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LIBR 285-15: Annotated Bibliography of Primary Sources

Betty Radice, trans. *The Letters of the Younger Pliny* (New York: Penguin Classics, 1963).

Pliny includes a conversation with Hadrian (10.97) which is very revealing as a portrait of the Emperor's psychology and rationales for action. In this letter Hadrian argues for universal law, justice and liberality, Stoic notions of the day.

David Magie, trans. *Historia Augusta* (Cambridge: Loeb Classical Library, 1921).

The Augustan History is a late Roman collection of biographies, in Latin, of the Roman Emperors, their junior colleagues and usurpers of the period 117 to 284. It presents itself as a compilation of works by six different authors (collectively known as the *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*), written in the reigns of Diocletian and Constantine I, but the true authorship of the work, its actual date, and its purpose, have long been matters for controversy. The Augustan History is problematic but nonetheless invaluable and its often fantastic claims can be checked against more rigorous accounts such as Dio and Herodian. The volume pays special attention to the character and personal behavior of the Roman emperors and is thus an aid to understanding the period, even if the precision of fact is often lacking.

Earnest Cary and Herbert B. Foster, trans., *Dio Cassius: Roman History* (Cambridge: Loeb Classical Library, 1924).

Dio's history is the best and most complete source and portrait of the life and time of the Stoic emperors, and places the period into the context of the greater history of the Roman polity. Dio's thoughtful and often philosophical tone is an aid to a thematic understanding of the period. *Roman History* ultimately provides the bulwark of essential fact and historical coverage which underlies the thesis.

Edward C. Echols, trans. *Herodian of Antioch's History of the Roman Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961)

While Dio offers complete historical coverage of the rise and apex of the Empire, Herodian pays special coverage to the decline and corruption following the reign of Marcus Aurelius, a dysfunction which is central to the argument laid to bear. Eight books cover the period of 180-238, from the death of Marcus Aurelius to the reign of Gordian III. Specifically Herodian covers the beginnings of the “Crisis of the Third Century” and the endemic failings of a Roman polity without proper respect of tradition or principled rule. A moral account, Herodian’s work is nonetheless extremely important for understanding the turbulent death throes of the Empire.

Elizabeth Carter, trans. *Moral discourses ; Enchiridion and fragments* (Charleston: Nabu Press, 2010).

The works of Epictetus were the essential teachings for Stoics during the reign of the Five Good Emperors, either through direct dissemination or by adaption of allied schools. An understanding of Epictetus is essential to understanding the psychology of Roman Stoics, as will be demonstrated by Pierre Hadot.

Gregory Hays, trans., *Meditations* (New York: Modern Library, 2003).

The philosophical journal of Marcus Aurelius offers a unique insight into Hellenistic and Roman perceptions of Stoicism, cosmology, civic responsibility, philosophical thought and tenets of leadership. This is perhaps the most important record for the work, as it clearly reveals a Roman emperor who is also a philosopher whose actions are heavily influenced, almost religiously by Stoicism. The Gregory Hays translation of the Koine Greek is the best available. While the George Long translation is considered often considered authoritative, its stubborn insistence on using Victorian and formal English is not compatible with the researcher's perception of hypomnema, or contemporaneous translations of similar writings.

H.W. Bird, trans. *Aurelius Victor: De Caesaribus* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1994).

Aurelius Victor's work is another contemporaneous account of the same dubiousness as the *Historia Augusta*. Nevertheless, this colorful history covers the "Five Good Emperor" period and the subsequent decline in the morals and values of the Roman polity. *De Caesaribus* pays special coverage to the reign of Nerva, which is essential to understanding the concept of adoptive rule.

John E. Hill, trans. *Through the Jade Gate to Rome: A Study of the Silk Routes during the Later Han Dynasty, First to Second Centuries CE* (Booksurge, 2009).

Hill's work includes a translation of *The Western Regions according to the Hou Hanshu* from Book 88 of *Hou Hanshu*, the history of the late Han. This Chinese account is critical

for an understanding of the cosmopolitan auspices of both the Roman and Chinese polities, and respective philosophical interpretations of their place in nature.

John Jackson, trans. *Tacitus: The Annals* (Cambridge: Loeb Classical Library, 1937).

The Histories of Tacitus, written c. 100–110, covers the Year of Four Emperors following the downfall of Nero, the rise of Vespasian, and the rule of the Flavian Dynasty (69–96) up to the death of Domitian. It is an essential record of the time before the Five Good Emperors, and naturally ends where his contemporaries initiate coverage.

John Dryden, trans. *Plutarch's Lives* (New York: Modern Library, 2001).

Plutarch's Lives, written at the beginning of the second century A.D., is a brilliant social history of the ancient world by one of the greatest biographers and moralists of all time. In what is by far his most famous and influential work, Plutarch reveals the character and personality of his subjects and how they led ultimately to tragedy or victory. Richly anecdotal and full of detail, Plutarch helps to depict the character which underlies historical action prior to the period of Five Good Emperors, and is thus invaluable for purposes of the thesis.

Joseph D. Frendo, trans. *Agathias: The Histories (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae)* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1975).

Agathias is a principal source for late Roman history and covering the origins and operation of the Byzantine politic. His focus, like many historians of antiquity, is on the manners, behaviors and morals of great leaders, and is thus excellent for purposes of this

thesis. While Agathias' histories are lacking in precision of fact, they are nonetheless important for understanding the terminal period of the Roman Empire, when powerful forces were shearing the west from east expanses, many of which were coming from within. Agathias is most notable as one of the only sources on the reign of Justinian and the foundation of the Byzantine domain. In this sense Agathias is useful for examining the broader theme of decline with an earlier age.

Kirsopp Lake, John Ernest Leonard Oulton and Hugh Jackson Lawlor, trans. *The ecclesiastical history* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980).

The church history of Eusebius is an excellent insight into the thought of the post-Stoic Roman society and the progression of the Logos from Stoic cosmology to Church doctrine.

P.G. Walsh, trans. *Livy: Ab urbe condita* (London: Duckworth Publishers, 2008).

Livy's monumental history of Rome since its founding up until 9 B.C. is an essential companion to the various other primary sources which cover the period of interest, as it was used extensively by contemporaneous writers as a basis of historical understanding.

Robert Graves and Michael Grant, trans. *The Twelve Caesars* (New York: Penguin Classics, 1957).

The Twelve Caesars, is a set of twelve biographies of Julius Caesar and the first 11 emperors of the Roman Empire written by Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus. The work, written in AD 121 during the reign of the emperor Hadrian, was the most popular work of

Suetonius, at that time Hadrian's personal secretary, and is the largest among his surviving writings. The book offers similar coverage to Tacitus and can be considered a companion for cross reference and verification.

Robin Campbell, trans. *Letters from a Stoic* (New York: Penguin Books, 1969).

This volume includes the epistles of Seneca the Younger, a foundational work in Roman Stoic philosophy. Included as an aid to comprehension of the Roman Stoic.

Tad Brennan and Charles Brittain, trans. *Simplicius: On Epictetus* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2002).

The essential Roman commentary on the most influential Stoic philosopher of the period. Through Simplicius we come to understand the Roman interpretation and adoption of Epictetus' doctrines.

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