

## Introduction

### Intentions of this Study

In the production of this study, the first detailed study on the *Vita Marci Antonini* in the *Historia Augusta* since Schwendemann,<sup>1</sup> a number of key concepts have been explored that consider the disadvantages and advantages of the *Historia Augusta*. The disadvantages are quite obvious: the problems with the text, its questionable authorship, and the numerous historical inaccuracies. However, there are also advantages, such as the fertile scope for analysis, the possibilities for examining the development of the biographical genre and the opportunity to understand Marcus Aurelius and how he was regarded and remembered in the later Roman Empire. Nevertheless, the focus of this examination of the *Vita Marci* is on one key element of the text: the thematic progression in the representation of Marcus Aurelius. The reasoning behind this concentration is to attempt to determine the intentions and bias of the biographer, which are both conceivable and instructive. This allows for an analysis of the text in a fashion that primarily concentrates upon how the author represented Marcus Aurelius. The difficulties with the text have been discussed briefly, but the overriding emphasis of this study is on the portrayal of Marcus Aurelius.

The most notable aspect of this biography is its positive partiality towards the *princeps*.<sup>2</sup> The *Vita Marci* was composed in such a positive fashion that it could almost be classed as *aretalogy*,<sup>3</sup> rather than biography. It is a biography, but one that provides a clear and obvious theme that stresses the brilliance of Marcus Aurelius. The infrequent inclusion of criticisms by the biographer highlights his partiality towards the *princeps* and also emphasises the idealism that surrounded the remembrance of Marcus Aurelius in the late 4<sup>th</sup> Century AD. This romanticism is stated from the outset of the *Vita Marci Antonini*, which indicates to the audience that Marcus was not only an emperor, but a philosopher who

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<sup>1</sup> J. Schwendemann, *Der historische Wert der Vita Marci bei den Scriptoribus Historiae Augustae*, Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1923. However, it should be noted that André Chastagnol has also dealt with the *Vita Marci* in some detail. See A. Chastagnol, *Histoire Auguste*, Paris: Robert Laffont, 1994, pp. 110-59.

<sup>2</sup> C. Motschmann, *Die Religionspolitik Marc Aurels*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2002, p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> cf. M. Hadas and M. Smith, *Heroes and Gods: spiritual biographies in antiquity*, London: Routledge, 1965, pp. 3-4.

epitomised the Platonic ideals of the philosophical monarch.<sup>4</sup> The *Vita Marci* has also been shown to have been among the most accurate biographies in the *Historia Augusta*,<sup>5</sup> so its historical content should not be entirely discounted either. Instead, it is the aim of this study to analyse how these elements were generally presented by the biographer in the most positive fashion possible. This has been undertaken so that the intentions of the author can be viewed, an approach which is particularly revealing when considering the negative representations that were occasionally included by the *HA* biographer.

The structure of the *Vita Marci Antonini* is also important to this study. It has been established by other scholars that the *Vita Marci* included a large interpolation in the actual text of the biography.<sup>6</sup> Owing to the dearth of information surrounding the compilation of the *HA*, it is impossible to ascertain how or when this occurred, but it is nevertheless important to note. In order to ascertain the thematic consistency of the *Vita Marci Antonini* the interpolation has been removed from the main commentary and examined as a separate text in Chapter Four. Disconnecting these two sections has allowed for a more discriminating interpretation of the original text, particularly in relation to the thematic progression of the original *Vita Marci Antonini Philosophi*.

This examination of the *Vita Marci Antonini* has established that the original biography was written in a deliberate style, which for the most part followed a coherent theme across the various sections of the *Vita*. Nevertheless, as with most of the biographies in the *Historia Augusta*, there are exceptions to this general tenet, particularly in relation to those sections in the text that overtly criticise the *princeps*.<sup>7</sup> However, these critical passages only comprise two out of the twenty-four original sections, which illustrates the overall consistency in the representation of Marcus Aurelius. The uniform approach by the biographer provides a clear example of the positive light in which Marcus Aurelius was portrayed and establishes the literary intentions of the biographer.

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<sup>4</sup> Plato, *Republic*, Book 6.

<sup>5</sup> cf. R.P. Hock, "Puns, Aelius Maurus and the Composition of the *Historia Augusta*". *TAPA* 112, 1982, pp. 107-8.

<sup>6</sup> D. Magie, *The Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, Vol. 1, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1921, p. xxii; A. Enmann, *Eine verlorene Geschichte der römischen Kaiser*, *Philologus* Supplementband 4, 1884, pp. 337-501.

<sup>7</sup> cf. M. Hadas, *A History of Latin Literature*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1952, p. 356.

### Significant Prior Research

The analysis of the *Historia Augusta* has produced numerous studies over the years,<sup>8</sup> largely motivated by the contentious character of the text and its authorship. One of the most important scholars to work on this area was Ronald Syme,<sup>9</sup> whose numerous books and articles had a significant impact on the fashion in which the *Historia Augusta* has been viewed, and many of his studies have been important for the development of this examination of the *Vita Marci*. There have also been many articles taken from the *Historia-Augusta-Colloquium Series* (referred to as *HAC*). While the majority of these papers have not concentrated on the *Vita Marci* directly, the analysis and discussion of issues such as authorship and the sources used by the *HA* biographer have provided a source of material for consideration in relation to this analysis. Another important work relating to the question of the biographer's sources is *The Sources of the Historia Augusta* by T.D. Barnes.<sup>10</sup> While this work has provided some discussion of the *Vita Marci*, the central aim of the study is on the *HA* as a whole, which has allowed for more comprehensive discussion of Marcus Aurelius' biography in the present study.

There have been several works produced in relation to the *Vita Marci*, but prior to this study an in-depth commentary of this *Vita* has not been published. The most significant study that has focused upon the *Vita Marci* was by Schwendemann,<sup>11</sup> who largely concentrated on the sources and historical value of the *Vita Marci*. While the importance of this study is evident, it has taken a different direction to the present study, which has focused on the biographical representation of Marcus Aurelius and the intentions that lay behind this portrayal of the *princeps*. In contrast to this, Schwendemann sought to connect various passages within the *Vita* in order to analyse the literary style in which they were written, be it annalistic or biographical. Schwendemann's study has been useful in the

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<sup>8</sup> cf. D.M. Robathan, "A Reconsideration of Roman Topography in the *Historia Augusta*", *TAPA* 70, 1939, p. 515.

<sup>9</sup> For example, Syme, R., 1958, *Tacitus*, Volumes I and II, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958; *Ammianus and the Historia Augusta*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968; "The Secondary Vitae", *HAC* 1968/9, 1970, pp. 285-307; *Emperors and Biography: studies in the Historia Augusta*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971; "The *Historia Augusta*: a call of clarity", *Antiquitas* 4, 1971; "Astrology in the *Historia Augusta*", *HAC* 1972/4, 1976, pp. 291-309; "Bogus Authors", *HAC* 1972/4, pp. 311-21; *Historia Augusta Papers*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983; "Hadrian and Antioch", *HAC* 1979/81, 1983, pp. 321-31; "Avidius Cassius: his rank, age and quality", *HAC* 1984/5, 1987, pp. 207-22.

<sup>10</sup> T.D. Barnes, *The Sources of the Historia Augusta*. Collection Latomus 155, Brussels: Latomus Revue d'Etudes Latines, 1978.

<sup>11</sup> Schwendemann, 1923, *op.cit.*

development of this study, but the foci of both analyses are quite different. There have been two other shorter studies that analysed the *Vita Marci*, by Pflaum,<sup>12</sup> and Syme.<sup>13</sup> The study of Pflaum considered both the *Vita Hadriani* and the *Vita Marci* in relation to the prosopographical evidence that existed at the time, however the brevity of Pflaum's discussion allows for further analysis of the *Vita Marci*.

The discussion of the *Vita Marci* presented by Syme was only part of the overall intention of his article.<sup>14</sup> In his study, Syme focused largely on the influence of Marius Maximus upon the creation of the *Vita Marci* and the overall structural inconsistencies of the biography in its present form. Owing to the brevity of the discussion presented by Syme it is quite evident that it was not his intention to provide a comprehensive analysis of the *Vita* itself, but to use it as a case-study for the discussion of the previous biographer, Marius Maximus. More recently there have also been other articles that have analysed the *Vita Marci*, which have been written by Klaus Rosen. The first of these studies<sup>15</sup> used the biography of Marcus Aurelius as a case study for the analysis of the political implications of the joint-principate, whereas the second article<sup>16</sup> has concentrated more directly on the representation of power and responsibility in the *Vita Marci*. While these studies provide a good source of analysis of the *Vita Marci*, they were not intended to discuss the representation of Marcus Aurelius overall, which is the main intention of the present study. Rosen has also written a short biography of Marcus' reign in recent years,<sup>17</sup> which has clarified some of the precise features of his principate, but in this regard the biography in the *Historia Augusta* has only be considered in an ancillary context by the author.

In relation to the historical study of Marcus Aurelius and his principate, there have been several other works that have been beneficial for the development of the present study.<sup>18</sup> The most significant of these was *Marcus Aurelius: a biography* by A.R. Birley,<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> H.G. Pflaum, "La Valeur de la source inspiratrice de la Vita Hadriani et de la Vita Marci Antonini à la lumière des personnalités contemporaines nommément citées", *HAC* 1968/9, 1970, pp. 173-232.

<sup>13</sup> R. Syme, "Marius Maximus Once Again", *HAC* 1970, 1972, pp. 287-302.

<sup>14</sup> Syme, 1972, *op.cit.*, pp. 291-5.

<sup>15</sup> K. Rosen, "Die angebliche Samtherrschaft von Marc Aurel und Lucius Verus", *HAC* 1990, 1991, pp. 271-85.

<sup>16</sup> K. Rosen, "Das Schlusskapitel der Marc Aurel Vita und der Konflikt zwischen Gesinnung und Verantwortung", *HAC* 1991, 1994, pp. 189-96.

<sup>17</sup> K. Rosen, *Marc Aurel*, Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1997.

<sup>18</sup> Such as A.S.L. Farquharson, *Marcus Aurelius: his life and his world*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1952; H.D. Sedgwick, *Marcus Aurelius : a biography told as much as may be by letters : together with some account of the Stoic religion and an exposition of the Roman government's attempt to suppress Christianity during*

which focused primarily on providing a detailed account of the historical developments that occurred throughout Marcus' lifetime. This study provides a good source of comparison and analysis for the dating of historical events, but it has a much broader scope of discussion than the *Vita Marci*. The analysis of the *HA* biography of Marcus Aurelius by Birley also seems to accept the representation of Marcus a little too readily,<sup>20</sup> which has been discussed in greater detail in this analysis of the biography.

### **Overall Textual Methodology**

As stated previously, the central focus of this study has been on the thematic progression that exists in the main text of the *Vita Marci Antonini*. The analysis of the *Vita Marci Antonini* has taken two formats: the examination of thematic sections, and the investigation into key individual sentences. The majority of this study has concentrated on the text using thematic divisions that exist in the text, in order to understand and delineate the changing and continuing themes that occur within the narrative. However, there have also been many instances where particular individual sentences have been analysed, which is largely because of their effect on the development of the account provided by the biographer. It is hoped that this style of analysis illustrates both the value and the dilemmas faced when approaching this text, which allows for a better understanding of both the author and his perspective of Marcus Aurelius. This is important because it demonstrates the worth of a critical understanding of a literary source and also establishes that in order to understand leading historical figures such as Marcus Aurelius, it is imperative to be aware of the nature of the evidence.

In order to ascertain the historical accuracy of the *Vita Marci Antonini Philosophi* it has been essential to compare the representations given by the biographer with other ancient literary sources, such as Cassius Dio, Herodian, Ammianus Marcellinus and Marcus' own *Meditations*. These comparisons have highlighted some of the inconsistencies that occur in the biography, but also some of its historical gains. Where possible this has been analysed in relation to some of the numismatic and archaeological evidence from the

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*Marcus's reign*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921; S. Jäkel, *Marcus Aurelius's Concept of Life*, Turku: Turun Yliopisto, 1991.

<sup>19</sup> A.R. Birley, *Marcus Aurelius: a biography*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London: Routledge, 1987.

<sup>20</sup> cf. A. Cameron, "Marcus the Emperor (Review)", *CR* 17.3, 1967, p. 348.

period, which has established some of the benefits of the *Vita Marci Antonini*. It is also clear that the inherent bias of the biographer has coloured some of the representations, which has raised some important questions about the legitimacy of the depiction of Marcus Aurelius in the *HA*. In general terms, the *HA* will always be problematic, but it does provide some historical value, particularly the *Vita Marci Antonini*. Yet the manner in which the biography has been written should be questioned in relation to the intentions of its author and his literary motives.

While the continuity of the text has been a consistent focus of this study, the structural divisions in the *Vita Marci Antonini Philosophi* have also been revealing for an understanding of the overall text. It is evident that the *HA* biographer used a combination of chronological and ideological factors in the creation of this *Vita*, but it appears that the ideological issues were typically viewed with more importance to the author. It is this element that has produced the uniform representation of Marcus Aurelius in this biography, but it should be stated that the biographer still attempted to place the didactic themes within a chronological context as well. The instructive elements of the biography are consistently emphasised in the text, particularly in relation to the representation of Marcus as an ‘ideal’ *princeps* who should be honoured by all. However, there are two passages (Sections 20 and 29.1-3) that made a clear break from this biographical approach, which may have been intended to highlight that Marcus was not perfect, or were included to emphasise his strengths using a similar method to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century biographer Suetonius.<sup>21</sup> But in the *Vita Marci Antonini* the result is much more confusing and epitomises the literary shortcomings of the biographer instead. All the same, this thematic break in the biography illustrates the consistency of the remaining twenty-two sections of the *Vita*.

### **General Objectives of this Study**

Having established the overall thematic and textual methodology used in this analysis, it is important to outline the intended results of this examination. There are three findings that have resulted from this analysis of the *Vita Marci Antonini*: firstly, it has established that there were clear motives in the biographer’s representation of Marcus

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<sup>21</sup> cf. K.R. Bradley, *Suetonius’ Life of Nero: An Historical Commentary*, Brussels: Latomus, 1978, p. 14; R.P. Hock, *The Historia Augusta, Septimius Severus and Roman Britain*, John Hopkins University, PhD Diss., 1977, p. 8..

Aurelius; secondly, that the use of the *Vita Marci Antonini* as an historical source is justified, as long as the representational intentions of the *HA* biographer are kept in mind; and finally, that there are definite themes across the range of literary evidence for Marcus Aurelius that epitomise the idealism that has surrounded the recollection of his principate.<sup>22</sup>

All of these results have been taken from a careful thematic reading of the text of the *Vita Marci Antonini*, which mostly has established the underlying biographical intentions of the author, which has in turn provided insight into the historiography of the evidence for Marcus Aurelius' principate and the romanticism that surrounds the literary evidence for the period. When the biographer included some criticisms of the *princeps* they were typically included in a somewhat haphazard and disjointed fashion, which creates some questions about the overall structure of the *Vita*, but this is quite consistent with the general questions that exist for the *HA*. Naturally, analysis of the *Vita Marci Antonini* cannot answer all of the questions that have been produced in relation to the *Historia Augusta*, but it is quite clear that it can add to the modern understanding of some of its literary intentions.

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<sup>22</sup> cf. R.M. Frakes, "Cross-References to the Lost Books of Ammianus Marcellinus", *Phoenix* 49.3, 1995, p. 235.

## Chapter 1

### **The *Vita Marci Antonini Philosophi* and the *Historia Augusta* in its Biographical Context**

#### **Introduction**

The focus of this chapter is on the issues surrounding the *Historia Augusta* as an historical text and the implications that this holds for the analysis of the *Vita Marci*. In order to fully comprehend the significance of the *Vita Marci Antonini*, the *Historia Augusta* must first be contextualised. This contextualisation can then be applied to the overall themes presented in the biography of Marcus Aurelius. It is also important for the other literary sources on Marcus' life and principate to be discussed briefly in this context in order that the *HA* biography can be compared with them. This has allowed for a greater understanding of its historical significance and provided further insight into the intentions of the biographer. Even by the time in which the *HA* was composed (see below for further discussion), the mystique surrounding the reign of Marcus Aurelius was well and truly established, a fact that has in many ways affected his representation within the Roman historiographical and biographical traditions. It is the central aim of this study to understand this pattern of idealism in order that a better understanding of both Marcus Aurelius and the *Vita Marci* may be achieved. But in order to examine the significance of the *Vita Marci*, the place of the *Historia Augusta* in the Roman biographical tradition must be established so that its literary context can be understood.

#### **The *Historia Augusta* in its Biographical Context**

The creation of the *Historia Augusta* continued a long standing biographical tradition that stemmed back to the origins of Greek biography in the late 5<sup>th</sup> to early 4<sup>th</sup> Centuries BC, which probably used the *Apology* by Plato as a model.<sup>1</sup> This was followed by the *Ethics* by Aristotle, which formed the basis upon which many later biographies were created,<sup>2</sup> but there were also the works of Isocrates and Xenophon that were highly

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<sup>1</sup> See A. Dihle, *Studien zur griechischen Biographie*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1956.

<sup>2</sup> See F. Leo, *Die griechisch-römische Biographie nach ihrer litterarischen Form*, Leipzig, 1901, p. 316.



influential.<sup>3</sup> Following this it was the Peripatetic school that continued the development of Greek biography during the Hellenistic period.<sup>4</sup> which was highly influential on the later Roman biographical tradition.<sup>5</sup> The first known Roman writer to follow in this tradition was Marcus Terentius Varro, but none of his biographical works now survive.<sup>6</sup> For the purposes of this study the focus is the extant texts in order to note the progression of biographical representation over time so that the literary context of the *Historia Augusta* can be understood. Five of the leading biographical predecessors have been discussed in order to examine any potential stylistic and representational influences that they may have had on the biographer of the *HA*. These authors are: Cornelius Nepos, Quintus Curtius Rufus, Tacitus, Plutarch and Suetonius.<sup>7</sup>

The earliest extant Roman biography was composed by Cornelius Nepos during the 1<sup>st</sup> Century BC.<sup>8</sup> He was born around 99 BC in Cisalpine Gaul,<sup>9</sup> but soon moved to the capital and remained there until his death in 24 BC.<sup>10</sup> Owing to the criticisms of his literary style,<sup>11</sup> the significance of Nepos' writings have often been neglected, but the usefulness of the *de Viris Illustribus* as an indicator of the progression of the Roman biographical tradition should still be noted. As with Varro, Cornelius Nepos followed the Peripatetic tradition of biographical composition,<sup>12</sup> but he also used various episodes in his *Vitae* to provide entertaining elements as well.<sup>13</sup> It would seemingly be a far stretch to claim that the *de Viris Illustribus* had a significant impact on the development of the *Vita Marci* in the

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<sup>3</sup> D.R. Stuart, *Epochs of Greek and Roman Biography*, Sather Classical Lectures, 1928, pp. 235ff.

<sup>4</sup> A. Momigliano, *Second Thoughts on Greek Biography*, Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing, 1971, p. 4; cf. J.P. Lynch, *Aristotle's School: a Study of a Greek Educational Institution*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972.

<sup>5</sup> E. Jenkinson, "Nepos – an introduction to Latin Biography", in T.A. Dorey (ed.), *Latin Biography*, London: Routledge, 1967, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>7</sup> The influence of Marius Maximus and other later Roman authors upon the composition of the *HA* has been discussed in the ensuing section, 'The Issues in Using the *Historia Augusta* as an Historical Source'.

<sup>8</sup> Jenkinson, 1967, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> Pliny, *NH*, 3.127.

<sup>10</sup> Jenkinson, 1967, *op.cit.*

<sup>11</sup> For example by Leo, 1901, *op.cit.*, pp. 226ff.

<sup>12</sup> For example see Nepos, *Aristides*, 2.2: *neque aliud est ullum huius in re militari illustre factum quam huius imperii memoria, iustitiae vero et aequitatis et innocentiae multa, in primis quod eius aequitate factum est, cum in communi classe esset Graeciae simul cum Pausania, quo duce Mardonius erat fugatus, ut summa imperii maritimi ab Lacedaemoniis transferretur ad Athenienses.*

<sup>13</sup> Jenkinson, 1967, *op.cit.*, p. 5.

HA,<sup>14</sup> but there were certainly some similarities in their themes and representational priorities. Both biographers sought to combine elements of moralising and entertaining through the selective inclusion of various episodes. It is also quite evident that they shared a judicious view of the distinctive features of biography when compared to history.<sup>15</sup>

Quintus Curtius Rufus wrote his history of Alexander the Great, the *Historiae Alexandri Magni Macedonis*, after the Augustan period, probably before the end of Claudius' reign.<sup>16</sup> While it is important to note that this text was nominally 'history', there are numerous elements that also establish its credentials as a biography.<sup>17</sup> The most useful passage for an understanding of his view of Alexander is found in Book 10, which epitomises the idealism with which Alexander was represented,<sup>18</sup> including his familial devotion, piety and natural restraint from vice. However, it is also notable that the representation of Curtius Rufus did not ignore the well-known vices of Alexander (insobriety, ruthless anger and his desire for divination). These faults are explained away as not being his fault: *fortuna* was responsible. Rufus' portrayal of Alexander is highly laudable, which can be seen in this explanation, but the author contradicts himself in the

<sup>14</sup> For a comment upon Nepos' own literary intentions, see R. Syme, *Sallust*, Berkeley: University Of California Press, 1964.

<sup>15</sup> See Nepos, *Pelopidas*, 1.1: *Pelopidas Thebanus, magis historicis quam vulgo notus. Cuius de virtutibus dubito quem ad modum exponam, quod vereor, si res explicare incipiam, ne non vitam eius enarrare, sed historiam videar scribere.* cf. F. Titchener, "Cornelius Nepos and the Biographical Tradition", *G&R* 50.1, 2003, pp. 86-7; C. Pelling, "Childhood and Personality in Greek Biography", in C. Pelling (ed.), *Characterization and Individuality in Greek Literature*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 214; A. Wallace-Hadrill, *Suetonius: the scholar and his Caesars*, London: Duckworth, 1983, pp. 8-9.

<sup>16</sup> J. Atkinson, "Originality and its Limits in the Alexander Sources of the Early Empire", in A.B. Bosworth and E.J. Baynham (eds.), *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 319; A.M. Devine, "The 'Parthi', the Tyranny of Tiberius, and the Date of Q. Curtius Rufus", *Phoenix* 33.2, 1979, p. 143.

<sup>17</sup> See E.I. McQueen, "Quintus Curtius Rufus", in T.A. Dorey (ed.), *Latin Biography*, London: Routledge, 1967, pp. 17-21.

<sup>18</sup> Curtius, 10.5.26-35. '*Et, hercule, iuste aestimantibus regem, liquet bona naturae eius fuisse, vitia vel fortunae vel aetatis. Vis incredibilis animi, laboris patientia propemodum nimia, fortitudo non inter reges modo excellens, sed inter illos quoque quorum haec sola virtus fuit, liberalitas saepe maiora tribunes quam a dis petuntur, clementia in devictos, tot regna aut reddita quibus ademerat bello aut dono data, mortis cuius metus ceteros exanimat perpetua contemptio, gloriae laudisque ut iusto maior cupido, ita in iuvene et in tantis negligenda rebus, iam pietas erga parentes, quorum Olympiada immortalitati consecrare decreverat, Philippum ultus erat, iam in omnes fere amicos benignitas, erga milites benevolentia, consilium par magnitudini animi et, quantam vix poterat aetas eius capere, sollertia, modus inmodicarum cupiditatum, veneris intra naturale desiderium usus, nec ulla nisi ex permissio voluptas, ingenii profecto dotes erant. Illa fortunae: dis aequare se et caelestes honores accersere et talia suadentibus oraculis credere et dedignatibus venerari ipsum vehementius, quam par esset, irasci, in externum habitum mutare corporis cultum, imitari devictarum gentium mores, quos ante victoriam spreverat. Nam iracundiam et cupidinem vini sicuti iuventa irritaverat, ita senectus mitigare potuisset. Fatendum est tamen, cum plurimum virtute debuerit, plus debuisse Fortunae, quam solus omnium mortalium in potestate habuit.'*

final sentence: Alexander could control *fortuna*.<sup>19</sup> This separation of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ qualities was indicative of the reception that these features would have received from Rufus’ audience; primarily the Roman senatorial élite.<sup>20</sup> In view of the differing foci between the *Historiae Alexandri Magni Macedonis* and the *Vita Marci*, it is unlikely that Curtius Rufus would have made a significant impression on the biographer of the *HA*. But it is important to note their similar concentration on examining the deeds of ‘great men’ as examples for their audiences, which is a consistent theme in the ancient biographical tradition.

The *de Vita Iulii Agricolae* by Cornelius Tacitus was composed during the later stages of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD, probably in AD 93.<sup>21</sup> His motivation in writing this biography would have been that he was married to Agricola’s daughter,<sup>22</sup> which could make the motivation behind the composition of the text somewhat problematic. All the same, Tacitus himself states that his purpose for writing is that wicked words and actions should fear their posthumous infamy,<sup>23</sup> which highlights his view of the merits of writing history and, in this instance, biography.<sup>24</sup> The *Agricola* was largely a defence of his father-in-law, following the end to his career during the principate of the Emperor Domitian.<sup>25</sup> This was most strikingly highlighted by Tacitus in his discussion following the narrative of the death of Agricola,<sup>26</sup> whereby the merits of both men were compared. Nevertheless, the overall merits of Tacitus’ scholarship cannot be discounted,<sup>27</sup> which makes the *Agricola* an important biographical source. However, it should be noted that the *Agricola* should be viewed in a different fashion to the biographies in the *HA* because of the temporal distance between author and subject. Tacitus was closely connected to his subject, whereas the biographer of the *HA* was much more separated from the various Emperors, which allowed

<sup>19</sup> cf. D. Spencer, *The Roman Alexander: reading a cultural myth*, Exeter: Exeter University Press, 2002, pp. 3, 10, 11.

<sup>20</sup> E.J. Baynham, *Alexander the Great: the unique history of Quintus Curtius Rufus*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998, pp. 15-16.

<sup>21</sup> R.M. Ogilvie and I. Richmond (eds.), *Cornelii Taciti De Vita Agricola*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 11.

<sup>22</sup> Tacitus, *Agricola*, 9.6. See R. Syme, *Tacitus*, Vol. 1, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958, p. 112ff.

<sup>23</sup> Tacitus, *Annals*, 3.65.

<sup>24</sup> H. Furneaux, *The Annals of Tacitus*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1896, pp. 27-8.

<sup>25</sup> Syme, 1958, *op.cit.*, 1.19ff, 2.585ff; B.W. Jones, *The Emperor Domitian*, London: Routledge, 1992, p. 58.

<sup>26</sup> Tacitus, *Agricola*, 42.4: *sciant, quibus moris est illicita mirari, posse etiam sub malis principibus magnos viros esse, obsequiumque ac modestiam, si industria ac vigor adsint, eo laudis excedere, quo plerique per abrupta sed in nullum rei publicae usum ambitiosa morte inclaruerunt.*

<sup>27</sup> See Ogilvie and Richmond, 1967, *op.cit.*, pp. 11-20.

him much more flexibility in the interpretation of events and the nature of the historical characters. As with the previously discussed biographies, any direct influence that it may have exerted upon the composition of the *Vita Marci* must have been minimal.<sup>28</sup>

The *Parallel Lives* of Plutarch was another important biographical composition that reflects the continuation of the biographical tradition into the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD. He was born in Chaeronea between AD 45-50,<sup>29</sup> and he also continued the traditional moralising conception of the Peripatetic school in his biographical compositions.<sup>30</sup> He made his motivation for writing quite evident in the *Life of Timoleon*,<sup>31</sup> where he clearly states that the examples of great men affected his own behaviour.<sup>32</sup> In a similar fashion to the biographer of the *Vita Marci*, Plutarch used a variety of sources (both literary and oral),<sup>33</sup> and consistently sought to instruct the audience on the correct form of behaviour.<sup>34</sup> He did not intend to reach an all-encompassing audience,<sup>35</sup> but he still attempted to make the *Parallel Lives* enjoyable to read.<sup>36</sup> It is the ‘parallel’ nature of these biographies that makes Plutarch’s writings distinctive, but also problematic. The task of comparing two lives in order to establish their similarities frequently affected the fashion in which various characters were portrayed by Plutarch, and, in turn, influenced his choice of subject matter in the *Lives*. Nevertheless, this interpretation shows the variation in literary technique that frequently occurred during the development of the negatively Greco-Roman biographical tradition. As with the biographer of the *Vita Marci*, Plutarch did not simply seek to

<sup>28</sup> cf. G. Zecchini, “La Fortuna di Tacito e l’*Historia Augusta*”, *HAC* 1990, 1991, pp. 337-50.

<sup>29</sup> U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, “Plutarch as Biographer”, in B. Scardigli (ed.), *Essays on Plutarch’s Lives*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 48.

<sup>30</sup> A.J. Gossage, “Plutarch”, in T.A. Dorey (ed.), *Latin Biography*, London: Routledge, 1967, p. 47.

<sup>31</sup> Plutarch, *Timoleon*, 1.1. Ἐμοὶ τῆς τῶν βίων ἄψασθαι μὲν γραφῆς συνέβη δι’ ἑτέρους, ἐπιμένειν δὲ καὶ φιλοχωρεῖν ἤδη καὶ δι’ ἑμαυτόν, ὥσπερ ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ τῆ ἱστορίας πειρώμενον ἀμῶς γέ πως κοσμεῖν καὶ ἀφομοιοῦν πρὸς τὰς ἐκείνων ἀρετὰς τὸν βίον.

<sup>32</sup> cf. P.A. Stadter, “Introduction”, in P.A. Stadter (ed.), *Plutarch and the Historical Tradition*, London: Routledge, 1992, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> cf. C.B.R. Pelling, “Plutarch’s Adaptation of his Source-Material”, in B. Scardigli (ed.), *Essays on Plutarch’s Lives*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 125-54.

<sup>34</sup> cf. D.A. Russell, “On Reading Plutarch’s *Lives*”, in B. Scardigli (ed.), *Essays on Plutarch’s Lives*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 79-80.

<sup>35</sup> For discussion of Plutarch’s intended audience, see A. Wardman, *Plutarch’s Lives*, London: Paul Elek, 1974, pp. 37-48.

<sup>36</sup> See T.E. Duff, “Plato, Tragedy, the Ideal Reader and Plutarch’s Demetrios and Antony”, *Hermes* 132.3, 2004, pp. 279-80.

entertain his audience, but instead aimed to provide moral examples to encourage (or discourage) certain forms of behaviour.<sup>37</sup>

The *de Vita Caesarum* by Suetonius was one of the most important ancient biographies in relation to the study of the *Vita Marci* and the *Historia Augusta*. Suetonius had served for a period as *ab epistulis* to the Emperor Hadrian,<sup>38</sup> early in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD,<sup>39</sup> which seems to have provided him with a fair degree of access to the imperial records.<sup>40</sup> Suetonius opted for the biographical form of writing, which in many ways represents the direction in which Roman politics had developed by the time he was writing, with the *princeps* being the sole representative of power.<sup>41</sup> That being said, Suetonius was frequently more interested in ‘entertaining’ his audience,<sup>42</sup> which must be kept in mind when considering the reliability of his representations.<sup>43</sup> Throughout the *de Vita Caesarum* there are instances where Suetonius exhibits some critical evaluation of his sources,<sup>44</sup> but he was hardly consistent in this regard. Suetonius’ biographies do not appear to have had the same moralising tendencies as his predecessors,<sup>45</sup> despite his frequent judgements on the merits of various characters.<sup>46</sup>

For the purposes of this study, it is important to note the lasting influence of Suetonius on the development of Imperial biographies in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Centuries AD.<sup>47</sup> This influence was mentioned by the biographer of the *HA*, in the *Vita Probi: et mihi*

<sup>37</sup> cf. T. Duff, *Plutarch’s Lives: exploring virtue and vice*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 52-71.

<sup>38</sup> cf. H. Lindsay, “Suetonius as *ab epistulis* to Hadrian and the Early History of the Imperial Correspondence”, *Historia* 43.4, 1994, pp. 454-68.

<sup>39</sup> A. Mâce, *Essai sur Suétone*, Paris: Albert Fontemoin, 1900, p. 87.

<sup>40</sup> R. Mellor, *The Roman Historians*, London: Routledge, 1999, p. 147.

<sup>41</sup> J. Henderson, *Fighting for Rome: Poets and Caesars, History and Civil War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 259; cf. H. Gugel, *Studien zur Biographischen Technik Suetons*, Wien: Hermann Bohlaus, 1977, p. 15.

<sup>42</sup> P. Plass, *Wit and the Writing of History*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988, p. 7; E. Cizek, *Structures et Idéologie dans les Vies des Douze Césars de Suétone*, Paris: Editura Academiei, 1977, p. 40.

<sup>43</sup> B. Baldwin, *Suetonius*, Amsterdam: A.M. Hakkert, 1933, 339.

<sup>44</sup> cf. R.C. Lounsbury, *The Art of Suetonius*, PhD Diss., Austin: University of Texas, 1979, p. 23.

<sup>45</sup> cf. G.B. Townend, “Suetonius and his Influence”, in T.A. Dorey (ed.), *Latin Biography*, London: Routledge, 1967, p. 92.

<sup>46</sup> This is a frequent occurrence, particularly in relation to the ‘bad’ Emperors. See G.W. Adams, “Suetonius and his Treatment of the Emperor Domitian’s Favourable Accomplishments”, *SHT* 6.A.3, 2005, <http://www.ut.ee/klassik/sht/2005/adams1.pdf>; W. Steidle, *Sueton und die Antike Biographie*, Munich: C.H. Beck, 1963, pp. 108-9.

<sup>47</sup> Townend, 1967, *op.cit.*, p. 79; A. Chastagnol, “L’Histoire Auguste et les Douze Césars de Suétone”, *HAC* 1970, 1972, pp. 101-23. However, it is quite evident that the *HA* biographer had a different perspective over the use of their source material. See E. Gabba, “True History and False History in Classical Antiquity”, *JRS* 71, 1981, p. 54.

*quidem id animi fuit ut non Sallustios, Livios, Tacitos, Trogos atque omnes disertissimos imitarer viros in vita principum et temporibus disserendis, sed Marium Maximum, Suetonium Tranquillum, Fabium Marcellinum, Gargilium Martialem,*<sup>48</sup> *Iulium Capitolinum, Aelium Lampridium ceterosque, qui haec et talia non tam diserte quam vere memoriae tradiderunt.*<sup>49</sup> The reasoning behind this compliment by the biographer of the *HA* may have been inspired by the Suetonian style to allow the readers to ‘make up their own minds’,<sup>50</sup> which is also a notable feature in the *Historia Augusta*. However, there were other important sources used by the biographer of the *HA*, which must also be considered.

### **The Issues in Using the *Historia Augusta* as an Historical Source**

There are many difficulties that face modern scholars when approaching the *HA*, particularly in relation to the question of its authorship. This has been dealt with in numerous studies previously,<sup>51</sup> and will only be discussed briefly because it is not the prime aim of this examination. It is important for this rather significant question to be addressed. The presence of the six names of supposed authors (Aelius Spartianus, Julius Capitolinus, Vulcacius Gallicanus, Aelius Lampridius, Trebellius Pollio, Flavius Vospiscus) has been difficult to explain, but as argued by Dessau and Syme, the linguistic and stylistic similarities indicate a single author.<sup>52</sup> With this in mind, the dating of the *Historia Augusta* is difficult,<sup>53</sup> considering that at various stages the biographer addresses the Emperors

<sup>48</sup> cf. E. Birley, “Africana in the *Historia Augusta*”, *HAC* 1968/9, 1970, pp. 80-2.

<sup>49</sup> *Probus*, 2.7. ‘As for myself, it has been my intention, by describing the lives and times of the emperors, to imitate, not Sallust, nor Livy, nor Tacitus, nor Trogos, or any other of the most articulate writers, but instead Marius Maximus, Suetonius Tranquillus, Fabius Marcellinus, Gargilius Martialis, Julius Capitolinus, Aelius Lampridius, and others who have passed down a memory of these and other elements not so much with articulacy as with honesty.’

<sup>50</sup> Townend, 1967, *op.cit.*, p. 92.

<sup>51</sup> P. White, “The Authorship of the *HA*”, *JRS* 67, 1977, pp. 115-33; J.N. Adams, “The Authorship of the *HA*”, *CQ* 22, 1972, pp. 186-94; “The Linguistic Unity of the *HA*”, *Antichthon* 11, 1977, pp. 93-102; D. Hengst, “The Discussion of Authorship”, *HAC* 2000, 2002, pp. 187-95; R. Syme, “The Secondary *Vitae*”, *HAC* 1968/9, 1970, pp. 306-7; “The Composition of the *Historia Augusta*: recent theories”, *JRS* 62, 1972, pp. 123-33; *Ammianus and the Historia Augusta*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968, pp. 176-91; I. Marriott, “The Authorship of the *Historia Augusta*: two computer studies”, *JRS* 69, 1979, pp. 65-77; D. Sansone, “The Computer and the *Historia Augusta*”, *JRS* 80, 1990, pp. 174-7; J.H. Drake, “Studies in the *Historia Augusta*”, *AJPh* 20.1, 1899, pp. 40-58; M. Meckler, “The Beginning of the *Historia Augusta*”, *Historia* 45.3, 1996, pp. 364-75; T. Honore, “Scriptor *Historiae Augustae*”, *JRS* 77, 1987, pp. 156-76.

<sup>52</sup> H. Dessau, ‘Über Zeit und Persönlichkeit der *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*’, *Hermes* 25, 1889, pp. 378ff; R. Syme, *Ammianus and the Historia Augusta*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968, pp. 176ff.

<sup>53</sup> cf. H. Brandt, *Kommentar zur Vita Maximi et Balbini der Historia Augusta*, *Antiquitas* 4.2: Bonn, 1996, pp. 35-38.

Diocletian, Constantius and Constantine.<sup>54</sup> In response to this, Syme has also argued that an approximate date for its composition should be around AD 395,<sup>55</sup> which appears most likely in view of the numerous correlations between the *HA* and other sources from this period.

Another difficulty with the *HA* as a literary and historical source is the nature of the extant evidence,<sup>56</sup> with the surviving manuscripts being quite different in their origins,<sup>57</sup> and erratic in their content.<sup>58</sup> The irregularities in the text have caused debate and discussion about how various passages should be interpreted,<sup>59</sup> which, in turn, has led to the legitimacy of its narrative being questioned, resulting in claims that it is a ‘forgery’.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, for the purposes of this study, the episodes presented in the *Vita Marci* have been compared to the other literary sources in order to ascertain their accuracy. It is also fortunate that in this regard there seems to be a fair amount of consensus about the text of the *Vita Marci Antonini*, which removes this problem for the most part in this study.

There are several reasons why these aspects are of particular importance when analysing the *Vita Marci*. Despite the name of the biographer being impossible to ascertain, the fact that the biography of Marcus Aurelius was only one section of a larger work by one author is illustrative of the author’s intentions: to provide an account of all the *principes*. The fact that the *Historia Augusta* even included the junior Caesars and potential Usurpers in this collection emphasises this point. Therefore, although this study has examined the *Vita Marci* in particular, it must be contextualised as a section of the entire work as well.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>54</sup> T.D. Barnes, *The Sources of the Historia Augusta*, Collection Latomus 155, Brussels: Latomus Revue d’Etudes Latines, 1978, p. 13; “Some Persons in the Historia Augusta”, *Phoenix* 26.2, 1972, p. 141.

<sup>55</sup> Syme, 1968, *ibid.*, pp. 72-9; “Propaganda in the Historia Augusta”, *Latomus* 37, 1978, p. 175; N.H. Baynes, *The Historia Augusta: its date and purpose*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1926; “The Historia Augusta: its date and purpose: a reply to criticism” *CQ* 22, 1928, pp. 166-71; “The Date of the Composition of the Historia Augusta”, *CR* 38, 1924, pp. 165-9; J. Schwartz, “Sur la date de l’Histoire Auguste”, *HAC* 1866/7, pp. 91-9; E. Birley, “Fresh Thoughts on the Dating of the Historia Augusta”, *HAC* 1975/6, 1978, pp. 99-105; A. Cameron, “Education and Literary Culture”, *CAH* 13, 1998, p. 685; B. Baldwin, “Some Legal Terms in the Historia Augusta”, *Maia* 47, 1995, pp. 207-9; “Ausonius and the Historia Augusta”, *Gymnasium* 88, 1981, p. 438; A. Momigliano, “Date et Destinataire de l’Histoire Auguste (Review)”, *JRS* 44, 1954, pp. 129-31.

<sup>56</sup> cf. H.L. Zernial, *Akzentklausel und Textkritik in der Historia Augusta*, *Antiquitas* 4.18, 1986, pp.1-18.

<sup>57</sup> J. Hirstein, “L’Histoire du texte de l’Histoire Auguste: Egnazio et la Vita Marci”, *HAC* 1996, 1998, pp. 167-89.

<sup>58</sup> Barnes, 1978, *op.cit.*, p. 32; J.P. Callu, “L’Histoire Auguste de Petrarque”, *HAC* 1984/5, 1987, pp. 81-115.

<sup>59</sup> cf. R.J. Penella, “S.H.A. Commodus 9.2-3”, *AJPh* 97.1, 1976, p. 39.

<sup>60</sup> cf. K.P. Johne, “Neue Beiträge zur Historia-Augusta-Forschung”, *Klio* 58.1, 1976, pp. 255-62; R. Syme, “Bogus Authors”, *HAC* 1972/4, 1976, p. 311.

<sup>61</sup> cf. R. Syme, “The Cadusii in History and in Fiction”, *JHS* 108, 1988, p. 147.

Another important point for consideration is the relationship between the main text of the *Vita Marci* and the interpolation that was included in the actual biography at some stage. The identification of the interpolation has been discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4, but for the purposes of the present examination it is necessary to point out the existence of an interpolation at Sections 15.1-19.12, which has been dated to the reign of Diocletian (AD 284-305). This is important because if the *HA* was composed around AD 395, it would indicate that the interpolation that was later inserted in the *Vita Marci* predated it by roughly a century. This provides an indication of the continuation of various episodes and accounts of Marcus' life over time, which provides an indication of how he was perceived after his death.

The period in which the *Vita Marci* was composed is also important to take into account when considering the intended audience of the text.<sup>62</sup> The positive representation of Marcus Aurelius in the text of the *Vita Marci* demonstrates some of the romanticism that surrounded the memory of him,<sup>63</sup> and also typifies the expectations of the audience.<sup>64</sup> The expectations for such a positive portrayal are shown most clearly in the interpolation, where the Emperor Diocletian is directly addressed, in relation to the great reverence and respect that he felt for Marcus Aurelius: **19.12** *deusque etiam nunc habetur, ut vobis ipsis, sacratissime imperator Diocletiane, et semper visum est et videtur, qui eum inter numina vestra non ut ceteros sed specialiter veneramini ac semper dicitis, vos vita et clementia tales esse cupere qualis fuit Marcus, etiamsi philosophia nec Plato esse possit, si revertatur in vitam.*<sup>65</sup>

It is quite evident that the *Vita Marci*, as with the *Historia Augusta* overall, presents numerous obstacles to the modern scholar. But with these difficulties in mind it is still possible to undertake an examination of the text, which allows for an insight into the perspective of the biographer, and also provides a clearer understanding of the literary tradition that evolved following the principate of Marcus Aurelius. If the theory that the

<sup>62</sup> For discussion of the significance of this aspect, see J. Marincola, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 19-33.

<sup>63</sup> cf. A.S.L. Farquharson, *Marcus Aurelius: his life and his world*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1952, p. 9.

<sup>64</sup> cf. T.N. Habinek, *The Politics of Latin Literature*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998, pp. 103-21.

<sup>65</sup> Section 19.12. 'Even at this time he is called a god, which has always appeared and even now seems correct to you, most esteemed Emperor Diocletian, who worships him among your deities, not as you revere the others, but as one separately, and one who often states that you aspire, in life and clemency, to be such a man as Marcus, even though, in regard to philosophy, Plato himself, were he to return alive, could not be such a philosopher.'



composition of the *HA* occurred around AD 395 is accepted, one of the most important themes that can be drawn from the *Vita Marci* is how it symbolised the idealism that surrounded Marcus' principate and how this romanticism continued for centuries after his death in AD 180.

### **The Sources Used by the Biographer of the *Historia Augusta***

The analysis of the sources used by the biographer of the *HA* for its composition has received a great amount of debate and examination,<sup>66</sup> but it is clear that there were several ancient literary authors who were used as sources. The use of these sources has been used in this study in two ways: firstly, to discuss the significance of the literary sources used in the *HA*, and secondly, to direct this source analysis on those used within the *Vita Marci*. The first group of sources includes Cassius Dio, Herodian, Aurelius Victor and Eutropius, whereas the analysis of the sources used in relation to the *Vita Marci* has focused primarily on Marius Maximus.

Cassius Dio was born in the early stages of Marcus' principate, around AD 165,<sup>67</sup> and seemingly began writing his *Roman History* at some stage after AD 193.<sup>68</sup> This work comprised eighty books and covered the period from the foundation of Rome up until AD 222. Dio wrote the structure of his text in an annalistic form, but by the time it focuses on the Imperial period it becomes essentially biographical,<sup>69</sup> concentrating on the major events surrounding each of the successive Roman Emperors. It has been argued that Dio's outlook was essentially that of an élite Roman,<sup>70</sup> and yet throughout the *Roman History* it is quite evident that he has combined sympathies: both Roman and Greek.<sup>71</sup> This can be seen

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<sup>66</sup> Barnes, 1978, *op.cit.*; "The Sources of the *Historia Augusta* (1967-1992)", *HAC* 1992, 1995, pp. 1-34; E. Birley, "Military Intelligence and the *Historia Augusta*", *HAC* 1964/5, 1966, pp. 40-1; F. Kolb, "Cassius Dio, Herodian und die quellen der *Historia Augusta*", *HAC* 1992, 1995, pp. 179-91; A Chastagnol, *Recherches sur la l'Histoire Auguste*, *Antiquitas* 4, 1970, pp. 5-19.

<sup>67</sup> C.L. Murison, *Rebellion and Reconstruction*, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999, p. 6; F. Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964, p. 7.

<sup>68</sup> L. De Blois, "Volk und Soldaten bei Cassius Dio", *ANRW* 34.3, 1997, pp. 2650-1.

<sup>69</sup> C. Pelling, "Biographical History? Cassius Dio on the Early Principate", in M.J. Edwards and S. Swain (eds.), *Portraits: biographical representation in the Greek and Latin literature of the Roman Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 117.

<sup>70</sup> Murison, 1999, *op.cit.*, p. 6; W. Ameling, "Griechische Intellektuelle und das Imperium Romanum: das Beispiel Cassius Dio", *ANRW* 34.3, 1997, pp. 2479-81.

<sup>71</sup> S. Swain, *Hellenism and Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 404-5.

through his use of Thucydidean style, and also in his insistence about the influence and importance of Greek culture.<sup>72</sup>

Considering that, in all likelihood, Dio was probably born in Rome,<sup>73</sup> he would have been intimately aware of the nature of Marcus' reign from an early stage and it is quite clear that his account of Marcus' principate would have been influenced by his own personal experiences. The use of the *Roman History* by the biographer of the *Historia Augusta* is almost unquestionable,<sup>74</sup> but it is also quite evident that he used numerous other sources as well.<sup>75</sup> The divergences between Cassius Dio and the author of the *HA* shows the different intentions behind their works,<sup>76</sup> but the impact of Dio's work on the later biographer still should not be doubted (even if it was unintentional). When comparing the *Vita Marci* with Books 71-72 of Cassius Dio it is evident that there were similarities in their representations of Marcus Aurelius, such as in relation to his consideration for justice,<sup>77</sup> his leniency,<sup>78</sup> and the dream about his future reign.<sup>79</sup> However, the portrayal of Marcus by Cassius Dio included other sections that were not referred to in the *Vita Marci*, such as the reference to the Iazyges,<sup>80</sup> and his emphasis on the *princeps*' piety.<sup>81</sup> This raises the possibility of some indirect influence on the *HA* biographer, but it is evident that Dio was not the primary historical source for the *Vita Marci*.

One of the most important sources used for the composition of the *HA* was Herodian,<sup>82</sup> who influenced the development of the various biographies.<sup>83</sup> As with Cassius Dio, Herodian wrote more from the perspective of an eye-witness,<sup>84</sup> which he emphasised

<sup>72</sup> Swain, 1996, *op.cit.*, pp. 406-7.

<sup>73</sup> W. Eck, "Rome and the Outside World: senatorial families and the world they lived in", in B. Rawson and P. Weaver (eds.), *The Roman Family in Italy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 73-99; Barnes, 1978, *op.cit.*, p. 81.

<sup>74</sup> A.R. Birley, "Kolb, Literarische Beziehungen zwischen Cassius Dio und Herodian (Review)", *JRS* 64, 1974, p. 267; J. Straub, "Cassius Dio und die Historia Augusta", *HAC* 1970, 1972, pp. 271-85.

<sup>75</sup> cf. Barnes, 1978, *op.cit.*, pp. 108-113; F.M. Clover, "Olympiodorus of Thebes and the Historia Augusta", *HAC* 1979/81, 1983, pp. 127-52.

<sup>76</sup> Barnes, 1978, *op.cit.*, p. 86.

<sup>77</sup> Dio, 72.6.1-2; *Marcus*, 10.10-12.

<sup>78</sup> Dio, 72.28.3-4; *Marcus*, 8.1.

<sup>79</sup> Dio, 72.36.1; *Marcus*, 5.2.

<sup>80</sup> Dio, 72.7.1-5.

<sup>81</sup> Dio, 72.34.2.

<sup>82</sup> cf. J. Burian, "Maximinus Thrax: sein bild bei Herodian und in der Historia Augusta", *Philologus* 132, 1988, pp. 230-44; F. Kolb, "Herodian in der Historia Augusta", *HAC* 1972/4, 1976, pp. 143-52..

<sup>83</sup> G. Alföldy, "Eine Proskriptionsliste in der Historia Augusta", *HAC* 1968/9, 1970, pp. 1-11.

<sup>84</sup> Barnes, 1978, *op.cit.*, p. 82.

with the claim that he confirmed all of his evidence personally.<sup>85</sup> It seems apparent that Herodian used Cassius Dio as a source,<sup>86</sup> which influenced the biographer of the *HA*.<sup>87</sup> It has already been established that Herodian was a major source for the Severan period in the *Historia Augusta*,<sup>88</sup> particularly in relation to the *Maximini Duo* and the *Maximus et Balbinus*.<sup>89</sup> However, Herodian was primarily used by the *HA* biographer for the period after Marcus' death,<sup>90</sup> which may indicate that he focused more upon other sources of evidence for Marcus' principate, such as Marius Maximus or Aurelius Victor.

Aurelius Victor was an author who had an influence on the development of the *HA*,<sup>91</sup> which is shown by Dessau.<sup>92</sup> This influence makes a clear case for why the *HA* must be dated to the post-AD 360 period.<sup>93</sup> Aurelius Victor was born just after AD 320 in Africa,<sup>94</sup> and he stated that he was from quite modest origins.<sup>95</sup> The evidence for the use of the *De Caesaribus* as a source by the biographer of the *HA* has been previously established,<sup>96</sup> which provides a strong indication of the late 4<sup>th</sup> Century dating for the *HA*.<sup>97</sup>

Eutropius<sup>98</sup> was probably used as a source for the composition of the *HA*,<sup>99</sup> but in relation to the *Vita Marci*, the use of Eutropius also presents an interesting dichotomy. Judging from the similarities between the interpolation and the *Breviarium Ab Urbe Condita* of Eutropius (11-14), it could be postulated that the interpolation was written prior to the creation of the *Breviarium*, which would mean that the interpolation was written

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<sup>85</sup> Herodian, 1.1.3, 2.5.

<sup>86</sup> Barnes, 1978, *op.cit.*, p. 84.

<sup>87</sup> cf. F. Kolb, *Literarische Beziehungen zwischen Cassius Dio und Herodian*, Bonn: *Antiquitas* Reihe 4.9, 1972.

<sup>88</sup> Barnes, 1978, *op.cit.*, p. 85.

<sup>89</sup> T. Mommsen, "Die Scriptorum Historiae Augustae", *Hermes* 25, 1890, pp. 260ff.

<sup>90</sup> See Kolb, 1972, *op.cit.*

<sup>91</sup> cf. A. Chastagnol, "L'Utilisation des 'Cesars' d'Aurelius Victor dans l'Histoire Auguste", *HAC* 1966/7, 1968, pp. 53-65.

<sup>92</sup> Dessau, 1889, *op.cit.*, pp. 363ff; M. Festy, "Aurélius Victor, source de l'Histoire Auguste et de Nicomache Flavien", *HAC* 1998, 1999, pp. 121-34.

<sup>93</sup> Barnes, 1978, *op.cit.*, p. 17.

<sup>94</sup> H.W. Bird, *Sextus Aurelius Victor: a historiographical study*, Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 1984, p. 5.

<sup>95</sup> Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus*, 20.5.

<sup>96</sup> Bird, 1993, *op.cit.*, pp. 122-6; *Liber De Caesaribus of Sextus Aurelius Victor*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1994, pp. xii-xiv; R. Syme, "The Historia Augusta: a call of clarity", *Antiquitas* 4, 1971, pp. 38-44; A. Chastagnol, "Le Problème de l'Histoire Auguste: état de la question", *HAC* 1963, 1964, pp. 43ff.

<sup>97</sup> A. Momigliano, "An Unsolved Problem of Historical Forgery: the *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*", in *Studies in Historiography*, London, 1966, p. 152.

<sup>98</sup> See J. Hellegouarc'h, *Eutrope: abrégé d'Histoire Romaine*, Paris: Belles Lettres, 1999, pp. vii-xi.

<sup>99</sup> Barnes, 1978, *op.cit.*, pp. 95-7; W. Schmid, "Eutropiuren in der Historia Augusta", *HAC* 1963, 1964, pp. 123-33; Schwendemann, 1923, *op.cit.*, pp. 197-205.

before AD 370 at the very least. In addition to this, the direct reference to Diocletian may suggest that the interpolation was written during the period AD 284-305. The paradox of this continual flow of literary influences was that at a later stage the interpolation was included in the *Vita Marci*, despite it having been written before Eutropius' *Breviarium*, which influenced the composition of the *Historia Augusta*.

With the unknown nature or authorship of the interpolation, it is appropriate to consider the *Kaisergeschichte* (KG) that was suggested by Dessau in 1889,<sup>100</sup> following from Enmann's discussion of the possibility of an unknown source in 1883.<sup>101</sup> The existence of such a text has been readily accepted by many modern scholars,<sup>102</sup> and it was seemingly used by the author of the *HA*.<sup>103</sup> It was also used for the account of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century AD,<sup>104</sup> which leaves it beyond the scope of this study.

There was another unknown source that may have influenced the creation of the *Historia Augusta* – the 'ignotus'.<sup>105</sup> While there are numerous arguments against the existence of such an influential source,<sup>106</sup> it is quite evident that there was at least one highly influential biographical or historical source for the period. The existence of such a source has been discussed at length by Syme,<sup>107</sup> so the present discussion does not need to postulate further on this source in any other way than to accept its existence for the purposes of the present study. Nevertheless, as Birley has shown recently,<sup>108</sup> there is still some debate about the nature of these sources, except in relation to Marius Maximus.

The most obvious historical source for the *Vita Marci* was Marius Maximus,<sup>109</sup> who was referred to in the text on three separate occasions by the biographer.<sup>110</sup> Marius

<sup>100</sup> Dessau, 1889, *op.cit.*, pp. 361ff.

<sup>101</sup> cf. T.D. Barnes, "The Lost Kaisergeschichte and the Latin Historical Tradition", *HAC* 1968/9, 1970, p. 16; H.W. Bird, "On the Dating of Enmann's Kaisergeschichte", *CQ* 23.2, 1973, pp. 375-7.

<sup>102</sup> Such as Leo, 1901, *op.cit.*, pp. 301ff; Syme, 1968, *op.cit.*, pp. 105ff; B. Bleckmann, "Überlegungen zur Enmannschen Kaisergeschichte und zur forming historischer traditionen in tetrarchischer und konstantinischer zeit", *HAC* 1994, 1997, pp. 11-37; H.W. Bird, "The Sources of the De Caesaribus", *CQ* 31.2, 1981, pp. 457-63; R.W. Burgess, "Principes cum Tyrannis: two studies on the Kaisergeschichte and its tradition", *CQ* 90.2, 1995, pp. 111-28.

<sup>103</sup> Barnes, 1970, *op.cit.*, pp. 28-43.

<sup>104</sup> Barnes, 1978, *op.cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>105</sup> R. Syme, *Emperors and Biography*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971, pp. 30ff; "The Son of the Emperor Macrinus", *Phoenix* 26.3, 1972, p. 275.

<sup>106</sup> H.W. Benario, "Ignotus, the 'Good' Biographer", *ANRW* 34.3, 1997, pp. 2759-72.

<sup>107</sup> R. Syme, "Ignotus, the Good Biographer", *HAC* 1966/7, 1968, pp. 131-53.

<sup>108</sup> A.R. Birley, "Rewriting second and third-century history in late antique Rome: the *Historia Augusta*", *Classica* 19.1, 2006, pp. 19-20.

<sup>109</sup> cf. F. Paschoud, "Propos sceptiques et iconoclasts sur Marius Maximus", *HAC* 1998, 1999, pp. 241-54.

Maximus was a senator and wrote a series of biographies (or a history) from the reigns of Nerva to Elagabalus.<sup>111</sup> But the proposed career of Marius Maximus and his influences have been previously discussed at length by Birley.<sup>112</sup> For the purposes of the present discussion it is most important to note that the *Vita Marci* has produced several direct references to the use of Marius Maximus as a source and that this is the only literary source mentioned within the entire *Vita*.<sup>113</sup> In view of the numerous direct references to Marius Maximus in the early biographies of the *HA*,<sup>114</sup> it is quite clear that his *Life of Marcus*, which was written in two volumes,<sup>115</sup> had an influence on the creation of the *Vita Marci* in the *Historia Augusta*.<sup>116</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, who was probably writing around the same time as the biographer of the *HA*,<sup>117</sup> also had some influence on the development of the *HA*,<sup>118</sup> but it is unlikely that he was used as a direct source.<sup>119</sup>

Having considered the potential sources for the creation of the *Vita Marci* by the biographer, it is possible to note some significant points. Firstly, the details provided for names and titles in much of the *Vita Marci*, as with the majority of the other *Vitae* between Hadrian and Caracalla, have been shown to be correct more often than not.<sup>120</sup> This indicates that the biographer had a fair degree of familiarity with the evidence, which would suggest that the biographer's available evidence for this period was better for the earlier lives. This was not always the case, there being several erroneous references in the *Vita Marci* as well,<sup>121</sup> but this is in many ways to be expected from the *HA* biographer.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> *Marcus*, 1.5-6, 21.1-2, 25.10.

<sup>111</sup> K.P. Johne, "Die Epitome de Caesaribus und die Historia Augusta", *Klio* 59.2, 1977, p. 498.

<sup>112</sup> A.R. Birley, "Marius Maximus: the consular biographer", *ANRW* 34.3, 1997, pp. 2678-757; See also R.P.H. Green, "Marius Maximus and Ausonius' Caesars", *CQ* 31.1, 1981, pp. 226-36.

<sup>113</sup> Against this view, see J.F. Matthews, "Marcus Aurelius", *JRS* 58, 1968, p. 263.

<sup>114</sup> Birley, 1997, *op.cit.*, pp. 2684-93.

<sup>115</sup> *Avidius Cassius*, 9.5. cf. R. Syme, "Marius Maximus once again", *HAC* 1970, 1972, p. 292.

<sup>116</sup> cf. A.R. Birley, "Indirect Means of Tracing Marius Maximus", *HAC* 1992, 1995, pp. 57-74.

<sup>117</sup> J.F. Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus*, London: Duckworth, 1989, p. 22; "Ammianus' Historical Evolution", in B. Croke and A.M. Emmett (eds.), *History and Historians in Late Antiquity*, Sydney: Pergamon Press, 1983, pp. 32-3; A. Cameron, "Ammianus and the Historia Augusta", *JRS* 61, 1971, pp. 255-67.

<sup>118</sup> Syme, 1968, *op.cit.*, p. 4; *The Historia Augusta: a call for clarity*, *Antiquitas* 4, 1971, p. 57. For evidence illustrating the similar literary techniques of these authors, see B. Frischer *et al.*, "Word-Order Transference between Latin and Greek", *HSCP* 99, 1999, p. 369.

<sup>119</sup> A.R. Birley, "Further Echoes of Ammianus in the Historia Augusta", *HAC* 1990, 1991, pp. 53-6.

<sup>120</sup> Barnes, 1978, *op.cit.*, p. 38.

<sup>121</sup> For example, see *Marcus*, 5.1.

<sup>122</sup> See Barnes, 1978, *op.cit.*, p. 47.

Secondly, the numerous potential ancient sources used by the biographer clearly reflect the character of the *HA*, and in particular the *Vita Marci*: the numerous opinions and interpretations used by the biographer end in a somewhat confused and haphazard result in the biography. However, that being understood, it is important to note that the *Vita Marci* also exhibit the opinions and literary intentions of the biographer through his representation of Marcus Aurelius. The thematic consistency throughout the *Vita* is clearly evident, particularly once the interpolation (Sections 15.1-19.12) has been removed from the original text.

### **The Significance of the *Vita Marci* in the *HA***

The analysis of the *Vita Marci* is a worthwhile study, particularly when its place in the *Historia Augusta* and its worth as an historical source are considered. However, concentrating on only one section of an overall text can often provide a misleading impression of the results. The main intention of this study is to analyse how Marcus Aurelius was represented by the biographer in the *Vita Marci*, but through this undertaking some consideration has been applied to the more universal significance of the *Vita* within the *Historia Augusta*. In this section of the study, there have been three points of significance considered, which are important to note prior to the analysis of the text itself: the significance of the textual inconsistencies, the importance of the overall structure of the *Vita Marci*, and the worth of the biography as an historical source on Marcus Aurelius' principate.

The textual inconsistencies that exist in the *Vita Marci* are seemingly indicative of the *HA* overall. The most notable inconsistency was the inclusion of the interpolation between Sections 15.1-19.12, which entirely disrupts the thematic flow of the biography. The presence of the interpolation has made the *Vita Marci* difficult to interpret, but since Enmann noted the textual irregularities in 1884,<sup>123</sup> and Dessau observed its similarities with Eutropius in 1889,<sup>124</sup> the questions surrounding the text of the biography have continued. However, with the removal of the interpolation from the *Vita Marci* the thematic consistency of the biography becomes markedly improved. That being said, the

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<sup>123</sup> Enmann, 1884, *op.cit.*, pp. 337-501.

<sup>124</sup> Dessau, 1889, *op.cit.*, pp. 368-70.

interpolation has been included in the subsequent publications of the *Vita Marci*, which in many ways explains why the difficulties with the text have continued. However, the inclusion of the interpolation in the original text provides a clear example of why the *Historia Augusta* is such a problematic text, with there being numerous questions surrounding its compilation and legitimacy as an overall work. In addition to the interpolation there are a few instances where *lacunae* exist,<sup>125</sup> which is indicative of the numerous textual problems in the *HA*. The questions that surround the surviving text of the *HA* will in all likelihood never be answered,<sup>126</sup> but this does not remove the importance of analysing the text.

The structure of the *Vita Marci* is another significant aspect that must be considered because it highlights the differences that existed in the thematic composition of the *HA* and other Imperial biographies, such as the *de Vita Caesarum* by Suetonius.<sup>127</sup> Whereas many biographies followed the formula of ‘positive-negative-positive’ in the representation of ‘good’ characters, the *Vita Marci* does not apply this method at all. The general theme of Marcus’ representation was overtly positive, with only a limited number of references to any criticisms of his character. The most explicit criticisms of him in the *Vita Marci* occurred in Sections 20 and 29, one of which is approximately in the middle of the biography and the other at the very end of the text. These two sections were unique in the biography owing to their consistent concentration on criticisms that were levelled at Marcus during his principate with little explanation of defence on the part of the author. In particular, the most notable aspect of this was the negative representation of Marcus in the final section (Section 29). This is an unusual biographical structure because it leaves the audience with a negative view of the *princeps*, which is for the most part different to the rest of the *Vita*. The ‘positive-negative-positive’ progression was clearly intended to emphasise the best features of a character,<sup>128</sup> but the form of the *Vita Marci* was quite different.

In order to ascertain whether this format was an exception rather than the norm, the structure of the *Vita Marci* has been compared to two other ‘positive’ biographies in the *HA*

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<sup>125</sup> See Sections 6.2, 11.7.

<sup>126</sup> cf. A.R. Birley, “The Augustan History”, in T.A. Dorey (ed.), *Latin Biography*, London: Routledge, 1967, p. 132.

<sup>127</sup> cf. K.R. Bradley, *Suetonius’ Life of Nero: An Historical Commentary*, Brussels: Latomus, 1978, p. 14.

<sup>128</sup> Bradley, 1978, *op.cit.*

(the *Vitae Hadriani, Antonini Pii*) and two ‘negative’ biographies: the *Vitae Veri, Commodi*. At first glance it is evident that the thematic structures of all five *Vitae* were different, regardless of whether they were intended to be positive or negative accounts. The two most notable biographies in this regard were the *Vitae Antonini Pii* and *Commodi*, which exhibit consistently good and bad representations respectively. Neither of these shows any variation in their portrayals within these biographies.

The *Vita Hadriani* on the other hand includes some variation in its overall positive representation of the *princeps*. There were four critical sections in this biography (Sections 9, 11, 14, 15) and they were all located around the middle of the *Vita*. This was quite different to the *Vita Marci*, particularly in relation to Section 29. The *Vita Avidii Cassii* was also different in its thematic structure, having no clear separation in its positive and negative themes. This final biography is also quite different because almost half of it discusses the events after Cassius’ death. Nevertheless, for the purposes of the present discussion, it is most important to note that there does not seem to have been a definitive thematic structure in the *Historia Augusta*, with each *Vita* being composed in accordance with the author’s view of each individual character.

In general terms, two forms of Greco-Roman structural elements have been identified in previous studies of ancient biography: *Chronologie* and *Eidologie*.<sup>129</sup> The form of *Chronologie* largely followed the chronological events of a biography, which resembled a narrative of various accomplishments and significant deeds, whereas the *Eidologie* form sought to emphasise the nature of a character through various episodes and anecdotes, which typically went beyond a purely chronological approach. The *Vita Marci* was seemingly constructed as a combination of these two elements, but it is quite clear that *Eidologie* was more important than *Chronologie* to the *HA* biographer. This explains some of the confusion in the events in the *HA*, but within the *Vita Marci* there seems to have been a good degree of balance between interpretation and chronological contextualisation (particularly once the interpolation is removed from the text). However, it is clear that the overall theme of the biography was of the utmost importance to the author, with the progression of key character traits in Marcus’ representation, such as moderation,

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<sup>129</sup> cf. Leo, 1901, *op.cit.*, pp. 178-92; A. Weiszäcker, *Untersuchungen über Plutarchs biographisch Technik*, Berlin, 1931, pp. 3ff.



equanimity and self-control, being the consistent focus. These elements were accentuated throughout the narrative by the inclusion of various anecdotes.<sup>130</sup>

This general consistency in Marcus' portrayal by the *HA* biographer exemplifies the structural significance of Sections 20 and 29, which make definitive breaks from the overall representation of the *princeps*. Section 20 sees a complete character change in the portrayal of Marcus Aurelius, depicting him as being quite vindictive towards his recently deceased Imperial colleague, Lucius Verus. It is entirely inconsistent with the character development that occurred in the previous fourteen sections of the *Vita Marci* and produces a stark contrast in the narrative itself. In relation to Section 29, it is possible that the biographer was attempting to establish that Marcus' moderation sometimes went too far, which led to the popular criticism of him being too compliant. But this was not stated by the author of the *Vita Marci* and these critical episodes<sup>131</sup> were not defended by the biographer either. However, in relation to the structure of the *Vita Marci* the decision to include these criticisms as some of the final comments is perplexing and highlights the inconsistencies that exist in the literary style of the *HA* biographer.

Another notable omission in the *Vita Marci* was the lack of discussion about the physiognomy of the *princeps*, which was a common inclusion in the ancient biographical tradition.<sup>132</sup> It should be observed that such a discussion was included in the *Vitae Hadriani*,<sup>133</sup> *Antonini Pii*,<sup>134</sup> and *Commodi*,<sup>135</sup> which makes its omission from the *Vita Marci* even more notable. It may have been that the *HA* biographer did not intend to stress the physical capabilities of Marcus in his positive representation of the *princeps*, which can be compared to Cassius Dio's portrayal of Marcus' physical frailties.<sup>136</sup>

The information provided by the *Vita Marci* on Marcus Aurelius is another significant feature. Judging from the overall worth of the early *Vitae* in the *HA*,<sup>137</sup> it appears

<sup>130</sup> R. Saller, "Anecdotes as Historical Evidence for the Principate", *G&R* 27.1, 1980, pp. 72-3.

<sup>131</sup> See *Marcus*, 12.4, 29.1-4 for example.

<sup>132</sup> cf. E.C. Evans, "Roman Descriptions of Personal Appearance in History and Biography", *HSCP* 46, 1935, pp. 43-84; "The Study of Physiognomy in the Second Century AD", *TAPA* 72, 1941, pp. 96-108.

<sup>133</sup> *Hadrian*, 26.1.

<sup>134</sup> *Pius*, 2.1.

<sup>135</sup> *Commodus*, 13.1-4.

<sup>136</sup> See Dio, 72.6.3-4.

<sup>137</sup> cf. H.G. Pflaum, "Les Personnages Nommément cites par la vita Veri de l'HA", *HAC* 1972/4, 1976, pp. 173-99; R.P. Hock, "Puns, Aelius Maurus, and the Composition of the *Historia Augusta*", *TAPA* 112, 1982, pp. 107-8.

that the *Vita Marci* does provide some valuable information about the principate of Marcus Aurelius. However, there were some historical errors that were included in this biography. This is the most important aspect of this study: to analyse *how* Marcus Aurelius was presented by the biographer of the *Historia Augusta* in order that the text and its inherent partiality towards the *princeps* can be understood. Undertaking this can lead to a better awareness of both the biographer of the *HA* and Marcus' life.

### The Other Literary Sources on Marcus Aurelius

In order to gain a good understanding of the *Vita Marci*, particularly in relation to its historical accuracy and literary objectivity, it is important to compare the representation provided by the biographer with the other extant literary sources, as well as the other available evidence on Marcus' principate (such as the archaeological and numismatic data). It is also important to note the correlations that occurred between the other *Vitae* in the *Historia Augusta*, which illustrates the consistency (or inconsistency) in their representations of Marcus Aurelius. The main literary sources that deal with the principate of Marcus Aurelius that have been compared to his portrayal in the *Vita Marci Antonini*, were Cassius Dio, Herodian, Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, Cornelius Fronto and Marcus Aurelius, in the *Meditations*. The first four of these authors have been previously discussed, but it is also important to consider both Cornelius Fronto and the *Meditations* for the analysis of the *Vita Marci Antonini*.

Marcus Cornelius Fronto was originally from Numidia,<sup>138</sup> and he may have had some relationship with Plutarch.<sup>139</sup> He was clearly a leading literary figure during his lifetime,<sup>140</sup> with his letters with Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus being published. These letters have been dated to the years between AD 161 and 176,<sup>141</sup> and they provide some useful evidence for the reign of Marcus Aurelius. This is evident through both his friendly relationship with Marcus and also as his *magister*.<sup>142</sup> This correspondence with the Imperial household has provided evidence that occasionally substantiates some of the episodes

<sup>138</sup> C.R. Haines, "Fronto", *CR* 34, 1920, p. 14.

<sup>139</sup> C.J. Webb, "Fronto and Plutarch", *CR* 11.6, 1879, pp. 305-6.

<sup>140</sup> E. Champlin, *Fronto and Antonine Rome*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980, p. 2; F. Portalupi, *Marcus Cornelio Frontone*, Turin: Giappichelli, 1961, pp. 103-22.

<sup>141</sup> cf. E. Champlin, "The Chronology of Fronto", *JRS* 64, 1974, pp. 136-59.

<sup>142</sup> Champlin, 1980, *op.cit.*, pp. 94-130.

mentioned in the *Vita Marci*. The **εἰς ἑαυτόν** of Marcus Aurelius was a serious work in which he espoused his Stoic ideology in a rather idealistic fashion.<sup>143</sup> Considering that it was intended for Marcus personally, hence the title **εἰς ἑαυτόν**, it is unknown how it survived,<sup>144</sup> which could lead to questions about its authorship.<sup>145</sup> It is quite evident that it was not intended to be a public work,<sup>146</sup> which means that it can provide some useful insight into the less public aspects of Marcus' principate. It must still be viewed critically, owing to the intentions of the author still being relatively unknown.<sup>147</sup>

When analysing the *Vita Marci* it is important to compare the representations of these authors with that of the *HA* biographer. This comparison allows for an understanding of the intentions that lay behind the representation of the *princeps* in the *HA* biography. If the text of the *Vita Marci* was analysed in isolation it would be virtually impossible to analyse its historical accuracy. It is evident that there was a tradition of positive representation in relation to Marcus Aurelius even by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD, which makes this comparison problematic as well. It is for this reason that the numismatic evidence becomes quite important because it can be used to confirm various literary references on the Imperial finances, salutations and donatives. This can also be supported through the use of some of the archaeological remains, but in relation to the *Vita Marci* this has only been of limited assistance. Nevertheless, the combined use of all of these forms of evidence has allowed for a greater understanding of the historical value of the *Vita Marci*, which has shown not only the merits of the *Vita* as a source, but also the literary intentions of the biographer.

### Overall Conclusions

The purpose of this chapter has been to delineate some of the key issues that are involved in the study of both the *Historia Augusta* and the *Vita Marci* as well. It is quite clear that the *HA* is a problematic text, which presents numerous difficulties for modern scholars who attempt to understand its purpose, authorship and literary context. It is not the

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<sup>143</sup> O.A.W. Dilke, "The Literary Output of the Roman Emperors", *G&R* 4.1, 1957, p. 95.

<sup>144</sup> P.A. Brunt, "Marcus Aurelius in his Meditations", *JRS* 64, 1974, p. 1.

<sup>145</sup> cf. A.S.L. Farquharson, *The Meditations of the Emperor Marcus Antoninus*, 1944, p. lviii.

<sup>146</sup> Brunt, 1974, *op.cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>147</sup> cf. P. Hadot, *The Inner Citadel: the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998.

intention of this study to attempt to solve these issues, but they must still be initially taken into account in order to achieve a comprehensive analysis of the *Vita Marci*. The issues of dating and authorship of the *HA* are particularly important when considering the context in which the *Vita Marci* was composed, its possible literary sources and intended audience. Nevertheless, the answers to these questions are difficult to obtain, with there being a fair degree of uncertainty involving these key areas.

When considering the relevance of the *HA* in the overall biographical tradition that had developed from the late 5<sup>th</sup>/early 4<sup>th</sup> Century BC it is evident that in some ways the *HA* maintained the form of previous biographies, but in other respects it broke with tradition.<sup>148</sup> It is evident that one of the greatest influences on the biographer was the previous work by Suetonius, but owing to the numerous references to him, the biographies from Nerva to Elagabalus by Marius Maximus were also of significance in both literary style and their use as source material for the *HA*. The elements of *Chronologie* and *Eidologie*<sup>149</sup> were continued in the structure of the *Vita Marci*, but the formation of positive and negative sections in the *Vita* was different from the models used in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Centuries AD.

Despite these difficulties it remains quite clear that there is great benefit in the analysis of the *Vita Marci*, particularly in relation to its usefulness as an historical source. There are identifiable inconsistencies between this biography and other extant ancient literary sources, but judging from the text it appears that this either resulted in the confusion of the biographer or through his representational agenda. This last point is particularly evident in the thematic consistency that exists through most of the *Vita Marci*, which exhibited Marcus Aurelius as a benevolent, moderate and self-controlled *princeps*: in a biography comprising twenty-four sections, only two of these parts conflict with this representation in a significant fashion. Nevertheless, the partiality of the biographer towards a positive representation of Marcus Aurelius is a serious consideration for the analysis of the text in this study, which has largely concentrated on the intentions of its author as much as its historical worth.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> For a textual example, see O.M. Oberhelman and R.G. Hall, "A New Statistical Analysis of Prose Rhythms in Imperial Latin Authors", *CPh* 79.2, 1984, pp. 114-30.

<sup>149</sup> cf. Leo, 1901, *op.cit.*, pp. 178-92.

<sup>150</sup> cf. J.P. Callu, *Histoire Auguste, Tome 1*, Paris: Belles Lettres, 1992, p. viii.

## Chapter 2

### *The Vita Marci Antonini Philosophi*

#### The Text<sup>1</sup>

**1.1** Marco Antonino, in omni vita philosophanti viro et qui sanctitate vitae omnibus principibus antecellit, **[1.2]** pater Annius Verus, qui in praetura decessit, avus Annius Verus, iterum consul et praefectus urbi, adscitus in patricios a principibus [a] Vespasiano et Tito censoribus, **[1.3]** patruus Annius Libo consul, amita Galeria Faustina Augusta, mater Domitia Calvilla, Cal<v>isii Tulli bis consulis filia, **[1.4]** proavus paternus Annius Verus praetorius ex [S]uccubitano municipio ex <Hi>spania factus senator, proavus maternus Catilius Severus bis consul et praefectus urbi, avia pater<na> Rupilia Faustina, Rupili Boni consularis filia, fuere. **[1.5]** Natus est Marcus Romae VI. kl. Maias in monte Caelio in hortis avo suo iterum et Augure consulibus. **[1.6]** cuius familia in originem recurrens a Numa probatur sanguinem trahere, ut Marius Maximus docet; item a rege Sallentino Malemnio, Dasummi filio, qui Lopias condidit. **[1.7]** educatus est in eo loco, in quo natus est, et in domo avi sui V<e>ri iuxta aedes Laterani. **[1.8]** habuit et sororem natu minorem Anniam Cornificiam, uxorem Anniam Faustina, consobrinam suam. **[1.9]** Marcus Antoninus principio a<e>vi sui nomen habuit Catilii[s] Severi, materni proavi. **[1.10]** post excessum vero patris ab Hadriano Annius Verissimus vocatus est, post virilem autem togam Annius Verus. patre mortuo ab avo paterno adoptatus et educatus est.

**2.1** Fuit a prima infantia gravis. at ubi egressus est annos, qui nutricum fovetur auxilio, magnis praeceptoribus traditus ad philosophiae scita pervenit. **[2.2]** usus est magistris ad prima elementa Euforione litteratore et Gemino comoedo, musico Androne eodemque geometra. quibus omnibus ut disciplinarum auctoribus plurimum detulit. **[2.3]** usus praeterea grammaticis Graeco Alexandro Coti<aens>i[s], Latinis Trosio Apro et Pol<i>on<e> et Eutychio Proculo Siccensi. **[2.4]** oratoribus usus est Graec<is> Ani<ni>o Macro, Caninio Celere et Herode Atti[o]co, Latino Frontone Cornelio. **[2.5]** sed multum ex his Frontoni detulit, cui et statuam in senatu petit. Proculum vero usque ad proconsulatum provexit [h]on<e>ribus in se receptis. **[2.6]** philosophi<a>e operam vehementer dedit et quidem adhuc puer. nam duodecimum annum ingressus habitum philosophi sumpsit et deinceps tolerantiam, cum studeret in pallio et humi cubaret, vix autem matre agente instrato pellibus lectulo accubaret. **[2.7]** usus est etiam Commodo magistro, cuius ei adfinitas fuerat destinata, usus est et Apollonio Chalcedonio stoico philosopho.

**3.1** Tantum autem studium in eo philosophiae fuit, ut adscitus iam in imperatoriam tamen ad domum Apollonii discendi caus<a> veniret. **[3.2]** audivit et Sextum Ch<a>eronensem Plutarchi nepotem, Iunium Rusticum, Claudium Maximum et Cinnam Catulum stoicos,

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<sup>1</sup> This text has primarily followed Hohl, but with some emendations recommended by Magie. See E. Hohl, *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, Leipzig: Teubner, 1955; D. Magie, *The Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, Vol. 1, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1921.

[3.3] peripat[heth]eticae vero studioss audivit Claudium Severum, <s>et praecipue Iunium Rusticum, quem et reveritus est et sectatus, qui domi militiaeque pollebat, stoicae disciplinae peritissimum; [3.4] cum quo omnia communicavit publica privataque consilia, cui etiam ante praefectos praetorio semper osculum dedit, quem et consulem iterum designavit, cui post obitum a senatu statuas postulavit. [3.5] tantum autem honoris magistris suis detulit, ut imagines eorum aureas in larario haberet ac sepulchra eorum aditu, hostiis, floribus semper honoraret. [3.6] studuit et iuri audiens Lucium Volusium M<a>ecianum. [3.7] tantumque operis et laboris studiis inpendit, ut corpus adficeret, atque in hoc solo pueritia eius reprehenderetur. [3.8] frequentavit et declamatorum scholas publicas amavitque <ex> condiscipulis praecipuos senatorii ordinis Seium Fuscianum et Aufidium Victorinum, ex equestri B<a>ebium Longum et Cal[l]enum. [3.9] in quos maxime liberalis fuit, et ita quidem ut, quos non posset ob qualitatem vitae rei p. praeponere, locupletatos teneret.

4.1 Educatus es[se]t in Hadriani gremio, qui illum, ut supra diximus, Verissimum nominabat et qui ei honorem e[t]qui publici sexenni detulit, [4.2] octavo aetatis anno in saliorum collegium rettulit. [4.3] in saliatu omen accepit imperii: coronas omnibus in pulvinar ex more iac<i>entibus aliae aliis locis haeserunt, huius velut manu capiti Martis aptata est. [4.4] fuit in eo sacerdotio et praesul et vates et magister et multos inauguravit atque exauguravit nemine praeunte, quod ipse carmina cuncta didicisset. [4.5] virilem togam sumpsit quinto decimo aetatis anno, statimque ei Lucii Ceionii Commodi filia desponsata est ex Hadriani voluntate. [4.6] nec multo post praefectus feriarum Latinarum fuit. in quo honore praeclarissime se pro <ma>gistratibus agentem et in conviviis Hadriani principis ostendit. [4.7] post hoc patrimonium paternum sorori totum concessit, cum eum ad divisionem mater vocaret, responditque avi bonis se esse contentum, addens, ut et mater, si vellet, in sororem suum patrimonium conferret, ne inferior esset soror marito. [4.8] fuit autem vitae indulgentia, ut cogeretur nonnumquam vel in venationes pergere vel in theatrum descendere vel spectaculis interesse. [4.9] operam praeterea pingendo sub magistro Diogeneto dedit. amavit pugilatum <et> luctamina et cursum et aucupatus et pila lusit adprime et venatus est. [4.10] sed ab omnibus his intentioni<bu>s studium eum philosophiae abduxit seriumque et gravem reddidit, non tamen prorsus abolita in eo comitate, quam praecipue suis, mox amicis atque etiam minus notis exhibebat, cum frugi esset sine contumacia, verecundus sine ignavia, sine tristitia gravis.

5.1 His ita se habentibus cum post obitum Lucii Caesaris Hadrianus successorem imperii quaereret, nec idoneus, utpote decem et octo annos agens, Marcus habe<re>tur, amitae Marci virum Antoninum Pium Hadrianus ea lege in adoptionem legit, ut sibi Marcum Pius adoptaret, ita tamen ut et Marcus sibi Lucium Commodum adoptaret. [5.2] sane ea die, qua adoptatus est, Verus in somnis se umeros eburneos habere vidit sciscitatusque, an apti essent oneri ferundo, solito repperit fortiores. [5.3] ubi autem comperit se ab Hadriano adoptatum, magis est deterritus quam laetatus iussusque in Hadriani privatam domum migrare invitus de maternis hortis recessit. [5.4] cumque ab eo domestici quaerent, cur tristis in adoptionem regiam transiret, disputavit, quae mala in se contineret imperium. [5.5] tunc primum pro Anno Aurelius coepit vocari, quod in Aureliam, hoc est Antonini, adoptionis iure transisset. [5.6] octavo decimo ergo aetatis anno adoptatus in secundo consulatu Antonini, iam patris sui, Hadriano ferente gratia aetatis facta quaestor est designatus. [5.7] adoptatus in aulicam domum omnibus parentibus suis tantam reverentiam,

quantam privatus exhibuit. [5.8] eratque <h>aut secus rei suae quam in privata domo parcus ac diligens, pro instituto patris volens agere, dicere, cogitare.

6.1 Hadriano <apud> Baias absumpto cum Pius ad advehendas eius reliquias esset profectus, relictus Romae avo iusta implevit et gladiatorium quasi privatus quaestor edidit munus. [6.2] post excessum Hadriani statim Pius per uxorem suam Marcum sciscitatus est et eum dissolutis sponsalibus, quae cum Lucii Ceionii Commodi .....<sup>2</sup> desponderi voluerat impari adhuc aetate, habita deliberatione velle se dixit. [6.3] his ita gestis adhuc quaestorem et consulem secum Pius Marcum designavit et Caesaris appellatione donavit et sev<i>rum turmis equitum Romanorum iam consulem designatum creavit et edenti cum collegis ludos seviraes adsedit et in Tiberianam domum transgredi iussit et aulico fastigio renite<n>tem ornavit et in collegia sacerdotum iubente senatu recepit. [6.4] secundum etiam consulem designavit, cum ipse quartum pariter inierit. [6.5] per eadem tempora, cum tantis honoribus occuparetur et cum formandus ad regendum statum rei publicae patris actibus interesset, studia cupidissime frequentavit. [6.6] post haec Faustina duxit uxorem et suscepta filia tribunicia potestate donatus est atque imperio extra urbem proconsulari addito iure quintae relationis. [6.7] tantumque apud Pium valuit, <ut> numquam quemquam sine eo facile promoverit. [6.8] erat autem in summis obsequiis patris Marcus, quamvis non deesset, qui aliqua adversum eum insurrerent, [6.9] et prae ceteris Valerius Homullus, qui, cum Lucillam matrem Marci in viridario venerantem simulacrum Apollinis vidisset, insurravit: ‘illa nunc rogat, ut diem tuum claudas, et filius imperet.’ quod omnino apud Pium nihil valuit: [6.10] tanta erat Marci probitas et tanta in imperatorio participatu[m] modestia.

7.1 Existimationis autem tantam curam habuit, ut et procuratores suos puer semper moneret, ne quid arrogantius facerent, et hereditatis delatas reddens proximis aliquando respuerit. [7.2] denique per viginti et tres annos in domo patris ita versatus, ut eius cotidie amor cresceret, nec praeter duas noctes per tot annos ab eo mansit diversis vicibus. [7.3] ob hoc Antoninus Pius, cum sibi adesse finem vitae videret, vocatis amicis et praefectis ut successorem eum imperii omnibus commendavit atque firmavit statimque signo aequanimitatis tribuno dato Fortunam auream, quae in cubiculo solebat esse, ad Marci cubiculum transire iussit. [7.4] bonorum maternorum partem Mummio Quadrato, sororis filio, quia illa iam mortua erat, tradidit. [7.5] post excessum divi Pii a senatu coactus reg<i>men publicum capere fratrem sibi participem in imperio designavit, quem Lucium Aurelium Verum Commodum appellavit Caesaremque atque Augustum dixit. [7.6] atque ex eo pariter coeperunt rem publicam regere. tuncque primum Romanum imperium duos Augustos habere coepit <cum imperium sibi re>lictum<sup>3</sup> cum alio participasset. Antonin<i> mox ips<e> nomen recepit. [7.7] et quasi pater Lucii Commodi esset, et Verum eum appellavit addito Antoni<ni> nomine filiamque suam Lucillam fratri despondit. [7.8] ob hanc coniunctionem pueros et puellas novorum nominum frumentariae perceptioni adscribi

<sup>2</sup> It is generally accepted that a lacuna was positioned after *Commodi* (see *Marcus*, 4.5; *Verus*, 2.3). Casubon in 1603 suggested the insertion of: *filia contrahere illvm Hadrianus voluerat, Faustina illi offeretur, quod Verus, cui eam Hadrianus*. At a later stage Mommsen suggested: *sorore, fecerat filiam Faustina cum hortata esset ut duceret, quam Hadrianus eidem Commodi*; and Ellis proposed: *et eum, diss. spons. L. Ceionii Commodi (i.e. Veri) quae cum filia fecerat, quam ei desponderi uol.....* See also A. Jackel, “Zwei Kritische Bemerkungen zu den Scriptoribus Historiae Augustae”, *Klio* 12, 1912, pp. 121-5.

<sup>3</sup> On this insertion, see Mommsen, 1890, *op.cit.*, pp. 282-5.

praeceperunt [7.9] actis igitur, quae agenda fuerant in senatu, pariter castra praetoria petiverunt et vicena milia nummum singulis ob participatum imperium militibus promiserunt et ceteris pro rata. [7.10] Hadriani autem sepulcro corpus patris intulerunt magnifico exequiarum officio. mox iustitio secuto public<i> quoque funeris expeditus est ordo. [7.11] et laudavere uterque pro rostris patrem flaminemque ei ex adfinibus et sodales ex amicissimis Aurelianos creavere.

**8.1** Adepti imperium ita civiliter se ambo egerunt, <u>t lenitatem Pii nemo desideraret, cum eos Marullus, sui temporis mimografus, cavillando inpune perstringeret. [8.2] funebr<e> munus patri dederunt. [8.3] dabat se Marcus totum et philosophiae, amorem civium adfectans. [8.4] sed interpellavit istam felicitatem securitatemque imperatoris prima Tiberis inundatio, quae sub illis gravissima fuit. quae res et multa urbis aedificia vexavit et plurimum animalium interemit et famem gravissimam peperit. [8.5] quae omnia mala Marcus et Verus sua cura et praesentia temperarunt. [8.6] fuit eo tempore etiam Parthicum bellum, quod Vologessus paratum sub Pio Marci et Veri tempore indixit fugato Atidio Corneliano, qui Syriam tunc administrabat. [8.7] imminebat etiam Britannicum bellum, et Catthi in Germaniam ac R<a>etiam iruperant. [8.8] et adversus Brittanos quidem Calpurnius Agricola missus est, contra Catthos Aufidius Victorinus. [8.9] ad Parthicum vero bellum senatu consentiente Verus frater est missus; ipse <apud> Romam remansit, quod res urbanae imperatoris praesentiam postularent. [8.10] et Verum quidem Marcus Capuam usque prosecutus amicis comitantibus a senatu ornavit additis officiorum omnium principi<bus>. [8.11] sed cum Romam redisset Marcus cognovissetque Verum apud Canusium aegrotare, ad eum videndum contendit susceptis in senatu votis; quae, posteaquam Romam redit audita Veri transmissione, statim red<d>idit. [8.12] et Verus quidem, posteaquam in Syriam venit, in deliciis apud Antiochiam et Daphnen vixit armisque se gladiatorii et venatibus exercuit, cum per legatos bellum Parthicum gerens imperator appellatus esset, [8.13] cum Marcus horis o<mn>ibus rei publicae actibus incubaret pa<t>interque delicias fratris et prope <non> invitus ac volens ferret. [8.14] denique omnia, quae ad bellum erant necessaria, Romae positus et disposuit Marcus et ordinavit.

**9.1** Gestae sunt res in Armenia prospere per Statium Priscum Artaxatis captis, delatumque Armeniacum nomen utr<i>[m]que principum. quod Marcus per verecundiam primo recusavit, postea tamen recepit. [9.2] profli<g>ato autem bello uterque Parthicus appellatus est. sed <id> quoque Marcus delatum nomen repudiavit, quod postea recepit. [9.3] patris patriae autem nomen delatum [a] fratre absente in eiusdem praesentiam distulit. [9.4] medio belli tempore et Civicam, patruum Veri, et filiam suam nupturam commissam sorori suae eandemque locupletatam Brundisium usque deduxit, [9.5] ad eum misit Romamque statim rediit, revocatus eorum sermonibus, qui dicebant Marcum velle finiti belli gloriam sibimet vindicare atque idcirco in Syriam proficisci. [9.6] ad proconsule<s> scrib<s>it, ne quis filiae suae iter facienti occurreret. [9.7] inter haec liberales causas ita mu<n>ivit, ut primus iuberet apud praefectos aerarii Saturni unumquemque civium natos liberos profiteri intra tricensimum diem nomine inposito. [9.8] per provincias tabulariorum publicorum usum instituit, apud quos idem de originibus fieret, quod Romae apud praefectos aerarii, ut, si forte aliquis in provincia natus causam liberalem diceret, testationes inde ferret. [9.9] atque hanc totam legem de adsertionibus firmavit aliasque de mensariis et au<c>tionibus tulit.



**10.1** Senatū multis cognitionibus et maxime ad se pertinentibus iudicem dedit. de statu etiam defunctorum intra quinquennium quaeri iussit. **[10.2]** neque qui<s>quam principum amplius senatui detulit. in senatus autem honorificentiam multis praetoriis et consularibus privatis decidenda negotia delegavit, quo magis eorum cum exercitio iuris auctoritas cresceret. **[10.3]** multos ex amicis in senatū adlegit cum aediliciis aut praetoriis dignitatibus. **[10.4]** multis senatibus vel pauperibus sine cr<i>mine dignitates tribunicias aediliciasque concessit. **[10.5]** nec quemquam in ordinem legit, nisi quem ipse bene scisset. **[10.6]** hoc quoque senatoribus detulit ut, quotiens de quorum capite esset iudicandum, secreta pertractaret atque ita in publicum proderet nec pateretur equites Romanos talibus interesse causis. **[10.7]** semper autem, cum potuit, interfuit senatui, etiamsi nihil esset referendum, si Romae fuit; si vero aliquid referre voluit, etiam de Campania ipse venit. **[10.8]** comitiis praeterea etiam usque ad noctem frequenter interfuit neque umquam recessit de curia nisi consul dixisset **[10.9]** ‘nihil vos moramur patres conscripti.’ s<e>nat<u>m appellationibus a consule factis iudicem dedit. **[10.10]** iudiciari<a>e rei singularem diligentiam adhibuit. fastis dies iudic<i>arios addidit, ita ut ducentos triginta dies annuos rebus agendis litibusque disceptandis constitueret. **[10.11]** praetorem tutelarem primus fecit, cum ante tutores a consulibus poscerentur, ut diligentius de tutoribus tractaretur. **[10.12]** de curatoribus vero, cum ante non nisi ex lege Laetoria vel propter lasciviam vel propter dementia darentur, ita statuit ut omnes adulti curatores acciperent non redditis causis.

**11.1** Cavet et sumptibus publicis et calumniis quadru[m]platorum intercessit adposita falsis delatoribus nota. **[11.2]** delationes, quibus fiscus augetur, contempsit. de alimentis publicis multa prudenter invenit. curatores multis civitatibus, quo latius senatorias tenderet dignitates, a senatu dedit. **[11.3]** Italicis civitatibus famis tempore frumentum ex urbe donavit omnique frumentariae rei consuluit. **[11.4]** gladiatoria spectacula omnifariam temperavit. temperavit etiam scaenicas donationes iubens, ut quinos aureos scaenici acciperent, ita tamen ut nullus editor decem aureos egrederetur. **[11.5]** vias etiam urbis atque itinerum diligentissime curavit. rei frumentariae graviter providit. **[11.6]** datis iuridicis Italiae consuluit ad id exemplum, quo Hadrianus consulares viros reddere iura praeceperat **[11.7]** Hispanis exhaus<ti> Italica allectione contra .....<sup>4</sup> Tra<ia>nique praecepta verecunde consuluit. **[11.8]** leges etiam addidit de vicensima hereditatum, de tutelis libertorum, de bonis maternis et item de filiorum successionibus pro parte materna, utqu[a]e senatores peregrini quartam partem in Italia possiderent. **[11.9]** dedit praeterea curatoribus regionum ac viarum potestatem, ut vel punirent vel ad praefectum urbi puniendos remitterent eos, qui ultra vectigalia quicquam ab aliquo exegissent. **[11.10]** ius autem magis vetus restituit quam novum fecit. habuit secum praefectos, quorum et auctoritate et periculo semper iura dictavit. usus autem est Scaevola praecipue iuris perito.

**12.1** Cum populo autem non aliter egit, quam est actum sub civitate libera. **[12.2]** fuitque per omnia moderantissimus in hominibus deterrendis a malo, invitandis ad bona, remunerandis copia, indulgentia liberandis fecitque ex malis bonos, ex bonis optimos, moderate etiam cavillationes nonnullorum ferens. **[12.3]** nam cum quendam Vetrasinum famae detestand<a>e honorem petentem moneret, ut se ab opinio<ni>bus populi vindicaret, et ille contra respondisset multos, qui secum in harena pugnassent, se praetores videre,

<sup>4</sup> Peter has identified a lacuna at this point. See H. Peter, *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, Leipzig: Teubner, 1884.

patienter tulit. [12.4] ac ne in quenquam facile vindicaret, praetorem, qui quaedam pessime <e>gerat, non abdicare se praetura iussit, sed collegae <i>u[e]ris dictionem mandavit. [12.5] fisco in causis compendii numquam iudicans favit. [12.6] sane, quamvis esset constans, erat etiam verecundus. [12.7] posteaquam autem e Syria victor rediit frater, patris patri<a>e nomen ambobus decretum est, cum se Marcus absente Vero erga omnes senatores atque homines moderatissime gessisset. [12.8] corona praeterea civica oblata est ambobus; petitque Lucius, ut secum Marcus triumpharet. petit praeterea Lucius, ut filii Marci Caesares appellarentur. [12.9] sed Marcus tanta fuit moderatione, ut, cum simul triumphasset, tamen post mortem Luci<i>[m] tantum Germanicum se vocaret, quod sibi bello prop<r>io pepererat. [12.10] in triumpho autem lib<e>ros Marci utriusque sexus secum vexerunt, ita tamen ut et puellas virgines veherent. [12.11] ludos etiam ob triumphum decretos spectaverunt habitu triumphali. [12.12] inter cetera pietatis eius haec quoque moderatio praedicanda est: funambulis post puerorum lapsum culcitas subici iussit. unde hodieque re[c]te praetenditur. [12.13] dum Parthicum bellum geritur, natum est Marcomannicum, quod diu eorum, qui aderant, arte suspensum est, ut finito iam orientali bello Marcomannicum agi posset. [12.14] et cum famis tempore populo insinuaste de bello, fratre post quinquennium reverso in senatu egit, ambos necessarios dicens bello Germanico imperatores.

13.1 Tantus autem timor belli Marcomannici fuit, ut undique sacerdotes Antoninus acciverit, peregrinos ritus impleverit, Romam omni genere lustraverit; retardatusque bellica profectio sic celebravit [13.2] et Romano ritu lectisternia per septem dies. [13.3] tanta autem pestilentia fuit, ut vehiculis cadavera sint exportata serracisque. [13.4] tunc autem Antonini leges sepeliendi sepulchrorumque asperrima<s> sanxerunt, quando quidem caverunt, ne quis <ut> velle<t> [ab]f<ab>ricaretur sepulchrum; quod hodieque servatur. [13.5] et multa quidem milia pestilentia consumpsit multosque ex proceribus, quorum amplissimis Antoninus statuas conlocavit. [13.6] tantaque clementia fuit, ut et sumptu publico vulgaria funera iuberet [et] e<c>ferri et vano cuidam, qui diripiendae urbis occasionem cum quibusdam consciis requirens de caprifici arbore in campo Martio contionabundus ignem de caelo lapsurum finemque mundi affore diceret, s<i> ipse lapsus ex arbore in ciconiam verteretur, cum statuto tempore decidisset atque ex sinu ciconiam emi<si>ssset, perducto ad se atque confesso veniam daret.

14.1 profecti tamen sunt paludati ambo imperatores et Victualis et Marcomannis cuncta turbantibus, aliis etiam gentibus, quae pulsae a superioribus barbaris fugerant, nisi reciperentur, bellum inferentibus. [14.2] nec parum profuit ista profectio, cum Aquileiam usque venissent. nam plerique reges et cum populis suis se retraxerunt et tumultus auctores interemerunt. [14.3] Quadi autem ami<sso> rege suo non prius se confirmaturos eum, qui erat creatus, dicebant, quam id nostris placuisset imperatoribus. [14.4] Lucius tamen invitus profectus est, cum plerique ad legatos imperatorum mitterent defectionis veniam postulantes. [14.5] et Lucius quidem, quod amissus esset praef. pr<a>etorio Furius Victorinus, <a>tqu[a]e pars exercitus interisset, redeundum esse[t] censebat; Marcus autem fingere barbaros aestimans et fugam et cetera, quae securitatem bellicam ostenderent, ob hoc ne tanti apparatus mole premerentur, instandum esse ducebat. [14.6] denique transcensis Alpibus longius processerunt composueruntque omnia, quae ad munimen Italiae atque Illyrici pertinebant. [14.7] placuit autem urgente Lucio, ut pr<a>emissis ad senatum

litteris Lucius Romam rediret. [14.8] bi<d>[q]uoque, postquam i[n]ter ingressi sunt, sedens cum fratre in vehiculo Lucius apoplexi arreptus perit.<sup>5</sup>

**20.1** Sed Marco Antonino haec sunt gesta post fratrem: primum corpus eius Romam devectum est et inlatum maiorum sepulchris. divini <ei> honores decreti. [20.2] dein cum gratias ageret senatu<i>, quod fratrem consecrasset, oc<c>ulte ostendit omnia bellica consilia sua fuisse, quibus superati sunt Parthi. [20.3] addidit pr<a>eterea quaedam, quibus ostendit nunc demum se quasi a principio acturum esse rem publicam amoto eo, qui remissior videbatur. [20.4] nec aliter senatus accepit, quam Marcus dixerat, ut videretur gratias agere, quod Verus excessisset vita. [20.5] omnibus deinde sororibus et adfinibus et libertis <iu>ris et honoris et pecuniae plurimum detulit. erat enim famae suae curiosissimus, requirens ad verum, quid quisque de se diceret, emendans quae bene reprehensa viderentur. [20.6] proficiscens ad bellum Germanicum filiam suam non decurs<o> luctus tempore grand<a>evo equitis Romani filio Claudio Pompeiano dedit genere Antioch<h>ensi nec satis nobili (quem postea bis consulem fecit), cum filia eius Augusta esset et Augustae filia. [20.7] sed has nuptias et Faustina et ipsa, quae dabatur, invitae habuerunt.

**21.1** Cum Mauri Hispanias prope omnes vastarent, res per legatos bene gestae sunt. [21.2] et cum per Aegyptum Bucolici[s] milites gravia multa fecissent, per Av<i>dium Cassium retunsi sunt, qui postea tyrannidem arripuit. [21.3] sub ipsis profectionis diebus in secessu Praenestino agens filium, nomine Verum Caesarem, execto sub aure tubere[m] septennem amisit. [21.4] quem non plus quinque diebus luxit consolatusque etiam medicos <se> actibus publicis reddidit. [21.5] et quia ludi Iovis Optimi Maximi erant, interpellari eos publico luctu noluit iussitque, ut statuae tantum modo filio mortuo decernerentur, et imago aurea circensibus per pompam ferenda, et ut sal<i>ari[i] carmini nomen eius insereretur. [21.6] instante sane adhuc pestilentia et deorum cultum diligentissime restituit et servos, quem ad modum bello Punico factum fuerat, ad militiam paravit, quos voluntarios exemplo volonum appellavit. [21.7] armavit etiam gladiatores, quos obsequentes appellavit. latrones etiam Dalmatiae atque Dardaniae milites fecit. armavit et dio<g>mitas. emit et Germanorum auxilia contra Germanos. [21.8] omni pra<a>eterea diligentia paravit legiones ad Germanicum et Marcomannicum bellum. [21.9] et, ne provincialibus esset molestus, auctione<m> rerum aulicarum, ut diximus, fecit in foro divi Traiani, in qua praeter vestes et pocula et vasa aurea etiam signa cum tabulis magnorum artificum vendidit. [21.10] Marcomannos in ipso transitu Danuvii delevit et praedam provincialibus reddidit.

**22.1** Gentes omnes ab Illyrici limite usque in Galliam conspiraverant, ut Marcomanni, Varistae, Hermunduri et Quadi, Suevi, Sarmat<a>e, Lacringes et Burei €hi aliique cum Victualis, Sosibes, Sicobotes, Roxolani, Basternae, Halani, Peu<c>ini, Costoboci. iminebat et Parthicum bellum et Britannicum. [22.2] magno igitur labore etiam suo gentes asperrimas vicit militibus sese imitantibus, ducentibus etiam exercitum legatis et praefectis praetorio, accepitque in deditionem Marcomannos plurimis in Italiam traductis. [22.3] semper sane cum optimatibus non solum bellicas res sed etiam civiles, priusquam faceret aliquid, contulit. [22.4] denique sententia illius praecipua semper haec fuit: ‘aequius est, ut

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<sup>5</sup> Note that the interpolation section of the text (Sections: 15-19) has been removed from this point of the text, in order that the original text may be analysed as a whole. The Interpolation sections have been discussed elsewhere.

ego tot talium amicorum consilium sequar, quam ut tot tales amici meam unius voluntatem sequantur.' [22.5] sane quia durus videbatur e<x> philosophiae institutione[m] Marcus ad militiae labores atque ad omnem vitam, graviter carpebatur, [22.6] sed male loquentum vel sermon<i> vel litteris respondebat. [22.7] et multi nobiles bello Germanico sive Marcomannico immo plurimarum gentium interierunt (quibus omnibus statuas in foro Ulpio collocavit); [22.8] quare frequenter amici suaserunt, ut a bellis discederet <et> Romam veniret, sed ille contempsit ac perstitit nec prius recessit, quam omnia bella finiret. [22.9] provincias ex proconsularibus consulares aut ex consularibus proconsulares aut praetorias pro belli necessitate fecit. [22.10] res etiam in Sequanis turbatas censura et auctoritate repressit. [22.11] compositae res et <in> Hispania, quae per Lusitaniam turbatae erant. [22.12] filio Commodi accersito ad limitem togam virilem dedit, quare congiarium populo divisit, et eum ante tempus consulem designavit.

**23.1** Si quis umquam proscriptus est a praefecto urbi, non libenter accepit. [23.2] ipse in largitionibus pecuniae publicae parcissimus fuit, quod laudi potius datur quam reprehensioni, [23.3] sed tamen et bonis viris pecunias dedit et oppidis labentibus auxilium tulit et tributa vel vectigalia, ubi necessitas cogebat, remisit. [23.4] absens populi Romani voluptates curari vehementer praecepit per ditissimos editores. [23.5] fuit enim populo hic sermo, cum sustulisset ad bellum gladiatores, quod populum sublatis voluptati<bu>s vellet cogere ad philosophiam. [23.6] iusserat en:m, ne mercimonia impedirentur, tardius pantomimos exhiberi, non <t>otis diebus. [23.7] de amatis pantomimis ab uxore fuit sermo, ut superius diximus. sed haec omnia per [a]epistolas suas purgavit. [23.8] idem Marcus sederi in civitatibus vetuit in equis sive vehiculis. lavacra mixta summovit. mores matronarum composuit diffluentes et iuvenum nobilium. sacra Serapidis a vulgaritate Pel<u>sia<ca> summovit. [23.9] fama fuit sane, quod sub philosophorum specie quidam rem publicam vexarent et privatos. quod ille purgavit.

**24.1** Erat mos iste Antonino, ut omnia crimina minore supplicio, quam legibus plecti solent, puniret, quamvis nonnumquam contra manifestos et gravium criminum reos inexorabilis permaneret. [24.2] capitales causas hominum honestorum ipse cognovit, et quidem summa aequitate, ita ut praetorem reprehenderet, qui cito reorum causas audierat, iuberetque illum iterum cognoscere, dignitatis eorum interesse dicens, ut ab eo audirentur, qui pro populo iudicaret. [24.3] aequitatem autem etiam circa captos hostes custodivit. infinitos ex gentibus in Romano solo collocavit. [24.4] fulmen de caelo precibus suis contra hostium machinamentum extorsit su<i>s pluvia impetrata, cum siti laborarent. [24.5] voluit Marcomanniam provinciam, voluit etiam Sarmatiam facere, et fecisset, [24.6] nisi Avidius Cassius rebellasset sub eodem in oriente. atque imperatorem se appellavit, ut quidam dicunt, Faustina volente, quae de mariti valetudine desperaret. [24.7] alii dicunt, ementita morte Antonini Cassium imperatorem se appellasse, cum divum Marcum appellasse<t>. [24.8] et Antoninus quidem non est satis m<o>tus defectione Cassii nec <in> eius affectus s<a>evi<t>. [24.9] sed per senatum hostis est iudicatus bonaque eius proscripta per aerarium publicum.

**25.1** Rel<i>cto ergo Sarmatico Marcommannicoque bello contra Cassium profectus est. [25.2] Romae etiam turbae fuerunt, quasi Cassius absente Antonino adventaret. sed Cassius statim interfectus est, caputque eius adlatum est ad Antoninum. [25.3] Marcus tamen non exultavit interfectione Cassii caputque eius humari iussit. [25.4] Maecianum etiam, filium

Cassii, cui Alexandria erat commissa, exercitus occidit; nam et praef(ectum) praet(orio) sibi fecerat, qui et ipse occisus est. [25.5] in conscios defection<i>s vetuit senatum graviter vindicare, [25.6] simul petit, ne qui senator tempore principatus sui occideretur, ne eius pollueretur imperium. [25.7] eos etiam qui deportati fuerant, revocari iussit, cum paucissimi centuriones capite essent puniti. [25.8] ignovit et civitatibus, quae Cassio consenserant, ignovit et Ant[h]ioc<h>ensibus, qui multa in Marcum pro Cassio dixerant. [25.9] quibus et spectacula et conventus publicos tulerat et omnium contionum genus, contra quos edictum gravissimum misit. [25.10] seditiosos autem eos et oratio Marci indicat indita a Mari<o> Maximo, qua ille usus est apud amicos. [25.11] denique noluit Ant[h]ioc<h>iam videre, cum Syriam peteret. [25.12] nam nec Cy<r>um voluit videre, ex qua erat Cassius.

**26.1** fuit Alexandr<i>ae clementer cum his agens. postea tamen Antioc<h>iam vidit. multa egit cum regibus et pacem confirmavit sibi occurrentibus cunctis regibus et legatis Persarum. omnibus orientalibus provinciis carissimus fuit. [26.2] apud multas etiam philosophiae vestigia reliquit. [26.3] apud Aegyptios civem se egit et philosophum in omnibus studiis, templis, locis. et cum multa Alexandrini in Cassium dixissent fausta, tamen omnibus ignovit et filiam suam apud eos reli[n]quit. [26.4] Faustina[m] suam in radicibus montis Tauri in vico Halalae exanimatam vi subiti morbi amisit. [26.5] petit a senatu, ut honores Faustinae aedemque decernerent, laudata eadem, cum inpudicitiae fama graviter laborasset. quae Antoninus vel nesciit vel dissimulavit. [26.6] novas puellas Faustianas instituit in honorem uxoris mortuae. [26.7] divam etiam Faustina[m] a senatu appellatam gratulatus est. [26.8] quam secum et in <a>estivis habuerat, ut matrem castrorum appellaret. [26.9] fecit et coloniam vicum, in quo obiit Faustina, et aedem illi extruxit. sed haec postea aedis Heliogabalo dedicata est. [26.10] ipsum Cassium pro clementia occisu<m> passus est, non occidi iussit. [26.11] deportatus est Heliodorus, filius Cassi, et alii liberum exilium acceperunt cum bonorum parte[m]. [26.12] filii autem Cassii et amplius media parte acceperunt paterni patrimonii, et auro atque argento adiuti, mulieres autem etiam ornamentis: ita ut Alexandria, filia Cassii, et Druncianus gener liberam vagandi potestatem habere<n>t commendati amitae marito. [26.13] doluit denique Cassium extinctum, dicens voluisse se sine senatorio sanguine imperium transigere.

**27.1** Orientalibus rebus ordinatis Athenis fuit et in<i> Italia Ce<r>eris adit, ut se innocentem probaret, et sacrarium solu<s> ingressus est. [27.2] revertens ad Italiam navigio tempestatem gravissimam passus est. [27.3] per Brundisium veniens in Italia togam et ipse sumpsit et milites togatos esse iussit, nec umquam sagati fuerunt sub eo milites. [27.4] Romam ut venit, triumphavit et inde Lavinium profectus est. [27.5] Commodum deinde sibi collegam in tribuniciam potestatem iunxit, congiarium populo dedit et spectacula mirifica; dein civilia multa correxit. [27.6] gladiatorii muneris sumptus modum fecit. [27.7] sententia[m] Platonis semper in ore illius fuit florere civitates, si aut philosophi imperarent aut imperantes philosopharentur. [27.8] filio suo Bruttii Praesentis filiam iunxit nuptiis celebratis exemplo privatorum, quare etiam congiarium dedit populo. [27.9] dein ad conficiendum bellum conversus in administratione eius belli obi<t> labentibus iam filii moribus ab instituto suo. [27.10] triennio bellum postea cum Marcomannis, Herm<u>nduris, Sarmatis, Quadis etiam egit et, si anno uno superfuisset, provincias ex his fecisset. [27.11] ante biduum quam exspiraret, admissis amicis dicitur ostendisse sententiam de filio eandem quam Philippus de Alexandro, cum de hoc male sentiret, addens minime se aegre ferre <quod moreretur, sed quod moreretur talem> filium superstitem

relinquens; [27.12] nam iam Commodus turpem se et cruentum ostentabat.

**28.1** Mors autem talis fuit: cum aegrotare coepisset, filium advocavit atque ab eo primum petit, ut <b>elli reliquias non contempneret, ne videretur rem p. prodere. [28.2] et, cum filius ei respondisse<t> cupere se primum sanitatem, ut vellet, permisit, petens tamen, ut expectasset paucos dies, <h>aut simul proficisceretur. [28.3] deinde abstinuit vi<ctu> potuque mori cupiens auxitque morbum. [28.4] sexta die vocatis amicis et ridens res humanas, mortem autem contempnens ad amicos dixit: ‘quid<d>e me fletis et non magis de pestilentia et communi morte cogitatis?’ [28.5] et cum illi vellent recedere, ingemescens ait: ‘si iam me dimittitis, vale vobis dico vos praecedens.’ [28.6] et cum ab eo quaereretur, cui filium commendaret, ille respondit: ‘vobis, si dignus fuerit, et dis immortalibus.’ [28.7] exercitus cognita mala valetudine vehementissime dolebant, quia illum unice amarunt. [28.8] septimo die gravatus est et solum filium admisit, quem statim dimisit, ne in eum morbus transiret. [28.9] dimisso filio caput operuit quasi volens dormire, sed nocte animam efflavit. [28.10] fertur filium mori voluisse, cum eum talem videret futurum, qu[is]alis exstitit post eius mortem, ne, ut ipse dicebat, similis Neroni, Caligulae et Domitiano esset.

**29.1** Crimini ei datum est, quod adulteros uxoris promoverit, Tertullum et <T>utilium et Orfitum et Moderatum, ad varios honores, cum Tertullum et prandentem cum uxore depr[a]henderit. [29.2] de quo mimus in sc<a>ena praesente Antonino dixit; cum stupidus nomen adulteri uxoris a servo quaereret et ille diceret ter ‘Tullus’, et adhuc stupidus quaereret, respondit ille: ‘iam tibi dixi ter, Tullus dicitur.’ [29.3] et de hoc quidem multa populus, multa etiam alii dixerunt patientiam Antonini incusantes. [29.4] ante tempus sane mortis, priusquam ad bellum Marcomanicum rediret, in Capitolio iuravit nullum senatorem se sciente occisum, cum etiam rebelliones dixerit se servaturum fuisse, si scisset; [29.5] nihil enim magis et timuit et depr[a]ecatus est quam avaritiae famam, de qua se multis epistulis purgat. [29.6] dederunt e<i> vitio, quod e<t> f<ictus> fuisset nec tam simplex quam videretur aut quam vel Pius vel Verus fuisset. [29.7] dederunt etiam crimini, quod aulicam adrogantiam confirmaverit summovendo[s] amicos a societate communi et a conviviis. [29.8] parentibus consecrationem decrevit. amicos parentum etiam mortuos stasis ornavit. [29.9] suffragatoribus non cito credidit, sed semper diu quaesivit, quod erat verum. [29.10] enisa est Fabia, ut Faustina mortua in eius matrimonium coiret. sed ille concubinam sibi adscivit procuratoris uxoris suae filiam, ne tot liberis superduceret novercam.

## Interpolation

**15.1** Fuit autem consuetudo Marco, ut in circensium spectaculo legeret audiretque ac suscriberet. ex quo quidem saepe iocis popularibus dicitur lacessitus. [15.2] multum sane potuerunt liberti sub Marco et Vero Gemin<u>s et Agaclytus. [15.3] tantae autem sanctitatis fuit Marcus, ut Veri vitia et celaverit et defenderit, cum ei vehementissime displicere<n>t, mortuumque eum divum appellaverit amitasque eius et sorores honoribus et salariis decretis sublevaverit atque provexerit sacrisque <e>um plurimis honoraverit. [15.4] flaminem et Antoninianos sodales et omnes honores, qui divis habentur, eidem dedicavit. [15.5] nemo est principum, quem non gravis fama perstringat, usque adeo ut etiam Marcus

in sermonem venerit, quod Verum vel veneno ita tulerit, ut parte cultri veneno lita <v>ul<v>am inciderit venenatam partem fratri edendam propinans et sibi innoxiam reservans, [15.6] vel certe per medicum Posidippum, qui ei sanguinem intempestive dicitur emisisse. Cassius post mortem Veri a Marco des<ci>vit.

**16.1** Iam in suos tanta fuit benignitate Marcus, ut cum in omnes propinquos cuncta honorum ornamenta contulerit, tum in filium et Commodum quidem scelestum atque impurum cito nomen Caesaris et mox sacerdotium statimque nomen imperatoris ac triumphii participationem et consulatum. [16.2] quo quidem tempore sedente imperator filio ad triumphalem curram in circo pedes cucurrit. [16.3] post Veri obitum Marcus Antoninus solus rem publicam tenuit, multo melior et fera<c>ior ad virtutes, [16.4] quippe qui nullis Veri iam impediretur aut simulatis callidae severitatis, qu[i]a ille ingenito vitio laborabat, erroribus aut his, qu<ae> praecipue displicebant Marco Antonino iam inde a primo aetatis suae tempore, vel institutis mentis pravae vel moribus. [16.5] erat enim ipse tantae tranquillitatis, ut vultum numquam mutaverit m<a>erore vel gaudio, philosophiae deditus stoicae, quam et per optimos quo<s>que magistros acceperat et undique ipse collegerat. [16.6] nam et Hadrianus hunc eundem successorem paraverat, nisi e<i> aetas puerilis obstitisset. [16.7] quod quidem apparet ex eo, quod generum Pio hunc eundem delegit, ut ad eum, dignum utpote virum, quandocumque Romanum perveniret imperium.

**17.1** Ergo provincias post h<a>ec ingenti moderatione ac benignitate tractavit. contra Germanos res feliciter gessit. [17.2] spe<c>iale ipse bellum Marcomanicum, sed quant<um> nulla umquam memoria fuit, cum virtute tum etiam felicitate transegit, et eo quidem tempore, quo pestilentia gravis multa milia et popularium et militum interemerat. [17.3] Pannonias ergo Marcomannis, Sarmatis. V[u]andalis, simul etiam Quadis extinctis servitio liberavit et Romae cum Commodum, quem iam Caesarem fecerat, filio, ut diximus, suo, triumphavit. [17.4] cum autem ad hoc bellum omne aerarium exhausisset suum neque in animum induceret, ut extra ordinem provincialibus aliquid imperaret, in foro divi Traiani auctionem orn<a>mentorum imperialium fecit vendiditque aurea pocula et cristallina et murrina, vasa etiam regia et vestem uxoriamicam et auratam, gemmas quin etiam, quas multas in repostorio sanctiore Hadriani repererat. [17.5] et per duos quidem menses haec venditio celebrata est, tantumque auri redactum, ut reliquias belli Marcomanici ex sententia persecutus postea dederit potestatem emptoribus, ut, si qui vellet emptam reddere[at] atque aurum recipere, sciret licere. nec molestus ulli fuit qui vel non reddidit emptam vel reddidit. [17.6] tunc viris clarioribus permisit, ut eodem cultu quo et ipse vel ministris similibus convivia exhiberent. [17.7] in munere autem publico tam magnanimus fuit, ut centum leones una[m] missione[m] simul exhiberet [et] sagittis interfectos.

**18.1** Cum igitur in amore omnium i<m>perasset atque ab aliis modo frater, modo pater, modo filius, ut cuiusque aetas sinebat, et diceretur et amaretur, octavo decimo anno imperii sui, sexagesimo et primo vitae, diem ultimum clausit. [18.2] tantusque illius amor <ad>eo die regii funeris claruit, ut nemo illum plangendum censuerit, certis omnibus, quod ab diis commodatus ad deos redisset. [18.3] denique, priusquam funus conderetur, ut plerique dicunt, quod numquam antea factum fuerat neque postea, senatus populusque non divisim locis sed in una sede propitium deum dixit. [18.4] hic sane vir tantus et talis ac diis vita[e] et morte coniunctus filium Commodum dereliquit: qui si felix fuisset, filium non reliquisset. [18.5] et parum sane fuit, quod illi honores divinos omnis aetas, omnis sexus,

omnis conditio ac dignitas dedit, nisi quod etiam sacrilegus iudicatus est, qui eius imaginem in sua domo non habuit, qui per fortunam vel potuit habere vel debuit. [18.6] denique hodieque in multis domibus Marci Antonini statuæ consistunt inter deos penates. [18.7] nec defuerunt homines qui somniis eum multa prædixisse augurantes futura et vera concinuerunt. [18.8] unde etiam templum ei constitutum, dati sacerdotes Antoniniani et sodales et flamines et omnia, quæ de sacrat<is> decrevit antiquitas.

19.1 Aiunt quidam, quod et verisimile videtur, Commodum Antoninum, successorem illius ac filium, non esse de eo natum sed de adulterio, ac talem fa<b>ellam vulgari sermone contextunt. [19.2] Faustina quondam, Pii filiam, Marci uxorem, cum gladiatores transire vidisset, unius ex his amore succensam, cum longa aegritudine laboraret, viro de amore confessa<m>. [19.3] quod cum ad C<h>ald<a>eos Marcus ret<t>ulisset, illorum fuisse consilium, ut occiso gladiatore sanguine illius sese Faustina subl<a>varet atque ita cum viro concumberet. [19.4] quod cum esset factum, solutum quidem amorem, natum vero Commodum gladiatorem esse, non principem, [19.5] qui mille prope pugnas publice populo inspectante gladiatorias imperator exhibuit, ut in vita eius docebitur. [19.6] quod quidem verisimile ex eo habetur, quod tam sancti principis filius his moribus fuit, quibus nullus lanista, nullus sc<a>enicus, nullus arenarius, nullus postremo ex omnium <de>decorum ac scelerum <c>onluvia concretus. [19.7] multi autem ferunt Commodum omnino ex adultero natum, si quidem Faustina satis constet apud Caietam condiciones sibi et nauticas et gladiatorias elegisse. [19.8] de qua cum diceretur Antonino Marco, ut eam repudiaret, si non occideret, dixisse fertur: 'si uxorem dimittimus, reddamus et dotem.' [19.9] dos autem quid habebatur <nisi> imperium, quod ille ab socero volente Hadriano adoptatus acceperat? [19.10] tantum sane valet boni principis vita, sanctitas, tranquillitas, pietas, ut eius famam nullius proximi decoloraret invidia. [19.11] denique Antonino, cum suos mores semper teneret neque alicuius insusurrante mutaretur, non obfuit gladiator filius, uxor infamis; [19.12] deusque etiam nunc habetur, ut vobis ipsi<s>, sacratissime imperator Diocletiane, et semper visum est et videtur, qui <e>um inter numina vestra non ut ceteros sed specialiter veneramini ac saepe dicitis vos vita et clementia tales esse cupere, qualis fuit Marcus, etiamsi philosophia nec Plato esse possit, si rever<t>at<u>r i<n> vita<m>. et quidem haec breviter et congeste.