

Sam Mackey
Shawn Oleszczuk
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Marcus Aurelius

Marcus Aurelius Antonius Augustus

Born: April A.D. 121

Died: March A.D. 180

16th emperor of Rome

Co-ruled with Lucius Verus from 161-169 (the death of Lucius Verus)

Married Faustina

Was recognized as a stoic philosopher.

Conquered the Sarmations and the Marcomanis

Last of the five good emperors



Statue of Marcus Aurelius in the Musei Capitolini
in Rome

5 good emperors:

-Nerva

-Trajan

-Hadrian

-Antonius Pius

-Marcus Aurelius

These five emperors marked a time of relative peace for Rome. Nerva came into power after the reign of Domitian in 96 A.D which was the beginning. Commodus came into power as a co-ruler in 177 A.D. and became emperor after the death of Marcus Aurelius in 180 A.D. and marked the end of the reign of the five good emperors.

People to know:

-Marcus Aurelius = 16th emperor of Rome.

-Lucius Verus = Co-ruler with Marcus Aurelius at the beginning of his reign.

-Faustina = Wife of Marcus Aurelius. Marcus set up Monuments in her honor.

Terms to know:

Stoicism= School of philosophy that teaches one to not be burdened by bad emotions

Meditations = A series of writings by Marcus Aurelius outlining his thoughts on stoicism

Coregency = The ruling of two leaders where one is usually the norm. (started in Rome by Hadrian)

-Soon you'll be ashes or bones. A mere name at most—and even that is just a sound, an echo.

The things we want in life are empty, stale, trivial.

-Quote from the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius.

WebSite:

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Historia_Augusta/home.html

- This website is a link to the Historia Augusta. A collection of biographies written in the Roman period. This work has a biography of Marcus Aurelius that is split into two sections. Before the death of Lucius Verus and after the death of Lucius Verus. This work was used to gather background information on Marcus Aurelius.

Journal Article:

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4435105>

- This article was discussing if the legislation of Marcus Aurelius was really as stoic as the man claimed to be. In this article the author takes a look at some of the legislation, mostly regarding children and tries to determine if they are of stoic values.

Discussion Questions:

- How do you think the fact that Marcus Aurelius was a stoic affected his rule as emperor?
- How do you think that Marcus Aurelius started his rule with a co-emperor affected his reign?
- Do you think that there was a correlation between the reactions of both Marcus Aurelius and Herodes Atticus over the deaths of their wives?
- Do you think that Marcus Aurelius was in part to blame for the end of the reign of good emperors?

Bibliography:

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Marcus Aurelius, Emperor and Philosopher

G. R. Stanton. *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* , Bd. 18, H. 5 (Dec., 1969) , pp. 570-587

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wikipedia.org. N.p., n.d. Web. 3 Feb. 2014. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Aurelius>.

Quote: How ridiculous and unrealistic is the man who is astonished at anything that happens in life- Marcus Aurelius.



Bust of Marcus Aurelius
Musee Saint-Raymond,
Toulouse