

MARCUS AURELIUS IN HIS *MEDITATIONS*¹

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The work we call the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius was entitled in the lost manuscript that Xylander used for the first printed edition (1559) Μάρκου Ἀντωνίνου αὐτοκράτορος τῶν εἰς ἑαυτὸν βιβλίων. This title was apparently unknown to a Byzantine historian of the fourteenth century,² and may rest merely on the impression the work made on one reader, who affixed it to his copy. But that impression was surely just; even Book I, of which more later, is an intimate document, and Books II to XII a kind of spiritual diary, which Marcus wrote in moments of leisure, probably with his own hand, just as he continued to the end of his life to send autograph letters to his friends (Dio lxxi, 36, 2), and on parchment books, to which he could most easily refer, like those used by Aelius Aristides (xlviiii, 8 K) to record his dreams; such books, intended for his own eyes alone, need have had no title. If this view is correct, the *Meditations* provide evidence unique in antiquity and perhaps in any age for the inmost thoughts of a ruler. The most cursory perusal will indeed show that Marcus was mainly concerned with the divine order of the universe and with the place of man in that order; overt personal allusions are rare. Yet it would be strange if his reflections were not on closer inspection to reveal traces of his own personal experience. I shall argue later that the very frequency with which he recurs to certain topics indicates the preoccupations of the ruler and has historical implications that have not been recognized, even by those who see the work as a spiritual diary and not in any sense as a philosophical treatise. But since that interpretation has not gone without challenge or modification, more must be said to justify it. I shall first discuss Books II to XII and then Book I.

I

If the work is a spiritual diary, how was it preserved? Of course we do not know, but we may readily guess. Ever since Xylander's edition it has supplied guidance, consolation and fortitude to countless readers who have not even shared Marcus' own system of beliefs. No wonder then if it was treasured by some kindred spirit in his entourage, who had somehow obtained possession of the precious books. We do not need to think of actual 'publication',³ as distinct from the gradual transmission of copies among those who found inspiration in Marcus' thoughts. Very probably few copies were ever made; there is little evidence that the work was much known until Byzantine times.⁴

Given that its survival was so fortuitous, we cannot presume that the diary survived in its entirety. Aristides lost some of his dream records (xlviiii, 3 K). Not all the books of the diary need have come into the hands of any one who prized them. Nor need they have borne any marks of date or sequence. Hence it is not self-evident that our books correspond to Marcus' own volumes, or that they, or even the chapters, are in due temporal succession. Some sections were certainly written in the last decade of Marcus' life, and indeed this can fairly safely be predicated of the whole work; we may think it probable that the order is in fact chronological, but this cannot actually be proved. It is hard to believe that once Marcus had formed the habit of committing his reflections to paper, he would have discontinued it, so long as his physical and mental energy permitted. No section of the *Meditations* indicates any decline in his powers, and unless his later entries have been lost, we may well have in Book XII some of his last thoughts.⁵

¹ F. = A. S. L. Farquharson, *The Meditations of the Emperor Marcus Antoninus*, 2 volumes, 1944. I follow Haines in his Loeb ed. in the division of chapters into sections, except for vi, 30, where I follow F. Haines' laconic notes and indexes are often useful. I have used or adapted translations by both Haines and F.

I have not cited all relevant texts from the *Historia Augusta*; though the author draws partly on a good source, he is in my view even then so careless that his testimony can be seldom trusted unless confirmed, and is then redundant. Dio's account is remarkably true to M.'s own self-portrait. The *SC de ludis* (ILS 5163 and 9340) is now best published by J. H. Oliver and R. E. A. Palmer, *Hesperia* xxiv, 1955, 320 ff.

² Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulos (1295-1360) thought the work was intended for the instruction of Commodus, F. xx.

³ On the general difficulty of applying this concept to antiquity cf. K. J. Dover, *Lysias and the Corpus Lysiacum*, 1968, 151-4.

⁴ F. xiii ff. F. mistakenly infers that Dio knew the *Meditations* because he makes Marcus use phrases that recall them; Dio would have known the language Marcus employed in actual speeches and edicts, and Marcus made no secret of his principles, cf. *SC de ludis*, esp. 25. Even Julian seems unfamiliar with the *Meditations*, though his contemporary, Themistius, apparently refers to them.

⁵ See further Appendix I.

The value of the *Meditations* for the understanding of Marcus is obviously much greater if they represent his inmost thoughts, expressed with perfect candour, than if they were designed as a moral treatise for the edification of others. No one has ever been able to maintain that as they now stand they constitute such a treatise. Scattered reflections are strung together with rapid changes of topics, logically inconsequential and often wholly unaccountable. Complicated philosophical doctrines are not systematically expounded, and mere allusions to them often precede relatively full statements; even in such statements the arguments are hardly given, and could not persuade any one not already convinced by treatises with which Marcus was of course himself familiar; similarly, technical terms are unexplained.⁶ Marcus enforces the truth as he sees it by endless iteration; restatements of his doctrines hardly ever show any development.⁷ Grave eloquence or vivid and poetic imagery alternates with passages that are arid or actually ungrammatical, with mere ejaculations or unconnected extracts from other writers.

Scholars who cannot bring themselves to think that Marcus was writing for himself alone have therefore been forced to conjecture that he wrote on wax tablets, which were scattered after his death and pieced together by an editor, or that what remains consists simply of extracts from a larger and coherent work.⁸ But in the former case one would expect the most witless editor to have made a more logical arrangement of the *disiecta membra* by topics. And in the latter, had Marcus ever chosen to compose a moral treatise, he would surely himself have given a more systematic, thorough and explicit exposition of his favourite themes, of which some trace would be detectable in excerpts. Why should an excerptor have divorced discussions of the same problem that should have come together? And what end could he have had in transcribing this enigmatic exclamation (iv, 28): 'a character black, obstinate, inhuman, childish, stupid, counterfeit, shameless, mercenary, tyrannical'? Again, though there are many striking passages in the work, other chapters are obscure or wholly unmemorable. I take one of the latter at random (ix, 13): 'this day I have escaped all trouble, or rather have cast out all trouble; for the trouble did not lie outside me, but within me in my own conceptions.' Here the idea is one common in the work, but it is often expressed more vigorously and intelligibly. Many collections of excerpts from the *Meditations* do exist,⁹ and they do not contain this kind of passage.

My last quotation illustrates how from time to time Marcus alludes to personal experiences, without describing them explicitly or seeking in Seneca's manner to point a moral for others. He refers occasionally to his family (viii, 25; 37; 49; ix, 3, 1) and to his own name and position as ruler (iii, 5; vi, 26; 30; 44; ix, 29; x, 31; xi, 18, 1); he admonishes himself against tyrannical conduct;^{9a} he thinks of speaking in the senate (viii, 30); he more than once complains of the difficulty of living the moral life in a court, and his mind turns naturally to past courts or past rulers.¹⁰ One of his most frequent themes is the vanity of fame, contemporary or posthumous, the temptation to set one's heart on it was one few prospective readers could have had occasion to resist! No less common is meditation on the proximity as well as on the inevitability of death, and he writes expressly as an old man near the grave.¹¹ Again he refers, if only twice, to his experience of warfare: 'you have seen a hand or foot cut off, a head severed from the trunk, and lying some way off' (viii, 34, cf. x, 10); it was of course he himself who had seen this, and 'you' seems always to be self-apostrophe, not an appeal to 'the dear reader'. He says that he has no time for reading, not even his little memoranda, or *The Acts of the old Greeks and Romans* and the

⁶ See iv, 3,2: ἐξ ὧν ἀπεδείχθη ὅτι ὁ κόσμος ὡσαύτῃ πάλαι; elliptical arguments for this in iv, 4. Cf. v, 16,2: πάλαι δέδεικται, but not by M., whose fullest statement of the 'proof' is in ix, 9 (F. 659), cf. ii, 1 etc. Some other specimens of M.'s reasoning: iv, 21; vi, 44; vii, 55; viii, 57; ix, 1; 40.

⁷ F. 290 on ii, 11 suggests that 'in the later Books Marcus prefers generally to preserve an open mind between belief in the gods and the Epicurean atomism', but when he puts the alternatives 'atoms' (or 'chaos' or a 'medley') and 'providence', 'gods', etc, he sometimes (iv, 3,2; 27; x, 39, cf. 40), if not always (vi, 10; vii, 32; viii, 17; ix, 28; 39;

xii, 14), rejects the first theory by implication, and in xii, 5; 36 etc. his faith is reasserted; it only wavers in moments. Cf. pp. 14 f.

⁸ F. lviii ff. discusses such theories rather too favourably.

⁹ F. xx ff.

^{9a} i, 11; iv, 28; 31; 48; v, 11; vi, 34; xi, 18, 11

¹⁰ The court: i, 17,3; v, 16; vi, 12; viii, 9. Past courts, iv, 32; viii, 31; x, 27, and rulers, iv, 33; vii, 49; viii, 3; 5; 25; 37; ix, 29; x, 31.

¹¹ Old age: ii, 2; 6; v, 31; x, 15; xii, 1,2 (cf. iii, 1); Dio lxxi, 24,4 ('speech' of M.). Fame and death: Appendix II.

anthology of their writings he had made to peruse in old age (viii, 8, cf. ii, 2 f.).¹² Once he looks back on the course of his past life (ix, 21), or refers to a particular individual, unnamed, who had acted shamelessly (ix, 42). He thinks of the ungrateful associates for whom he had worked and prayed (x, 36). He is conscious of lack of shrewdness (v, 5), and hardens himself against the wish to snuggle in bed, instead of rising at dawn; from other sources we know that he was afflicted by insomnia and sensitive to cold.¹³ Although most of what he writes is of universal import, applicable to at least all who can find comfort in his doctrines, closer scrutiny suggests that it arises from his personal circumstances; the prominence of fame and death as *motives* provides two instances of this, and in Part II I shall give others. And where he is most personal, he is not making his own experience a paradigm for the instruction of humanity. He is addressing himself. To take the clearest case, none but he could benefit from the injunction to 'act always as the disciple of Pius' (vi, 30, 2) and from his reminiscences of the way in which Pius performed the duties of an emperor.

Furthermore, there is express evidence that Marcus would not have thought of composing a moral treatise. No doubt his natural inclination was towards a life of philosophic study. It is significant that he does not thank the gods (nor Hadrian or Pius) for making him emperor (i, 17). But he had known since boyhood, without Fronto's reminder,¹⁴ that though he were to acquire the wisdom of Zeno or Cleanthes, he must still don the imperial purple and not the philosopher's cloak. He had had to give up hope of becoming skilled in dialectic or physics (vii, 67), in which he perhaps never had a strong interest for their own sake, though he held that they provided the indispensable foundation for moral action.¹⁵ As for ethics, he had learned early from Rusticus not to compose didactic treatises nor deliver little speeches of exhortation (i, 7). Not for him then even the sermonizing of the revered Epictetus (who had himself written nothing). In life, as in primary education, a man must be instructed before he can give instruction (xi, 29); Marcus had insufficient leisure and had made too little moral progress. 'This too corrects vainglory, that you are no longer able to have lived your whole life or at least through your manhood as a philosopher'; he was far from philosophy and had little chance of winning repute as a philosopher, not merely because of moral failings that made his life a 'chaos', but because of his role (ὑπόθεσις, viii, 1). It is only an apparent contradiction that elsewhere he says that no role is more conducive than his to philosophizing,¹⁶ for here the essence of philosophy consists not in discursive thinking but in that activity which is proper to the 'rational and civic being' (ix, 16); no other role gives more scope for turning to noble use the obstacles and frustrations by which he feels himself encompassed,¹⁷ and for displaying that reverence for the divine and justice towards his fellows in which he commonly sees the whole duty of man. Though not free to read (n. 12),—and much less then to compose a treatise—he can still express his *hybris* (viii, 8). 'Always remember this: just because you have despaired of being expert in dialectic and physics, you must not despair of being free, modest, a social being, obedient to God' (vii, 67).

'Always remember': such phrases recur some forty times.¹⁸ Some men, he remarks, seek solitude for reflection, but 'at a moment's notice you can retire into yourself'; it is in

¹² If the ὑπομνημάτων of iii, 14 are his *Meditations* (and why not?), he must have written much (now lost, or included in our later books) before making this entry. 'Acts . . .' and anthology: iii, 14 (cf. Philostr. v. *Soph.* 565 for Herodes Atticus' anthology). Cf. Appendix I for possible extracts from the anthology.

¹³ v, 1, 1 with Haines' note, cf. ii, 1; vi, 2; viii, 12. Impersonal allusions to health: ix, 11; x, 33, 3. Dio continually stresses his physical frailty in the 170's (Fronto i, 150; 178; 182 H. = 35; 68 f. N. and *HA, Marc.* 4, 9 f. may indicate that this was not true in early life), lxxi, 1², cf. 3; 6, 3; 24, 4 ('speech'); 34, 2; 36, 2. M. is content to thank the gods that his body 'holds out so long in such a life' and that dreams had supplied him with antidotes against spitting blood and dizziness (i, 17, 6 and 8). A cluster of allusions (vii, 14; 16; 33; 64; 68; viii, 28; 40; ix, 41, earlier only in iv, 39) to physical pain may reflect personal experience in a particular period.

¹⁴ ii, 62 Haines = 144 N.

¹⁵ He has no use for syllogisms or inquiries into physical phenomena, i, 17, 8; viii, 1. Even the Stoics find the world hard to comprehend, v, 10. Yet the presentations of the senses (φαντασίαι) must be tested by rules of physics and dialectic, viii, 13. It is vital to see things as they really are, stripped of false judgements, e.g. iii, 13; vii, 2; viii, 49; x, 8, 1; xi, 16; xii, 18. Every act must be performed with the consciousness of the links between things divine and human, iii, 13. A man does not know himself without understanding the Universe, viii, 52, cf. xi, 5; 12. Almost everywhere M.'s metaphysics and moral precepts are connected, often expressly; his *dogmata* are the principles of a more or less coherent system, e.g. ii, 3 and 5.

¹⁶ xi, 7, cf. viii, 8; x, 31, 2; xii, 27.

¹⁷ e.g. v, 20; vi, 50; vii, 58; viii, 35.

¹⁸ See Schenkl's Index; the imperative alone is used 22 times.

the seclusion of a man's own soul that he can 'renew himself' with 'short and elemental axioms'.¹⁹ Here surely is the key to the *Meditations*. Whereas other men of affairs have eased themselves of the fret and weariness of the day by recording its incidents in journals and venting in private the feelings they had often had to repress, Marcus finds renewed strength in recalling those *dogmata* or doctrines which in his view alone enable a man to understand his own life through comprehension of the world and of man's place in the world (n. 15), and thereby to lead the only life that can give calm and freedom and happiness.²⁰ By 'taking his rest in philosophy' he can render existence at court more tolerable (vi, 12). But he must always have the guiding *dogmata* 'ready'.²¹ He must constantly rekindle their life; then he can stand upright and himself 'live again' (vii, 2). What better way of imprinting them firmly in his memory, of being 'bitten' by them (x, 34), so that they will come to mind when needed in his daily duties, than to write them out, if necessary again and again, with all the power and pungency that his mental energy and literary talent allowed? At his weariest a brief aphorism, a mere exclamation expressive of his feelings, a line of verse recollected, a golden passage from some *florilegium* in his tent, might be all that he could set down. At other times arguments ran through his head; he alludes to them—something, he may say, has often been proved—or summarizes them (n. 6). Then technical terms cannot be avoided; and perhaps that was why he wrote in Greek; no need for any effort to convey the subtleties of doctrine in a tongue so recalcitrant as Latin. Hence too the aridities hardly intelligible to one less versed in Stoic (and other) theories than Marcus himself. But when he is most deeply moved, and has the vigour and perhaps the leisure to express himself as best he can, the stylist may take command, and why not? It would have been surprising if one who had spent so much time in youth and even after his accession in literary exercises showed no traces of their effect.²² If the *Meditations* abound in striking phrases or longer passages 'fastidiously composed',²³ that is no proof that they were intended for eyes other than his own. Eloquence, Cicero had written, is one and the same, whatever the theme and the size of the audience, the same even if a man is speaking to himself (*de oratore* iii, 23). And for Marcus eloquence could give his convictions that force and memorable quality which might echo in his mind amid all the inexorable stress of his daily work and help him to conform his actual conduct to his principles at every point (παρ' ἑκαστα, v, 11).

Those who would like to think that the *Meditations* are the sketch, or remains, of a moral treatise justly say that the first chapter of Book II and the last of Book XII make a fine beginning and close. But there are other passages of which the same could have been said, had they stood at the start or end of the whole work, for instance iii, 4, 1-3, or iv, 48. Nor need we be moved by the consideration that, while so much in the work is disjointed, some chapters form a natural sequence; there is no difficulty in assuming that Marcus had leisure on occasions to write consecutively at greater length, or that reading and pondering the latest entry in the diary, he continued the same line of thinking.²⁴ Farquharson urged (p. lxxv) that 'there is a whole class of reflections, like Book XI, ch. 18, which might well belong to a hortatory or expository discourse'. Certainly the chapter cited is in some ways the most elaborate in the whole work. Gataker gave it the title 'ad compescendam iram', and Marcus there adduces ten considerations to restrain him from anger. Every point he

¹⁹ 'Retiring into oneself' (iv, 3, 1 and 4); Seneca, *ep.* 25.6, cited by F., ascribes the phrase to Epicurus, not then a novelty in authors of the Roman Empire (A. J. Festugière, *Personal Religion among the Greeks* 58 ff. with many parallels). Cf. iv, 3,4; vi, 11; vii, 28; 59; viii, 48; ix, 42,4. In Marcus at least it is not incompatible with Stoic doctrine that a man must be active; philosophical meditation supports him in his duties, vi, 12, cf. ii, 17. It 'renews' him (iv, 3,1); for the meaning of ἀνανεοῦν cf. vi, 15 and F. ad loc. Against total withdrawal, viii, 51. Cf. n. 37.

²⁰ Cf. nn. 36 and 68.

²¹ iii, 13, cf. iv, 3, 1 and 4; 12; v, 1; vii, 1; 61; 64; 68; ix, 42, 1; xi, 4; 18,10; xii, 9; 24. Epict. i, 1, 25 says that philosophers should write down their thoughts daily.

²² Youth: abundant evidence in Fronto. After

accession: Dio lxxi, 1,2. Fronto argued that an emperor needed rhetorical skill to persuade the senate and even the people, i, 52; ii, 40; 58; 138 H. = 40; 97; 141; 124 N. Perhaps M. continued his studies after 161 on that account. For such speeches of Pius and M. cf. perhaps v, 36; *epit. de Caes.* 15,9; *HA Marc.* 12,14; note also M.'s speeches to the army, Dio 3,3; 24 f.; *fr. Vat.* 195. Eventually M. seems to have set little value on rhetoric, cf. i, 7; 11; 17,4; iii, 5 (μήτε κομψεία τὴν διάνοιάν σου καλλωπιζέτω); vi, 30,1, perhaps iv, 51. F. lxxvi finds no rhetorical artifice in the *Med.*, but ii, 17 and many other chapters are at least very studied pieces.

²³ F. lxxv-lxxvii.

²⁴ See F.'s introductions to each book; II and III are the most coherent.

makes can be paralleled from essays on the same theme by Seneca and Plutarch.²⁵ And yet few pages in the *Meditations* are more demonstrably personal. I shall revert to this later, but for the moment note how it begins and ends. At the outset Marcus reminds himself that he has come into the world to be set over men, as a ram over a flock or a bull over a herd; he finishes with a warning against tyrannical conduct. His exhortations are directed to himself as emperor, not to mankind at large.

The first book, which I have so far disregarded, where he recites his debts to early mentors and friends, to his kin, to Pius and to the gods, has been construed as an intended preface or epilogue to a moral treatise. It was clearly composed as a whole; Marcus names his benefactors in a roughly chronological order, and his expressions of gratitude reach a deliberate climax in the last two chapters recounting his debts to Pius and the gods. Yet even Book I consists of mere jottings. The sentences are formless, from the opening words παρά τοῦ πάππου Οὐήρου τὸ καλόηθες καὶ ἀόργητον with no verb.²⁶ His recitals of debts to particular benefactors are sometimes in no intelligible sequence, as if he mentions them just as they came to his memory with no attempt at arrangement. Thus the gift from the gods he must have valued above all else was that he had received from them clear and frequent impressions of the kind of life that accords with nature; by comparison advantages of fortune lying outside his own control were secondary in the Stoic creed he accepted. Yet this supreme blessing is recorded neither first nor last of the benefits the gods had conferred (i, 17, 6); he starts by thanking them for the virtue of his family and friends and ends with a sort of diminuendo: 'that I was granted aid in dreams, and in particular learned thereby to avoid spitting of blood and giddiness. Then think of the oracle at Caieta, "how you shall employ yourself"'. And though in love with philosophy, I did not fall in with a sophist, and did not sit down by myself to analysis of discourses or syllogisms or to busying myself with celestial phenomena. For all these things require the gods to aid, and Fortune.'

The oracle at Caieta is only one of several dark allusions in Book I to incidents or persons known to few. What could other readers have made of 'the letter written from Sinuessa (by Rusticus) to my mother' (i, 7, 2) or of the way Pius 'treated the tax-collector at Tusculum who craved his pardon' (i, 16, 8)? At most the book contains notes which might have been worked up for publication, in a form in which such matters would have been explained. But did Marcus ever intend the world to know that he was thankful not to have lived for long in the same house as his grandfather's concubine (17, 2), or that he did not touch Benedicta or Theodotus and kept his virginity till rather late in manhood (17, 6)? Would he have recommended his children to others by saying that they were not deformed or mentally deficient (17, 4)? Indeed I can think of no purpose that the publication of his autobiographical reminiscences would have served, even if they had been more artfully constructed. On the other hand we can discern the use these recollections could have had in his own private devotions. In vi, 48 he adjures himself to think of the merits of his associates and take comfort by meditating on their virtues. That was a theme that seldom ran in his mind, for he had but a poor opinion of most of the men actually in his entourage (pp. 12 ff.). But to men of a previous generation, and to the gods, he felt that he owed much.²⁷ To set this down was a work of self-consolation, that must have lightened a few hours from the gloom that continually descended on him. In these memories he found some evidence in his own experience for the providence in which he wanted so much to believe.

II

If from first to last the *Meditations* were for Marcus' eyes alone, certain consequences follow.

First, he says what he really thought; if there is deception, it is self-deception. Thus his testimony to the respect and affection showed him by Verus (i, 17, 4), while it does not

²⁵ See nn. 61-77.

²⁶ M. means that he has learned to value certain qualities and practices from the benefactors named, not that he has himself attained perfection in them, cf. n. 32.

²⁷ cf. perhaps xi, 26. He also remembers or

recognizes his blessings in vii, 27; v, 31 (with πῶσα ὄνται καλὰ cf. iii, 2, unique in M. for appreciation of natural beauty; vi, 36,2 is rather different). Fronto's correspondence reveals the ease and affection that had informed M.'s relations with one of his preceptors.

bar us from believing in some of Verus' alleged vices or frailties, and need not indicate that Verus was an effective partner in the government, shows that when he wrote it, probably after Verus' death (Appendix 1), Marcus was far from suspecting him of disloyalty; in fact the stories purveyed or invented in the *Historia Augusta* have small claim to acceptance.²⁸ Scandalous gossip about Faustina certainly circulated at the time, and Dio as well as the biographer gave it credit, while observing that Marcus tolerated, or never inquired into, her supposed infidelities, and manifested the most profound grief at her death; he presumably did not know, or did not accept, the curious tale of her complicity in Avidius' revolt, or conceivably thought it not culpable, if she (and perhaps Avidius) had acted in the mistaken judgement that Marcus was a dying man and that Avidius alone could ensure the ultimate succession of Commodus (cf. n. 80). We cannot be sure that she was still alive when Marcus described her as obedient, affectionate and simple (i, 17, 7), but his conduct in deifying her may suggest that he would probably have expressed no different opinion in 176.²⁹ Above all, Marcus' portrait of Pius (i, 16; vi, 30) is uniquely authentic among all our accounts of Roman emperors, written by one who knew him intimately, shared his responsibilities, and had no motive to distort the truth.

Second, it is no part of Marcus' purpose to prescribe conduct to any one but himself. It is natural to compare him with Epictetus, who certainly influenced him and whose thinking is closer to his than any other Stoic's. Both insist that a citizen of the great city which includes both gods and men must welcome all the dispensations of providence and be active for the good of his fellows. Both derive the individual's specific duties from his place or station or role or calling or function in society. But Epictetus was preaching to all men, and has something to say, though but little, of the varying duties of different men in different stations: Marcus is concerned only with his own.³⁰ For a Roman and an emperor Pius furnished the exemplar, and what he says of Pius is not merely descriptive, but the most authoritative and valuable statement we possess on the principles and policy that any emperor sought to follow. In effect, as only a detailed analysis could show, Marcus' philosophy bade him adopt the principles traditionally demanded of an emperor since Augustus both by panegyrists and critics of the regime.³¹ Indeed in many ways his specific duties were so clear to him that he never needed to remind himself of them; thus it was self-evident that he had to defend the empire and that the requirements of justice demanded that he should observe the law. The model of Pius was important chiefly where it was easiest for an emperor to miss the true course. But the *Meditations* provide other evidence for Marcus' principles and difficulties, and it is to some of this other evidence that I propose to devote the rest of this paper.

Thirdly, if Marcus' aim was to console and strengthen himself, all that he says surely has some relevance to his own special problems. He was by his own admission no 'sapiens';³² hence on the strict Stoic view he was 'stultus', and as Seneca observed (*de Benef.* iv, 27, 1), 'stultus omnia vitia habet, sed non in omnia natura pronus est; alius in avaritiam, alius in luxuriam, alius in petulantiam inclinatur'. Epictetus had urged each man to battle with the errors to which he had the greatest propensity (iii, 12, 7 ff.). Marcus adjures himself to practise even the things he despairs of achieving: ἔθιζε καὶ ὅσα ἀπογινώσκεις (xii, 6). Zeal for self-improvement would make him preoccupied with the faults to which he was

²⁸ cf. P. Lambrechts, *L'Antiquité class.* 1934, 173 ff. Verus' own letters to Fronto (Haines i, 294, 304; ii, 116 = 116, 11, 129 N.) create a favourable impression. T. D. Barnes, *JRS* 1967, 65 ff., thinks Verus 'something of a playboy', but his analysis of the *Life* shows that much tittle-tattle, not confirmed by Dio, is from a poor source. Dio lxxi, 3,1 knows but does not endorse the story that Verus plotted against M. but was poisoned first. Philostr., *v. Soph.* 560, says that Marcus did not acquit Herodes Atticus of complicity in the plot of which he had suspected Verus. In fact Herodes had to face a quite different charge and could not have been either condemned or acquitted of a crime of which he was not accused. In his defence (561) he allegedly referred to his friendship with Verus as if this were something that might have counted against him; if this be true, it shows that in 175 it could be thought that M. and

Verus had not been on good terms. That need attest no more than the prevalence of malicious rumours in Marcus' court. Later still, when this had been blown up into an actual plot, it could be assumed that Herodes was alluding to it. But I feel little confidence in Philostratus and none in the *HA*. It is particularly absurd and incompatible with the value M. set on candour that M. should be made to cast a slur on Verus at the moment of deifying him (*Marc.* 20, 1-4).

²⁹ Dio lxxi, 22; 29, 1; 30 f.; 34,3. The abundance of coins commemorating her deification is hardly proof that M. did not accept the gossip (so H. Mattingly, *HThR* 1948, 147 ff.), but the *HA* is a poor witness to her misdeeds.

³⁰ G. R. Stanton, *Phronesis* 1968, 183 ff. seems to me to misconceive this matter.

³¹ I hope to discuss this elsewhere.

³² e.g. ii, 2; 4 f.; iv, 17; v, 5; viii, 1; x, 1; 8; 36 etc.

most susceptible and the virtues he found it hardest to attain, perhaps not only nor chiefly because of his own temperament, but also because of the environment in which he had to live, the corrupting atmosphere of a court (n. 10). 'Exeat aula qui volt esse pius' Lucan had said: 'virtus et summa potestas non coeunt' (viii, 492 f.). Explicitly or indirectly, Marcus often alludes to the dangers and difficulties his station created or aggravated. Now if the *Meditations* are a kind of diary, the extent of Marcus' preoccupation with particular themes and problems should appear in the very frequency with which he reverts to them, and less emphasis should be placed on more or less isolated passages than on an almost numerical analysis of subjects he harps on over and over again. This is a contention I now propose to *illustrate*. Naturally space does not permit an exhaustive examination, and in particular I can say nothing here of what can be learned of Marcus' conception of justice.

III

It needs no proof that Marcus wished to be a good man and a good ruler (e.g. ii, 4 f.). Of the four cardinal virtues wisdom (φρόνησις) was basic to the rest; it is seldom named, but this is not significant, as a very large part of the *Meditations* is consecrated to reflection on the world-order;³³ 'what is more delightful than wisdom herself, when thou thinkest how sure and smoothly flowing in all its workings is the faculty of understanding and knowing?' (v, 9).

Justice or the obligation to social activity or to conduct befitting the rational and 'civic' soul of a citizen of the great city of gods and men (which also involves acceptance of the world-order) are mentioned well over a hundred times.³⁴

Courage, manliness and cognate terms (or their contraries) appear in over thirty texts, but none of these contains a specific allusion to the perils and hardships of Marcus' campaigns; there is no sign that he ever felt the temptation, to which Commodus is said to have succumbed (e.g. Dio lxxiii, 1 f.), to leave the scenes of war for the ease and safety of life at Rome; as a boy he had learned to bear pain and discomfort (i, 5). 'Greatness of soul', a synonym or aspect of courage, enables a man to endure all the blows of fortune (v, 18), just because they can be viewed as inherent in the providential order (cf. iii, 11, 2; x, 11), and because the wise man knows that they do not affect his true happiness (x, 8, 1). Not indeed that mere endurance was enough; courage was also required for Marcus to fulfil his social duties as a Roman and a male (ii, 5).³⁵ However, so far from being preoccupied with the need to overcome the fear of physical danger, when Marcus gives 'manliness' any specific content, he declares it to lie in conquering the weakness of irascibility (n. 71).

This was a passion, the subjugation of which was more properly in the province of *sophrosyne*. That word, and its cognates, synonyms and antonyms, are not very frequent,³⁶ and again it is notable that though Marcus rejects hedonism in the manner common to his school, he finds little need to warn himself against the sensuality and greed which in theory and actual experience were the hallmarks of the tyrant. He had learned in boyhood to practise a simple or ascetic life (i, 3; 5 f.), and though he approves of Pius' readiness to accept the good things of life without becoming dependent on them (i, 16, 4 and 9; cf. vii,

³³ e.g. in half of Bk. II alone (chs. 1; 3 f.; 9; 11 f.; 14-17). Cf. n. 15. Φρόνιμος, φρόνησις occur only 4 times, φιλοσοφία etc. 22. All counts come from Schenkl's index.

³⁴ Schenkl, s.v. δίκαιον, δίκαιος (a few instances relate to the just arrangements of the world order), κοινωνία, πολιτεία and cognate words.

³⁵ Schenkl, s.v. ἀνδρείος, ἀνδρικός, ἄρην, ἀσθενής, ἔρωμένος, μεγαλοφροσύνη, μεγαλοψυχία (cf. *SVF* iv, s.v.), στιβαρός, φερέποντος, φιλόποντος, ὑπέρφρων and cognates; for relevant Stoic definitions cf. *SVF* i, 200 f.; 563; iii, 285 (Chrysippus defined 'fortitudo' as 'scientia rerum perferendarum vel affectio animi, in patiendi ac perferendo summae legi parens sine timore'); 262-6; 269 etc. Cf. v, 31: οἷα ἤρκεσας ὑπομείναι; iv, 49,2; but vi, 30,1 ἔρωμένον πρὸς τὰ πρέποντα ἔργα; iii, 12 and many other texts of course illustrate a more active ideal.

³⁶ Σωφροσύνη, etc., are found 10 times, ἐγκρατεία twice. Words denoting freedom or the reverse (ἐλευθερία etc., δουλεία, ἀνεμπόδιστος) which are found 31 times are also relevant, since for M. a man is free, if not subject to external things and the passions they arouse; for this idea cf. ii, 9; 17; iii, 5; 8; 12; v, 10,2; vi, 16,3; vii, 16; viii, 16; 48; x, 32 f. W. A. Oldfather, *Epictetus*, Loeb ed. i, p. xvii, remarks that the words for 'free' and 'freedom' occur 130 times in Epictetus (he wrongly makes the frequency only twice as great as in M.) and reasonably connects E.'s fondness for these terms with his personal experience as a slave; this suggestion is analogous to my interpretation of frequencies in M. However, E.'s conception of freedom (see esp. iv, 1) is the same as M.'s, and has nothing to do with legal status.

27; viii, 33), he expresses distaste for luxury (i, 17, 3; v, 12; ix, 2; xii, 2).³⁷ There are only a few allusions to his avoidance of, or contempt for, sexual lusts, and three to sobriety in food and drink;³⁸ by contrast the minor duty of rising early recurs four times (n. 13); the desire to lie abed was surely a greater temptation than other forms of self-indulgence. Born rich, he had always been able to spend liberally, on education (i, 4) and on gifts to others (i, 17, 8); he only once warns himself against overvaluing money (x, 30)³⁹ and names stinginess once in a list of vices (v, 5); Dio indeed says that he was accused of meanness, but falsely; certainly he did not think it a fault that needed self-correction, though he was conscious that it was necessary to husband the resources of the empire, as Pius had done, and frugality was required.⁴⁰ The paucity of references to these topics casts into high relief his more continual concern with veracity and with the repression of anger.

Veracity

The words ἀλήθεια, ἀληθής are used by Marcus to characterize both things as they really are and the mind that understands them aright; these senses are not only Stoic (*SVF*, Index s.v.) but normal in Greek; by contrast the words seldom denote veracity, a meaning found indeed in Plato, but used by Aristotle plainly in the consciousness that it is forced; he once describes veracity as a nameless virtue, and once says, 'let it be called *aletheia*'.⁴¹ When Marcus nine times lists *aletheia* among other virtues, it may then be that he has in mind only understanding of reality.⁴² However, even in these texts it may at least connote truthfulness, since in ix, 1 (cf. vi, 47) he associates truth-finding with truth-telling; a lie is impious, whether it be that of the man who does not use his natural faculty for distinguishing the true from the false or that of one who does wrong by deceiving his fellows; such deliberate falsehood seems to be a consequence of 'the lie in the soul' and alienates the liar from the order of nature. There are fourteen other texts in which he reminds himself of the duty of telling the truth;⁴³ some of these are associated with condemnations of hypocrisy, of which there are thirteen instances in all, or with the virtues of straightforwardness (ἀπλότης, *simplicitas*) and faithfulness (πίστις, *fides*), which occur respectively eighteen and five times; he also tells himself to act sincerely (ἀληθινῶς) in three chapters or 'from the heart' (ii, 3; vii, 13).⁴⁴ If we avoid double counting, there are over fifty chapters in which he refers to the duties of truthfulness and sincerity, or sixty if we allow that *aletheia* in the lists of virtues is also relevant. Nor is this all: the force of his language must be noted. Straightforwardness is a quality written on the forehead, revealed at once in the ring of the voice and the flash of the eye (xi, 15); three times by the collocation 'good and simple' he seems to indicate that it is one of the most essential qualities of the good man. Similarly, whereas in general he is apt to sum up the whole duty of man as just and beneficent action and acceptance of the decrees of providence, he more than once adds veracity, and

³⁷ In 23 chapters given by Schenkl s.v. ἡδονή M. takes or implies the Stoic view that pleasure is no good and pain no evil, cf. also v, 12; viii, 1; 29; xii, 19 and other texts cited in n. 13. From x, 1, cf. iv, 3, one might guess that he sometimes pined for retirement to some quiet spot with congenial company, cf. n. 19.

³⁸ Sex: i, 16, 1; 17,2; 17,6 (claiming that he had been cured of erotic passions); iii, 2,2; v, 10; 28; vi, 34; viii, 21; x, 13; xi, 18,2; with the last two texts cf. Epict. iv, 1, 143. I have found a score of allusions in Epictetus, esp. ii, 4. Sobriety: i, 16,3; iv, 26; v, 1.

³⁹ πλοῦτος is named 5 times as one of the δίδιφορα. Contrast the great frequency with which he rejects glory: 'cetera principibus statim adesse: unum insatiabiliter parandum, prosperam sui memoriam' (Tac., *Ann.* iv, 38). The vanity of possessions is a very common motif in Epictetus, though he too has much on glory, addressing himself to hearers in the official class.

⁴⁰ Dio lxxi, 32, cf. 3,3 f.; *Med.* i, 16,3 and 7. M. is ἀφιλάργυρος in the *Acta Appiani* (see e.g. H. A. Musurillo, *Acts of the Pagan Martyrs*, 1954). His *congiaria* (Chron. of 354, *MGH* I, p. 147) were in fact rather extravagant; Dio lxxii, 16; lxxiii, 5

permits comparisons, cf. also lxxiii, 8,4 for donative.

⁴¹ Reality: e.g. vii, 9; xii, 12: knowledge, e.g. iii, 11,2; iv, 11; 21,3 (cf. for idea vi, 13; vi, 21; vii, 68; xi, 18,3). Truthfulness: relatively rare in Greek, cf. L. and S., s.v., but see also Plato, *Hipp. Min.* 365B; 369B; 370E (though the meaning is not recognized in Astius' Lexicon); Arist., *EN* 1127a13 ff. (nameless); 1108a20 (ἀλήθεια λεγέσθω). (Of course ἀληθεύειν, ἀληθές λέγειν mean 'to tell the truth'.)

⁴² i, 14; iii, 6,1; 11,2; v, 33; vi, 47; x, 8,1; 13; xi, 1,2; xii, 15.

⁴³ ii, 16; 17; iii, 4,2; 12; 16,2; iv, 33; 49,2; ix, 2; x, 32; xi, 19; xii, 1,1; 3; 17; 29. Cf. also vi, 47.

⁴⁴ See Schenkl, s.v. ἀκρίβητος, ἀπλούς, κίβητος, πιστός, ὑπόκρισις and cognates. Note τὸ ἀληθές τε καὶ τὸ ἀπλοῦν — ταῦτόν γάρ ἐστιν, Plato, *Crat.* 405C (cf. *Rep.* 382E; *Hipp. Min.* 365A; *Laws* 738E). M. describes the straightforward man without using the word in i, 14 and 15. F. on iv, 26 seems to me wrong on the meaning of ἀπλοῦς, cf. x, 1,1 (ψυχὴ) ἀγαθὴ καὶ ἀπλὴ καὶ μία καὶ γυμνή, φανερωτέρα τοῦ περικειμένου σοι σώματος. Cf. also viii, 30: λαλεῖν καὶ ἐν συγκλήτῳ καὶ πρὸς πάντ' ὀπιτινοῦν κοσμίως, μὴ περιτράνωσ, with F.'s note. Also i, 9,1: τὸ σεμνὸν ἀπλάστως.

veracity alone (iii, 16, 2; iv, 33; xii, 3; 29). He even seems to suggest that the good man will admit no thought he dare not avow (iii, 4, 2; xii, 4). That would indeed be too hard for most mortals; truthfulness is a heroic virtue (iii, 12).⁴⁵ No doubt he had in mind Achilles, whom Plato in a long discussion of truthfulness had called the 'most straightforward and truthful of men' (*Hipp. Min.* 365A), quoting *Iliad* ix, 313 f.

ἔχθρὸς γὰρ μοι κείνος ὁμῶς Ἀἴδαο πύλησιν
ὄς χ' ἕτερον μὲν κεύθη ἐνὶ φρεσίν, ἄλλο δὲ εἴπη

We may well think that Odysseus, with whom Plato contrasts Achilles (365B), was the more typical Greek. Herodotus clearly thought it quaint that Persian boys were taught to ride, shoot and tell the truth (i, 136). Even among Greek moralists veracity is little discussed or commended.⁴⁶ I can find only one allusion to it in Epictetus (*Ench.* 52). Plutarch suggests that from time to time we should follow special moral exercises and for a given period refrain from sexual intercourse, wine and lying (464B)! Plato authorized his philosopher kings to deceive their subjects for their own good, and the idea was not alien to the old Stoics;⁴⁷ it does not occur to Marcus, who would speak plainly in the senate (n. 44). His attitude is more typical of the good old Roman than of Greeks; he wished to act 'as a Roman' (ii, 5). Nepos praises Atticus because 'mendacium neque dicebat neque pati poterat' (*Att.* 15, 1); this was characteristic of traditional Roman moral values.⁴⁸ They obtained in the circle of Marcus' early years; he recalls the truthfulness of Severus and Maximus (i, 14 f.), and from Fronto he had learned to avoid 'tyrannical hypocrisy' (i, 11). Both he and Verus told Fronto that he had taught them truthfulness,⁴⁹ and Fronto himself names love of veracity and straightforwardness as ideals.⁵⁰ Hellenistic and Imperial Roman thought on statecraft tends to be content with representing the model ruler as the virtuous man, but it seems to be only in Roman treatments of his good qualities that truthfulness and simplicity strongly appear, perhaps first under Trajan, who is contrasted by Pliny and others with the tyrant Domitian, 'insidiosissimus princeps'.⁵¹ For Dio Marcus himself was a 'truly good man, free of all pretence' (lxxi, 34, 4).

He was born M. Annius Verus; the very name he inherited may have helped to inculcate the ideal.⁵² But when he was only seventeen Hadrian called him 'Verissimus',

⁴⁵ Dio Chrys. lv, 9 says that Socrates and Homer taught men about morality, including ἀληθείας καὶ ἀπάρτης. He singles out truthfulness as a virtue in xxxiv, 30; lxxiv, 4; lxxvii/viii, 33.

⁴⁶ Pythagoras allegedly taught that men approximate to the gods by τὸ ἀληθεύειν (telling the truth) and conferring benefits (Ael., *VH* xii, 59). Other moralists of course reprehend lying (cf. n. 41; Plato, *Laws* 730C; 943E, cf. *Alcib.* 122A) as a general rule, but without Marcus' emphasis. Epictetus constantly uses πιστός of the good man, but men thought that philosophers condoned lying (iv, 6, 33).

⁴⁷ e.g. *Rep.* 389B; 459 C. Cf. *SVF* iii, 513; 554; ii, 132; but note iii, 629.

⁴⁸ 'Verus, veritas' constantly mean 'truthful, veracity' in Latin, see Forcellini's Lexicon, and are often linked with 'fides' (on which E. Fraenkel, *Kl. Beiträge* i, 15 ff.) and *simplicitas*, cf. nn. 49, 50, 55. Cf. Cic., *de Offic.* i, 63: 'itaque viros fortes et magnanimos, eosdem bonos et simplices, veritatis amicos minimeque fallaces esse volumus'; 109: 'veritatis cultores, fraudis inimici'; perhaps the Roman (cf. e.g. *Verr.* ii, 1,4; 3,144; *Quinct.* 10; *Balb.* 12), rather than the translator of Panaetius, is speaking. Cf. also 'apertus et simplex' (*Fam.* i, 9, 22 etc.); Pliny, *ep.* ii, 9,4; iv, 22,3; ix, 25,2.

⁴⁹ i, 16 H. = 49 N.: 'verum me (Marcus) dicere satius simul et audire verum me doces'; ii, 118 = 130 N.: Verus has learned from Fronto 'prius multo simplicitatem verique amorem quam loquendi polite disciplinam'.

⁵⁰ ii, 230 H. = 235 N.: 'multa ... fideliter ... consulta ... Verum dixi sedulo, verum audiui libenter.' ii, 224 H. = 232 N.: 'Victorinum pietate

mansuetudine veritate innocentia maxima'. ii, 154 H. = 135 N.: 'simplicitas, castitas, veritas, fides Romana plane, φιλοστοργία vero nescio an Romana ... (For the last quality cf. *Med.* i, 11 with 9,3; 17,7; vi, 30,1; xi, 18,4; *Epict.* i, 11,16; 23,3; ii, 17,38.)

⁵¹ Pliny, *Pan.* 1,6; 49,8; 54,5; 67,1; 84,1; 95,3 the same contrast in Mart. x, 72 with Domitian, on whom cf. Tac., *Agr.* 42; Suet., *Dom.* 11; Dio lxvii, 1; see also on Tiberius, another 'tyrant', Tac., *Ann.* i, 11,2; vi, 50,1; 51,3 etc.; Suet., *Tib.* 24,1; 42,1; Dio lvii, 1. The ideal of 'veri affectus': Tac., *Hist.* i, 15,4. On Trajan, Dio lxviii, 5,3; 6,2; Dio Chrys. (cf. n. 45) iii, 2. Veracity and simplicity do not appear in the evidence collected by W. Schubart, 'Das Hellenistische Königsideal nach Inschr. u. Papyri', *Arch. f. Pap.* xii, 1 ff., nor in what we have of Greek treatises on monarchy by 'Ephantus' and 'Diotogenes', probably of Roman imperial date (L. Delatte, *Les Traités de la royauté* ... , 1942), yet reflecting Hellenistic thought; there is one reference in Aristeas' letter, s. 206. Dio Chrysostom depicts the ideal king as truthful, sincere and simple (i, 26; ii, 26), perhaps because Trajan was so regarded. Arrian's view that a king like Ptolemy I should tell the truth (*Anab. pr.*) might simply represent his own (Roman?) view, but in vii, 5,2, perhaps from Ptolemy himself, he ascribes this view to Alexander.

⁵² The prevalence of such moral cognomina in new families from the *municipia* and provinces may reflect the old-fashioned moral standards that held out there (Tac., *Ann.* iii, 55; xvi, 5; Pliny, *ep.* i, 14,4).

and the nickname became widely known.⁵³ The occasion was Hadrian's regulation of the succession on the premature death of his intended heir, L. Ceionius Commodus. Hadrian's new choice was strange: an elderly senator with little administrative experience, whom he had never before marked out for any high position. It was conditional on Pius adopting both Marcus and Ceionius' son, the future emperor Verus, then a boy of seven. Since Pius had no surviving sons, Marcus, his nephew by marriage, was probably his natural heir, even if he had remained in private life; by contrast he had no ties to the young Verus. It has commonly been supposed that Pius, whose expectation of life was much less than the twenty-three years he was actually to reign, was in Hadrian's intention a stopgap for Marcus. T. D. Barnes has argued that in reality Hadrian wished to assure the ultimate succession to Verus.⁵⁴ His case, convincing in itself, can be reinforced. Even by requiring Pius to adopt Verus, Hadrian could not guarantee that Pius would abide by a plan that Verus should become emperor; in fact Pius was never to give Verus the title of Caesar, nor any post in which his capacity could be tested, although he had reached the age of thirty by Pius' death, whereas Marcus was soon associated in imperial responsibilities. But Hadrian could rely on Pius passing on the power to Marcus. On Pius' death Marcus made his adoptive brother, wholly untried as he was, his full colleague as emperor, an arrangement for which there was no exact precedent. I suggest that he did so, because he was pledged by a promise he had given Hadrian, and that Hadrian adopted Pius, precisely because Marcus was in an event Pius' natural heir and he could count on Marcus' fidelity. He was 'Verissimus' and keeping promises was a part of truthfulness: 'fides' is 'dictorum conventorumque constantia et veritas'.⁵⁵

It may still seem strange, if Marcus was a naturally truthful man and yet insists most in the *Meditations* on duties he found hardest, that he should have so much to say on truthfulness. We have to reckon with the peculiar difficulties of the imperial station. A ruler is often bound to secrecy and may conceive himself to be justified in dissimulation. It is perhaps significant that Marcus praises Pius for having few secrets, and those only matters of state (i, 16, 7). Dissimulation he clearly rejects. There may also be another factor at work. Marcus not only voices his dislike of flattery (he desired to be told the truth),⁵⁶ but twice too he warns himself against flattering others (v, 5; xi, 18, 10). This is curious; what need had an emperor to curry favour by flattery? The second passage supplies the clue. 'Beware of flattering men no less than of being angry with them; both are anti-social and do harm.' Marcus wished to be kind and gentle, as well as to avoid the pomp and arrogance of a Caesar;⁵⁷ it would have been all too easy for him to fall into the practice of saying things merely to please. However, this was not the fault he was most apprehensive of: it was irascibility.

Marcus and his Associates

Marcus often expresses disgust with his environment, and above all with the prevalence of wickedness. 'At daybreak say to yourself: I shall meet meddling, thankless, insolent, treacherous, envious and anti-social men'; he more than once lists such evil qualities,⁵⁸ and they were nowhere more common than in a court (n. 10). His life was to be passed amidst 'the frivolous pursuit of pomp, stage-plays, flocks, herds, sham-fights, a bone thrown to lapdogs, crumbs cast into fishponds, the weariness of ants carrying their burdens, the scurrils of frightened mice, puppets moved by strings' (vii, 3). 'All that we prize in life is vain, rotten, petty, puppies snapping, quarrelsome children, laughing and then at once in tears' (v, 33, cf. ix, 24). It was no different under Vespasian and Trajan; then too men would 'marry, rear children, sicken, die, fight, make holiday, trade, farm, flatter, assert themselves, suspect others, plot, pray for other men's death, grumble at their lot, love, hoard,

⁵³ Dio lxi, 21, 2. Cf. *AE* 1940, 62 (Verissimus Caesar, A.D. 143); Justin, *Apol.* i, 1; coins *ap. RE* viii A 1550, where some explanations are discussed which I do not accept.

⁵⁴ *op. cit.* (n. 28).

⁵⁵ Cic., *de Offic.* i, 23, cf. *Med.* iii, 7: μή παραβήναι πίστιν; Dio lxxi, 24, 2; 26, 2 ('speech' of M.).

⁵⁶ i, 6; 14; 16, 3 and 4; vi, 30, 4; cf. n. 49; Dio lxxi, 3, 4.

⁵⁷ vi, 30, 1. cf. i, 17, 3; Schenkl. s.v. ἀτυφία, τῦφος; the old ideal of *civilitas*; cf. Dio lxxi, 35, 3-5. See Appendix II on kindness.

⁵⁸ ii, 1 (there is no adequate translation for περιεργος, see F. ad loc.), cf. iii, 4, 2; 7; iv, 18; 28; 31 f.; v, 5; vi, 16, 3; 20; 47; viii, 8; ix, 42, 4; x, 13; 36; xi, 18.

covet consulships and kingdoms' (iv, 32).^{58a} Such human wickedness was 'customary and familiar as the rose in spring and the ripe fruit in summer' (iv, 44, cf. vii, 1). But it preyed on his mind and roused his indignation. In xi, 18 he sets out ten considerations, not all clearly distinguishable, why he should 'bear and forbear' (v, 33). The themes he discusses there are the subject of admonition or allusion in more than one out of every ten chapters in the *Meditations*; they recur with rather growing frequency (Appendix II). No passion seems to have disturbed his calm so much as anger, and though he could accept Theophrastus' view that it was less heinous than lust (ii, 10), like other Stoics he did not admit the Peripatetic conception that it could be harnessed to useful purposes:⁵⁹ it must be eliminated.

Marcus had the reputation of being as mild and gentle as he sought to be. He can recall that he had repaid much unkindness with kindness (v, 31). But that was not enough. He had learned from his mother to desire not only to abstain from doing evil but from the wish to do it (i, 2). Just as he longed to be dyed with justice to the core, impregnating his very thoughts (iii, 4, 3; v, 16), so too he aspires to 'a loving and affectionate *disposition*' (x, 1), to be one who 'loves' men (vii, 13; 31) and more particularly his neighbours, among whom his lot is cast (vi, 39; xi, 1, 2), and not as a 'bare duty' but 'from the heart' (vii, 13). It was not, or not so much, vindictive acts⁶⁰ that he felt he needed to avoid as a covert resentment, poisoning his own mind, and depriving him of that passionless calm which the good man would enjoy. I briefly summarize his arguments in xi, 18 and elsewhere.

If men seek to do wrong, it is because they cannot but act on their own principles, and these principles are false; hence their wrong-doing arises from ignorance and can be viewed as involuntary;⁶¹ but on that account it deserves pardon and compassion:⁶² 'it is proper to a man to love those who stumble' (vii, 22). And they are no worse than I am, for I too act wrongly, or am tempted to do so⁶³ and only restrained by fear of what others will think.⁶⁴ Perhaps too my judgement of their conduct is mistaken; the apparent wrong-doer may really have some good end in mind; I do not know enough of other men's motives to judge them.⁶⁵ Moreover life is short; we shall all soon be dead and forgotten; why be angry over what is necessarily a petty matter?⁶⁶ More fundamentally, the only harm that I can sustain comes from my own failure to comprehend the divine order of the Universe and to act justly towards men, and no one can do me real harm but myself.⁶⁷ Serenity, the mark of the good life,⁶⁸ is disturbed not by the injustice of others but by the passion of anger such injustice arouses in the minds of those who do not understand that they cannot truly suffer from it.⁶⁹ Moreover, since wickedness and insensibility are so common and familiar, it must be assumed that they do not harm the world-order and that the Universe in some way has need of wicked men.⁷⁰ But because I do comprehend the truth, I must always act in accordance with it, whatever others may do, remember that all men, even those who offend against me, are my kin, and treat them with beneficence; anger would be emotion and weakness.⁷¹ The greatest good I could do them would be to show them that they are wrong, not by rebukes and sarcasm but by tactful and affectionate

^{58a} cf. Lucian, *Icaromen.* 16; 19; *Charon* 15; 18. Both M. and Lucian are perhaps reminiscent of Cynic diatribes. Cf. also ix, 30; xii, 24; 27 etc.

⁵⁹ See e.g. Cic., *Tusc. Disp.* iv, 41 ff; Sen., *de Ira* i, 5 ff; ii, 6 f.; iii, 3.

⁶⁰ This is no doubt why he does not bother, like other moralists who wrote on anger, to give practical recipes for avoiding angry acts, e.g. Plut. 459 E-F.

⁶¹ cf. Sen., *de Ira* i, 14,2; ii, 26,6; iii, 26,1; Epict. ii, 22,36.

⁶² For pity (*ἔλεος*) cf. ii, 13; vi, 27; vii, 22; 26; 65; ix, 3,2; Sen. o.c. iii, 29,1 (but cf. ii, 15,2; 17,2; *de Clem.* ii, 5); Epict. i, 18,3; 28,9. Not allowed by the old Stoa, *SVF*, Index s.v.

⁶³ Sen., o.c. i, 14; ii, 9 f.; 28; iii, 24-6 ('male inter malos vivimus') and Plut. 463 E are less personal.

⁶⁴ δὶὰ δειλίαν ἢ δοξοκοπίαν, xi, 18,4: 'sensitiveness to public opinion', F. Cf. pp. 13 f.

⁶⁵ Sen. o.c. ii, 26,3. On κατ' οἰκονομίαν F. on xi, 18,5; cf. iv, 19; 51; Epict. iii, 14,7.

⁶⁶ Sen., o.c. iii, 42 f.

⁶⁷ Sen., o.c. iii, 25 f. is not such high doctrine: 'plus mihi nocitura est ira quam iniuria', and M. has nothing of his argument (30,2) that vengeance is unnecessary, since 'dabit poenas alteri quas debet tibi'. Epict. i, 18, 11 ff. is close to Marcus.

⁶⁸ On this ideal see Schenkl s.v. ἀπάθεια, ἀταρακτεῖν, γαλήνη, εὐθυμείν, εὐρροεῖν, θυμηδία and cognate words (30 examples). It goes back to Zeno.

⁶⁹ Sen., o.c. i, 10,2; 14,1; ii, 12,6; iii, 6,6; 25,4; Plut. 464 C-D; 467 A; 468.

⁷⁰ v, 28; viii, 55; ix, 42; xii, 26, cf. v, 17; xi, 18, 11. Cf. *SC de ludis* 12: 'O magni imperatores, qui scitis altius fundari remedia, quae etiam malis consulunt, qui se etiam necessarios fecerint'. See Sen., o.c. ii, 10, 6-8 (cf. *de Benef.* i, 10). Epict. iii, 20,9 ff. suggests that the wicked are sent to give good men the chance to exercise their virtue.

⁷¹ Sen., o.c. i, 26; ii, 32,2; iii, 5; 25 (also *de Const.* 12); Plut. 456 F; 457 D.

advice.⁷² 'Rage as you may, they will do the same things' (viii, 4). Perhaps genuine kindness may prove irresistible.⁷³ In any event I must persist in it, all the more because of my power as ruler, or else I shall turn into a tyrant (xi, 18, 1 and 11).

There is nothing in all this to which parallels cannot be found in earlier discussions of anger by Stoics or by Plutarch.⁷⁴ But the total impression is very different. Plutarch, for instance, says that different men are moved to anger by various causes but nearly always because they think themselves despised or neglected (460D). Marcus has nothing of this; an emperor could hardly be despised or neglected, or even fancy that he was. Seneca warns us not to be incensed with persons who frustrate our desires without deserving blame (*de Ira* iii, 28 f.); in one of the few passages in which he discusses the subject Epictetus says that the master should bear with the slave who is ordered to bring hot water and brings it lukewarm.⁷⁵ Marcus finds no necessity to remind himself that anger is out of place in such circumstances. He is preoccupied with righteous indignation; although some of his arguments are designed to appease his ire at actions apparently (though in his view not truly) harmful to himself, he is even more concerned with the wickedness that such actions betoken. This theme is not absent in earlier treatments of anger; thus Plutarch tells us not to be exasperated by hatred of wickedness (μισοσπονρηρία) and adds that to avoid this fault, we should not put excessive trust in our associates but remember that men are but jagged and crooked instruments (451E; 453D; 463B; 468B ff.).⁷⁶ But no previous moralist was so absorbed as Marcus with this aspect of the subject. Moreover, when they do advert to it, both Seneca and Plutarch are led into an examination of the theory of punishment.⁷⁷ Not so Marcus, although in his own person he constituted the supreme criminal court, and might have been expected to take a deep interest in the question.⁷⁸ It is not criminals he is thinking of, but the men he sees around him, at once servile and arrogant (x, 19), whom he could at least try to correct by gentle admonition.

This is particularly plain when he imagines the deathbed of a truly wise man, such as he himself did not claim to be (n. 32), where some one will say: 'We can breathe again at last, freed from this schoolmaster; he was not hard on any of us, but I used to feel that he was condemning us tacitly'. Just so, says Marcus, hundreds will be glad to be quit of him, and he ought to be the readier to die in the reflection: 'I am leaving a life in which my very associates (κοινωνοί), for whom I have so greatly struggled, prayed and cared, themselves actually wish me gone, perhaps expecting greater ease as a result' (x, 36). Although once (no more) he would cheer himself by calling to mind the good qualities, images of virtue, displayed by his associates (οἱ συμβιοῦντες, vi, 48), just as he recalls that nearly all his kin and early friends and mentors were good men (i, 17, 1), elsewhere he finds the character of most of them, even the best, hard to endure, so that death shou'd be welcome (v, 10; ix, 2 and 3, 2). Spiritually he is isolated: 'be of the same branch, not of the same mind' (xi, 8). It would have surprised him to be taken as a representative figure of his time, or to read of the trusted counsellors he left to guide Commodus: one of them was Perennis!^{78a} Herodian says that his age produced a crop of 'wise men', presumably philosophers, 'since subjects always model their lives on that of the ruler' (i, 2, 4). Dio was more realistic; great numbers, he says, pretended devotion to philosophy in the hope of enrichment (lxxi, 35, 2). Marcus knew the breed (though he may not have detected every specimen); he praises Pius for appreciating true philosophers without reproaching the false.⁷⁹ But the

⁷² For tact, cf. i, 9 f. Sen., o.c. i, 6; 15; ii, 14; iii, 27, like Cic. (Panaetius), *de Offic.* i, 88; 136 f.; ii, 10, approves of instruction but allows harsher rebukes.

⁷³ xi, 18, 9. Sen., o.c. ii, 10 is less hopeful (like M. in ix, 29; xi, 8), but cf. *de Benef.* vii, 31.

⁷⁴ cf. nn. 61-73. Plutarch is cited from his essays on Anger and Tranquillity (non-Stoic, cf. D. Babut, *Plutarque et le Stoicisme* 94-102).

⁷⁵ i, 13, 2 (cf. Sen. *de Ira* i, 12, 4; ii, 25, 1), see also i, 11, 37; 12, 18-21; 18 *passim*; 28 *passim*; ii, 10, 18; 18, 5-14; iii, 2, 16; 4, 18; 5, 16; 10, 17; 13, 11; 15, 10; 22, 13; 24, 58 and 79; iv, 12, 20, mostly mere allusions to duties of avoiding anger and not blaming others. Seneca and Plutarch particularly deprecate anger against slaves and members of the family: not M.'s concern.

⁷⁶ 453 D; 462 E; 463 B; 468 B ff. Cf. Sen., o.c. i, 14; ii, 9; iii, 28; *de Tranqu.* 15, 1.

⁷⁷ *De Ira* i, 6; 15 f.; 19; ii, 31, cf. *de Const.* 12, 3; Plut. 459.

⁷⁸ His rescript in *Dig.* i, 18, 14 implies a retributive or deterrent theory.

^{78a} *RE* vi A 952 ff., cf. now *CRAI* 1971, 486. (The text in *JRS* 1973, 87 unfortunately omits the restoration of his name in line 49.) Hdn. i, 2, 2; 6 *passim*; 8, 3 idealizes Marcus' advisers.

⁷⁹ i, 16, 5; ix, 29, cf. Epict. ii, 9; iii, 21; 23; iv, 1, 132-43; 8. F. aptly cites *Dig.* xxvii, 1, 6, 7. Contrast Lucian's accounts of Demonax and Nigrinus with the charlatans pilloried in *Vitarum Auctio, Piscator*, and often elsewhere. Victor 16, 9 (M.'s dependence on philosophers' advice) is surely absurd.

Stoic on the throne well knew that he was surrounded by men who did not share his principles.

With characteristic candour Marcus made no secret of the matter. Dio tells that he would commend a man for good services and disregard his other conduct, declaring that one could not make men as one would have them and that it was fitting to employ any one where he could serve the common good (lxxi, 34, 4); it should have been his aim, like Pius, to acknowledge and reward talent of every kind (i, 16, 6). The speech Dio gives him on Avidius Cassius' revolt is at least in character; he lamented that no fidelity was to be found among men and that his dearest friend had plotted against him, yet he could not blame the divine order (τὸ δαιμόνιον), and purposed as a true friend to forgive the man who had broken faith (24-6); to Cassius and his accomplices (27, 1; 28, 1-4; 30) he showed that humanity and mercy (executing only a few persons guilty of other crimes) which marked his general policy, even to barbarians (14, 1), and was instanced in his unwillingness to inquire into or punish other offences, such as those imputed to his wife (34, 3).⁸⁰ The *Meditations* indicate that he abhorred suspiciousness (i, 4; 15, 2; iv, 3, 2; 32; vi, 16, 3; 20).^{80a} At times he evinces a reluctance to probe the thoughts of others (ii, 8; 13; iv, 18)—unless it be for the common good (iii, 4).⁸¹ Yet more often he would penetrate into their minds and discover what ends they had in view,⁸² just as Pius, though not given to reproaches or suspicions, used to test men's character and conduct with care (vi, 30, 3). These texts come later in the work, and were perhaps written later, conceivably from Marcus' experience of Avidius' revolt.

To Marcus his predecessor and model had been a ruler who tolerated open opposition and censure and was always ready to hear proposals for the public good, but who hated flattery, despised popular clamour, cared nothing for the credit his acts procured, and was inflexible in adhering to the decisions he had taken after the closest consideration (i, 16, 1; 16, 3 f.; 16, 7; vi, 30, 2-4). Marcus himself had learned as a boy to accept plain speaking (i, 6) and later to value *isegoria* and the freedom of the subjects (i, 14). Men were at liberty to voice disapproval or hatred of himself (ix, 27). When he asks, 'if they get angry, will you get angry too?' (vi, 26), we may infer that there were few inhibitions on debate in his presence; although he could not shed his responsibility but must stand 'upright without support' (iii, 5), he must recall that a soldier cannot storm the breach alone, and must not be ashamed to seek help (vii, 7); where he could not discern the right course for himself, he should apply to the best counsellors (x, 12), and be ready to change his mind, if any one could convince him that this was just and in the common interest (iv, 12; vi, 21; vii, 12; viii, 16).^{82a} Indeed were his mind unequal to his tasks, he should either withdraw in favour of a better man,⁸³ unless for some reason that were not appropriate (an enigmatic qualification), or do his best with the help of any one who could use Marcus' ruling reason for the common good (vii, 5). Perhaps, if men censured him, it was because they had the safety of the ship of state at heart (vi, 55). Once or twice he seems to suggest that he can escape such censure if his own conduct is pure (iv, 16; x, 1). At any rate he should try to obtain men's approval (vi, 50), opening his own mind to them (viii, 61). But then will they not merely profess assent (ix, 29), praise him now and blame him when he is gone (ix, 30)? In the last resort it is not their advice or consent that must be decisive, but his own sense of what is just (vi, 50), his own ruling reason, even when he adopts another man's suggestions (vii, 5; viii, 16). 'Be like a headland of rock on which the waves break without pause; it stands fast, and round it the seething waters come to rest' (iv, 49). Censure or unpopularity must never divert him from the straight path of duty as he sees it.⁸⁴ 'If they cannot bear you, let them kill you' (x, 15). Marcus' principles should have bound him to fulfil the responsibilities of

⁸⁰ Dio makes M. question if Avidius had not acted only in the mistaken belief that he was already dead (25,3). If so, he would have acted perhaps κατ' οἰκονομίαν (n. 65), and ix, 38 might refer to him (or to Faustina, if she were involved): εἰ μὲν ἤμαρτεν, ἐκεῖ τὸ κακόν. τάχα δ' οὐχ ἤμαρτεν.

^{80a} cf. the stories in Dio lxxi, 29, 1 f.; lxxii, 7,4; Amm. xxii, 16,11.

⁸¹ iii, 7; iv, 3,2; 32; vi, 16,3; 20; 30,3; cf. *de Ira* ii, 24.

⁸² vi, 53; vii, 3 f.; 30; viii, 61; ix, 22; 27; x, 37.

^{82a} Oliver and Palmer (n. 1) argue that the *SC de ludis* was modified by the free initiative of a senator.

⁸³ Presumably by suicide, cf. iii, 1; v, 29; viii, 47; ix, 2; x, 8,2.

⁸⁴ iii, 5; v, 3; vi, 22; vii, 15; x, 11; xi, 16; xii, 1,1; note specific allusions to worthlessness of other men's judgements, which should not weigh with him, iv, 3,3; vii, 62; ix, 18; 27; 34; x, 9; 23. A man may be godlike without recognition, vii, 67.

an autocrat, who will listen to others, yet decide himself, and whose sole power can be ended only by death.

To Stoics fame was at best one of the secondary goods, which a man rationally prefers to its opposite but on which he should not set his heart: virtue is its own reward. Marcus continually insists on the worthlessness of reputation, contemporary or posthumous or both, not only on this general ground but also because it is inevitably ephemeral and conferred by men of false principles, whose judgement deserves no respect (Appendix II). By contrast he has little to say of other such secondary goods as wealth or health (cf. nn. 13 and 39), though enough to show that here too he held to the Stoic position. On fame he protests too much. Here and there he lets out that he did pay regard to or fear what men said of him (ii, 6; ix, 18; x, 34; xii, 4, cf. n. 64); in any case the mere frequency of his allusions to fame shows how much it was in his mind. For once we might perhaps believe the *Historia Augusta* that he was 'famae suae curiosissimus' and cared more than he admits for the 'clapping of tongues' (vi, 16, 2); not that the instances it gives of his sensitiveness to public opinion deserve much credit.⁸⁵

The biographer makes a more important statement in alleging that he invariably consulted the 'optimates'⁸⁶ before making any decision, civil or military, and was wont to say that it was fair for him to defer to the majority of his council. But if Marcus behaved in this way, he contravened his own principles in practice and allowed himself to be guided by men of whose character he had in general a poor opinion.⁸⁷ The biographer immediately contradicts himself by recording that he rejected the advice of almost all his friends to abandon the northern campaigns (*Marc.* 22, 3-8). Dio has nothing of his dependence on advisers, but says that he ruled so σωφρόνως καὶ ἐγκρατῶς that neither fear nor flattery would make him depart from the right course, and that he did nothing inconsistent with his character (lxxi, 3, 4; 30, 2). The evidence of the *Meditations* may appear decisive against the *Historia Augusta*.

Religion

Marcus has been represented as exceptionally devout in the service of the gods.⁸⁸ Although the terms denoting piety are rather rare in the *Meditations*,⁸⁹ references to the gods are numerous; like Epictetus, Marcus writes indifferently of 'God', 'the god', Zeus or of 'the gods', but unlike Epictetus, he prefers the plural.⁹⁰ To God or the gods he acknowledges debts and duties; we should give them reverence, obedience, praise, trust; we should 'live with them', keep them in mind in all our actions, as if their eyes were upon us, and be their priests and ministers; the good man is θεοφόρητος (xii, 23).⁹¹ At first sight such expressions bear out the claim that he was deeply imbued with conventional piety.

⁸⁵ *Marc.* 20,4, cf. 23,7 for his replying to criticisms 'vel sermone vel litteris', which would accord with his wish to persuade others, particularly (29,5) to charges of meanness (n. 40; the *HA* wrongly thinks he was sparing in largess), and (23,7) to gossip about Faustina; this is refuted by Dio (n. 29). Ch. 29 is full of silly tales and ch. 20 not re-assuring; it makes M. act out of character ('occulte ostendit') and absurdly (n. 28); it contradicts M.'s own testimony on Verus (n. 28); coins show that he was slow to take Verus' titles, Armeniacus and Parthicus, and laid them down after Verus' death. Mattingly-Sydenham, *RIC* iii, 196 ff. He might have said that he had planned Verus' campaigns (if that was true), but would not have sought to appropriate Verus' glory. Cf. *Marc.* 9,5 (also unreliable).

⁸⁶ J. Schwendemann, *Der historische Wert der vita Marci*, 1923, 97 noted that this word appears elsewhere in the *HA* only in the disreputable *Vita Bonosi*. In the life of Hadrian (18,1) the distinction between *amici principis* and jurists is obviously false (cf. *Dig.* xxxvii, 14, 17 pr.), and it is inconceivable that H. admitted to his *consilium* only men approved by the senate. In the life of Pius the list of jurists (6,11) includes invention (R. Syme, *Emperors and Biography*, 1971, 38). In my view all references to the *consilium* in the *HA* lead on to the 'farrago' of his account of it in the 'falsified' life of Severus Alexander (cf. J. A.

Crook, *Consilium Principis*, 1955, 89), and no reliance should be placed on them. Note that *Pius* 6,11 goes much beyond *Medit.* i, 16,2; vi, 30 on P.'s relations with his *amici*.

⁸⁷ *Dig.* xxxvii, 14,17, pr.: he follows the *most authoritative* legal opinions; xxviii, 4,3: he decides a case 'remotis omnibus' (but perhaps the barristers rather than his own advisers, cf. W. Kunkel, *ZSS* lxxv, 1968, 303). Two instances do not in any case permit any generalization. Cf. n. 84 on Pius.

⁸⁸ J. Beaujeu, *La Religion rom. à l'apogée de l'Empire*, 1955, i, ch. v, contesting a view of Renan, which I think closer to the truth. (On M. and the Christians, of which Beaujeu makes much, see T. D. Barnes, *JRS* lviii, 1968, 32 ff. There is nothing novel. I hope to argue elsewhere that in xi, 3 ὡς οἱ χριστιανοὶ is probably a gloss.)

⁸⁹ θεοσεβεία, δσιότης etc: i, 3; iv, 18; v, 9; vi, 30; 44; vii, 54; 66; ix, 1; xi, 20; xii, 1.

⁹⁰ A. Bonhöffer, *Die Ethik des Stoikers Epictet*, 1894, 78-85; the full index also covers his *Epictet u. die Stoa*, 1890—together the best works ever written on late Stoicism.

⁹¹ Plural: ii, 3; 5; 13; iii, 4,3; 6,2; 9; v, 27; 31; 33; vi, 16,3; 30,1; 41; viii, 23; ix, 37; 41; x, 1; 8; xi, 13; xii, 12; 27 f. Singular: iii, 16; vi, 7; vii, 31; 67; x, 11; xii, 11.

However, other terms can be substituted for 'God' or the gods. (1) If we are to accept and welcome (a) their dispensations (10 texts), the same is true of the dispensations of (b) Nature, the common Nature, the Nature of the Whole, the Whole, the Kosmos (24 texts), or (c) of 'him who manages the Whole' (twice), or (d) of Fate (5 texts) or (e) of Providence (once), or simply 'what befalls' or 'what is assigned' (12 texts).⁹² In at least four chapters Marcus varies his expressions in such a way as to show that whether he speaks of gods or Nature or the like, his meaning is the same: I may quote one, the most famous of all his utterances (iv, 23): 'all that is in tune with thee, *Kosmos*, is in tune with me All that thy seasons bring forth, Nature, is fruit for me One man says: "Dear city of Cecrops", and shall you not say "Dear city of Zeus"?'.⁹³ (2) We ought to obey or follow (a) God or the gods (7 texts) but also (b) to live 'in agreement with Nature', the classic Stoic formula only once used (iii, 4, 4) or to be in accord with or follow Nature, or our own individual nature which is part of 'the common Nature' (12 texts), or (c) right reason (iii, 12) or (d) 'the reason and ordinance of the most venerable city and polity' (ii, 16).⁹⁴ This is of course the Universe, which is 'a sort of city' (ὡσαυτὴ πόλις, iv, 4) of gods and men, 'the dear city of Zeus' (cf. n. 34). (3) It is Zeus who established fellowship in the world, i.e. between gods and men (xi, 3), but equally this can be said to be the work of Nature or the 'intelligence of the Whole' (e.g. ii, 1; v, 30; ix, 1, 1).

There is no mystery about these equations: they come from the classic Stoic doctrine which Marcus expresses thus: 'there is one *kosmos* made up of all things, and one God that goes through all things, and one substance, and one law, reason common to all intelligent beings' (vii, 9).⁹⁵ The *kosmos* consists of passive material and of a causal substance which gives it form and is the source of every change. This can be indifferently described as the *logos* or *hegemonikon* of the world or personalized as 'he who manages the world' (ii, 4; v, 8, 3; vi, 43; x, 25) or as God or Zeus, but as the causal agent permeates all being, Nature, the Whole etc. can (as we have seen) themselves be treated as causal and rational.⁹⁶ The 'Nature of the Whole' is itself the 'most venerable of gods', whose will it is impiety to reject (ix, 1). As man shares in reason, his *logos* is properly his *hegemonikon*, but it can also be viewed as a fragment (v, 27) or effluence (xii, 2; 26) of God or Zeus; it is often called the god or *daimon* within, which is no more than another way of referring to man's reason (v, 27), for intelligence is a portion of divinity (ii, 1).⁹⁷ To say that man should follow 'right reason' or Nature or 'God' is to say the same thing in different language.⁹⁸ Nature leads man on a certain path (vii, 55); he is swept away by Fate (iii, 4, 3); but if he identifies himself with the world order, then he is θεοφόρητος (xii, 23). 'Ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt.'

It will be observed that of these often equivalent expressions, God (or the gods) and Nature etc. Marcus prefers the less personal; they recur much more frequently.

It is of course only because 'whatever befalls justly befalls' (iv, 10) that we are required to accept and welcome it and not to grumble at our lot or blame the gods. The constant reiteration of this precept shows that Marcus does not take very seriously the alternative view, which he canvasses at times (n. 7), that the world is a chaos of atoms; at most his faith falters occasionally. In general he holds that every event, every change is for the good of the Whole, and also for every one of its parts or limbs (vii, 13), for it is a rational organism;⁹⁹

⁹² (a) Included in last n. (b) ii, 16; iv, 25; 29; v, 8; 10; vi, 42; vii, 66; viii, 5; 7; 18; 46; ix, 1, 3; x, 6; 8, 1; 11; 14; 21; 33; xi, 13; 16; 20; xii, 1, 1; 26; 36. (c) iv, 10; x, 25. (d) ii, 2; iii, 6, 1; 16, 2; iv, 34; vii, 57. (e) xii, 24. (f) ii, 5; 17; iii, 4, 3; iv, 33; v, 5; 27; viii, 43; ix, 6; 39; x, 28; xii, 3.

⁹³ cf. v, 8 (the Nature of the Whole = Fate = the common Nature = Zeus); vi, 44; xii, 5 (the gods = the divine = Nature = the God).

⁹⁴ (a) iii, 6, 2; 9; 16; vii, 31; 67; x, 11; xii, 27. (b) iii, 9; 12; iv, 1; v, 1, 1; 3; 4; 48, 2; vii, 56; 74; viii, 29; ix, 1, 4; x, 33, 2; xii, 1, 2.

⁹⁵ See F. ad loc., and Haines' index, s.v. Cause, Causal and Material. Cf. esp. iv, 40; v, 8; vi, 25; viii, 34; xii, 30.

⁹⁶ e.g. vii, 23; 75; ix, 1, 4. For λόγος and ἡγεμονικόν see indexes in *SVF*, Bonhöffer and Haines. Zeus as

the mind of the world: *SVF* ii, 937; 1061 ff.; Bonhöffer, *Die Ethik* 78 ff.

⁹⁷ Bonhöffer, *Epictet*. . . . 83 ff. also detects a rival conception of the *daimon* both in Marcus and in other Stoics. See Schenkl. s.v.

⁹⁸ Also 'godlike' (ii, 5) or 'divine' (vii, 67). Man can 'touch' God, ii, 12.

⁹⁹ ii, 3 f.; v, 22; vi, 54; x, 6 f.; 33, 4. That Nature provides for the good of the Whole is more often stated (e.g. v, 8). Perpetual change is itself necessary to her plan, e.g. vii, 18 f.; 23; 25; viii, 6 f.; 20; 50; ix, 35. M. sometimes suggests that we can discern by close study how all is ordered for the best, e.g. iii, 2 (cf. vi, 36); 11, 2; iv, 10; x, 9, 2, and adumbrates the doctrine of a sympathetic unity pervading the universe, vi, 38; ix, 9 with F.'s notes.

to Stoics the *kosmos* was itself a living being (*SVF* iv, p. 86). But even when his trust is firmest in providence, the content of his belief is not clear. Is there a pre-destined necessity and untransgressable order, or a providence with means of grace (πρόνοια ἰλάσιμος)?¹⁰⁰ In the former case there is hardly any room for the individual's moral choice, the existence of which he everywhere assumes; this was a notorious difficulty for Stoics, which Marcus does not face.¹⁰¹ Equally there is no place for 'special providences' and for the interposition of the gods on a man's behalf.

Like all Stoics, Marcus believed that there was a plurality of gods as of men.¹⁰² But what do the gods do for us and what should we do for them? The answer to this cannot be deduced from the texts so far considered, in which the gods or God may never represent more than the reason pervading nature in, as it were, a warmer and more emotional colouring. But Marcus does confront the problem of the gods' activity in human affairs. He thinks it impious to suppose (with the Epicureans) that, as they are wise and do no ill, they can have no concern for anything, but when he explicitly considers the question, he cannot decide whether they take thought only for the Universe or for individuals as well, though it is only on the second view, as he recognizes, that sacrifices, prayers and oaths avail (vi, 44; ix, 40). Even in this agnostic mood he suggests that we should pray to them—for what alone is truly good, our moral welfare (ix, 40). After all, if he did not know that they would *not* intervene, supplications might do some good and could do no harm! At other times he could assume their concern and power to help (ii, 11); they aid men by dreams and oracles to obtain their heart's desire, the gifts of fortune (ix, 27, cf. 11); dreams had actually cured his own ailments (i, 17, 8), and a reference to the prescriptions of Asclepius (v, 8) presupposes that he thought them effective, though there is no suggestion, here or elsewhere, that he himself felt any special devotion to that god or to any other.¹⁰³ He mentions his prayers to the gods for others' good (x, 36), and says that we should pray simply or not at all (v, 7). Of course in i, 17 he ascribes to the gods all the blessings of his life, but except for his final allusion to dreams, he may not have meant to express more than his gratitude to the providential order of things. In the whole context of the *Meditations* these few references to divine interventions and to acts of worship make the impression of intermittent half-belief. If the practice of prayer and sacrifice had been important in Marcus' spiritual life, we should surely have heard more of it in his intimate diary.

I do not of course question that Marcus believed in the individual gods and kept up the traditional cults. That was what his school taught him to do.¹⁰⁴ At the least the cults symbolized that reverence for the divine which he certainly felt. He was grateful to his mother for inculcating τὸ θεοσεβές (i, 3); whatever piety came to mean for him in later life, it must have taken the rudimentary form of conventional worship in childhood. He praises Pius for observance of ancestral customs,^{104a} which naturally included the public and family cults. In fact Pius was officially extolled 'ob insignem erga caerimonias publicas curam ac religionem'.¹⁰⁵ But all that Marcus says of this is that Pius avoided τὸ περὶ θεοῦς

¹⁰⁰ xii, 14, giving chaos as a third possibility (cf. n. 7). For εἰσαρμένη or τὸ ἀναγκαῖον see e.g. ii, 3; iii, 11,3; iv, 9; 26; v, 8; ix, 1,4; 28; x, 5.

¹⁰¹ Recent discussions in J. M. Rist, *Stoic Philosophy*, 1969, ch. 7; A. A. Long, *Problems in Stoicism*, 1971, ch. v; J. B. Gould, *Philosophy of Chrysippus*, 1971, 137 ff.

¹⁰² vi, 43; viii, 19; ix, 35; immortal, vii, 70; heavenly bodies as gods, vi, 43; xii, 28; other gods (besides Zeus) named: v, 8; vi, 43; viii, 19; xi, 18, 11 (much rarer than in Epictetus, cf. Bonhöffer, *Die Ethik* . . . 75 ff.). Cf. Zeller, *Phil. d. Gr.* iii⁴, 318 ff.

¹⁰³ *Contra*, Beaujeu (n. 88) 366. In the light of the *Meditations* I can see no ground for supposing that M. had any special devotion to any of the gods named in his coins (who do not include Asclepius). Beaujeu 333 cites letters to Fronto, which belong to his youth, and express formal gratitude to the gods etc. (4; 69; 79 f.; 90 N); these surely prove nothing. More striking is 47 N = Haines i, 50: 'deos igitur omnes, qui usquam gentium vim suam praesentem promptamque hominibus praebent, qui vel somniis vel

mysteriis vel medicina vel oraculis usquam iuvant atque pollent, eorum deorum unumquemque mihi votis advoco, meque pro genere cuiusque voti in eo loco constituo, de quo deus ei rei praeditus facilius exaudiat'; he then pictures himself supplicating Aesculapius at Pergamum, Minerva at Athens etc. Yet all this strikes me as flowery rhetoric to please his teacher. Contrast the personal devotion of Aristides to Asclepius and Serapis.

¹⁰⁴ Dio lxxi, 33,3; 34,2. His initiation at Eleusis (Beaujeu 338 f.) followed the precedents set by other emperors who had visited Athens (Augustus, Hadrian, Verus). Epictetus has a livelier concern in the cults, *Ench.* 31; Bonhöffer (n. 102). Seneca says that the wise perform the cults 'tamquam legibus iussa, non tamquam dis grata' (fr. 38 f.).

^{104a} i, 16,6, cf. his approval of τὰ πάτρια ἔθη at Athens (*Hesperia*, Suppl. xiii, no. 1, 33 f.). See also *Dig.* xxii, 5, 3, 6.

¹⁰⁵ *ILS* 341, cf. 338; Paus. viii, 43,5; *HA*, Pius 11,3; 13,3 f.

δεισιδαιμον (i, 16, 3) or that he revered the gods without δεισιδαιμονία (vi, 30, 4).¹⁰⁶ His formal piety was less important to Marcus than his freedom from superstitious fear. Marcus' emphasis on this characteristic can surely be explained only in one way: it was a vital part of his doctrine that Nature or the gods should be regarded as purely beneficent. The gods never caused harm to men (ii, 11; vi, 44), though they *might* be prevailed on to do good; they were not to be feared. It was characteristic of Marcus to penalize any one who so acted that 'leves hominum animi superstitione numinis *terrerentur*' (*Dig.* xlvi, 19, 30), or to express aversion to magical practices (i, 6, cf. Dio lxxi, 9, 3).¹⁰⁷ In the crises of his reign he may well have thought it his duty as a ruler to allay public anxiety by multiplying sacrifices and resorting to novel devices for propitiating divine wrath.¹⁰⁸ But he never betrays the least intimation that he could have shared the notion that 'non esse curae deis securitatem nostram, esse ultionem'. The overt performance of cult acts in itself implied no conviction. Marcus, in conformity with tradition, deified Pius, Verus and Faustina; in the *Meditations* he never alludes to the ruler-cult but names *divi*, Augustus and Hadrian (n. 10), merely to illustrate the transience of human greatness; the man who harped on the evanescence of fame and doubted his own survival after death can have attached no religious meaning to the apotheosis he too could expect, nor to the cults honouring his predecessors.¹⁰⁹

'Vis deos propitiare? Bonus esto' (Seneca, *ep.* 95, 50). Piety for Marcus is not only acceptance of the decrees of 'the Nature of the Whole' but justice and truth (ix, 1). He should delight and rest in one thing: proceeding from one social act to another with God in mind (vi, 7). It is not flattery the gods desire from men, but the works proper to man, by which he shows his rational and divine nature (x, 8, 2). When Marcus speaks of truly good men who have had, as it were, the closest commerce with the divine (τὸ θεῖον) and have had most communion with it δι' ἔργων ὁσίων καὶ ἱερουργιῶν (xii, 5), we do not need to think that this communion consisted primarily, if at all, in 'acts of worship'.¹¹⁰

IV

It is in this last passage that Marcus asks how the gods could allow such men to be utterly extinguished on death, and answers that if they really are extinguished, 'the gods would have made it otherwise, if this had been necessary; for if it had been just, it would also have been feasible, and if it had been in conformity with Nature, then Nature would have brought it about; therefore, from its not being so, if it is not so, be assured that it ought not to have been so'. By such faith in the providential order Marcus also seeks to reconcile himself to the prevalence of wickedness (vi, 42) and the unceasing mutability of all things visible, which often fills his mind.¹¹¹ Apparent evils are only products (ἐπιγεννήματα) of the grand and beautiful (vi, 36, 2). It is a faith he shares with Epictetus. If we had sense, Epictetus said, we should do nothing else, publicly and privately, but sing hymns of praise to God for the manifold benefits we have received from Him (i, 16, 15 ff.; iii, 26, 28 ff.; iv, 1, 108 f.). No such hymns of warm and passionate conviction are to be found in the *Meditations*. 'As the earth is a pinpoint in infinite space, so the life of man is a

¹⁰⁶ For Stoic view of this, cf. *SVF* iii, 408 f.; Cic., *de Leg.* i, 43; Sen., *de Ira* ii, 27; *de Benef.* iv, 19; vii, 1, 7. Plut., *de Superst.* takes the same view: the belief that the gods do harm is worse than atheism, 164 E. A false conception of the gods leads to too much praying and sacrificing for the wrong ends, Cic., *ND* ii, 70-2 (Stoic). In *de Div.* ii, 148 (non-Stoic) Cic. distinguishes 'religio' as keeping up the ancestral cults (cf. *ND* iii, 5) from 'superstitio', but M. surely means more.

¹⁰⁷ They mark the *deisidaimon* in Theophr., *Char.* 16.

¹⁰⁸ *HA Marc.* 13; 21 and epigram in Amm. xv, 4, 17. On the Rain Miracle, Beaujeu 342 ff. with bibliography; it is notable that the credit was soon transferred from Thoth to Jupiter, the ancestral god. Dio lxxi, 8, 4 (Ἄρνούφιν τινὰ μάγον Αἰγύπτιον—in fact a priest of Thoth—συνόντα τῷ Μάρκῳ) need not mean more than that Harnouphis was 'with M.'s army', especially as M. seems not to have been present at the scene of the Miracle. The credibility of Lucian,

Alex. 48, and still more, its relevance to M.'s own attitudes, may be doubted. M.'s revival of the *ius fetiale* (Dio lxii, 3, 3) can be taken as symbolic of his acceptance of Stoic views on the *bellum iustum*, cf. Cic., *Off.* i, 34-6, citing the Roman practice to exemplify Panaetius' doctrine; Paus. viii, 43, 6 may show how M. sought to justify his wars as defensive. Beaujeu 361, n. 3 himself admits that *Pietas* on M.'s coins does not illustrate religious fervour.

¹⁰⁹ M. was least divinized of emperors in his lifetime, Beaujeu 363. Cf. J. H. Oliver, *Hesp. Suppl.* no. 111, where M. and Verus say οἱ γὰρ οὐτ' ἄλλως [εἰς τ]ὸς ἡμε[τέ]ρας τιμὰς ἔσμεν πρόχειροι. The coin types seem to me too conventional to support Beaujeu's claim (359 ff.) that they suggest a novel concept of the emperor's supernatural power, his assimilation to a hero deified for his services, or his divine right.

¹¹⁰ Dio lxxi, 30, 2 connects his 'piety' with his clemency and constancy to his principles. On piety cf. Epict., *Ench.* 31; Galen, *de usu part.* iii, 10.

¹¹¹ Zeller, iii⁴, 784 ff.

pinpoint in infinite time, a knife-edge between two eternities.’¹¹² Short and transitory, it is also nasty: ‘mucus to ashes’ (iv, 48, 2). ‘What is bathing but oil, sweat, filth, greasy water, everything disgusting? Such is every part of life and every object we find’ (viii, 24).¹¹³ Marcus can give vent to such feelings in the very moment of re-affirming his doctrine of the world-order, as when he asks ‘Why then do you say that all things began ill and will ever remain ill, and that no power has been found in all these gods to set things right, but that the Universe has been condemned to be bound in an unbroken chain of evil?’ (ix, 35).¹¹⁴ His experience did not confirm his faith.

The professor of philosophy, living a humble but tranquil life at Nicopolis, amid admiring pupils and hoped-for converts, found it easier to be content and grateful to God than the autocrat burdened by the cares of government and frustrated by the failings of men on whom he had to rely. This did not weaken his resolve. Even if everything were haphazard, he says in a moment of doubt, he must not be haphazard himself (ix, 28, cf. xii, 14 f.). Not that he had any large hopes of political achievement. Everything perpetually changed and yet remained the same. He could only serve the present hour, for only the present belongs to us,¹¹⁵ not seeking Plato’s Utopia but content if the least thing went forward. This is another common theme; with that perceptiveness which is characteristic of his account of Marcus, Dio remarked on the meticulous care he devoted to the slightest matter.¹¹⁶ Bréhier observed that the Stoics ‘had a special reason not to seek the realization of justice in the world, for they were persuaded that it exists already; the cosmic reality is a reality with a moral essence which contains within itself perfect wisdom and perfect happiness.’¹¹⁷ Reason told Marcus that the world was good beyond improvement, and yet it constantly appeared to him evil beyond remedy. Dio says that after his death an age of iron and rust succeeded one of gold (lxxi, 36, 4). In his own experience the age of iron and rust had already begun.

APPENDIX I

The Dating of the Meditations

Book I was clearly composed as a unity. 17,3 presupposes the death of Pius (cf. iv, 33; vi, 30 etc.) and 17,6 alludes to the physical frailty which was probably characteristic only of Marcus’ later years (n. 13). However, the alternation of past and present infinitives or participles in i, 16, where the present tense must correspond to an imperfect indicative, shows that we cannot infer from the use of the present infinitive in regard to Faustina that 17,7 was written before her death in 175/6, and the alternation of present and past participles in regard to Verus in itself gives us no certainty that he was dead when Marcus wrote 17,4. Marcus, however, alludes to his death in viii, 25 and 37, and the inference from 17,6 permits us with some confidence to suppose that Book I was composed as a pendant to the journals preserved in II–XII, which all probably belong to the 170’s (*infra*).

The division of these journals into books is based on that in Xylander’s lost codex (P). The only extant manuscript (A) does not number them nor in five cases (see F’s apparatus) indicate breaks between them. We cannot be certain that they correspond to the putative parchment books in which Marcus wrote down his thoughts, though it may be significant that II and III, and also XI and XII, are markedly shorter than the rest. There can also be no proof that the books follow each other in chronological order. The order of texts preserved in some extant collections of excerpts (F. xxviii ff.) is not the same as in P and A. This may suggest that the present arrangement is arbitrary. In that case it would follow that even the rare historic allusions can be used only to date the chapters in which they occur, and not the whole books concerned. Even the entry preceding II τὰ ἐν Κυάδοις πρὸς τῷ Γρανοῦα α’ and that preceding III τὰ ἐν Καρνούντῳ (both only in P) would strictly show only that

¹¹² E. R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety* 8, citing vi, 36; iv, 3,3; ix, 32; x, 17; xii, 32. Add v, 24; vii, 48 f.; viii, 21.

¹¹³ cf. iii, 3,2; vi, 13; 15; 16,1; vii, 1; 3; 47; viii, 37; ix, 14; 36; xii, 24, and nn. 112; 114; pp. 10 f. On loathing for the body, cf. Dodds 29.

¹¹⁴ cf. ii, 2; 12; 14; 17; v, 10; 33.

¹¹⁵ cf. i, 15; ii, 5; 14; iii, 10; 12; vi, 2; 23; 26; 32; vii, 5; 8; 68; viii, 2; 32; 36; ix, 6; x, 1; 9; 11 f.; 31; xii, 1,1; 3; 26; one can only act justly etc. ἐπὶ τῆς δοθείσης ὕλης (xii, 27, cf. x, 33) such acts are

ἀναγκαῖα (iv, 24, cf. 32,2; i, 5); it is useless, and wrong, to attempt what Providence does not allow.

¹¹⁶ ix, 29 (τὸ βραχύτατον), cf. iii, 13 (τὸ μικρότατον). Dio lxxi, 6,2 uses τὸ βραχύτατον and ἐλάχιστον τι. Cf. on Pius’ thoroughness i, 16,1 and 2 (τῶν ἐλαχίστων); vi, 30,3; for an instance in M.’s case *Dig.* i, 18, 14, cf. xxv, 4,1 pr.; xxxvii, 14,17, pr.

¹¹⁷ *Chrysippe*⁴, 1950, 213. Babut (n. 74) 363 contrasts the moral pessimism and metaphysical optimism of the Stoics with Plutarch’s pessimism on the world and optimism about man.

some parts of what follows were composed in the places stated, though the relatively high degree of coherence in these short books (see F's introductions) may make it probable that they were wholly written in the places named. The chronology of Marcus' northern wars is, however, so uncertain, and so little is known of his own personal movements (cf. Birley, *Marcus Aurelius*, Appendix 3, for possible modifications of the fundamental treatment by W. Zwickler, *Studien zur Marcussäule*)—only the note preceding Book II attests his own presence in Quadian territory at any time—that I do not see how we can date II–III more precisely within the general limits 171–5.

No sound chronological inferences can be drawn from Marcus' allusions to the illness of one of his children in viii, 49 or to the plague in ix, 2, which was doubtless endemic in the west after its outbreak at Aquileia in 168/9. In ix, 3 he refers to his wife's pregnancy. (Haines, *Journ. of Phil.* 1914, 278 ff. cannot be right in thinking that he is addressing any reader whose wife may be pregnant; 'you' is self-apostrophe in every clear instance.) Birley (p. 222) dates the birth of Marcus' last surviving child to 170, and it might thus seem that ix, 3 was written before II–III. However, we have no right to assume that Faustina had no later child who died at birth or soon afterwards and thus left no trace in our meagre tradition. The reference to a man capturing Sarmatians in x, 10 may have been prompted by recollection of a report, not necessarily recent, from a general who boasted of the number of his prisoners, and need not be connected in time with Marcus' personal operations against the Iazyges (Sarmatians) or assumption of the title Sarmaticus in 175. Verus' death in viii, 25 and 37 need not of course be recent.

In iii, 14 and viii, 8 Marcus has no leisure for reading. Some of his quotations may be from memory; note the variations in viii, 41; xi, 12 and xii, 3, and the inaccurate quotation from Plato in x, 23. But in vii, 33–52, 63–6; ix, 41 (a long extract from Epicurus); xi, 6 and 30–39 he seems to be transcribing. This does not imply that he had access to a library; he may have been drawing on a *florilegium* (n. 12), nor need we suppose that he had no books with him on his journeys, even if he sometimes lacked time to read them. Quotations are actually least common in the contexts of the most highly wrought passages; he may have turned to a *florilegium*, just when he was too tired to try to think things out for himself. Haines (op. cit.) refuted Breithaupt's arguments that we can infer from the relation of quotations to the context that those which come later in our text were written later. They cannot be used for the absolute or relative dating of the books.

I cannot detect any change in Marcus' philosophical opinions which could justify us in holding that the later books represent a later stage of his thought (n. 7). In my view there is no development.

The allusions to Marcus' role as a ruler and to his age and the imminence of death are so widely scattered in Books II to XII (p. 2) as to suggest that all were written (as some sections clearly were) in the period of the great wars (note also viii, 34) after Verus' death. Moreover, references both to death and to his dissatisfaction with his associates tend to multiply. On this admittedly subjective ground I incline to the belief that after all the books are in due sequence; there is at least no evidence to the contrary. Hence XII might be close to his death. But all attempts at greater precision seem to me to fail (see also F. lxxii ff.). Sometimes they are based on mere speculation, as when Haines connected v, 7 with the Rain Miracle, and Birley iv, 28 with Avidius Cassius; I should prefer to find allusions to his revolt in Book IX, e.g. in 3, 2; 38; 42 (cf. n. 80); but this too can only be a guess, convenient in that it would make IX intermediate chronologically between II–III (c. 173) and XII (c. 180). Some of Birley's explanations rest on inadequate acquaintance with the background to Marcus' thought; thus the metaphor of the military *statio* had been used by and of emperors since Augustus, including Pius (E. Koester, *Philologus* 1932, 358 ff.; 430 ff.), and the comparison of time to a river comes from Heraclitus, who had much influence on Stoics and on Marcus in particular (cf. M. Pohlenz, *Die Stoa*, and Haines' edition, *Indexes sub nomine*); neither has anything to do with Marcus' experience of warfare or his impressions of the Danube!

APPENDIX II

I list here some texts relevant to various parts of my paper.

The themes of *human wickedness and restraint of anger* in xi, 18 are the subject of discussion or brief allusion (the principal texts are italicized) in:—

i, 1; 7; 8; 9, 1 and 3; 15, 2–3; ii, 1; 10; 13; 16; iii, 4, 1 and 4; 11, 3; 16, 2; iv, 3, 2; 6; 7; 11; 18; 28; 32; 44; v, 10, 1; 16; 17; 22; 25; 28; 31; 33; 35; vi, 6; 12; 20; 22; 26; 27; 30, 3; 41; 42; 47; vii, 1; 3; 22; 26; 29; 36; 52; 62; 63; 65; 66; 70; 71; viii, 4; 8; 9; 14; 17; 55; 56; 59; ix, 2; 3, 2; 4; 9, 3; 11; 20; 22; 24; 27; 29; 34; 38; 42; x, 1; 4; 9; 13; 15; 19; 25; 30; 36; 37; xi, 8; 9; 13; 14; 20, 2; xii, 12; 16, 1–2; 26.

Some of these sections also refer to the duty of *kindness or gentleness or good-will to our fellows*. Schenkl gives the following numbers for the occurrence of the relevant words (and cognates), often in juxtaposition: εὐγνώμοσύνη 3; εὐνοσίη 7 (excluding x, 14); εὐμέμεια 27; ἡμερος 3; ἴλεως 11;

πρᾶτος 7; for φιλοστοργία cf. n. 50. Cf. also vi, 30,2: τὸ εὐδίων τοῦ προσώπου καὶ τὸ μειλίχιον; vii 24; 31; 60. Galen calls M. εὐγνώμονά τε καὶ μέτριον, ἡμερόν τε καὶ πρᾶον, cf. M. on Pius, J, 17, 1. All these terms represent conventional virtues of the king (cf. e.g. Schubart, cited in n. 50). M. does not use ἐπιεικεία (disapproved by the old Stoa, see *SVF* iv, s.v.) and φιλανθρώπως only of the gods. In Latin he appeals to *humanitas* in 4 extant rescripts (*Dig.* xxviii, 4,3; xl, 5,37; xlvi, 18, 1,27; l, 1,24) and Callistratus speaks of his showing this quality (xlvi, 10,31). Cf. the *SC de ludis* 7-10 and Dio lxxi, 29. (In fact the SC made gladiatorial games cheaper to the rich producers at the cost of the treasury, i.e. the taxpayers!) In x, 8 M. reproaches gladiators for clinging to life and in i, 5; 16, 7; vi, 46 he does not distinguish such games from races; he finds both apparently frivolous, costly and boringly repetitive. The humanity of his legal rulings must also not be asserted without qualification, cf. *Dig.* i, 8, 6, 1; xlvi, 18,16 pr.; *h.t.* 17 pr.) No emperor is more often styled 'indulgentissimus' (*Diz. Ep.* s.v.); he refers to his 'indulgentia' in the Tabula Banasitana (*JRS* 1973, 86 f.) and built a temple, probably to the *numen* (Dio lxxi, 34,3; Wissowa, *Rel. u. Kultus*² 336), cf. *RE* ix, 1378 ff. on the meaning. For his clemency cf. p. 13.

Preoccupation with Death

ii, 2; 6; 11; 12; 14; 17; iii, 1; 3; 7; 10; 16,2; iv, 5; 14; 17; 19; 21; 32; 33; 35; 36; 37; 41; 44; 46; 47; 48; 50; v, 10,2; 13; 29; 31; 33; vi, 24; 46; 49; 56; vii, 18; 34; 35; 44; 46; viii, 2; 5; 18; ix, 21; x, 7,2; 8,1; 8,2; 15; 22; 29; 34; xii, 1,2; 5; 7; 23; 31; 32; 34; 35; 36. On survival after death he is agnostic, see esp. xii, 5, cf. iii, 3,2; iv, 14; 21; v, 33; vi, 4; vii, 34; viii, 25; 28.

Contempt of Fame and Praise

(a) Contemporary: ii, 6; 11; 12; iv, 20; vi, 16,2; vii, 36; 62; 73; viii, 1; 8; 52; 53; ix, 18; 27; 29; 30; 34; 35; xi, 13; 16; xii, 1, 1; 2. (b) Posthumous: iii, 10; iv, 32; 33; 35; v, 33; vii, 6; 10; 21; viii, 21; 25; 37; 44; ix, 30; xii, 27. (c) Both: iv, 3,3; 6; 19; vii, 34; x, 8,1; 30; 34; xii, 8. I have italicized texts in which he alludes to the worthlessness of the judgement of those who confer fame. Most texts on posthumous fame treat it as ephemeral. Both these considerations are no doubt subsidiary to the thesis that virtue alone is good and fame only one of 'the things indifferent'.

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