateful.</p>

**Language Differences:** The collective Greek diminutive *δοξαρίου* (petty reputation / scrap of fame) is precisely matched by Xylander's choice of the Latin diminutive *gloriolae*. Xylander supplies the verb *licet* ("it is permitted / in your power") to anchor the rhythm.

**Commentary:** Marcus counters his personal frustration regarding his lack of leisure for academic study. While command on campaign prevents deep scholarly tracking, moral choice is never restricted. Restraining anger and actively caring for ungrateful companions remain immediate actions fully within our control.

#### Book VIII · Section 9

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Μηκέτι σου μηδεὶς ἀκούσῃ καταμεμφομένου τὸν ἐν ἀύλῃ βίον μηδὲ σὺ σεαυτοῦ</p>	<p><i>Nemo te audiat vitam aulicam reprehendere, ac ne tu quidem teipsum.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Let no one any longer hear you finding fault with life at court — nor let yourself hear it.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Let no one hear you finding fault with life at court — nor let even yourself hear it.</p>

**Language Differences:** The translation maps perfectly; τὸν ἐν ἀύλῃ βίον (existence inside the courtyard / palace) is rendered standardly as *vitam aulicam*.

**Commentary:** Marcus issues a blunt command to eliminate administrative self-pity. Complaining about the burden of his imperial office leaks energy and reinforces a false perception of harm. True resilience requires executing duty silently without performative grumbling.

Book VIII · Section 10

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἡ μετάνοιά ἐστὶν ἐπίληψις τις ἑαυτοῦ ὡς χρήσιμόν τι παρειακότος· τὸ δὲ ἀγαθὸν χρήσιμόν τι δεῖ εἶναι καὶ ἐπιμελητέον αὐτοῦ τῷ καλῷ καὶ ἀγαθῷ ἀνδρὶ· οὐδεὶς δ' ἂν καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ μετανοήσειεν ἐπὶ τῷ ἡδονῆν τινα παρειακέναι· οὔτε ἄρα χρήσιμον οὔτε ἀγαθὸν ἡδονή</p>	<p><i>Poenitentia est reprehensio quaedam sui ipsius, propter bonum aliquod dimissum; bonum vero oportet utile esse, ideoque ei cura habenda viro bono et honesto. At nullus tali poenitentia ducetur ob neglectam aliquam voluptatem; ergo voluptas neque in bonis est, neque in utilibus numeranda.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Repentance is a kind of self-reproach for having let something useful pass by; but the good must be something useful, and the perfect and good man must attend to it. Now no perfect and good man would ever repent of having let a pleasure pass. Pleasure, therefore, is neither useful nor good.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Repentance is a kind of self-reproach for some useful thing let slip; but the good must be something useful, and so the good and honorable man must take care of it. Yet no such man would feel repentance for any pleasure he let pass; therefore pleasure is to be reckoned neither among goods nor among useful things.</p>

**Language Differences:** The technical definition ἐπίληψις τις ἑαυτοῦ (a seizing or laying hold of oneself) is rendered as *reprehensio quaedam sui ipsius* ("a certain self-reproach"). Xylander maps the character archetype καλῷ καὶ ἀγαθῷ ἀνδρὶ directly into standard humanist vocabulary: *viro bono et honesto*.

**Commentary:** A tight logical syllogism. Repentance is an emotional alarm indicating that a genuine good has been missed. Because an integrated character never experiences moral regret over passing up a sensory pleasure, pleasure is proven to be completely separate from genuine goodness.

Book VIII · Section 11

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Τοῦτο τί ἐστὶν αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτὸ τῇ ἰδίᾳ κατασκευῇ, τί μὲν τὸ οὐσιώδες αὐτοῦ καὶ ὑλικόν, τί δὲ τὸ αἰτιώδες, τί δὲ ποιεῖ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, πόσον δὲ χρόνον ὑφίσταται</p>	<p><i>Res ita expendendae sunt: Quid est hoc per se et sua propria constitutione? Quae eius substantia et materia? Quae forma? Quod eius in mundo officium? Ac quamdiu permanet?</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: This thing — what is it in itself, in its own constitution? What is its substance and material? What its cause? What does it do in the cosmos? And for how long a time does it subsist?</p>	<p>English from Latin: Things are to be weighed thus: What is this in itself, in its own proper constitution? What is its substance and material? What its form? What its office in the world? And how long does it last?</p>

**Language Differences:** Xylander transforms the abstract Greek τὸ αἰτιώδες (the causal / efficient factor) into the classical Aristotelian term *forma* (form), updating the vocabulary for Renaissance readers.

**Commentary:** Marcus applies his standard reductionist technique. To neutralize the emotional disruption of a complex object or situation, you must strip it bare, analyzing its physical material, its causal origin, its function, and its lifespan.

Book VIII · Section 12

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ὅταν ἐξ ὕπνου δυσχερῶς ἐγείρη, ἀναμιμνήσκου ὅτι κατὰ τὴν κατασκευὴν σου ἐστὶ καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπικὴν φύσιν τὸ πράξεις κοινωνικὰς ἀποδιδόναι, τὸ δὲ καθεύδειν κοινὸν καὶ τῶν ἀλόγων ζώων· ὃ δὲ κατὰ φύσιν ἐκάστω, τοῦτο οἰκειότερον καὶ προσφνέστερον καὶ δὴ καὶ προσηνέστερον</p>	<p><i>Si difficulter a somno expergiscaris, reminiscere consentaneum esse tuae constitutioni et naturae humanae, ut aliquid agas quod coetui humano prosit. At dormire etiam brutis est commune. Quod autem unicuique secundum naturam est, id et magis proprium ei est et cognatius, adde etiam gratius.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: When you wake from sleep with reluctance, remember that to render social acts is according to your constitution and according to human nature, while sleeping is shared with the irrational animals too. And what is according to each being's nature is more proper to it, more native — and indeed more pleasant.</p>	<p>English from Latin: If you wake from sleep with difficulty, remember that it accords with your constitution and with human nature to do something that benefits the human community. But sleeping is shared even with the brutes; whereas what is according to nature for each is the more proper to it, the more akin, and indeed the more agreeable.</p>

**Language Differences:** The Greek τῶν ἀλόγων ζώων (irrational animals) is translated by Xylander using the direct Latin noun *brutis* (brutes / beasts). Πράξεις κοινωνικὰς ἀποδιδόναι is rendered as *aliquid agas quod coetui humano prosit* ("to do something that benefits the human gathering").

**Commentary:** A return to the morning struggle first tracked in Book V. Human consciousness is designed specifically for social utility and cooperative actions. Because sleep is an unreflective state shared with beasts, choosing active community service aligns with our proper human nature.

Book VIII · Section 13

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Διηνεκῶς καὶ ἐπὶ πάσης, εἰ οἶόν τε,</p>	<p><i>Hoc assidue, et ad quaecumque</i></p>

<p>φαντασίας φυσιολογεῖν, παθολογεῖν, διαλεκτικεύεσθαι</p>	<p><i>incidentes cogitationes, si fieri possit, in promptu habendum.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Wipe out impressions, saying continually to yourself: it is now in my power that in this soul there be no wickedness, no desire, no disturbance at all; but seeing all things as they are, I use each according to its worth. Remember this power that nature gives you.</p>	<p>English from Latin: This should be kept ready at hand continually, and at whatever thoughts may arise, if it can be done.</p>

**Language Differences:** *Xylander provides a highly compressed rendering for this entry, cutting out the explicit structural definition of assessing items according to worth to preserve rhetorical momentum.*

**Commentary:** This entry commands continuous cognitive filtering. The mind retains absolute internal sovereignty to bar entry to malice, anxiety, or chaotic desires, ensuring every impression is parsed cleanly according to its objective worth.

Book VIII · Section 14

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ὅτι ἂν ἐντυγχάνῃς, εὐθὺς ἑαυτῷ πρόλεγε· οὗτος τίνα δόγματα ἔχει περὶ ἀγαθῶν καὶ κακῶν; εἰ γὰρ περὶ ἡδονῆς καὶ πόνου καὶ τῶν ποιητικῶν ἑκατέρου καὶ περὶ δόξης, ἀδοξίας, θανάτου, ζωῆς, τοιάδε τινὰ δόγματα ἔχει, οὐδὲν θαυμαστὸν ἢ ξένον μοι δόξει. ἔὰν τάδε τινὰ ποιῇ, καὶ μεμνήσομαι ὅτι ἀναγκάζεται οὕτως ποιεῖν</p>	<p><i>Si de natura, affectibus, aut aliis rebus disputare cum aliquo libet, statim teipsum ante interroga: Quenam is sentit de bonis et malis? Nam opiniones de voluptate et dolore, eorumque efficientibus, de honore, ignominia, morte, vita [omnia produunt].</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Whomever you meet, say to yourself at once: what doctrines does this man hold about goods and evils? For if he holds such-and-such doctrines about pleasure and pain and what produces each, about fame and obscurity, death and life, it will seem to me nothing wonderful or strange if he does such-and-such things; and I shall remember that he is compelled to act so.</p>	<p>English from Latin: If you wish to dispute with someone about nature, the passions, or other matters, first ask yourself at once: What does this man think about goods and evils? For his opinions about pleasure and pain and their causes, about honor and dishonor, death and life [reveal everything].</p>

**Language Differences:** *Xylander reframes the context from an immediate encounter to a formal philosophical debate: Si de natura... disputare cum aliquo libet. He appends a concluding bracketed synthesis: [omnia produunt] ("they reveal everything").*

**Commentary:** Human behavior flows deterministically from underlying value structures. If an individual categorizes material pleasure as a good and death as an evil, their reactions are entirely predictable. Recognizing this pattern eliminates surprise when encountering social friction.

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**Book VIII · Section 15**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Μέμνησο ὅτι, ὥσπερ αἰσχρὸν ἐστὶ ξενίζεσθαι, εἰ ἡ συκῆ σῦκα φέρει, οὕτως, εἰ ὁ κόσμος τάδε τινὰ φέρει ὧν ἐστὶ φορός· καὶ ἰατρῶ δὲ καὶ κυβερνήτη αἰσχρὸν ξενίζεσθαι, εἰ πεπύρεχεν οὗτος ἢ εἰ ἀντίπνοια γέγονεν</p>	<p><i>Non debet mihi novum aut mirum videri, si quae res hoc aut illo modo agat: cogitabo enim ita opus esse fieri. Cogitabo: sicut turpe sit velle me in admirationem rapi si ficus fructum suum producat, ita etiam si mundus ea proferat quorum est ferax; et medico et gubernatori turpe sit mirari velle, si quis febricitaret, aut si adversus ventus exstiterit.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Remember that, as it is shameful to be surprised that the fig tree bears figs, so it is shameful to be surprised that the cosmos bears the crop it is the bearer of. And for a physician or a helmsman it is shameful to be surprised that this man has a fever, or that a headwind has sprung up.</p>	<p>English from Latin: It ought not to seem new or strange to me if something acts in this way or that: for I shall reflect that it must needs be so done. I shall reflect that, just as it would be base for me to be carried into wonder that the fig tree bears its fruit, so too if the world brings forth the things of which it is fruitful; and that it would be base for a physician or a pilot to wish to wonder if someone fell into a fever, or if a contrary wind arose.</p>

**Language Differences:** Xylander tracks the text precisely, matching the navigation metaphor ἀντίπνοια directly to the nautical phrase *adversus ventus* (contrary wind / headwind).

**Commentary:** Expecting the world to change its laws to accommodate personal comfort is a basic failure of logic. Just as a fig tree naturally yields figs, a complex human society will naturally yield difficult or ungrateful personalities. A trained ruler should view social friction as expected environmental data.

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**Book VIII · Section 16**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Μέμνησο ὅτι καὶ τὸ μετατίθεσθαι καὶ ἔπεσθαι τῷ διορθοῦντι ὁμοίως ἐλεύθερόν ἐστι· σὴ γὰρ ἐνέργεια, κατὰ</p>	<p><i>Memento mutare sententiam, et recte monenti obsequi, perinde esse liberi. Tua enim actio est, secundum tui animi</i></p>

<p>τὴν σὴν ὀρμηὴν καὶ κρίσιν καὶ δὴ καὶ κατὰ νοῦν τὸν σὸν περαινομένη</p>	<p><i>impetum facta atque iudicium, tuamque mentem.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Remember that to change your mind and to follow the one who sets you right are equally acts of freedom. For the action is yours, carried through according to your own impulse and judgment — indeed, according to your own mind.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Remember that to change your opinion, and to follow one who rightly sets you straight, is equally the act of a free man. For the action is your own, done according to your own impulse and judgment, and your own mind.</p>

**Language Differences:** The translation maps flawlessly; the key phrase *ἔπεισθαι τῷ διορθοῦντι* (following the one who corrects) becomes *recte monenti obsequi* ("to comply with one advising rightly").

**Commentary:** Marcus targets intellectual pride. True autonomy does not mean clinging stubbornly to an initial error out of vanity; shifting your perspective based on superior evidence or objective truth is a direct, active victory for your own reason.

Book VIII · Section 17

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p><i>Εἰ μὲν ἐπὶ σοί, τί αὐτὸ ποιεῖς; εἰ δὲ ἐπ' ἄλλῳ, τί νιν μέμψῃ; ταῖς ἀτόμοις ἢ τοῖς θεοῖς; ἀμφοτέρω μανιώδη. οὐδενὶ μεμπτέον. εἰ μὲν γὰρ δύνασαι, διόρθωσον· εἰ δὲ τοῦτο μὴ δύνασαι, τό γε πρᾶγμα αὐτό· εἰ δὲ μὴδὲ τοῦτο, πρὸς τί ἔτι σοι φέρει τὸ μέμψασθαι; εἰκῆ γὰρ οὐδὲν ποιητέον</i></p>	<p><i>Si in tua est potestate, cur facis? Sin in alterius, quid reprehendis? Atomosne, an Deum? Quorum utrumque est cum insania coniunctum. Nihil igitur reprehendum. Nam si potes, vel eum qui causa est corrige; vel, si prius nequis, rem ipsam; sin neutrum, quid iam tibi profuit reprehendisse? Atque nihil frustra faciendum.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: If it is in your power, why do you do it? If in another's, whom do you blame — the atoms, or the gods? Either is madness. No one is to be blamed. For if you can, set the man right; if you cannot do that, set right at least the thing itself; and if you cannot even do that, what further purpose does blaming serve? Nothing should be done without purpose.</p>	<p>English from Latin: If it is in your power, why do you do it? But if in another's, whom do you blame — the atoms, or God? Either is madness. Nothing, then, is to be blamed. For if you can, correct the one who is the cause; or, if you cannot do that, correct the thing itself; and if neither, what does it now profit you to have blamed? Nothing should be done in vain.</p>

**Language Differences:** Xylander transforms Marcus's question *τί νιν μέμψῃ*; (whom do you blame?) into an emotional evaluation: *cui tandem succenses?* ("against whom do you burn with anger / rage?"). The phrase *εἰκῆ* (at random / without a plan) becomes *frustra* (in vain).

**Commentary:** A systematic breakdown of causal responsibility. If a crisis falls within your own agency, fix it directly; if it falls under external constraints, finding fault with the elements or divine fate is an act of intellectual madness (μανία). Every action must be tied strictly to common utility.

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**Book VIII · Section 18**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἔξω τοῦ κόσμου τὸ ἀποθανὸν οὐ πίπτει. εἰ ὧδε μένει καὶ μεταβάλλει, ὧδε καὶ διαλύεται εἰς τὰ ἀίδια, ἃ στοιχεῖά ἐστι τοῦ κόσμου καὶ σά. καὶ αὐτὰ δὲ μεταβάλλει καὶ οὐ γογγύζει</p>	<p><i>Quod moritur, non excidit e mundo: nam ut constat et mutatur, ita etiam dissolvitur in elementa, quae tibi sunt cum mundo communia; et ipsa etiam mutantur, neque indigne ferunt.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: What dies does not fall outside the cosmos. If it remains here and changes here, it is also dissolved here into the everlasting things, which are the elements of the cosmos — and yours. And they too change, and do not murmur.</p>	<p>English from Latin: That which dies does not fall out of the world: for as it both holds together and changes, so too it is dissolved into its elements, which are common to you and to the world; and these too are changed, and do not take it ill.</p>

**Language Differences:** Xylander tracks the syntax flawlessly, matching οὐκ ἐκπίπτει τοῦ κόσμου directly to non extra mundum cadit ("does not fall outside the world").

**Commentary:** Marcus appeals to the total, closed-system conservation of material physics. Death cannot banish an individual outside the boundaries of reality. Because components are simply broken down and refashioned into alternative cosmic structures, human decay is an ordinary, neutral transformation.

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**Book VIII · Section 19**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἐκαστον πρὸς τι γέγονεν, ἵππος, ἄμπελος, τί θαυμάζεις; καὶ ὁ Ἥλιος ἐρεῖ πρὸς τι ἔργον γέγονα, καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ θεοί. σὺ οὖν πρὸς τί; τὸ ἡδεσθαι; ἴδε εἰ ἀνέχεται ἡ ἔννοια</p>	<p><i>Unumquodque est ad certum finem factum, ut vitis, equus. Quid mirum? Etiam sol et reliqui dii possunt dicere cuius rei causa facti sunt. Tu vero cuius causa? Num voluptatis tuae? An hoc ferat intellectus?</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Each thing has come to be for some purpose — a horse, a vine. Why do you wonder? The Sun too will say: I came to be for a certain work; and so the rest of the gods. For what, then, did you?</p>	<p>English from Latin: Each thing has been made for a fixed end — a vine, a horse. Why wonder? Even the sun and the other gods could say for what purpose they were made. And you — for what purpose? For</p>

For pleasure? See whether the thought endures the test.	your pleasure? See whether the understanding will bear that.
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**Language Differences:** *The translation remains completely stable across both columns, with Xylander mapping the final query ἴδε εἰ ἀνέχεται ἡ ἔννοια to Vide an hoc cogitatio tua ferat.*

**Commentary:** A dense challenge to hedonistic values. Every single physical structure across nature is designed to execute a specific functional purpose. Arguing that a human being — the highest rational creature — was framed merely to enjoy passing sensory pleasures (τὸ ἡδεσθαί) breaks the symmetry of nature.

Book VIII · Section 20

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἡ φύσις ἐστόχασται ἐκάστου οὐδέν τι ἔλασσον τῆς ἀπολήξεως ἢ τῆς ἀρχῆς τε καὶ διεξαγωγῆς, ὡς ὁ ἀναβάλλων τὴν σφαῖραν· τί οὖν ἀγαθὸν τῷ σφαιρίῳ ἀναφερομένῳ ἢ κακὸν καταφερομένῳ ἢ καὶ πεπτωκότι; τί δὲ ἀγαθὸν τῇ πομφόλυγι συνεστῶσῃ ἢ κακὸν διαλυθείσῃ; τὰ ὅμοια δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ λύχνου	<i>Natura consilium iniit de uniuscuiusque rei tam fine quam initio et duratione, ut qui pilam in sublime iaciat. Quid boni malive pilae accidit dum effertur, vel cum defertur aut cadit? Quid bullae boni accidit si constet, aut mali si dissolvatur? Idem de lucerna possis intelligere.</i>
English from Greek: Nature has aimed, in each thing, no less at its ending than at its beginning and its course — like a man tossing up a ball. What good is it, then, to the little ball to rise, or harm to come down and even to fall? What good to the bubble to hold together, or harm to be dissolved? And the same of a lamp.	English from Latin: Nature has taken counsel concerning the end of each thing no less than its beginning and duration — as with one who tosses a ball aloft. What good or evil befalls the ball while it is borne up, or while it is borne down and falls? What good comes to a bubble if it holds together, or what evil if it bursts? The same you may understand of a lamp.

**Language Differences:** *Marcus's active description ἡ φύσις ἐστόχασται (nature has aimed at) is rendered with deliberate intent by Xylander as Natura consilium iniit ("nature has entered into counsel / designed a plan"). The common Greek noun πομφόλυγι maps directly to the classical Latin bullae (bubble).*

**Commentary:** Marcus deconstructs human status through gravity metaphors. Nature prioritizes the termination of a structure just as much as its launch. Because there is zero inherent moral 'good' in a ball moving upward and zero 'evil' in its falling back down, historical success and material death are revealed to be neutral physical phases.

Book VIII · Section 21

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἔκστρεψον καὶ θέασαι οἶόν ἐστι, γηῶσαν δὲ οἶον γίνεται, νοσήσαν δέ, † πορνεῦσαν	<i>Cogita quid fiat corpusculo si senescat, si aegrotet, si scortetur.</i>
English from Greek: Turn it inside out and see what it is like — and what it becomes when it grows old, or falls sick, or plays the harlot.	English from Latin: Consider what becomes of the poor body if it grows old, if it sickens, if it plays the harlot.

**Language Differences:** Marcus uses the intense imperative Ἔκστρεψον (Turn it inside out like a garment!). Xylander shifts this graphic visual command into an intellectual statement: *Cogita quid fiat corpusculo* ("Think on what becomes of the tiny body").

**Commentary:** A tool designed to neutralize sexual infatuation and physical pride. By analyzing the human body stripped bare down to its biological parameters — subject to old age, sickness, and raw animal desires — the mind remains unswayed by superficial visual appearances.

Book VIII · Section 22

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Βραχύβιον καὶ ὁ ἐπαινῶν καὶ ὁ ἐπαινούμενος καὶ ὁ μνημονεύων καὶ ὁ μνημονεύόμενος. προσέτι δὲ καὶ ἐν γωνία τούτου τοῦ κλίματος καὶ οὐδὲ ἐνταῦθα πάντες συμφωνοῦσι καὶ οὐδὲ αὐτός τις ἑαυτῷ· καὶ ὅλη δὲ ἡ γῆ στιγμή	<i>Brevis vita est et laudantis et eius qui laudatur, eius qui mentionem facit et eius cuius mentio fit; praeterea sit hoc in angulo portionis mundi, ac ne ibi quidem omnes consentiunt, immo ne sibi quidem ipsi quisquam. Tota vero terra punctum est.</i>
English from Greek: Short-lived are both the praiser and the praised, the rememberer and the remembered. And all of it in a corner of this region of the earth — where not even all are in accord, nor any man with himself; and the whole earth itself a point.	English from Latin: Short-lived is both the praiser and the praised, the one who makes mention and the one of whom mention is made; and all this, besides, in a corner of a portion of the world — and not even there do all agree, nay, not even each man with himself. And the whole earth is but a point.

**Language Differences:** The Greek spatial marker κλίματος (latitude, zone, or slope) is rendered by Xylander as *portionis mundi* ("a portion of the world"). The mathematical noun στιγμή (a geometric point) maps exactly to *punctum*.

**Commentary:** Marcus coordinates a double historical and spatial reduction. Human validation is trivial because both the historical observer and the person

being praised will soon turn to dust. Because our entire known civilization is confined to a tiny point inside an infinite space, seeking external reputation is a failure of logic.

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**Book VIII · Section 23**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Πρόσεχε τῷ ὑποκειμένῳ ἢ τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ ἢ τῷ δόγματι ἢ τῷ σημαينوμένῳ</i>	<i>Animum adverte subiectae opinioni, actioni aut dicto.</i>
English from Greek: Attend to what is before you — the object, the activity, the doctrine, or the meaning.	English from Latin: Attend to what is before you — the opinion, the action, or the word.

**Language Differences:** *The precise technical noun τῷ σημαينوμένῳ (the underlying meaning, or the thing signified) is rendered loosely by Xylander as dicto (the spoken word / saying).*

**Commentary:** Marcus commands absolute concentration on current tasks. Total concentration blocks out emotional static, allowing an individual to systematically evaluate the object, the underlying principle, and the literal truth of the situation.

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**Book VIII · Section 24**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Δικαίως ταῦτα πάσχεις· μᾶλλον δὴ θέλεις ἀγαθὸς αὔριον γενέσθαι ἢ σήμερον εἶναι</i>	<i>Merito haec pateris; malle enim cras bonus fieri quam hodie.</i>
English from Greek: You suffer these things justly; for you would rather become good tomorrow than be good today.	English from Latin: You suffer these things deservedly; for you would rather become good tomorrow than be good today.

**Language Differences:** *The parallel columns match word-for-word, with Xylander deploying the classic adverbial opposition cras ... hodie to perfectly capture αὔριον ... σήμερον.*

**Commentary:** Internal frustration is diagnosed as an inevitable consequence of self-betrayal. Deferring moral execution to an imagined future date guarantees current instability. Goodness must be practiced immediately in the passing moment.

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Book VIII · Section 25

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Πράσσω τι; πράσσω ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων εὐποιίαν ἀναφέρων. συμβαίνει τί μοι; δέχομαι ἐπὶ τοὺς θεοὺς ἀναφέρων καὶ τὴν πάντων πηγὴν, ἀφ' ἧς πάντα τὰ γινόμενα συμμηρύεται</p>	<p><i>Si quid ergo ago, id ita fit a me ut ad benefaciendum hominibus referatur. Accidit mihi aliquid? Refero id ad Deos, omnium rerum fontem et originem, a qua omnia inter se connexa dependent.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Am I doing something? I do it referring it to the benefit of mankind. Does something happen to me? I receive it referring it to the gods, and to the source of all things, from which everything that comes to pass is spun together.</p>	<p>English from Latin: If, then, I do anything, I so do it that it is referred to doing good to men. Does anything befall me? I refer it to the Gods, the fountain and origin of all things, from which all things, bound together with one another, depend.</p>

**Language Differences:** The rare Greek verb *συμμηρύεται* (wound together into a single ball, or systematically coiled) is unpacked by Xylander as *inter se connexa dependent* ("hang together tightly bound").

**Commentary:** A perfect architectural statement of the dual Stoic lifestyle. Inward actions are directed entirely toward the common utility of humanity, while outward circumstances are received with a calm recognition that they flow from a coordinated cosmic providence.

Book VIII · Section 26

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ὅποιόν σοι φαίνεται τὸ λούεσθαι, - ἔλαιον, ἰδρώς, ρύπος, ὕδωρ γλοιῶδες, πάντα σικχαντά, - τοιοῦτον πᾶν μέρος τοῦ βίου καὶ πᾶν ὑποκείμενον</p>	<p><i>Lavare — quae tibi res videtur? Oleum, sudor, sordes, aqua, unguenta: omnia abominanda. Ita se omnis pars mundi, omnisque res subiecta habet.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Such as bathing appears to you — oil, sweat, filth, greasy water, everything disgusting — such is every part of life, and every object in it.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Bathing — what does the thing seem to you? Oil, sweat, filth, greasy water, ointments: all things to be loathed. Such is every part of the world, and every object in it.</p>

**Language Differences:** The colloquial Greek adjective *σικχαντά* (nauseating, sickening, or causing an internal turn of the stomach) is translated via Xylander's definitive religious adjective *abominanda* (things to be loathed / abominated).

**Commentary:** Marcus strips the allure from Roman luxury culture. While the imperial bathhouses were celebrated as spaces of luxury, objective analysis reduces them down to an unappealing collection of sweat, grease, and dirty

water. This technique cuts through sensory distraction, keeping the mind anchored in reality.

Book VIII · Section 27

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Λούκιλλα Ουήρον, εἶτα Λούκιλλα Ἰέκουνδα Μάξιμον, εἶτα Σέκουνδα Ἐπιτύγχανος Διότιμον, εἶτα Ἐπιτύγχανος Φαυστῖναν Ἀντωνῖνος, εἶτα Ἀντωνῖνος. τοιαῦτα πάντα Κέλερ Ἀδριανόν, εἶτα Κέλερ. οἱ δὲ δριμεῖς ἐκεῖνοι ἢ προγνωστικοὶ ἢ τετυφωμένοι ποῦ; οἶον, δριμεῖς μὲν Χάραξ καὶ Δημήτριος [ὁ Πλατωνικὸς] καὶ Εὐδαίμων καὶ εἴ τις τοιοῦτος. πάντα ἐφήμερα, τεθηγκότα πάλαι ἔνιοι μὲν οὐδὲ ἐπὶ ὀλίγον μνημονευθέντες, οἱ δὲ εἰς μύθους μεταβαλόντες, οἱ δὲ ἤδη καὶ ἐκ μύθων ἐξίτηλοι. τούτων οὖν μεμνησθαι, ὅτι δεήσει ἢτοι σκεδασθῆναι τὸ συγκριμάτιόν σου ἢσβεσθῆναι τὸ πνευμάτιον ἢ μεταστῆναι καὶ ἀλλαχοῦ καταταχθῆναι</p>	<p><i>Lucilla Verum, deinde Lucilla ipsa; Secunda Maximum, deinde Secunda; Diotimum, Faustina — Antoninus haec omnia. Ceterum Hadrianum, inde Celer. Ubi vero austeri illi et vates et inflati? ut ex austeris Charax, et Demetrius Platonicus, Eudaemon, et si qui alii tales. Omnia in diem durant. Iampridem mortui sunt: quorundam ne minimo quidem tempore duravit memoria; quidam fabulae facti sunt; nonnulli etiam e fabulis iam evanuerunt. Id igitur memoria tenendum: quod necesse erit aut dissipari tuam mixturam, aut extinguere animulam, aut mutari et alio transferri.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Lucilla buried Verus, then Lucilla was buried; Secunda buried Maximus, then Secunda; Epitynchanus buried Diotimus, then Epitynchanus; Antoninus buried Faustina, then Antoninus. All things are so: Celer buried Hadrian, then Celer. And those sharp wits, those foretellers of the future or men swollen with pride — where are they? Sharp wits like Charax and Demetrius and Eudaemon and their kind. All ephemeral, long dead; some remembered not even for a moment; some turned into legends; some already faded even out of legend. Remember, then, this: that your little compound must either be scattered, or your bit of breath be quenched — or else removed, and stationed elsewhere.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Lucilla buried Verus, then Lucilla herself was buried; Secunda buried Maximus, then Secunda; and Diotimus, and Faustina — Antoninus buried all these. Then Hadrian buried Celer. And where now are those austere men and seers and puffed-up ones? — such of the austere as Charax, and Demetrius the Platonist, and Eudaemon, and any others like them. All things last but for a day. Long since they are dead: of some not even for the briefest time did the memory endure; some have become a tale; some have already vanished even from tales. This, then, must be held in mind: that it will be necessary either for your compound to be scattered, or your little soul to be quenched, or for it to change and be transferred elsewhere.</p>

**Language Differences:** The lyrical Greek phrase ἐκ μύθων ἐξίτηλοι (faded away completely out of mythology) is translated by Xylander using the verb *evanuerunt* ("vanished / disappeared"). He maps τετυφωμένοι (blinded by pride / delusion) to *inflati* (swollen / puffed up).

**Commentary:** A rhythmic register of deaths. Marcus reviews pairs of people where one buried the other, only to be buried themselves shortly after. By looking at this inevitable historical cycle, death is stripped of its tragic tone and recognized simply as an ordinary physical redistribution of components.

**Book VIII · Section 28**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p><i>Εὐφροσύνη ἀνθρώπου ποιεῖν τὰ ἴδια ἀνθρώπου, ἴδιον δὲ ἀνθρώπου εὐνοία πρὸς τὸ ὁμόφυλον, ὑπερόρασις τῶν αἰσθητικῶν κινήσεων, διάκρισις τῶν πιθανῶν φαντασιῶν, ἐπιθεώρησις τῆς τῶν ὅλων φύσεως καὶ τῶν κατ' αὐτὴν γινομένων</i></p>	<p><i>Laetitia hominis est, ut faciat quae ei sunt propria. Propria autem eius sunt: benevolentia erga sui genus, contemptus motuum qui sunt in sensibus, distinctio inter visa probabilia, contemplatio naturae universi et eorum quae secundum eam fiunt.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: The joy of a man is to do what is proper to a man. And proper to a man are: good will toward his own kind; disdain of the movements of the senses; the diagnosis of plausible impressions; the contemplation of the nature of the whole and of what comes to pass according to it.</p>	<p>English from Latin: The joy of a man is to do the things proper to him. And proper to him are: good will toward his own kind, contempt of the motions that are in the senses, the discerning of plausible impressions, and the contemplation of the nature of the universe and of the things that come to pass according to it.</p>

**Language Differences:** The target Greek noun *Εὐφροσύνη* (the cheerful flow of high spirits) is translated standardly by Xylander as *Laetitia* (joy / gladness). He renders *ὑπερόρασις* (looking down upon / viewing from a height) as *contemptus* (contempt / disdain).

**Commentary:** Marcus outlines four distinct operational parameters that generate genuine human fulfillment. Joy is found by anchoring choices to human fellowship, discarding sensory impulses, critically evaluating impressions, and aligning with cosmic nature.

**Book VIII · Section 29**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p><i>Τρεῖς σχέσεις· ἡ μὲν πρὸς [τὸ αἴτιον] τὸ περικείμενον, ἡ δὲ πρὸς τὴν θεῖαν αἰτίαν, ἀφ' ἧς συμβαίνει πᾶσι πάντα, ἡ δὲ πρὸς τοὺς συμβιοῦντας</i></p>	<p><i>Item tres respectus: unus ad causam proximam, alter ad divinam causam a qua omnia omnibus eveniunt, tertius ad eos qui nobiscum vivunt.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Three relations: the one to the body that surrounds you; the one to the divine cause, from which all</p>	<p>English from Latin: Likewise there are three relations: one to the cause nearest at hand, another to the divine cause from</p>

things come to pass for all; and the one to those who live alongside you.	which all things come to all, and a third to those who live with us.
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**Language Differences:** The physical text τὸ περικείμενον (the shell that stands wrapped around you, i.e., the mortal frame) is translated by Xylander through an analytical lens as *causam proximam* ("the nearest cause").

**Commentary:** A concise look at structural relationships. Human consciousness is bound to three axes: its relationship to its physical vessel, its relationship to the divine cause driving destiny, and its immediate obligations to human society.

### Book VIII · Section 30

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὁ πόνος ἤτοι τῷ σώματι κακόν· οὐκοῦν ἀποφαινέσθω· ἢ τῇ ψυχῇ· ἀλλ' ἔξεστιν αὐτῇ τὴν ἰδίαν αἰθρίαν καὶ γαλήνην διαφυλάσσειν καὶ μὴ ὑπολαμβάνειν ὅτι κακόν. πᾶσα γὰρ κρίσις καὶ ὄρμη καὶ ὄρεξις καὶ ἔκκλισις ἔνδον καὶ οὐδὲν κακὸν ὧδε ἀναβαίνει	<i>Dolor aut corpori malus est — ergo id ipsum pronunciet — aut animo. Sed animus potest suam tranquillitatem et serenitatem conservare, neque dolorem pro malo ducere. Omne enim iudicium, omnis impetus, appetitio et inclinatio intus est; neque ei dolor quicquam mali affert. Quare omnia visa tolle ex animo.</i>
English from Greek: Pain is either an evil to the body — then let the body declare it — or to the soul. But the soul has power to preserve its own clear sky and calm, and not to take pain for an evil. For every judgment and impulse and desire and aversion is within — and no evil climbs in here.	English from Latin: Pain is an evil either to the body — then let the body declare it — or to the soul. But the soul can keep its own tranquillity and serenity, and not reckon pain an evil. For every judgment, every impulse, appetite, and inclination is within; and pain brings no evil to it. Therefore take away all impressions from the soul.

**Language Differences:** Marcus uses the lyrical noun αἰθρίαν (a clear sky, unclouded weather). Xylander renders this cleanly using the matching Latin alternative *serenitatem*. He appends a direct imperative to conclude the entry: *Quare omnia visa tolle ex animo* ("Therefore remove all mental images from the soul").

**Commentary:** Marcus localizes suffering. If the physical frame experiences a traumatic impact, let it report the injury mechanically. The intellect retains absolute internal power to preserve its own unclouded sky (αἰθρίαν), knowing that because value is generated exclusively inside our judgments, external trauma is incapable of breaching the soul.

Book VIII · Section 31

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἐξάλειψε τὰς φαντασίας συνεχῶς ἑαυτῷ λέγων· νῦν ἐπ' ἐμοί ἐστὶν ἵνα ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ ψυχῇ μηδεμία πονηρία ἢ μηδὲ ἐπιθυμία μηδὲ ὅλως ταραχὴ τις, ἀλλὰ βλέπων πάντα ὅποιά ἐστι χρῶμαι ἐκάστω κατ' ἀξίαν. μέμνησο ταύτης τῆς ἐξουσίας κατὰ φύσιν</p>	<p><i>Continenter teipsum admone: Nunc in mea est potestate, ut in hoc animo nihil sit malitiae, nihil cupiditatis, nihil omnino tumultus; sed ut, cum omnia ita cernam ut sunt, singulis utar pro ipsorum dignitate. Hoc tibi licere memineris secundum naturam.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Wipe out impressions, saying continually to yourself: it is now in my power that in this soul there be no wickedness, no desire, no disturbance at all; but seeing all things as they are, I use each according to its worth. Remember this power that nature gives you.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Continually admonish yourself: Now it is in my power that in this soul there be no malice, no lust, no tumult at all; but that, seeing all things as they are, I deal with each according to its worth. Remember that this is permitted you according to nature.</p>

**Language Differences:** The forceful Greek imperative Ἐξάλειψε (Wipe out completely / blot out) is rendered as *Continenter teipsum admone* ("Continuously remind yourself"). The target ταραχὴ (internal chaos / turmoil) becomes *tumultus*.

**Commentary:** A direct call to practice cognitive command. Marcus commands his mind to erase complex, unexamined impressions. By holding back assent, he protects his soul from chaos, sizing every external variable correctly according to its real worth.

Book VIII · Section 32

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Λαλεῖν καὶ ἐν συγκλήτῳ καὶ πρὸς πάνθ ὄντινοῦν κοσμίως, μὴ περιτράνωσ' ὑγιεῖ λόγῳ χρῆσθαι</p>	<p><i>Loquere et in senatu et cum quibuscumque hominibus compositē. Sana oratione non est aperte semper utendum.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Speak, both in the senate and to every person whatsoever, with decorum and without grandiloquence. Use sound speech.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Speak, both in the senate and with whatever men, in a composed manner. Sound speech is not always to be used openly.</p>

**Language Differences:** The Greek μὴ περιτράνωσ (not with over-articulated, affected, or hyper-refined speech) is interpreted loosely by Xylander as *non est aperte semper utendum* ("is not always to be used openly").

**Commentary:** Marcus targets the false, long-winded rhetoric common to the Roman political elite. Whether addressing the Senate or a common citizen,

communication must be direct, honest, and completely free of performative vanity.

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Book VIII · Section 33

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Αὐλὴ Αὐγούστου, γυνή, θυγάτηρ, ἔγγονοι, πρόγονοι, ἀδελφή, Ἀγρίππας, συγγενεῖς, οἰκεῖοι, φίλοι, Ἄρειος, Μαικήνας, ἰατροί, θύται ὅλης αὐλῆς θάνατος. εἶτα ἐπιθι τὰς ἄλλας .. μὴ καθ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου θάνατον, οἶον Πομπηίων. κάκεινο δὲ τὸ ἐπιγραφόμενον τοῖς μνήμασιν ἔσχατος τοῦ ἰδίου γένους. ἐπιλογίζεσθαι πόσα ἐσπάσθησαν οἱ πρὸ αὐτῶν, ἵνα διάδοχόντινα καταλίπωσιν, εἶτα ἀνάγκη ἔσχατόν τινα γενέσθαι ἄλλαν ὡς ὅλου γένους θάνατον</p>	<p><i>Aula Augusti: uxor, filia, nepotes, posteri, soror, Agrippa, cognati, propinqui, amici, Areus, Maecenas, medici, sacrificuli: omnino totam aulam mors abripuit. Deinde accede etiam ubi non unus modo homo est mortuus: defecit tota Pompeiorum gens; unde monumentis etiam inscribi videmus, fuisse aliquem eius familiae ultimum. Quam anxii vero fuere maiores eius ut aliquem successorem relinquerent! Et tamen necesse est aliquem esse ultimum.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: The court of Augustus — wife, daughter, grandsons, stepsons, sister, Agrippa, kinsmen, household, friends, Areius, Maecenas, physicians, sacrificers: the death of an entire court. Then pass on to the others — not the death of a single man, but of a whole line, like the Pompeii. And that inscription set on tombs: Last of his house. Reckon up how much those before them strained that they might leave a successor — and then someone must, of necessity, be last. Here again: the death of a whole house.</p>	<p>English from Latin: The court of Augustus: wife, daughter, grandsons, descendants, sister, Agrippa, kinsmen, relations, friends, Areus, Maecenas, physicians, sacrificers — death has carried off the whole court entire. Then go on too to where not one man only has died: the whole house of the Pompeys failed; whence we see inscribed even on monuments that someone was 'the last of his family.' How anxious their forefathers were to leave a successor! And yet some one must of necessity be the last.</p>

**Language Differences:** *The Greek tragic phrase ἔσχατος τοῦ ἰδίου γένους is translated clearly into its classic epigraphic Latin alternative: fuisse aliquem eius familiae ultimum ("that someone was the ultimate / last of his line").*

**Commentary:** Marcus reviews the dynastic vanity of the early Empire. He reviews the complete court of Augustus, listing every official position to show that an entire institution has vanished. The common epigraphic marker 'Last of his line' reveals the futility of human ambition: despite immense generational planning, every family line eventually ends.

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Book VIII · Section 34

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
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<p>Συντιθέναι δεῖ τὸν βίον κατὰ μίαν πράξιν καὶ εἰ ἐκάστη τὸ ἑαυτῆς ἀπέχει ὡς οἶόν τε, ἀρκεῖσθαι ἵνα δὲ τὸ ἑαυτῆς ἀπέχη, οὐδὲ εἰς σε κωλύσαι δύναται ἢ “ἀλλ’ ἐν&gt;στήσεται τι ἔξωθεν ἢ” οὐδὲν εἰς γε τὸ δικαίως καὶ σωφρόνως καὶ εὐλογίστως ἢ “ἄλλο δέ τι ἴσως ἐνεργητικὸν κωλυθήσεται ἢ” ἀλλὰ τῇ πρὸς αὐτὸ τὸ κώλυμα εὐαρεστήσει καὶ τῇ ἐπὶ τὸ διδόμενον εὐγνώμονι μεταβάσει εὐθὺς ἄλλη πράξις ἀντικαθίσταται ἐναρμόσουσα εἰς τὴν σύνθεσιν, περὶ ἧς ὁ λόγος</p>	<p><i>Vita componenda est ita ut constet uniuscuiusque actionis ratio. Quarum si unaquaeque suum, quantum eius fieri potest, praestet officium, contentus sis; atque id quo minus fiat, nemo tibi obstare poterit. Sed obstabit, inquis, aliquid extrinsecus. Nihil quidem quod iustitiae, modestiae, et prudentiae impedimento sit. At fortasse aliquid vim agendi habens impediet? Quin tu id impedimentum boni consule; et, facto statim ad id quod conceditur moderato transitu, alia tibi emerget actio, quae ad eam de qua loquimur constitutionem quadret.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: One must compose one's life action by action, and be content if each action achieves its own end as far as possible — and no one can prevent it achieving its end. 'But something from outside will stand in the way.' Nothing can — not against acting justly, temperately, and with sound reason. 'But perhaps some other activity will be hindered.' Yes — but by welcoming the hindrance itself, and by a graceful change to what is granted, another action at once takes its place, one that fits into the composition of which we are speaking.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Life must be so composed that the rule of each several action holds firm. And if each action achieves its own office, so far as may be, you should be content; and no one will be able to hinder its being achieved. 'But,' you say, 'something external will hinder it.' Nothing, indeed, that can be a hindrance to justice, temperance, and prudence. But perhaps something with power over your acting will hinder it? Then take that very hindrance as a good; and, passing at once with measure to what is granted, another action will emerge for you, one that fits the disposition of which we speak.</p>

**Language Differences:** The beautiful Greek participle ἀντιπαρεξάγοντα (introducing an alternative maneuver, or shifting alignment like an adaptable general) is simplified by Xylander into the phrase *impedimentum boni consule* ("consider the hindrance as a good").

**Commentary:** Character is built one action at a time. While an external obstacle can block a specific logistical outcome, it has zero power to degrade core moral virtues like justice or prudence. By accepting the barrier, a philosopher adapts immediately, turning the hindrance into raw material for a new virtue.

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Book VIII · Section 35

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ἀτύφως μὲν λαβεῖν, εὐλύτως δὲ ἀφεῖναι	<i>Accipiendum sine fastu, dimittendum cum facilitate.</i>

English from Greek: Receive without pride; let go without struggle.	English from Latin: Receive without pride; let go with ease.
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**Language Differences:** The Greek εὐλύτως (freely, loosely, or without friction) maps directly to Xylander's choice of cum facilitate ("with ease").

**Commentary:** A classic formula for managing material fortune. Wealth and status are 'preferred indifferents.' If destiny delivers them, receive them without vanity; if fate reclaims them, surrender them without friction, maintaining total internal autonomy.

Book VIII · Section 36

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Εἴ ποτε εἶδες χεῖρα ἀποκεκομμένην ἢ πόδα ἢ κεφαλὴν ἀποτετμημένην, χωρὶς πού ποτε ἀπὸ τοῦ λοιποῦ σώματος κειμένην· τοιοῦτον ἑαυτὸν ποιεῖ, ὅσον ἐφ' ἑαυτῷ, ὁ μὴ θέλων τὸ συμβαῖνον καὶ ἀποσχίζων ἑαυτὸν ἢ ὁ ἀκοινωνητόν τι πράσσων. ἀπερρίψαι πού ποτε ἀπὸ τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἐνώσεως· ἐπεφύκεις γὰρ μέρος· νῦν δὲ σεαυτὸν ἀπέκοψας. ἀλλ' ὧδε κομψὸν ἐκεῖνο, ὅτι ἔξεστί σοι πάλιν ἐνωσαὶ σεαυτόν. τοῦτο ἄλλω μέρει οὐδενὶ θεὸς ἐπέτρεψεν, χωρισθέντι καὶ διακοπέντι πάλιν συνελθεῖν, ἀλλὰ σκέψαι τὴν χρησιμότητα ἣν τετίμηκε τὸν ἄνθρωπον· καὶ γὰρ ἵνα τὴν ἀρχὴν μὴ ἀπορράγῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὅλου ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἐποίησε, καὶ ἀπορράγέντι πάλιν ἐπανελθεῖν καὶ συμφῦναι καὶ τὴν τοῦ μέρους τάξιν ἀπολαβεῖν [ἐποίησεν</p>	<p><i>Si quando vidisti manum abscissam, vel pedem, caputve amputatum, alicubi seorsim a corpore iacere, cogita ad id se assimilare, pro virili sua, hunc qui improbat ea quae eveniunt, seque a communi societate seiungit, aut agit aliquid ab ea alienum. Ita tu teipsum ab unitione naturali abruptisti, cum esses pars naturae; nunc vero teipsum abscidisti.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: If you have ever seen a severed hand or foot, or a head cut off, lying somewhere apart from the rest of the body — such a thing does the man make of himself, so far as in him lies, who refuses to accept what happens and cuts himself off, or who does some unsocial act. You have been cast away, somewhere, from the unity that accords with nature — for you grew as a part, and now you have cut yourself off. Yet here is the gracious thing: it is in your power to unite yourself again. To no other power has god granted this — to come together again after being separated and cut apart. But consider the kindness</p>	<p>English from Latin: If you have ever seen a hand cut off, or a foot, or a head severed and lying somewhere apart from the body, picture that a man makes himself like that, so far as in him lies, who disapproves of what befalls and cuts himself off from the common fellowship, or does something foreign to it. Thus you have torn yourself away from the natural union, since you were a part of nature; but now you have cut yourself off.</p>

with which he has honored man: he has put it in man's power, in the first place, not to be broken off from the whole; and, if broken off, to return again and grow back and take up his station as a part.

**Language Differences:** The graphic Greek noun συγκριμάτιον (the puny physical compound) is balanced by Xylander through the phrase unitione naturali (natural union). The beautiful Greek ἐπιπεριτρέπει (to expertly pivot, or structurally re-orient an item) is simplified into convertit (turns around). (In early Renaissance editions §§36–37 are integrated into a single paragraph block; our edition keeps them as distinct sections.)

**Commentary:** Marcus provides a graphic anatomical metaphor: an individual who resists fate or breaks human fellowship acts like a severed hand rotting on the ground. Yet human reason possesses a unique power: unlike a severed limb, the mind can return, grow back, and instantly rejoin the social whole, taking every hindrance as its own material.

Book VIII · Section 37

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ὡσπερ τὰς ἄλλας δυνάμεις ἐκάστῳ τῶν λογικῶν † σχεδὸν ὅσον ἢ τῶν ὄλων φύσις, οὕτως καὶ ταύτην παρ' αὐτῆς εἰλήφαμεν. ὃν τρόπον γὰρ ἐκείνη πᾶν τὸ ἐνιστάμενον καὶ ἀντιβαῖνον ἐπιπεριτρέπει καὶ κατατάσσει εἰς τὴν εἰμαρμένην καὶ μέρος ἑαυτῆς ποιεῖ, οὕτως καὶ τὸ λογικὸν ζῶον δύναται πᾶν κώλυμα ὑλὴν ἑαυτοῦ ποιεῖν καὶ χρῆσθαι αὐτῷ, ἐφ' οἷον ἂν καὶ ὠρμησεν</p>	<p><i>Id vero scitum est, quod iterum tibi licet ei adiungi — id quod nulli alii deus concessit, ut separata et avulsa rursum inolesceret toti. Hic mihi bonitatem considera, quae homini tantum honoris detulit: nam et in initio in ipsius manu posuit ne a toto avelleretur; et deinde, ut avulsus rediret, iterumque omnes partes loci recuperare posset, dedit. For just as the nature of the whole gave nearly all rational beings their other faculties, so we too received this one from her. Quemadmodum enim ipsa omne id quod obstat et resistit convertit, et fato subicit, suamque partem efficit, ita animal ratione praeditum potest omne impedimentum pro sua materia accipere, eoque uti ad id quod intenderat.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: If you have ever seen a severed hand or foot, or a head cut off, lying somewhere apart from the rest of the body — such a thing does the man make of himself, so far as in him lies, who refuses to accept what happens and cuts himself off, or who does some unsocial act. You</p>	<p>English from Latin: And this is a wondrous thing: that it is in your power to join yourself to it again — a thing granted to no other part, that, once severed and torn away, it should grow back into the whole. Here consider the goodness that has bestowed so much honor on man: for at the</p>

<p>have been cast away, somewhere, from the unity that accords with nature — for you grew as a part, and now you have cut yourself off. Yet here is the gracious thing: it is in your power to unite yourself again. To no other part has god granted this — to come together again after being separated and cut apart. But consider the kindness with which he has honored man: he has put it in man's power, in the first place, not to be broken off from the whole; and, if broken off, to return again and grow back and take up his station as a part.</p>	<p>beginning she put it in his power not to be torn from the whole; and then, when he is torn away, she granted that he might return and recover all the parts of his place again. For just as the nature of the whole gave to nearly every rational being its other faculties, so we too received this faculty from her: for as she herself turns every obstacle and resistance, subjects it to fate, and makes it her own part, so a being endowed with reason can take every hindrance as its own material, and use it for the end at which it aimed.</p>
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**Language Differences:** *The graphic Greek noun συγκριμάτιον (the puny physical compound) is balanced by Xylander through the phrase unitione naturali (natural union). The beautiful Greek ἐπιπεριτρέπει (to expertly pivot, or structurally re-orient an item) is simplified into convertit (turns around). (In early Renaissance editions §§36-37 are integrated into a single paragraph block; our edition keeps them as distinct sections.)*

**Commentary:** This continues the severed-limb metaphor into its resolution: just as universal nature turns every obstacle and subjects it to fate, the rational being can take every hindrance as its own material and use it for the very end at which it aimed — the unique faculty of re-growth granted to no other part.

**Book VIII · Section 38**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Μή σε συγχείτω ἡ τοῦ ὅλου βίου φαντασία, μὴ συμπερινόει ἐπίπονα οἷα καὶ ὅσα πιθανὸν ἐπιγενεῆσθαι· καὶ ἐπιγενήσεσθαι· ἀλλὰ καθ' ἕκαστον τῶν παρόντων ἐπερώτα σεαυτὸν· τί τοῦ ἔργου τὸ ἀφόρητον καὶ ἀνύποιστον; αἰσχυνθήσῃ γὰρ ὁμολογήσαι. ἔπειτα ἀναμίμνησκε σεαυτὸν ὅτι οὔτε τὸ μέλλον οὔτε τὸ παρωχηκὸς βαρεῖ σε, ἀλλ' αἰεὶ τὸ παρόν, τοῦτο δὲ κατασμικρύνεται, ἐὰν αὐτὸ μόνον περιορίσῃς καὶ ἀπελέγχῃς τὴν διάνοιαν, εἰ πρὸς τοῦτο ψιλὸν ἀντέχειν μὴ δύναται</p>	<p><i>Ne te cogitatio totius vitae confundat; neque animum adverte iis quae multa videntur dolorem allatura; sed singulis rebus oblatis, a teipso quaere quid in ea re sit intolerabile: id enim pudebit te fateri. Deinde memineris neque praeterita tibi neque futura ullam afferre molestiam, sed praesentia tantum. At haec extenuantur, si suis ea finibus determines, et cogitationem tuam redarguas, si tantam exiguae rei non ferendae vim tribuat.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Do not let the picture of your whole life confound you; do not dwell on all the troubles, in kind and number, that have likely befallen and will befall. Rather, at each present thing ask yourself: what is there in this work that is</p>	<p>English from Latin: Do not let the thought of your whole life confound you; nor turn your mind to all the many troubles that are likely to come; but at each thing that is set before you, ask yourself what in it is unbearable — for you will be ashamed to</p>

unbearable and past enduring? You will be ashamed to confess that there is anything. And then remind yourself that it is neither the future nor the past that weighs on you, but always the present; and the present is reduced to littleness if you mark off its bounds, and then convict your mind if it cannot hold out against this alone — this bare thing.	confess it. Then remember that neither the past nor the future brings you any trouble, but only the present. And even this is lessened if you mark off its bounds, and rebuke your mind if it grants so great a power to so small a thing not to be borne.
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**Language Differences:** The exact Greek technical command *περιορίσης* (to draw a strict geometric line around an item) is rendered by Xylander as *suis ea finibus determines* ("determine it within its own boundaries"). The verb *ἀπελέγχεις* (to logically refute or convict) becomes *redarguas*.

**Commentary:** This forms the definitive anti-anxiety framework of the Meditations. Anxieties multiply when the mind clumps past regrets and future fears into a single imaginary mass. True sanity requires separating time down to the present moment. Isolated on its own, any single moment is highly manageable, and the mind is shamed if it cannot carry so small a parcel.

**Book VIII · Section 39**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p><i>Μῆτι νῦν παρακάθηται τῇ [τοῦ] Οὐήρου σορῶ Πάνθεια ἢ Πέργαμος; τί δέ, τῇ Ἀδριανοῦ Χαβρίας ἢ Διότιμος; γελοῖον. τί δέ, εἰ παρεκάθητο, ἔμελλον αἰσθάνεσθαι; τί δέ, εἰ ἤσθάνοντο, ἔμελλον ἡδεσθαι; τί δέ, εἰ ἤδοντο, ἔμελλον οῖοι ἀθάνατοι εἶναι; οὐχί καὶ τούτους πρῶτον μὲν γραίας καὶ γέροντας γενέσθαι οὕτως εἴμαρτο, εἴτα ἀποθανεῖν; τί οὖν ὕστερον ἔμελλον ἐκεῖνοι ποιεῖν τούτων ἀποθανόντων; γράσος πᾶν τοῦτο καὶ λύθρον ἐν θυλάκῳ</i></p>	<p><i>Num iam domini tumulo adsident Panthea aut Pergamus? Num Hadriani sepulchro Chabrias et Diotimus? Ridiculum hoc. Quid vero si adsiderent — sentirentne illi? Aut voluptatem caperent, si quidem sentirent? Aut, si eam cepissent, an eo immortales essent redditae? Nonne his quoque fatum fuit ut, senes et vetulae, prius morerentur? Quid autem illi postmodo facient, his mortuis? Omnia haec foetida sunt, et tabes in sacco.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Does Panthea now sit by the coffin of Verus, or Pergamus? What — does Chabrias or Diotimus sit by Hadrian's? Absurd. And if they did sit there, would the dead perceive it? And if they perceived it, would they be pleased? And if they were pleased, would the mourners be immortal? Was it not fated that these too become old women and old men first, and then die? And what, afterward, would the dead do when the mourners were gone? It is all stench of</p>	<p>English from Latin: Do Panthea or Pergamus now sit by the tomb of their lord? Do Chabrias and Diotimus sit by Hadrian's sepulchre? Ridiculous. And what if they did sit there — would they feel it? Or take pleasure, if they did feel it? Or, taking it, would they thereby be made immortal? Was it not fated for these too — old men and old women — to die first? And what will they do afterward, when these are dead? All these things are stinking, and corruption in a bag.</p>

decay, and gore in a sack.

**Language Differences:** The visceral Greek closing γράσος πᾶν τοῦτο καὶ λύθρον ἐν θυλάκῳ (all goat-stench and foul gore inside a leather sack) is matched precisely by Xylander's clinical Latin phrase: *Omnia haec foetida sunt, et tabes in sacco.*

**Commentary:** This entry stands as the most unvarnished memento mori in the journal. Marcus reviews the famous court vigils maintained over his late co-emperor Lucius Verus and his adoptive grandfather Hadrian. He breaks down sentimental grief through sharp logical steps: the vigils eventually end, the corpses feel nothing, and the mourners themselves rot.

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**Book VIII · Section 40**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Εἰ δύνασαι ὀξὺ βλέπειν, βλέπε κρίνων &lt;κρίμασι&gt;, φησί, σοφωτάτοις</i>	<i>Si acute videre potes, aspice; et quam sapientissime iudica, inquit ille.</i>
English from Greek: If you can see keenly, see — and judge, as the sage says, by the wisest judgments.	English from Latin: If you can see keenly, look; and judge, he says, by the wisest judgment you can.

**Language Differences:** The columns match word-for-word, with Xylander expanding the implicit βλέπε into the dual alternatives *aspice ... iudica.*

**Commentary:** Marcus commands himself to look past superficial appearances. True clarity requires using your analytical intellect to strip an object down to its essential nature, ensuring your will is never misled by initial impressions.

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**Book VIII · Section 41**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Δικαιοσύνης κατεξαναστατικὴν ἀρετὴν οὐχ ὁρῶ ἐν τῇ τοῦλογικῷ ζώου κατασκευῇ, ἡδονῆς δὲ ὁρῶ τὴν ἐγκράτειαν</i>	<i>In constitutione animantis mente praediti nullam invenio virtutem quae iustitiam expellat; sed quae voluptatem eiciat, video continentiam.</i>
English from Greek: In the constitution of the rational creature I see no virtue set in opposition to justice; but I do see one set against pleasure: self-control.	English from Latin: In the constitution of the living being endowed with mind I find no virtue set against justice; but against pleasure I do see one — self-control.

**Language Differences:** The unique compound κατεξαναστατικήν (capable of rising up to overthrow, or structurally subverting) is translated by Xylander as quae expellat ("which expels / drives out"). Ἐγκράτειαν maps directly to continentiam.

**Commentary:** Within the architecture of human nature, justice operates as an absolute standard. While no virtue exists to oppose or limit justice, self-control (ἐγκράτεια) is specifically designed to counteract the destabilizing pull of physical pleasure.

Book VIII · Section 42

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἐὰν ἀφέλης τὴν σὴν ὑπόληψιν περὶ τοῦ λυπεῖν σε δοκοῦντος, αὐτὸς ἐν τῷ ἀσφαλεστάτῳ ἕστηκας. "τίς αὐτός;" ὁ λόγος. "ἀλλ οὐκ εἰμὶ λόγος." ἔστω. οὐκοῦν ὁ μὲν λόγος αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν μὴ λυπεῖτω, εἰ δέ τι ἄλλο σοι κακῶς ἔχει, ὑπολαβέτω αὐτὸ περὶ αὐτοῦ</p>	<p><i>Si tuam opinionem detrahas ab eo quod videtur dolorem afferre, ipse in tutissimo es collocatus. Quis 'ipse'? Ratio. 'Verum ego,' inquires, 'non sum ratio.' Esto. Proinde ratio seipsam ne dolore afficiat; et si quid aliud in te est quod laedatur, ipsum de se iudicet.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: If you take away your own opinion about what seems to pain you, you yourself stand on the most secure ground. 'Who is yourself?' Reason. 'But I am not reason.' So be it. Then let reason itself not pain itself; and if some other part of you is in a bad way, let it form its own opinion about itself.</p>	<p>English from Latin: If you withdraw your opinion about that which seems to bring pain, you yourself are set in the safest place. Who is 'yourself'? The reason. 'But I,' you will say, 'am not reason.' Be it so. Then let the reason not afflict itself with pain; and if there is anything else in you that is hurt, let it form its own judgment about itself.</p>

**Language Differences:** The Greek ἐν τῷ ἀσφαλεστάτῳ (in the safest / most unassailable position) is rendered cleanly by Xylander as in tutissimo.

**Commentary:** Marcus challenges his own identity. True safety is found by removing value judgments from pain. When his immediate personality complains that he is more than abstract intellect, he notes that even if the body feels trauma, the governing reason should remain unmoved, refusing to internalize physical discomfort as a moral evil.

Book VIII · Section 43

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἐμποδισμὸς αἰσθήσεως κακὸν ζωτικῆς φύσεως. ἔμποδισμὸς ὀρμῆς ὁμοίως κακὸν ζωτικῆς φύσεως. ἔστι δέ τι ἄλλο ὁμοίως ἔμποδιστικὸν καὶ κακὸν τῆς</p>	<p><i>Cum impedit somnus aut appetitus, id mali accidit vegetatrici animae, quae et alia ratione offenditur. Ita si mens impediatur, id cum damno est mente</i></p>

<p>φυτικῆς κατασκευῆς. οὕτως τοί νυν ἐμποδισμὸς νοῦ κακὸν νοεραῖς φύσεως. πάντα δὴ ταῦτα ἐπὶ σεαυτὸν μετάφερε. πόνος, ἡδονὴ ἄπτεται σου; ὄψεται ἡ αἴσθησις. ὀρμήσαντι ἔνστημα ἐγένετο; εἰ μὲν ἀνυπεξαιρέτως ὄρμας, ἤδη ὡς λογικοῦ κακόν, εἰ δὲ τὸ κοινὸν λαμβάνεις, οὐπω βέβλαψαι οὐδὲ ἐμπεπόδισαι. τὰ μέντοι τοῦ νοῦ ἴδια οὐδεὶς ἄλλος εἴωθεν ἐμποδίζειν· τούτου γὰρ οὐ πῦρ, οὐ σίδηρος, οὐ τύραννος, οὐβλασφημία, οὐχ ὅτιοῦν ἄπτεται, ὅταν γένηται "σφαῖρος κυκλωτερῆςμονί</p>	<p><i>praeditae naturae. Haec omnia ad te transfer. Dolor, voluptas attingunt te? Si visus impeditur quo minus cernat, impeditur is sensus. Quod si absque exceptione aliquid appetis, iam id cum rationis capacis partis incommodo sit; sin commune tibi propositum est, neque laesus es neque impeditus. Mentis quidem proprias actiones nihil aliud impedire potest: non enim attingitur ab igni, ferro, tyranno, aut calumnia, aut alia ulla tali re. Sphaera cum sit, rotunda manet.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: A hindrance of sense-perception is an evil to the animal nature. A hindrance of impulse is likewise an evil to the animal nature. (And there is something else that is similarly a hindrance and evil to the constitution of plants.) So then a hindrance of mind is an evil to the intelligent nature. Apply all this now to yourself. Do pain and pleasure touch you? Let sense-perception see to it. Has an obstacle met your impulse? If you set out without reservation, then this is at once an evil to you as a rational being; but if you take what is common to all, you are not yet harmed nor even hindered. The things proper to the mind, indeed, no one else is wont to hinder: fire does not touch it, nor steel, nor a tyrant, nor abuse, nor anything whatsoever, once it has become 'a sphere rounded into stillness.'</p>	<p>English from Latin: When sleep or appetite is hindered, that is an evil befalling the nourishing soul, which is offended in other ways too. So if the mind is hindered, that is to the harm of the nature endowed with mind. Transfer all this to yourself. Do pain and pleasure touch you? If sight is hindered from seeing, that sense is hindered. But if you desire anything without reservation, then that is already to the hurt of the part capable of reason; whereas if your aim is the common good, you are neither harmed nor hindered. Nothing else can hinder the proper actions of the mind: for it is not touched by fire, iron, a tyrant, slander, or any such thing. Once it has become a sphere, it remains round.</p>

**Language Differences:** The beautiful Empedoclean quote *σφαῖρος κυκλωτερῆς μονίη* (a sphere rounded into solitary stillness) is flattened by Xylander into an elegant geometric fact: *Sphaera cum sit, rotunda manet* ("Since it is a sphere, it remains round").

**Commentary:** Marcus builds an analogy based on biology. While blocking animal functions harms basic survival, the rational mind operates on an entirely different level. If an impulse includes a 'reserve clause,' obstacles are simply absorbed into the common path. Once the mind gathers into itself, external forces like fire, steel, or tyrants cannot breach its borders.

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
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<i>Οὐκ εἰμὶ ἄξιος ἐμαυτὸν λυπεῖν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἄλλον πώποτε ἐκὼν ἐλύπησα</i>	<i>Indignum est me mihi ipsi dolorem afferre, qui nullum unquam alium lubens laeserim.</i>
English from Greek: I am not worthy to give myself pain; for I have never willingly given pain to another.	English from Latin: It is unworthy that I should bring pain upon myself, I who have never willingly hurt another.

**Language Differences:** The phrase *Οὐκ εἰμὶ ἄξιος* (I am not worthy / it is unjust) is mapped by Xylander to the adjective *Indignum est* ("It is unbecoming / unworthy").

**Commentary:** Marcus applies a strict standard of justice to his own mind. Since he works deliberately to avoid causing pain to others, it is completely illogical to inflict pain on his own soul through irrational value judgments.

#### Book VIII · Section 45

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Εὐφραίνει ἄλλον ἄλλο· ἐμὲ δέ, ἐὰν ὑγιὲς ἔχω τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, μὴ ἀποστρεφόμενον μήτε ἄνθρωπὸν τινα μήτε &lt;τι&gt; τῶν ἀνθρώποις συμβαινόντων, ἀλλὰ πᾶν εὐμενέσιν ὀφθαλμοῖς ὁρῶν τε καὶ δεχόμενον καὶ χρώμενον ἐκάστω κατ' ἀξίαν</i>	<i>Aliis aliae res laetitiam afferunt; mihi, si pars mei princeps sana sit, neque aversetur quenquam — vel hominem vel humanum casum — sed omnia placidis aspiciat oculis, omnia accipiat, iisque utatur uti dignum est.</i>
English from Greek: One thing gladdens one man, another another. It gladdens me if I keep the ruling faculty healthy — not turning away from any human being nor from anything that befalls human beings, but seeing everything with kindly eyes, receiving and using each thing according to its worth.	English from Latin: Different things bring joy to different men; to me, if my ruling part be sound, and turn away from no one — neither from any man nor from any human chance — but look upon all things with calm eyes, receive all, and use each as is fitting.

**Language Differences:** The Greek *εὐμενέσιν ὀφθαλμοῖς* (with kindly / well-disposed eyes) is translated smoothly by Xylander as *placidis ... oculis* ("with calm / placid eyes").

**Commentary:** True stability requires finding fulfillment within a healthy character. Instead of chasing external distractions, Marcus locates his joy in maintaining an aligned *ἡγεμονικόν* that treats all human beings with fellowship and sizes every event correctly according to its worth.

#### Book VIII · Section 46

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Τοῦτον ἰδοῦ τὸν χρόνον σεαυτῷ χάρισαι. οἱ τὴν ὑστεροφημίαν μᾶλλον διώκοντες οὐ λογίζονται ὅτι ἄλλοι τοιοῦτοι μέλλουσιν ἐκεῖνοι εἶναι, οἳ εἰσιν οῦτοι οὐκ βαροῦνται· κάκεῖνοι δὲ θνητοί. τί δὲ ὅλως πρὸς σέ, ἂν ἐκεῖνοι φωναῖς τοιαύταις ἀπηχῶσιν ἢ ὑπόληψιν τοιαύτην περὶ σοῦ ἔχωσιν</p>	<p><i>Disce praesens tempus tibi ipsi gratificari. Qui commendationem posteritatis magis curant, non reputant eos horum similes futuros quos nunc aegre ferunt, atque ipsos etiam mortales. Porro quid omnino tua interest, si tales te illi vocibus celebrent, aut ita de te sentiant?</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: See that you bestow this present time on yourself. Those who rather pursue fame in the future do not reckon that the men of that time will be just like these whom they find so burdensome now — and those too will be mortal. What is it to you, in the end, if they echo your name in such-and-such voices, or hold such-and-such an opinion about you?</p>	<p>English from Latin: Learn to bestow the present time on yourself. Those who care more for the praise of posterity do not consider that those men will be just like the ones they now bear with difficulty, and that they too are mortal. And in any case, what is it to you, if such men celebrate you with their voices, or hold such opinions of you?</p>

**Language Differences:** Xylander inserts a helpful transition command: *Disce praesens tempus tibi ipsi gratificari* ("Learn to favor yourself with the present time"). The Greek *ὑστεροφημίαν* maps directly to *commendationem posteritatis*.

**Commentary:** Marcus targets the illusion of posthumous fame. Chasing legacy is illogical because future generations will be just as short-lived and flawed as our current contemporaries. True intelligence requires reclaiming the passing moment as a direct gift to yourself.

Book VIII · Section 47

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἄρον με καὶ βάλε, ὅπου θέλεις. ἐκεῖ γὰρ ἔξω τὸν ἐμὸν δαίμον αἴλεων, τουτέστιν ἀρκούμενον, εἰ ἔχει καὶ ἐνεργοίη κατὰ τὸ ἐξῆς τῇ ἰδίᾳ κατασκευῇ. Ἄρα τοῦτο ἄξιον, ἵνα δι' αὐτὸ κακῶς μοι ἔχη ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ χείρων ἐαυτῆς ἢ, ταπεινουμένη, ὀρεγομένη, συνδουμένη, πτυρομένη; καὶ τί εὐρήσεις τούτου ἄξιον</p>	<p><i>Tolle me, et pone quocumque volueris: ibi enim utar genio meo propicio — id est, recto — si habeat se et agat consequenter suae naturae. An vero hoc dignum est, ut propterea male habeat animus meus, ac seipso deterius subiectus, appetens, anxius, pavens, territus? Et quid eo dignum invenias?</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Take me up and cast me where you will; for there I shall keep my own spirit gracious — that is, content, if it can hold itself and act in accord with what follows from its own constitution. Is this thing worth it — that on its account my soul should be in a bad state, worse than itself: abased, craving, cringing,</p>	<p>English from Latin: Take me up and set me wherever you will: for there too I shall keep my guardian spirit gracious — that is, upright — if it bears and acts conformably to its own nature. But is this thing worth it, that on its account my soul should fare ill, debasing itself below itself — craving, anxious, fearful, terrified? And what could</p>

frightened? And what will you find that is worth that price?	you find worth that?
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**Language Differences:** Marcus uses the vivid compound participle *συνδουμένη* (co-enslaved, cringing, or bound tightly in structural servitude). Xylander renders this through status vocabulary as *subiectus* (subjected / abased).

**Commentary:** A powerful statement of total spatial flexibility. No change in physical geography or political exile can alter your inner alignment. Because the *δαίμων* remains portable, allowing external disruptions to compromise your internal composure is a complete failure of judgment.

Book VIII · Section 48

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἄνθρώπῳ οὐδενὶ συμβαίνειν τι δύναται ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνθρωπικὸν σύμπτωμα, οὐδὲ βοῖ ὃ οὐκ ἔστι βοϊκόν, οὐδὲ ἀμπέλῳ ὃ οὐκ ἔστι ἀμπελικόν, οὐδὲ λίθῳ ὃ οὐκ ἔστι λίθου ἴδιον. εἰ οὖν ἐκάστῳ συμβαίνει ὃ καὶ εἶωθε καὶ πέφυκε, τί ἂν δυσχεραίνοις; οὐ γὰρ ἀφόρητόν σοι ἔφερεν ἡ κοινὴ φύσις</p>	<p><i>Homini nihil accidere potest quod non sit humanum; neque bovi, viti, saxo quicquam, quod non sit consentaneum eius naturae. Quod si unicuique id contingit quod et consuetum est et naturale, quid est cur indigneris? Nihil intolerabile tibi communis affert natura.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Nothing can happen to any human being that is not an incident proper to humans, nor to an ox that is not proper to oxen, nor to a vine that is not proper to vines, nor to a stone that is not the stone's own. If, then, what happens to each is both customary and natural, why should you be discontented? The common nature has brought you nothing you cannot bear.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Nothing can befall a man that is not proper to a man; nor anything to an ox, a vine, or a stone, that is not agreeable to its nature. And if to each there befalls what is both customary and natural, what cause have you for indignation? The common nature brings you nothing intolerable.</p>

**Language Differences:** The precise Greek compound *ἀνθρωπικὸν σύμπτωμα* (a human occurrence / matching human incidence) is rendered cleanly by Xylander as *humanum*.

**Commentary:** Hardships are framed through biological parameters. Just as an ox or a stone is subject to specific natural changes, a human being is subject to standard human experiences like illness, loss, and social friction. Universal nature never issues an assignment that the species lacks the structural capacity to endure.

Book VIII · Section 49

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Εἰ μὲν διὰ τι τῶν ἐκτὸς λυπῆ, οὐκ ἐκεῖνό σοι ἐνοχλεῖ, ἀλλὰ τὸ σὸν περὶ αὐτοῦ κρῖμα, τοῦτο δὲ ἤδη ἐξαλεῖψαι ἐπὶ σοί ἐστιν. εἶδὲ λυπεῖ σέ τι τῶν ἐν τῇ σῇ διαθέσει, τίς ὁ κωλύων διορθῶσαι τὸ δόγμα; ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ εἰ λυπῆ ὅτι οὐχὶ τότε τι ἐνεργεῖς ὑγιές σοιφαινόμενον, τί οὐχὶ μᾶλλον ἐνεργεῖς ἢ λυπῆ</p>	<p><i>Sin propter extraneam aliquam rem perturbaris, non illa tibi, sed tuum de ea iudicium molestiam affert; id vero ut aboleas, in tua est potestate. Quod si quid eorum quae in te sunt te molestat, quis est qui prohibeat ne opinionem emendes?</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: If you are pained because of something external, it is not that thing which troubles you, but your own judgment about it — and it is in your power to wipe that out this moment. But if what pains you is something in your own disposition, who prevents you from correcting the doctrine? And likewise, if you are pained that you are not doing some particular thing that seems sound to you — why not rather do it than be pained?</p>	<p>English from Latin: But if you are disturbed because of some external thing, it is not that thing which troubles you, but your judgment about it; and to do away with that is in your power. And if something within yourself troubles you, who is there to prevent your correcting your opinion?</p>

**Language Differences:** Xylander condenses the final third of the entry, omitting Marcus's concluding question about why one chooses passive anxiety over immediate ethical action.

**Commentary:** This section is a foundational rule of Stoic cognitive therapy. External crises do not possess an inherent right to cause mental distress; pain is generated entirely by the secondary judgment applied to the event. If your character flaws disrupt your peace, you retain absolute authority to correct your principles immediately.

Book VIII · Section 50

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>“ἀλλὰ ἰσχυρότερόν τι ἐνίσταται.” μὴ οὖν λυποῦ ὅ γὰρ παρὰ σέ ἡ αἰτία τοῦ μὴ ἐνεργεῖσθαι. “ἀλλὰ οὐκ ἄξιον ζῆν μὴ ἐνεργουμένου τούτου.” ἄπιθι οὖν ἐκ τοῦ ζῆν εὐμενής, ἣ καὶ ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἀποθνήσκει, ἅμα ἴλεως τοῖς ἐνισταμένοις</p>	<p><i>Similiter, si doles te hoc non agere, prodest cogitare cur non potius agas aliquid quam doleas; sin aliquod potentius obstat, noli dolere, cum non fiat tua culpa quod non agas. 'At videtur vivendum non esse, nisi hoc agatur.' Placidus ergo vitam relinque — quando et is qui agit moritur, aequus erga impediētes.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: 'But something too strong stands in the way.' Then do not be</p>	<p>English from Latin: Likewise, if you grieve that you are not doing this, it is better to</p>

<p>pained: the cause of the act's not being done is not in you. 'But life is not worth living with this undone.' Then depart from life with good will — as he too dies who accomplishes his purpose — gracious, even toward what stood in the way.</p>	<p>consider why you should not rather do something than grieve; but if something stronger stands in the way, do not grieve, since it is not your fault that you are not acting. 'But life seems not worth living unless this is done.' Then leave life calmly — since even he who acts dies, at peace with those who hindered him.</p>
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**Language Differences:** The beautiful Greek participle *εὐμενής* (gracious / well-disposed) is translated by Xylander as *Placidus* (calmly / serenely), and *ἴλεως* maps to *aequus* (fair / at peace).

**Commentary:** Marcus outlines his boundaries regarding physical restrictions. If an unyielding obstacle blocks your path, your responsibility ends, because you are not to blame for external conditions. If the obstacle makes life unviable, exit gracefully without harboring any resentment toward the barrier.

Book VIII · Section 51

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Μέμνησο ὅτι ἀκαταμάχητον γίνεται τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, ὅταν εἰς ἑαυτὸ συστραφέν ἄρκεσθῇ ἑαυτῷ, μὴ ποιοῦν τι ὃ μὴ θέλει, κἂν ἀλόγως παρατάξῃται. τί οὖν, ὅταν καὶ μετὰ λόγου καὶ περισκεμμένως κρίνῃ περὶ τίνος; διὰ τοῦτο ἀκρόπολις ἐστὶν ἢ ἐλευθέρα παθῶν διάνοια· οὐδὲν γὰρ ὀχυρώτερον ἔχει ἄνθρωπος, ἐφ' ὃ καταφυγῶν ἀνάλωτος λοιπὸν ἂν εἴη. ὁ μὲν οὖν μὴ ἐωρακῶς τοῦτο ἀμαθής, ὁ δὲ ἐωρακῶς καὶ μὴ καταφεύγων ἀτυχής</p>	<p><i>Memento partem tui principem superari non posse, cum, in se collecta, seipsa contenta est, neque quicquam praeter voluntatem agit — etiam si, non instructa ratione, pugnam conferat. Quid ergo fiet, si etiam tarde parata, circumspicte de rebus iudicet? Itaque mens ab affectibus libera arx est: nihil enim munitius homo habet, quo refugiens superari non possit. Qui hoc non vidit, indoctus est; qui vidit, neque eo refugit, infortunatus.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Remember that the ruling faculty becomes unconquerable when, gathered into itself, it is content with itself, doing nothing it does not will — even when its stand is unreasonable. How much more, then, when it judges about something with reason and circumspection? On this account the understanding free of passions is a citadel; for man has nothing more secure, to which he can flee and remain thereafter beyond capture. He who has not seen this is untaught; he who has seen it and does not flee to it — unfortunate.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Remember that your ruling part cannot be overcome when, gathered into itself, it is content with itself and does nothing against its own will — even if it should make its stand without reasoned preparation. How much more, then, if, though slow in its preparing, it judges of things with circumspection? And so the mind freed from the passions is a citadel: for a man has nothing more fortified, to which he may flee and be unconquerable. He who has not seen this is unlearned; he who has seen it, yet does not flee thither, is unfortunate.</p>

**Language Differences:** Marcus uses the classic defensive noun ἀκρόπολις (acropolis / citadel). Xylander maps this perfectly to the resonant Latin noun arx. The Greek adjective ἀνάλωτος (un-takeable / immune to capture) matches superari non possit.

**Commentary:** This entry contains the definitive formulation of the 'Inner Citadel.' The fortress is built on the mind's capacity for self-possession. When the will gathers into itself, its boundaries become unconquerable. Failing to retreat into this inner sanctuary during a crisis is an absolute failure of judgment.

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Book VIII · Section 52

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Μηδὲν πλέον ἑαυτῷ λέγε ὧν αἱ προηγούμεναι φαντασίαι ἀναγγέλλουσιν. ἤγγελλται ὅτι ὁ δεῖνά σε κακῶς λέγει. ἤγγελλται τοῦτο· τὸ δέ, ὅτι βέβλαψαι, οὐκ ἤγγελλται. βλέπω ὅτι νοσεῖ τὸ παιδίον. βλέπω· ὅτι δὲ κινδυνεύει, οὐ βλέπω. οὕτως οὖν μένε ἀεὶ ἐπὶ τῶν πρώτων φαντασιῶν καὶ μηδὲν αὐτὸς ἔνδοθεν ἐπίλεγε καὶ οὐδέν σοι γίνεται· μάλλον δὲ ἐπίλεγε ὡς γνωρίζων ἕκαστα τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ συμβαινόντων</p>	<p><i>Si quid visa aut cogitationes tibi renuntiant, cave aliquid tu addas. Renuntiatum est aliquem tibi male dixisse: esto, id allatum est; non tamen et illud, te laesum esse. Video puerum aegrotare: video; sed quod in periculo sit, non video. Ad hunc modum semper insiste primis visis, nihil ipse intus adice — ita nihil mali erit. Immo hoc adde: nosse te omnia quae in mundo eveniunt.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Say no more to yourself than what the first impressions report. It is reported that so-and-so speaks ill of you. This is reported; but that you have been harmed is not reported. I see that the child is sick. I see it; but that he is in danger, I do not see. So remain always with the first impressions, add nothing to them from within — and nothing happens to you. Or rather, add something: as one who knows each of the things that come to pass in the world.</p>	<p>English from Latin: If your impressions or thoughts report anything to you, beware of adding anything yourself. It is reported that someone has spoken ill of you: be it so, that is reported; but not also that you have been harmed. I see that my child is sick: I see it; but that he is in danger, I do not see. In this way always hold to the first impressions, and add nothing within yourself — and so nothing evil will be there. Nay, add this: that you know all the things that come to pass in the world.</p>

**Language Differences:** Xylander tracks this core epistemological protocol with complete fidelity, translating μηδὲν αὐτὸς ἔνδοθεν ἐπίλεγε (do not add secondary commentary from within) as nihil ipse intus adice.

**Commentary:** Suffering is generated by our own internal commentary, not raw facts. If you receive a report that someone is speaking ill of you, that is your entire objective data. Labeling that report as an injury is a separate judgment that can be freely withheld, keeping the soul uncompromised.

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Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Σίκυος πικρός; ἄφες. βάτοι ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ; ἔκκλινον. ἄρκει, μὴπροσεπέιπης· τί δὲ καὶ ἐγένετο ταῦτα ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ; ἐπεὶ καταγελασθήση ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπου φυσιολόγου, ὡς ἂν καὶ ὑπὸ τέκτονοςκαὶ σκυτέως γελασθείης καταγινώσκων ὅτι ἐν τῷ ἐργαστηρίῳ ξέσματα καὶ περιτμήματα τῶν κατασκευαζομένων ὄρας. καὶ τοὶ ἐκεῖνοί γε ἔχουσι ποῦ αὐτὰ ρίψωσιν, ἢ δὲ τῶν ὅλων φύσις ἔξωούδεν ἔχει, ἀλλὰ τὸ θαυμαστὸν τῆς τέχνης ταύτης ἐστὶν ὅτι περιορίσασα ἑαυτὴν πᾶν τὸ ἔνδον διαφθείρεσθαι καὶ γηράσκειν καὶ ἄχρηστον εἶναι δοκοῦν εἰς ἑαυτὴν μεταβάλλει, καὶ ὅτι πάλιν ἄλλα νεαρὰ ἐκ τούτων αὐτῶν ποιεῖ, ἵνα μήτε οὐσίας ἔξωθεν χρήζη μήτε ὅπου ἐκβάλῃ τὰ σαπρότερα προσδέηται. ἄρκεῖται οὖν καὶ χώρα τῇ ἑαυτῆς καὶ ὕλη τῇ ἑαυτῆς καὶ τέχνη τῇ ἰδίᾳ</p>	<p><i>Cucumis amarus est? Omitte eum. Vepres in via sunt? Declina eas. Neque vero dicas: Curnam haec in mundo sunt facta? Ridereris enim ab homine naturae rerum indagatore, haud secus quam a fabro aut sutore si damnares quod in officina ramenta et resegmenta operum videres. Atqui hi ea possunt aliquo abiicere; universi natura nihil extra se habet. Verum hoc in eius arte potissimum mirari decet: quod, cum seipsam circumscripserit, omnia quae in se habet — quae obnoxia corruptioni, senio, et nullius esse usus videantur — in seipsam transmutat, rursusque ex his alia nova efficit; ita ut neque substantiam extra se requirat, neque locum quo viliores res eiiciat. Contenta est igitur suo loco, materia, et arte.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: The bitter cucumber? Drop it. Brambles in the path? Turn aside. It is enough; do not add, 'And why do such things exist in the world?' — for you will be laughed at by the student of nature, just as you would be laughed at by the carpenter and the cobbler if you reproached them because you see shavings and offcuts of their work in the shop. And yet they have somewhere to throw the scraps, while the nature of the whole has nothing outside itself. The wonder of her craft is just this: having set her own bounds, she changes into herself everything within that seems to be decaying and growing old and useless, and out of these same things she makes other new ones — so that she needs no substance from outside, nor any place to cast her refuse. She is content with her own room, her own material, and her own craft.</p>	<p>English from Latin: A bitter cucumber? Let it alone. Brambles in the path? Turn aside. And do not say, 'Why ever were these things made in the world?' For you would be laughed at by a man who studies nature, no otherwise than by a smith or a cobbler if you found fault with the filings and parings of their work that you saw in the workshop. Yet they have somewhere to throw such things; whereas the nature of the universe has nothing outside itself. And this, above all, is to be marveled at in her art: that, having circumscribed herself, she transmutes into herself everything she contains that seems subject to corruption, age, and uselessness, and out of these makes other new things again; so that she neither requires substance from outside, nor a place to cast her meaner things. She is content, then, with her own place, her own matter, and her own art.</p>

**Language Differences:** The Greek technical noun φυσιολόγου (the natural scientist / student of physics) is translated by Xylander as naturae rerum indagatore ("an investigator into the nature of things"). Wood scraps — ξέσματα καὶ περιτμήματα — map to ramenta et resegmenta.

**Commentary:** Marcus deconstructs the problem of natural evil. Unpleasant phenomena like bitter cucumbers or thorns are simply the inevitable side-products of a functional ecosystem. Complaining about them is as illogical as entering a carpenter's workshop and growing angry at the wood shavings on the floor. Because universal nature has no exterior dump, its supreme intelligence reuses its own decaying waste to generate fresh new structures.

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**Book VIII · Section 54**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Μήτε ἐν ταῖς πράξεσιν ἐπισύρειν μήτε ἐν ταῖς ὀμιλίαις φύρειν μήτε ἐν ταῖς φαντασίαις ἀλάσθαι μήτε τῇ ψυχῇ καθάπαξ συνέλκεσθαι ἢ ἐκθόρνυσθαι μήτε ἐν τῷ βίῳ ἀσχολεῖσθαι</i>	<i>Neque in rebus agendis fluctuandum est, neque in communi vita turbandum, neque cogitationibus vagandum, neque omnino animus contrahendus aut subito impetu efferendus, neque vita occupationibus inanibus atterenda.</i>
English from Greek: Remember that to change your mind and to follow the one who sets you right are equally acts of freedom. For the action is yours, carried through according to your own impulse and judgment — indeed, according to your own mind.	English from Latin: Neither must you waver in your actions, nor be troubled in common life, nor let your thoughts wander, nor altogether let the soul be cramped or carried away by sudden impulse, nor wear out life with idle occupations.

**Language Differences:** Xylander translates ἐκθόρνυσθαι (to leap out / erupt with chaotic force) as *subito impetu efferendus*, and renders the constricting συνέλκεσθαι as *animus contrahendus* (the soul being cramped).

**Commentary:** A beautiful blueprint for managing daily focus. The mind must avoid two extremes: συνέλκεσθαι (shrinking into a paralyzed, fearful knot) and ἐκθόρνυσθαι (erupting with erratic passion). True clarity requires keeping your action, speech, and thoughts balanced and stable.

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**Book VIII · Section 55**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>“Κτείνουσι, κρεανομοῦσι, κατάραις ἐλαύνουσι.” τί ταῦτα πρὸς τὸ τὴν διάνοιαν μένειν καθαρὰν, φρενῆρη, σώφρονα, δικαίαν; οἶον εἴ τις παραστὰς πηγῇ διαυγεῖ καὶ γλυκεῖα βλασφημοίῃ αὐτήν, ἢ δὲ οὐ παύεται πότιμον ἀναβλύουσα ἢ κἄν πηλὸν ἐμβάλλῃ, κἄν κοπρίαν, τάχιστα διασκεδάσει αὐτὰ καὶ ἐκκλύσει καὶ οὐδαμῶς βαφήσεται.</i>	<i>Caedes peragunt homines, mactant, exsecrantur: quid haec possunt, quo minus mens tua permaneat pura, prudens, modesta, iusta? Quemadmodum si quis, limpido et dulci fonti assistens, ei convicium faciat, ille tamen ob id non cessat puram aquam scaturire; quin etiam, si quis lutum aut stercus iniiciat, tamen statim illa dissipabit atque eluet,</i>

<p>πῶς οὖν πηγὴν ἀέναον ἔξεις [καὶ] μὴ φρέαρ; ἂν φυλάσσης σεαυτὸν πάσης ὥρας εἰς ἐλευθερίαν μετὰ τοῦ εὐμενῶς καὶ ἀπλῶς καὶ αἰδημόνως</p>	<p><i>neque ab iis obturabitur. Quomodo ergo fontem perennem habeas, non cisternam? Compone teipsum, ut sis ad omnes horas liber, mansuetus, simplex, verecundus.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: This too tends against vainglory: that you can no longer claim to have lived your whole life as a philosopher, or even your life since youth; to many others, and to yourself as well, it has become plain that you are far from philosophy. You have been muddled, then — so that to acquire the reputation of a philosopher is no longer easy for you; and your station in life fights against it too. If, then, you have truly seen where the matter lies, put away the question of how you will appear, and be content if you live the remainder of your life, whatever its length, as your nature wills. Consider, then, what it wills, and let nothing else distract you. For you have made trial and wandered through how many things without finding the good life anywhere — not in syllogisms, not in wealth, not in reputation, not in enjoyment — nowhere. Where, then, is it? In doing what man's nature seeks. And how will a man do this? If he holds doctrines from which his impulses and actions flow. What doctrines? Those concerning goods and evils: that nothing is good for a man which does not make him just, temperate, courageous, free; and nothing evil which does not produce the opposites of these.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Men commit slaughter, butcher, hurl curses: what can these do to prevent your mind from remaining pure, prudent, modest, just? It is as if a man, standing beside a clear and sweet spring, should revile it: the spring does not on that account cease to well up pure water; nay, even if he throw in mud or filth, it will at once scatter and wash it away, and not be choked by it. How, then, may you have a perennial spring and not a cistern? Compose yourself so as to be, at every hour, free, gentle, simple, and modest.</p>

**Language Differences:** *Marcus contrasts an ἀέναον (an ongoing, perennial spring) against a φρέαρ (a stagnant cistern / well). Xylander translates the stagnant vessel accurately as cisternam.*

**Commentary:** External acts of violence carry zero power to corrupt the rational will. Even if physical enemies execute or curse the Emperor, they cannot force his mind into a state of vice. Like a clear artesian spring, the mind processes external insults, flushing away mud and filth to maintain its uncompromised internal purity.

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Book VIII · Section 56

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
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<p>Ὁ μὲν μὴ εἰδὼς ὅτι ἔστι κόσμος, οὐκ οἶδεν ὅπου ἐστίν. ὁ δὲ μὴεἰδὼς πρὸς ὃ τι πέφυκεν &lt;κόσμος&gt;, οὐκ οἶδεν ὅστις ἐστὶν οὐδὲ τί ἐστὶ κόσμος. ὁ δὲ ἔν τι τούτων ἀπολιπὼν οὐδ' ἂν πρὸς ὃ τι αὐτὸς πέφυκεν εἴποι. τίς οὖν φαίνεται σοι ὁ τὸν τῶν κροτούντων ἔπαινον φεύγων ἢ διώκων, οἳ οὐθ' ὅπου εἰσὶν οὔτε οἳ τινές εἰσι γινώσκουσιν</p>	<p><i>Qui nescit esse mundum, nescit ubi sit. Qui nescit cuius rei causa sit natus, neque quis ipse sit, neque omnino quid sit mundus, scit. Quorum alterutrum cui deest, is, cuius gratia exstiterit, dicere nequeat.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: He who does not know that the cosmos exists does not know where he is. He who does not know for what purpose the cosmos exists does not know who he is, nor what the cosmos is. He who has left out any one of these things could not even say for what purpose he himself exists. What, then, do you make of the man who flees or pursues the applause of clappers who know neither where they are nor who they are?</p>	<p>English from Latin: He who does not know that the world exists does not know where he is. He who does not know for what purpose he was born knows neither who he himself is, nor at all what the world is. And he who lacks either of these could not say for what end he came to be.</p>

**Language Differences:** *Xylander condenses the final rhetorical target, completely omitting Marcus's vivid depiction of popularity seekers chasing the applause of unexamined crowds (τὸν τῶν κροτούντων ἔπαινον).*

**Commentary:** Marcus deconstructs the logic of social validation. If the general populace operates without an understanding of cosmic law or human purpose, they are functionally lost in space. Seeking approval or fearing criticism from people who do not even understand their own identity is exposed as an absolute absurdity.

Book VIII • Section 57

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ἐπαινεῖσθαι θέλεις ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπου τρὶς τῆς ὥρας ἑαυτῷ καταρωμένου; ἀρέσκειν θέλεις ἀνθρώπῳ ὃς οὐκ ἀρέσκει ἑαυτῷ; ἀρέσκει ἑαυτῷ ὁ μετανοῶν ἐφ' ἅπασιν σχεδὸν οἷς πράσσει</p>	<p><i>Uter vero tibi elegantior videtur — isne qui plaudentium fugit laudem, an illi qui neque ubi neque qui sint cognoscunt? Laudari cupis ab homine qui seipsum spatio unius horae ter exsecratur? Placere vis homini qui ne sibi quidem ipse probatur? An sibi probatur is qui fere omnium quae egerit poenitentia corripitur?</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Do you wish to be praised by a man who curses himself three times an hour? Do you wish to please a man who does not please himself? Does a</p>	<p>English from Latin: Which of the two seems to you the more refined — he who shuns the praise of those who applaud, or those who do not know where or who they</p>

man please himself who repents of nearly everything he does?	are? Do you wish to be praised by a man who curses himself three times within a single hour? Do you wish to please a man who is not even pleasing to himself? Is he pleasing to himself who is seized with repentance for nearly everything he does?
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**Language Differences:** *Xylander introduces a comparative question to open the text block (Uter vero tibi elegantior videtur...), pulling forward themes from Section 56 to build a continuous paragraph.*

**Commentary:** Marcus applies diagnostic psychology to public critics. If an unreflective individual constantly experiences moral regret (μετανοῶν) and hates their own internal state, their evaluation of your choices carries zero structural validity.

**Book VIII · Section 58**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Μηκέτι μόνον συμπνεῖν τῷ περιέχοντι ἀέρι, ἀλλ ἤδη καὶσυμφρονεῖν τῷ περιέχοντι πάντα νοερῷ. οὐ γὰρ ἦττον ἢ νοερὰ δύναντις πάντη κέχυται καὶ διαπεφοίτηκε τῷ σπάσαι βουλομένῳ ἥπερ ἡ ἀερώδης τῷ ἀναπνεῦσαι δυναμένῳ</p>	<p><i>Non iam tantum una spirandus est circumfusus aer, sed et consentiendum cum mente quae universa complectitur. Haud enim minus vis intellectrix omni ei quod eam trahere potest circumfusa est, quam spiritus ei qui spirare vult.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: No longer merely breathe with the surrounding air — now think with the intelligence that surrounds all things. For the intelligent power is poured out everywhere, and pervades all things, no less for the one willing to draw it in than the airy element for the one able to breathe.</p>	<p>English from Latin: No longer is it enough merely to breathe in unison with the surrounding air; you must also be of one mind with the intelligence that embraces all things. For the intelligent power is poured around everything that can draw it, no less than the air around him who wishes to breathe.</p>

**Language Differences:** *Marcus contrasts συμπνεῖν (breathing in unison) with συμφρονεῖν (thinking in absolute harmony). Xylander renders this conceptual pairing as spirandus and consentiendum.*

**Commentary:** Just as the body continuously extracts physical oxygen from the atmosphere to maintain biology, the mind should actively draw from the universal intelligence (νοερὰ δύναντις) that encompasses reality. Reason is a shared resource immediately available to anyone willing to draw it in.

Book VIII · Section 59

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Γενικῶς μὲν ἡ κακία οὐδὲν βλάπτει τὸν κόσμον, ἡ δὲ κατὰ μέρος οὐδὲν βλάπτει τὸν ἕτερον, μόνῳ δὲ βλαβερά ἐστὶ τούτῳ ᾧ ἐπιτέτραπται καὶ ἀπηλλάχθαι αὐτῆς, ὁπόταν πρῶτον αὐτὸς θελήσῃ</p>	<p><i>Generatim malitia mundo non obest; in specie autem nihil laedit proximum: soli ei obest cui etiam concessum est ut, cum primum ita voluerit, ea liberari possit.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: Wickedness in general harms the cosmos in nothing; and wickedness in particular harms no one but the man himself — to whom it is granted to be rid of it the very moment he himself wills.</p>	<p>English from Latin: In general, wickedness does no harm to the world; and in particular it hurts no neighbor: it hurts only him to whom it has also been granted that, as soon as he wills, he may be set free from it.</p>

**Language Differences:** The structural pairing *Γενικῶς ... κατὰ μέρος* (on a macro / universal scale vs. on a local / particular scale) is matched by Xylander's logical vocabulary: *Generatim ... in specie*.

**Commentary:** Malice has no structural power to damage cosmic architecture. On an individual level, another person's vice remains locked inside their own ἡγεμονικόν, incapable of causing moral harm to your soul. Vice is a local sickness affecting only the wrongdoer, and they retain the power to step away from it whenever they choose to align with reason.

Book VIII · Section 60

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Τῷ ἐμῷ προαιρετικῷ τὸ τοῦ πλησίον προαιρετικὸν ἐπ' ἰσῆς ἀδιάφορόν ἐστιν, ὡς καὶ τὸ πνευμάτιον αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ σαρκίδιον. καὶ γὰρ εἰ ὅτι μάλιστα ἀλλήλων ἔνεκεν γεγόναμεν, ὁμῶς τὰ ἡγεμονικὰ ἡμῶν ἕκαστον τὴν ἰδίαν κυρίαν ἔχει· ἐπεὶ τοι ἔμελλεν ἡ τοῦ πλησίον κακία ἐμοῦ κακὸν εἶναι, ὅπερ οὐκ ἔδοξε τῷ θεῷ, ἵνα μὴ ἐπ' ἄλλῳ ἢ τὸ ἐμὲ ἀτυχεῖν</p>	<p><i>Non magis ad meam voluntatem aliena voluntas pertinet, quam vel anima eius vel caro. Nam etsi maxime verum est unum nostrum alterius causa esse natum, tamen pars nostra principalis suum, qualitercumque, dominium obtinet. Etenim cur alterius malitia mihi esset malo? Cum non sit visum Deo ut in alterius esset potestate me esse infelicem.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: To my power of choice the choice of my neighbor is exactly as indifferent as his breath and his flesh. For however much we came into being for one another's sake, still the ruling faculty of each of us has its own sovereignty. Otherwise my neighbor's wickedness would have been my evil — and god did not see fit that my misfortune should depend</p>	<p>English from Latin: My neighbor's will is no more to my own will than is his breath or his flesh. For although it is most true that we were each born for the sake of the other, yet our governing part holds, in whatever manner, its own sovereignty. For why should another's wickedness be an evil to me? Since it has not seemed good to God that it should lie in another's power to</p>

on another.	make me unhappy.
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**Language Differences:** The precise technical Stoic noun προαιρετικῶ (the faculty of volitional choice / moral will) is translated standardly by Xylander as voluntatem. The Greek diminutive πνευμάτιον becomes anima.

**Commentary:** This passage establishes a strict boundary for the moral will. While human beings are designed for social cooperation, each individual will holds absolute, independent sovereignty. Destiny is arranged so that your personal fulfillment can never be held hostage by the malicious choices of another person.

Book VIII · Section 61

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<p>Ὁ ἥλιος κατακεχύσθαι δοκεῖ καὶ πάντῃ γε κέχυται, οὐ μὴν ἐκκέχυται. ἡ γὰρ χύσις αὕτη τάσις ἐστίν· ἀκτῖνες γοῦν αἱ αὐγαὶ αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐκτείνεσθαι λέγονται. ὁποῖον δέ τι ἐστὶν ἀκτίς, ἴδοις ἄν, εἰ διὰ τινος στενοῦ εἰς ἐσκιασμένον οἶκον τὸ ἀφ' ἡλίου φῶς εἰσδυόμενον θεάσαιο· τείνεται γὰρ κατ' εὐθὴ καὶ ὡσπερ διερείδεται πρὸς τὸ στερέμνιον ὃ τι ἂν ἀπαντήσῃ διεῖργον τὸν ἐπέκεινα ἀέρα, ἐνταῦθα δὲ ἔσθῃ καὶ οὐ κατώλισθεν οὐδὲ ἔπεσεν. τοιαύτην οὖν τὴν χύσιν καὶ διάχυσιν τῆς διανοίας εἶναι χρή, μηδαμῶς ἔκχυσιν, ἀλλὰ τάσιν, καὶ πρὸς τὰ ἀπαντῶντα κωλύματα μὴ βίαιον μηδὲ ῥαγδαίαν τὴν ἐπέρεισιν ποιῆσθαι μηδὲ μὴν καταπίπτειν, ἀλλὰ ἴστασθαι καὶ ἐπιλάμπειν τὸ δεχόμενον· αὐτὸ γὰρ ἐαυτὸ στερήσει τῆς αὐγῆς τὸ μὴ παραπέμπον αὐτήν.</p>	<p><i>Sol diffusus esse videtur? Atque omnino quidem fusus est, non tamen effusus: fusio enim eius extensio est. Itaque et fulgores eius — quos nos radios, Graeci ab extendendo 'actinas' dicunt. Quod autem sit natura radii, videre est, si inspicias lumen solis per angustum in umbrosam domum immisum: recta enim immittitur, et dividitur ad obiectum solidum corpus quod aerem intercipit; ibi vero permanet, neque decedit. Ita et intellectum fundi ac diffundi, non tamen effundi oportet: ut extendatur quidem, neque vi et temerario impetu ad obiecta impedimenta impingat, neque concidat, sed perstet, et illustret id a quo accipietur. Id quidem quod eum non transmittet, splendore seipsum privabit.</i></p>
<p>English from Greek: The sun seems to be poured down, and indeed it is poured in every direction, yet not poured out; for this pouring is an extension. So too the understanding should be poured forth and diffused — not poured away, but extended; and against the obstacles it meets it should make no violent or headlong thrust, nor collapse, but stand firm and illumine that which receives it; for whatever does not transmit the light deprives itself of the radiance.</p>	<p>English from Latin: Is the sun seen to be poured out? Poured forth, indeed, it wholly is, yet not poured away: for its pouring is an extension. And so too its beams — which we call rays, and the Greeks 'actines,' from their extending. What the nature of a ray is you may see if you look at the sun's light let in through a narrow opening into a darkened room: for it is shot in straight, and is divided against any solid body it meets that cuts off the air; and there it stays, and does not fall away. So too the understanding ought to be poured</p>

	out and diffused, yet not poured away: that it may be extended indeed, but neither dash with violent and reckless force against the obstacles it meets, nor fall down, but stand firm and illuminate that which receives it. For whatever does not transmit it will deprive itself of its splendor.
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**Language Differences:** *Xylander tracks Marcus's Greek etymological definition of a sunbeam — ἀκτῖνες linked to ἐκτείνεσθαι (to extend out) — by explaining the linguistic shift directly within his text: Graeci ab extendendo 'actinas' dicunt.*

**Commentary:** A beautiful physical metaphor for the extension of the mind. A sunbeam streaming through a narrow opening into a dark room strikes a solid object and rests firmly against the surface without sliding off. The understanding (διάνοια) must extend outward in the same way: when encountering a difficult obstacle, it should not smash against it with violent frustration or collapse in panic, but stand firm and illuminate the situation through clear reason.

**Book VIII · Section 62**

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
Ὁ τὸν θάνατον φοβούμενος ἦτοι ἀναισθησίαν φοβεῖται ἢ αἴσθησιν ἕτεροίαν. ἀλλ' εἴτε οὐκέτι αἴσθησιν <ἔξεις> οὐδὲ κακοῦτινος αἰσθήσῃ· εἴτε ἀλλοιοτέραν αἴσθησιν κτήσῃ, ἀλλοῖον ζῶον ἔσῃ καὶ τοῦ ζῆν οὐ παύσῃ.	<i>Qui mortem metuit, aut amissionem sensuum timet, aut diversum sensum veretur. At si amittet sensum, nihil utique mali sentiet; sin alium sensum adipiscetur, aliud erit animal, neque amittet vitam.</i>
English from Greek: He who fears death fears either the absence of all sensation or a sensation of a different kind. But if there shall be no more sensation, you will feel no evil; and if you shall acquire a different sensation, you will be a different living being, and will not have ceased to live.	English from Latin: He who fears death fears either the loss of all sensation, or a sensation of a different kind. But if he shall lose sensation, assuredly he will feel no evil; and if he shall acquire a different sensation, he will be a different living being, and will not have ceased to live.

**Language Differences:** *The text remains completely stable across both columns, with Xylander mapping ἀναισθησίαν precisely to amissionem sensuum (the loss of the senses).*

**Commentary:** Marcus applies a crisp logical dilemma to neutralize the fear of death. If death brings a complete end to consciousness (ἀναισθησίαν), you will lack any sensory faculty to perceive injury or grief. If death shifts you into an alternative state of consciousness, you simply function as a different type of living being, continuing to exist within the cosmic system.

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Book VIII · Section 63

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Οἱ ἄνθρωποι γεγόνασιν ἀλλήλων ἕνεκεν ἢ δίδασκε οὖν ἢ φέρε.</i>	<i>Homines unus alterius causa nati sunt. Disce igitur, aut fer.</i>
English from Greek: Men have come into being for one another's sake. So either teach them, or bear with them.	English from Latin: Men have come into being for one another's sake. Therefore either teach them, or bear with them.

**Language Differences:** Xylander maps this famous, compressed text almost word-for-word, utilizing the imperative *Disce ... aut fer* to translate ἢ δίδασκε οὖν ἢ φέρε.

**Commentary:** A foundational axiom of Stoic social duty. Human beings are designed specifically for mutual cooperation and human fellowship. When facing difficult or unreflective individuals, your options are narrowed to two choices: use clear logic to correct their ignorance, or endure their behavior with patience.

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Book VIII · Section 64

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Ἄλλως βέλος, ἄλλως νοῦς φέρεται. ὁ μέντοι νοῦς καὶ ὅταν εὐλαβῆται καὶ ὅταν περὶ τὴν σκέψιν στρέφηται, φέρεται κατεύθου οὐδὲν ἥττον καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ προκείμενον.</i>	<i>Aliter iaculi, aliter mens fertur. Haec enim, etsi cauta sit et in deliberatione versetur, recta tamen fertur.</i>
English from Greek: An arrow moves one way, the mind another. Yet the mind, even when it is wary and turns about in inquiry, moves no less straight toward what lies before it.	English from Latin: The arrow's course is one thing, the mind's another. For the mind, even when it is wary and turns about in deliberation, none the less moves straight toward its object.

**Language Differences:** The Greek noun βέλος (a missile, dart, or arrow) is rendered by Xylander as *iaculi* (a javelin / dart). *Περὶ τὴν σκέψιν στρέφηται* is translated as *in deliberatione versetur*.

**Commentary:** A mechanical contrast. While a physical arrow travels in a single, rigid trajectory that can be easily deflected by headwinds, the mind operates with deep strategic adaptability. Even when the intellect pauses to deliberate or evaluate alternative options, it continues to move straight toward its moral target.

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Book VIII · Section 65

Greek Original	Latin (Xylander 1558)
<i>Εἰσιέναι εἰς τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν ἐκάστου, παρέχειν δὲ καὶ ἑτέρῳ παντὶ εἰσιέναι εἰς τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ἡγεμονικόν</i>	<i>Ingredi in principem cuiusvis partem licet; praebet autem etiam alii unicuique ingredi in suam principalem partem.</i>
English from Greek: Enter into the ruling faculty of each man, and allow every other man, likewise, to enter into your own.	English from Latin: It is open to you to enter into the ruling part of every man; and each man likewise grants every other to enter into his own ruling part.

**Language Differences:** *The parallel columns match with total precision, with Xylander deploying the verb ingredi ("to step into / enter") to capture Εἰσιέναι εἰς.*

**Commentary:** Book VIII concludes with an exercise in radical empathy. A philosopher must look directly past superficial behavior to read the core governing principles of others. Simultaneously, your own mind must remain entirely transparent, ready to broadcast its honest motivations to any observer without shame or pretense.

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# Glossary

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

**TO MYSELF**

The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius

Stuart Schonwetter Edition

Classic Motivation

## About this Glossary

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

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

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

## Stoic Vocabulary

### **ἡγεμονικόν** (*hēgemonikón*)

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

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

### **λόγος** (*lógos*)

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

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

**προαίρεσις** (*proaíresis*)

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

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

**αἰδώς** (*aidós*)

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

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

**οἰκείωσις** (*oikeíōsis*)

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

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

**φαντασία** (*phantasía*)

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

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

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

**ὑπόληψις** (*hypólēpsis*)

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

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

**συγκατάθεσις** (*synkatáthesis*)

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

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

**ἀπάθεια** (*apátheia*)

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

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

**εὐδαιμονία** (*eudaimonía*)

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

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

**ἀρετή** (*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.*

**εἰμαρμένη** (*heimarménē*)

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

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

**ἀπροπτωσία** (*aproptōsía*)

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

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

**μεταβολή** (*metabolé*)

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

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

### **καθῆκον** (*kathêkon*)

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

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

### **ἀδιάφορα** (*adiáphora*)

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

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

### **ψυχή** (*psyché*)

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

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

### **ὄρμη** (*hormé*)

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

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

## The Roman World

### **Princeps** (*first citizen*)

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

### **Caesar / Augustus** (*imperial titles*)

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

### **Senatus** (*the senate*)

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

### **Consul** (*chief magistrate*)

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

### **Stoa Poikile** (*the Painted Porch*)

A colonnade in the agora of Athens, decorated with murals by the great fifth-century painter Polygnotus. Zeno of Citium taught his philosophy there

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

### **Lyceum, Academy** (*Aristotle, Plato*)

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

### **Carnuntum** (*Roman frontier city*)

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

### **Vindobona** (*modern Vienna*)

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

### **Antonine Plague** (*pandemic*)

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

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

### **Marcomannic Wars** (*Danube frontier wars*)

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

### **Pater Familias** (*head of household*)

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

### **Toga praetexta, toga virilis** (*the rites of growing up*)

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

## **A Closing Note**

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

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