



Meditations: The Personal Writings by Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (The Personal Writings by Marcus Aurelius Antoninus - The Roman Emperor)

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Meditations by Marcus Aurelius Antoninus - The Personal Writings by Marcus Aurelius. The Roman Emperor. With Appendix, Notes and Glossary. Meditations is a series of personal writings by Marcus Aurelius, Roman Emperor 161–180 CE, setting forth his ideas on Stoic philosophy. Marcus Aurelius wrote the 12 books of the Meditations in Koine Greek as a source for his own guidance and self-improvement. It is possible that large portions of the work were written at Sirmium, where he spent much time planning military campaigns from 170 to 180. Some of it was written while he was positioned at Aquincum on campaign in Pannonia, because internal notes tell us that the second book was written when he was campaigning against the Quadi on the river Granova (modern-day Hron) and the third book was written at Carnuntum. It is not clear that he ever intended the writings to be published, so the title Meditations is but one of several commonly assigned to the collection. These writings take the form of quotations varying in length from one sentence to long paragraphs. The Meditations is divided into 12 books that chronicle different periods of Marcus's life. Each book is not in chronological order and it was written for no one but himself. The style of writing that permeates the text is one that is simplified, straightforward, and perhaps reflecting Marcus's Stoic perspective on the text. Depending on the English translation, Marcus's style is not viewed as anything regal or belonging to royalty, but rather a man among other men which allows the reader to relate to his wisdom. A central theme to Meditations is to analyze your judgement of self and others and developing a cosmic perspective. As he said "You have the power to strip away many superfluous troubles located wholly in your judgement, and to possess a large room for yourself embracing in thought the whole cosmos, to consider everlasting time, to think of the rapid change in the parts of each thing, of how short it is from birth until dissolution, and how the void before birth and that after dissolution are equally infinite". He advocates finding one's place in the universe and sees that everything came from nature, and so everything shall return to it in due time. It seems at some points in his work that we are all part of a greater construct thus taking a collectivist approach rather than having an individualist perspective. Another strong theme is of maintaining focus and to be without distraction all the while maintaining strong ethical principles such as "Being a good man".

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