

Marcus Cornelius Fronto

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Birth & Early Years:

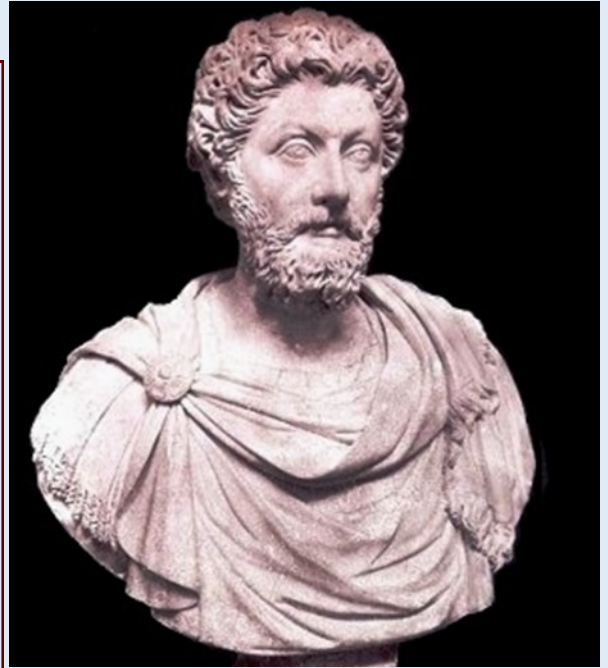
Fronto was born circa 100 in Roman North Africa. It can be deduced that he was almost definitely from the city of Cirta, however it is not stated in any of his surviving writings. There is evidence that points to a brother named Quadratus, who had a house in Rome. Fronto moved to Rome at an early age, and it seems that he only visited his homeland a few times after moving.

Training and Career in Rome:

Two of Fronto's tutors are mentioned in his letters, the Stoic Athenadotus and Dionysius. He enjoyed a successful career as a lawyer, senator, and a tutor to Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. He was also a friend of Antoninus Pius.

Family/Personal Life:

Fronto was wealthy, owning a mansion on the Esquiline hill, as well as the Mycenaean gardens and the house that stood there, along with a villa in Campania, possibly another along the Via Aurelia, and a villa by the Bay of Naples. He seems to have been very close to his wife Cratia, who was a good friend of Marcus Caesar's mother. They had one daughter who survived to adulthood, Cornelia Cratia.



- Cirta: City where Fronto was most likely born.
- Stoicism- a philosophical lifestyle where emphasis was placed on controlling the spectrum of emotions and living virtuously.
- 2nd Sophistic- A school of thought emphasizing rhetoric and oratory
- Magister-latin, 'master' or 'teacher'
- Imperator- Commander in chief, or Emperor.
- Cratia- Fronto's wife, most likely
- Aufidius Victorinus- son in law of Fronto, excellent orator, who had a successful military career.

Book:

Written by Edward Champlin, *Fronto and Antonine Rome* provides a detailed look at the life of Fronto, and uses it as a lens to study Antonine Rome, not unlike Pomeroy's *Regilla*. This book details his time in Africa and in Italy, and his family; as well as his careers as a lawyer, senator, and tutor to Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus.

Website:

The Correspondence of letters focuses on recorded writings to and from Fronto to Marcus Aurelius, and well Lucius Verus. The letters range from simple greetings and well wishes, to deep conversations about Stoicism and other philosophy. Marcus Aurelius also confides in Fronto about political happenings as well, trusting in Fronto's advice as his magister. The letters were found in 1815, and are fairly new to the world considering the time gap. The letters are written in not only Latin, but in Koine Greek as well. The letters share the happenings in the empire, as well as the thoughts and actions of both Caesar and his mentor.

Topics for discussion:

- Marcus Aurelius was the Emperor, but in his letters he addressed Fronto as Magister. What could this say about these two individuals, as well as teacher/student relationships in general?
- As two 'new men' in Rome, both who were Stoics and tutors to the Emperors, would Fronto and Herodes have been allies or competitors for imperial favor, etc?
- Would it have been easy for highly intellectual individuals such as Fronto, Herodes, and Marcus Aurelius to balance the lifestyle of a Stoic with the social prowess of a Sophistic?

Sources:

Champlin, Edward. *Fronto and Antonine Rome*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1980. Print.

Fronto, Marcus C. "The Correspondence of Marcus Cornelius Fronto." Letter to Marcus Aurelius. N.d. N.p.: n.p., n.d. N. pag. Web. 04 Feb. 2014. <<http://www.archive.org/stream/correspondencem00auregoog#page/n10/mode/2up>>.