

THE PHILOSOPHY OF LUCIUS ANNAEUS SENECA
THROUGH HIS LETTERS TO LUCILIUS.

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I. LIFE.

LUCIUS ANNAEUS SENECA, THE SON OF THE RHETOR SENECA, WAS BORN AT CORDUBA IN SPAIN, ABOUT THE BEGINNING OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA. HE WAS EDUCATED IN ROME, UNDER SOTION; THE STOIC ATTALUS; AND A FOLLOWER OF THE SEXTII, PAPIRIUS FABINUS. HE ALSO ATTENDED SCHOOLS OF RHETORIC. HIS MOTHER, HELVIA, WAS A LADY OF NOBLE BIRTH, WHOSE SISTER MARRIED VITRASIVS POLLIO, FOR SOME YEARS GOVERNOR OF EGYPT. SENECA APPEARS TO HAVE SPENT SOME TIME IN EGYPT WITH HIS AUNT, THROUGH WHOSE INFLUENCE HE OBTAINED THE QUAEATORSHIP AFTER HIS RETURN TO ROME, AT SOME TIME BETWEEN 42 AND 37 A. D. A SPEECH WHICH HE DELIVERED IN THE SENATE NEARLY CAUSED HIS DEATH BY AROUSING THE JEALOUSY OF CALIGULA IN 39 A. D. IN 41 A. D., HE WAS BANISHED TO CORSICA THROUGH THE INFLUENCE OF MESSALINA, ON THE CHARGE OF HAVING TOO GREAT AN INTIMACY WITH JULIA LIVILLA, CALIGULA'S YOUNGER SISTER. SUCH STORIES WERE CIRCULATED ABOUT ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE IMPERIAL FAMILY, AND WE HAVE NOW NO MEANS OF KNOWING WHETHER THERE WAS ANY TRUTH IN THE CHARGE AGAINST SENECA AND LIVILLA. PROBABLY THE REAL REASON FOR SENECA'S BANISHMENT WAS HIS CONNECTION WITH THE FACTION OF AGRIPPINA. AT ANY RATE, AGRIPPINA RECALLED HIM FROM CORSICA EIGHT YEARS LATER, AFTER THE EXECUTION OF MESSALINA. AGRIPPINA OBTAINED THE OFFICE OF PRAETORSHIP FOR HIM, AND MADE HIM TUTOR TO HER SON DOMITIUS NERO. SENECA'S INFLUENCE OVER HIS YOUNG PUPIL WAS SO GREAT THAT WHEN NERO CAME TO THE THRONE, SENECA, WITH THE AID OF HIS FRIEND AFRANIUS BURRUS, COMMANDER OF THE PRAETORIAN GUARDS, DIRECTED THE IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT. HE RESTRAINED THE FEROCITY OF NERO AND CHECKED THE AMBITION AND VENGEFULNESS OF AGRIPPINA. THANKS TO SENECA'S INFLUENCE, THE EARLY YEARS OF NERO'S REIGN WERE LONG REMEMBERED

AS A PERIOD OF REST AND PEACE AT ROME. BUT SENECA OBTAINED AND HELD HIS INFLUENCE IN GREAT MEASURE BY YIELDING CONSENT TO NERO'S WISHES, EVEN WHEN THEY WERE OPPOSED TO THE BETTER JUDGEMENT OF HIS CONSCIENCE. HE WAS PROBABLY PRIVY TO THE MURDER OF CLAUDIUS, BY WHICH NERO BECAME EMPEROR. THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT HE OPPOSED THE MURDER OF GERMANICUS IN 55 A. D., AND HE PROBABLY HAD SOME CONNECTION WITH THE MURDER OF AGRIPPINA IN 59 A. D. IT IS NATURAL THAT IN SPITE OF HIS REMARKABLE INTELLECTUAL AND SOCIAL GIFTS, HE WAS UNABLE TO MAINTAIN HIS MORAL ASCENDENCY OVER THE EMPEROR. WITH THE DEATH OF BURRUS, IN 62 A. D., SENECA'S POWER WAS BROKEN. HE RECOGNIZED THE FACT, AND WITHDREW SO FAR AS HE COULD FROM THE LIFE OF THE COURT. IN 64 A. D., HE OFFERED TO GIVE UP HIS GREAT WEALTH. UNFORTUNATELY, NOT EVEN HIS RETIREMENT COULD SAVE HIM FROM NERO'S CRUELTY, AND IN 65 A. D., HE WAS ACCUSED OF SHARING IN THE CONSPIRACY OF PISO AND COMPELLED TO COMMIT SUICIDE.

SENECA'S PHILOSOPHY DID NOT FORBID HIM TO HAVE A SHARE OF WORLDLY WEALTH AND HONORS. AT THE HEIGHT OF HIS PROSPERITY HE WAS IMMENSELY WEALTHY, POSSESSING ESTATES IN ITALY AND ABROAD, AND HAVING MONEY OUT AT INTEREST AS FAR AWAY AS BRITAIN. HIS TOTAL WEALTH WAS ESTIMATED AT MORE THAN \$15,000,000. HE HELD ALL THE REGULAR POLITICAL OFFICES, ATTAINING CONSULSHIP IN 57 A. D. HIS PRIVATE LIFE REMAINS SOMEWHAT OBSCURE. HE WAS MARRIED TWICE. HIS FIRST WIFE BORE HIM AT LEAST TWO SONS, ONE OF WHOM DIED SHORTLY BEFORE HIS FATHER'S BANISHMENT. HIS SECOND WIFE, POMPEIA PAULINA, WHOM HE MARRIED IN 56 A. D., WISHED TO COMMIT SUICIDE AT THE TIME OF HER HUSBAND'S DEATH, BUT WAS PREVENTED FROM DOING SO BY NERO.¹

II. WORKS.

A LARGE PART OF SENECA'S PHILOSOPHICAL WRITINGS ARE STILL EXTANT. HIS POPULARITY IN THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH UNDOUBTEDLY HELPED TO SECURE THE PRESERVATION OF HIS WORK IN NUMEROUS COPIES. WE HAVE TWELVE MORAL TREATISES, NOT TOTALLY COMPLETE, WHICH ARE CALLED DIALOGUES, BECAUSE THEY ARE LARGELY COMPOSED IN THE ARGUMENTATIVE SECOND PERSON. HE WROTE THESE TREATISES AT DIFFERENT TIMES IN HIS LIFE AND DEDICATED THEM TO VARIOUS FRIENDS, AS FOLLOWS:

- I. AD LUCILIUM - DE PROVIDENTIA
- II. AD SERENUM - DE SAPIENTIA
- III. AD NOMATUM - DE IRA
- IV. AD NOMATUM - DE IRA
- V. AD NOMATUM - DE IRA
- VI. AD MARCIAM - DE CONSOLATIONE
- VII. AD GALLIONEM - DE VITA BEATA
- VIII. AD SERENUM - DE OTIO
- IX. AD SERENUM - DE TRANQUILLITATE ANIMI
- X. AD PAULINUM - DE BREVITATE VITAE
- XI. AD POLYBIUM - DE CONSOLATIONE
- XII. AD HELVIAM MATREM - DE CONSOLATIONE

THE TWO BOOKS DE CLEMENTIA AD NERONEM CAESAREM, THE SEVEN BOOKS AD AEBUTIUM LIBERALEM DE BENEFICIIS, AND THE COLLECTION OF EPISTULAE MORALES AD LUCILIUM, OF WHICH ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FOUR ARE NOW EXTANT, ARE ALSO MORAL ESSAYS, OF MUCH THE SAME CHARACTER AS THE OTHERS, ALSO ADDRESSED TO LUCILIUS ARE THE SEVEN BOOKS OF NATURALES QUAESTIONES, A PARTIAL

EVIDENCE OF SENECA'S SCIENTIFIC INTERESTS. IN ADDITION TO THESE WE HAVE THE SATIRE OF THE APOTHEOSIS OF CLAUDIUS KNOWN AS THE APOCOLOCYNTOSIS, WHICH MAY BE TRANSLATED AS PUMPKINIFICATION. THERE WERE ALSO A FEW EPIGRAMS AND POEMS WHICH WERE NOT TOO SUCCESSFUL. SENECA WROTE NINE TRAGEDIES, WHICH ARE IMITATIONS OF THE GREEK DRAMA AND FOUNDED ON THE SAME LEGENDS, BUT PROBABLY NOT INTENDED FOR STAGE REPRESENTATION. ALTHOUGH NOT ALL OF THE NINE ARE OF ASSURED AUTHENTICITY, MOST OF THEM, INCLUDING THE HERCULES RURENS, THE TROADES, AND THE PHAEDRA, ARE GENERALLY ACCEPTED SENECA'S.

A CONSIDERABLE PART OF SENECA'S WORKS ~~HAVE~~ BEEN LOST. THERE ARE OTHERS ALLUDED TO BY SENECA OR OTHER AUTHORS, WHICH WE POSSESS PARTIALLY OR ENTIRELY. AMONG THE MORE INTERESTING OF THEM SEEM TO HAVE BEEN THE DE SITU ET SACRIS AEGYPTIORUM, WHICH WAS ONE OF THE FRUITS OF A TEMPORARY RESIDENCE IN EGYPT DURING HIS EARLY LIFE, THE DE FORMA MUNDI, IN WHICH, ACCORDING TO A REFERENCE IN BOETHIUS, THERE IS STATED A THEORY OF THE SPHERICAL SHAPE OF THE EARTH, AND THE DIALOGUS DE SUPERSTITIONE, TO WHICH ST. AUGUSTINE ALLUDES IN HIS DE CIVITATE DEI, BESIDES SEVERAL OTHER MORAL ESSAYS. SENECA ALSO WROTE A BIOGRAPHY OF HIS FATHER, AND PUBLISHED VARIOUS LETTERS NOW LOST. HE ALSO PREPARED A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT ADDRESSES FOR NERO, AND PRODUCED UNCOUNTED SPEECHES IN HIS PRACTICE AS AN ADVOCATE. THE ALLEGED CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN SENECA AND ST. PAUL, AS WELL AS SEVERAL OF THE WORKS WHICH WERE CREDITED TO SENECA IN THE MIDDLE AGES, ARE NOW KNOWN TO BE SPURIOUS.²

III. TIMES.

SENECA WAS BORN JUST AFTER THE BIRTH OF CHRIST IN ABOUT THE YEAR 4 A. D. HIS LIFE ENDED IN 65 A. D., JUST BEFORE THE DEATH OF NERO. HE LIVED IN A TIME OF POLITICAL CONFUSION. AUGUSTUS WAS RUNNING A GOVERNMENT WHICH WAS LARGELY UNCONSTITUTIONAL. NOMINALLY ROME WAS STILL A REPUBLIC; PRACTICALLY IT WAS AN EMPIRE. BECAUSE THERE WAS NO ESTABLISHED SUCCESSION TO THE THRONE, THE PRINCIPATE WAS CONTROLLED BY INTRIGUE OR CIVIL WAR. AFTER THE DEATH OF AUGUSTUS THERE CAME THE REST OF THE JULIO-CLAUDIAN LINE OF EMPERORS IN QUICK SUCCESSION. TIBERUS, CAIUS (CALIGULA), CLADIUS AND NERO. DURING THIS TIME THERE WAS COMPARATIVELY LITTLE FIGHTING ON THE OLD FRONTIER BATTLE LINES. THE MAIN STRUGGLE WAS A COLD WAR IN ROME ITSELF. ROME ENJOYED OUTWARD PEACE AND PROSPERITY; CONDITIONS WERE JUST RIGHT FOR THE THINKING MAN.

THE LATER YEARS OF THE JULIO-CLAUDIAN DYNASTY BROUGHT ABOUT THE COMPLETE TRANSFORMATION OF THE GOVERNMENT INTO AN ABSOLUTE MONARCHY AND ALSO LAID THE FOUNDATIONS FOR A LINE OF PHILOSOPHERS WHICH WOULD LAST FOR MORE THAN EIGHTY YEARS. THE STOIC^{al} PHILOSOPHY LEFT THE DOMAIN OF THE GREEK SCHOOLS TO BECOME A RELIGIOUS CREED AND A PRACTICAL CODE OF MORALS FOR EVERYDAY USE. BECAUSE IT WAS AT FIRST THOUGHT TO OPPOSE THE IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT, IT UNDERWENT A PERIOD OF PERSECUTION WHICH ONLY SERVED TO STRENGTHEN IT. THE FINAL STRUGGLE DIDN'T TAKE PLACE UNTIL AFTER SENECA'S DEATH. IN THE YEAR 94 A. D., DOMITIAN PASSED AN EDICT EXPELLING ALL PHILOSOPHERS FROM ROME. AFTER HIS ASSASSINATION TWO YEARS LATER, A GOVERNMENT DEEPLY IMBUED WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF STOICISM WAS ESTABLISHED.³

DUE TO THE SHAKY POLITICAL SITUATION, WRITERS OF THIS TIME HAD TO BE VERY CAREFUL OF HOW THEY CRITICIZED THE GOVERNMENT. RESTRICTIONS BEGAN TO BE FELT WITH THE RISE OF THE EMPERORS. ABOUT THE TIME OF AUGUSTUS THE WRITINGS OF GALLEUS DISAPPEARED AND THOSE OF LABIENUS WERE BURNED. OVID'S WORKS WERE EXCLUDED FROM THE OFFICIAL LIBRARY ON HIS BANISHMENT. AFTER AUGUSTUS, SEVERAL WRITERS WERE SUPPRESSED FOR OFFENDING THE EMPEROR. CONSEQUENTLY, THOSE WHO HAD OCCASION TO SPEAK OF THE EXISTING GOVERNMENT EITHER EXPRESSED THEMSELVES WITH EXTREME CAUTION OR INDULGED IN OVERLY EXAGGERATED FLATTERIES. DESPITE HIS HIGH IDEALS, SENECA, WHO DEPENDED UPON THE GOOD WILL OF NERO, WAS BY NO MEANS EXEMPT FROM STOOPING TO SUCH FLATTERY. THIS IS ESPECIALLY EVIDENT IN HIS WORK, DE CLEMETIA^N, WRITTEN TO THE YOUNG PRINCE TO ENCOURAGE HIM TOWARD THE IDEAL OF A MERCIFUL AND POPULAR RULER.⁴

IV. INFLUENCE.

IN PHILOSOPHY SENECA WAS A STOIC. HIS LITERARY FAME RESTS LARGELY ON HIS PHILOSOPHICAL PROSE WORKS, CONCERNING WHICH TEUFFEL REMARKS: HE STARTED FROM THE STOIC SYSTEM, BUT IN HIM ITS BARREN AUSTERITY WAS TONED DOWN, THE HARSHNESS SOFTENED, ITS CROTCHETS LAID ASIDE. HIS PRIMARY PURPOSE IS THE FORCIBLE AND ELOQUENT PRESENTATION AND ADVOCACY OF MORAL PRINCIPLES CONDUCTIVE TO THE BENEFIT OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND OF SOCIETY.⁵ SENECA WAS NOT ONLY IMPORTANT DURING HIS OWN TIME AS A LEADER OF THE ROMAN STOIC MOVEMENT, BUT HIS PHILOSOPHY WAS ALSO STUDIED SEVERAL CENTURIES AFTER HIS DEATH, POSSIBLY BECAUSE IT CLOSELY RESEMBLED THE NEW TEACHINGS OF THE CHRISTIANS OF THAT TIME.

SENECA'S TRAGEDIES HAVE HAD A VERY SUBSTANTIAL INFLUENCE UPON SUCCEEDING LITERATURE, ESPECIALLY UPON ENGLISH LITERATURE IN THE CASE OF PRE-ELIZABETHAN AND ELIZABETHAN DRAMA.

ALTHOUGH SENECA'S NATURAL QUESTIONS ARE NOT CONSIDERED TO HAVE ANY SCIENTIFIC VALUE, THEY ARE PRAISED FOR SOME EXCELLENT DESCRIPTIONS OF NATURAL PHENOMENA.⁶

V. STOICISM.

THE STOICS WERE A SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHERS FOUNDED AT THE CLOSE OF THE FOURTH CENTURY B. C., BY ZENO OF CITIUM AND SO CALLED FROM THE PLACE WHERE HE DELIVERED HIS LECTURES; VIZ., THE STOA OR PAINTED CORRIDOR ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE MARKET PLACE AT ATHENS. IT CANNOT BE CONSIDERED AS A PRODUCT OF PURELY GREEK INTELLECT BUT IS RATHER THE RESULT OF AN INTERACTION OF THE EAST AND WEST AFTER THE CONQUESTS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT. VERY FEW OF THE MEMBERS OF THIS SCHOOL WERE FROM THE HEART OF GREECE BUT USUALLY FROM ITS SURROUNDING TERRITORIES. MOREOVER, STOICISM DID NOT ACHIEVE ITS CROWNING TRIUMPH UNTIL IT WAS BROUGHT TO ROME WHERE IT COULD BE APPRECIATED AND BECOME THE PHILOSOPHY OF MANY GREAT MEN.

PHILOSOPHY FOR THE STOIC IS NOT PURE THEORY OR KNOWLEDGE FOR ITS OWN SAKE, BUT KNOWLEDGE REALIZED IN VIRTUOUS ACTION, THE LEARNING OF VIRTUE BY EXERCISE AND EFFORT AND TRAINING. THE THREE MAIN DIVISIONS OF PHILOSOPHY AT THAT TIME - LOGIC, PHYSICS AND ETHICS - ARE DEFINED AS THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE VIRTUES. ETHICS IS THE MOST VITAL OF THE THREE. THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE WHOLE SYSTEM ARE FOUND IN THE SCIENCE OF NATURE WHICH DEALS WITH THE UNIVERSE AND MAN, INCLUDING NATURAL THEOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY OR PSYCHOLOGY, THE LATTER FORMING THE DIRECT INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS.

THE BASIC CONCEPT OF STOIC PHILOSOPHY IS LOGOS, WHICH MEANS REASON OR REASONED SPEECH IN GREEK. FOR THE STOICS IT MEANT A DIVINE POWER OR BREATH (PNEUMA) PERVADING ALL THINGS. IT WAS BOTH REALITY AND DIVINE. PNEUMA OR LOGOS WAS THE QUALITY WHICH MAKES A THING TO BE WHAT IT IS, EG., THE HARDNESS OF THE IRON OR THE DENSITY OF STONE. PNEUMA WAS ALSO CONSIDERED TO

BE THE "TENSIONAL MOTION" WITHIN EACH ENTITY, A STRETCHING OR TIGHTNESS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ENTITY'S COHERENCE. FINALLY PNEUMA WAS THOUGHT TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR CONSCIOUSNESS AND PERCEPTION.

THE STOIC HELD THERE WERE ONLY TWO CLASSES OF MEN, THE WISE (VIRTUOUS) AND THE UNWISE (WICKED). THE IDEALLY WISE MAN HAD TO BE BOTH INDEPENDENT AND RESPONSIBLE TO DO GOOD TO OTHER MEN. HIS VIRTUE WAS HELD TO BE ALONE SUFFICIENT FOR HAPPINESS. THUS, HIS HAPPINESS COULD NOT BE IMPAIRED BY THE LOSS OF FAMILY, REPUTATION, OR ANY OTHER EXTERNAL BENEFIT. SO FAR AS HIS VIRTUE WAS CONCERNED THE STOIC WISE MAN WAS INDEPENDENT OF SOCIETY. YET, HE COULD BECOME MORE VIRTUOUS ONLY BY EXERCISING HIS VIRTUE IN RELATIONS WITH OTHER MEN IN POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY.

SIMPLICITY AND FRUGALITY PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN STOIC ETHICS. THE OLD STOA DESPISED SOCIAL CONVENTION. EVEN MORE SIGNIFICANT, THE STOICS EMPHASIZED THE ESSENTIAL KINSHIP OF ALL MEN THROUGH THEIR PARTICIPATION IN DIVINE REASON (LOGOS). THEY SPOKE OF A UNIVERSAL SOCIETY, DISREGARDED NOBILITY, AND WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSITION OF THE SLAVE.

STOICISM INFLUENCED CHRISTIANITY IN MANY RESPECTS. CHRISTIANS CONVERTED FROM STOICISM EXPRESSED THEIR NEW IDEAS IN FORMS OF OLD STOIC CONCEPTS. BOTH THE TERMS "LOGOS" AND "PNEUMA" HAVE TAKEN ON NEW MEANINGS CONSISTENT WITH CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE. THE STOICS HAD EMPHASIZED THE ESSENTIAL SIMILARITY OF ALL MEN AND THE MORAL RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH MAN TO PROVIDE FOR THE BASIC NEEDS OF OTHER MEN. THEY ALSO INSISTED UPON SIMPLICITY AND FRUGALITY AND THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN THE FACE OF AN EVIL AND HOSTILE SOCIETY. ALL OF THESE TEACHINGS WERE IN CONFORMITY WITH CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES.⁷

VI. ROMAN STOICISM.

APART FROM HIS PERSONAL HISTORY, SENECA CLAIMS OUR ATTENTION AS THE LEADING EXPONENT OF ROMAN STOICISM. MOST OF HIS PROSE WORKS ARE STOIC TRACTS. BECAUSE OF THE PRESSING URGENCY OF RELIGIOUS DECAY AND POLITICAL DEPRESSION AND ALSO PERSONAL PERIL FOR MEN OF RANK, THE STOIC ATTITUDE TOWARD LIFE AND DEATH WAS ONE WHICH APPEALED VITALLY TO MANY OF THE BEST QUALITIES OF THE ROMAN MIND. STOICISM UNDOUBTEDLY ATTAINED FAR GREATER SOCIAL IMPORTANCE AMONG THE ROMANS THAN WHAT ITS THEORETIC VALUE MAY SEEM TO HAVE WARRANTED.⁸

STOICISM LOOKED BACK UPON THE FIELD OF GREEK PHILOSOPHY AND WAS IN CONTACT WITH PHILOSOPHICAL IDEAS WHICH EMANATED FROM THE EAST. ITS ADHERENTS ENGAGED WITH MOST OF THE PROBLEMS ALREADY RAISED BY PHILOSOPHICAL SPECULATION - METAPHYSICAL, PHYSICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, ETHICAL, LOGICAL, POLITICAL - AND THEY SPREAD THEIR TEACHING FAR AND WIDE OVER THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN. BUT THE ROMANS ADOPTED ONLY THE PARTS OF A PHILOSOPHY WHICH INTERESTED THEM. THUS THEY DROPPED THE METAPHYSICAL QUESTIONS AND WERE INTERESTED PRIMARILY IN ACTION AND ITS ~~PSY~~SPRINGS AND JUSTIFICATION. HENCE, ROMAN PHILOSOPHY IS LARGELY ECLECTIC, AND IS CONCERNED CHIEFLY WITH MORALS.⁹

ROMAN STOICISM IS AN ATTITUDE OF LIFE BASED ON A FEW FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS VARIOUSLY EXPRESSED. IT IS NOT NECESSARILY A RELIGION, THOUGH IT MAY TAKE A STRONGLY RELIGIOUS FORM. NEITHER IS IT A TRUE PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEM. IT IS NOT A BODY OF CAREFULLY ENUNCIATED ETHICAL DOCTRINE. STILL LESS IS IT A MERE REFLECTION OF GREEK STOICISM, FOR IT HAS A VERY DEFINITE ROMAN CHARACTER. ROMAN STOICISM PAID LITTLE ATTENTION TO A BASIC PHILOSOPHY

AND BUILT UP A LARGE BODY OF PRECEPTS. THOUGH REFERENCE WAS MADE TO ONE OR TWO FUNDAMENTAL POSTULATES, WHAT REALLY CARRIED AUTHORITY WAS THE EXAMPLE OF THE TEACHING OF THE STOIC 'WISE' MAN WHO POSSESSED INSIGHT INTO THE CANONS OF MORAL BEHAVIOR. 'WHAT WILL THE "SAGE" DO IN SUCH AND SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES?' IS THE STOIC CRITERIAN, WHEREAS THE EARLIER GREEK QUESTION WAS 'HOW AM I TO DISCOVER BY AN INTELLECTUAL PROCESS WHAT IS RIGHT AND THEREFORE WHAT IS RIGHT IN THIS PARTICULAR CASE?'¹⁰

WITHOUT GOING INTO THE TEACHINGS ON PHYSICS, LOGIC AND PSYCHOLOGY, IT IS ENOUGH TO SAY THAT THE IMPORTANT THING FOR MAN WAS THAT 'HE SHOULD LIVE ACCORDING TO NATURE', AND NATURE WAS THAT FORCE OR PROVIDENCE WHICH ORDAINS THAT THINGS SHALL BE AS THEY ARE. MAN'S HOPE OF HAPPINESS LIES IN SUBORDINATION TO THIS ALL - PERVADING AND LIFE - SUSTAINING POWER. THE ONENESS OF THIS PRINCIPLE IMPLIES THE UNITY OF MANKIND, THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN AND THE POTENTIAL EQUALITY OF ALL MEN. STOICISM VACILLATED ON SOME PROBLEMS WHICH MAY OCCUR TO THE ORDINARY MAN, SUCH AS GOD, IMMORTALITY, ~~FREE~~WILL, AND DEATH. SOMETIMES GOD IS FATE, SOMETIMES A PERSONAL AND LOVING DEITY. MAN COULD BE A SPARK OF THE DIVINE OR A SPECK OF DUST. THE SOUL COULD BE IMMORTAL OR CONSUMED IN A FINAL CONFLAGRATION. DESPITE THESE DOUBTS, AN ETHICAL IDEAL IS FORMED. THE SAGE CANNOT BE DISTRESSED BY TROUBLE; HE IS SUPERIOR TO RICHES AND POVERTY, TO OPINION FRIENDLY AND CRITICAL. HE IS KIND TO FRIENDS AND MERCIFUL TO ENEMIES. HE RESPECTS HIS NEIGHBORS AND DOES NOTHING TO INFRINGE UPON THEIR LIBERTY. HE WILL DEPART THIS WORLD WITH THE CONSCIOUSNESS THAT IN INDEPENDENCE OF SPIRIT HE HAS BORNE ALIKE ITS JOYS AND SORROWS AND THAT DEATH HOLDS NO TERRORS. BUT THIS WAS ONLY THEORY; AS WE CAN SEE IN SENECA'S LIFE, ACTUAL PRACTICE WAS

FAR DIFFERENT. AT BEST THE SAGE INTENDED TO ISOLATE HIMSELF FROM THE WORLD DESPITE MANY PROTESTATIONS THAT HE SHOULD TAKE PART IN ITS ACTIVITIES. AT WORSE HE SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH A SMUG SELF-COMPLACENCY AND CONTEMPT OF HIS FELLOWS.

ULTIMATELY, STOICISM FAILED TO ANSWER THE URGENT MORAL QUESTIONS OF THE TIMES. IT OFFERED A NOBLE IDEAL BUT NO MOTIVE OR REASON FOR ENTHUSIASM. IT DEMANDED THAT MAN IGNORE THE WORLD AND SAVE HIMSELF ON HIS OWN RESOURCES. THE MULTITUDE REJECTED STOICISM AS A BARREN TEACHING WHICH OFFERED LITTLE SUBSTANTIAL THOUGHT FOR A PRACTICAL PEOPLE. ¹¹

VII. THE PHILOSOPHY OF SENECA.

A. RELATIONSHIP TO PHILOSOPHY.

BY THE TIME OF SENECA, STOICISM HAD BEEN QUITE FIRMLY ESTABLISHED AS A WAY OF THOUGHT BY THE GREEKS, AND WAS BEGINNING TO BECOME PART OF THE ROMAN WORLD. AS WE HAVE SEEN IN SO MANY INSTANCES THE ROMANS COULD NOT INHERIT A WAY OF THOUGHT FROM THEIR GREEK NEIGHBORS WITHOUT ADDING THEIR OWN DISTINCT QUALITIES. THE GREEK STOICISM WHICH HAD BEEN ONLY A THEORY WAS NOW TURNED INTO A PRACTICAL WAY OF LIFE. SENECA PLAYED A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE IN HELPING THIS TRANSITION AND REMOULDING OF THE STOIC IDEA. WE SEE THIS NOTE OF PRACTICALITY ALMOST IMMEDIATELY IN SENECA'S WRITINGS JUST BY GLANCING AT THE TITLES OF HIS WORK. HE IS NOT CONCERNED WITH SPECULATIVE KNOWLEDGE BUT IS RATHER INTERESTED IN SUBJECTS WHICH APPLY TO DAILY LIFE. IN DE VITA BEATA HE CONSIDERS WHAT TRUE HAPPINESS IS AND HOW IT CAN BE OBTAINED. IN THE DE TRANQUILLITATE ANIMI THE AUTHOR COUNSELS SERENUS ON HOW TO COPE WITH LUXURY, PUBLIC AFFAIRS, AND LITERARY FAME. IN DE BREVITATE VITAE HE DISCUSSES HOW TO LIVE A GOOD LIFE AND HOW TO DIE. SENECA SEEMS TO BE GENERALLY IMPRESSED WITH THE SHORT TIME WE HAVE TO LIVE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF USING EACH MOMENT WELL. PRACTICALLY HIS WHOLE PHILOSOPHY IS BUILT AROUND QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE PRACTICAL VIRTUES OF DAILY LIFE.

WE CAN TRACE SOME OF THE ORIGINS OF SENECA'S IDEAS ON LIFE TO HIS TEACHERS. EVIDENTLY HE WAS GREATLY IMPRESSED AS A YOUNG MAN BY THE STOIC ATTALUS. HE WAS THE FIRST TO ARRIVE AND THE LAST TO LEAVE CLASS. WHEN HE HEARD ATTALUS DECLAIM THE VICES AND MISERIES OF LIFE HE WAS MOVED TO PITY THE HUMAN RACE; WHEN ATTALUS PRAISED POVERTY, HE WANTED TO BE POOR;

WHEN HE ATTACKED PLEASURES HE RESOLVED TO PRACTICE SELF-DENIAL. ANOTHER IMPRESSIVE TEACHER WAS SOTION THE PATHAGOREAN, UNDER WHOSE INFLUENCE SENECA TOOK UP VEGETARIANISM FOR A TIME.¹²

THE WHOLE TEACHING OF LATER STOICISM WAS BASED ON THE INDIVIDUAL'S FREEDOM OF CHOICE. SENECA ESPECIALLY RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WILL. 'WHAT DO YOU NEED TO BE A GOOD MAN?' HE ASKS, AND ANSWERS, 'THE WILL TO BE'. THE STOICISM OF SENECA MARKS A BREAK WITH THE INTELLECTUALISM OF EARLIER GREEK THOUGHT. HE NO LONGER ASSUMED THAT TO KNOW WHAT WAS RIGHT MEANT TO DO WHAT WAS RIGHT. MERE KNOWLEDGE OF VIRTUE DOES NOT MAKE IT PART OF A PERSON. THE EMPHASIS IS SHIFTED FROM WISDOM TO GOODNESS, FROM KNOWLEDGE TO THE WILL.¹³

IN THIS PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE SENECA PROCEEDS TO SET UP AN IDEAL FOR MANKIND REPRESENTED IN THE FIGURE OF THE WISE MAN, INVULNERABLE TO INJURY AND ILL FORTUNE, CONSISTENT AND SELF-SUFFICIENT, SUBJECT TO NEITHER HOPES NOR FEARS, CONSCIOUS OF HIS OWN SUPERIORITY AND INVULNERABLE TO INSULT. THE EMOTIONS MUST BE SUBDUED. THE WISE MAN WILL NOT BE ANGRY, EVEN IF HE SEES HIS FATHER KILLED AND HIS MOTHER RAPED. HE WILL BE FREE FROM THE WEAKNESS OF PITY, WHICH SENECA COMPARES TO LAUGHING WHEN OTHERS LAUGH, AND YAWNING WHEN THEY YAWN. THE FLESH MUST BE DISCIPLINED. LUXURIES ARE UNNECESSARY AND ENERVATING; ONLY A LITTLE IS NEEDED FOR FOOD AND CLOTHING, AND THE MAN WHO ACCUSTOMS HIMSELF TO LIVING WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF NATURE WILL HAVE NO CAUSE TO FEAR POVERTY. IF THERE IS ANYTHING IN SENECA'S ANALYSIS OF THE MALAISE OF HIS TIMES, IT MAY WELL BE THAT THE HEROIC SELF-DISCIPLINE OF STOICISM APPEALED TO SOME AS PROVIDING A WAY OUT OF THE TEDIOUS OF AIMLESS PLEASURE SEEKING. SENECA LIVED AT A TIME WHEN ROME WAS

FLOURISHING. ROMANS WERE WEALTHY AND WERE FREE TO SPEND THEIR TIME AS THEY WISHED. BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THEIR EXCESS LEISURE TIME, LIFE WAS BORING AND MEANINGLESS. SENECA TRIED TO REPLACE THIS TAEDIUM VITAE, AS HE CALLED IT, WITH A MEANINGFUL PURPOSE IN DAILY LIVING.¹⁴

ALTHOUGH STOICISM HAS THE REPUTATION OF BEING A RATHER HARSH AND INHUMANE PHILOSOPHY, SENECA DID NOT PURSUE THIS APPROACH. HE POINTED OUT THAT WHILE A WISE MAN DOES NOT FEEL PITY, HE WILL SHOW CLEMENCY, WHICH DIFFERS FROM PITY AS RELIGION FROM SUPERSTITION. HE WILL HELP OTHERS, NOT FROM EMOTION, BUT BECAUSE OF THE BOND THAT UNITES MANKIND. BECAUSE OF THIS COMMON BOND OF MANKIND, SENECA CONSIDERS ALL MEN EQUAL DESPITE WEALTH OR SOCIAL CLASS. HE VIGOROUSLY DEFENDED SLAVES BECAUSE THEY ARE HUMAN BEINGS.

IN DE CLEMENTIA HE SAYS:

"IT IS PRAISEWORTHY TO USE AUTHORITY OVER SALVES WITH MODERATION. EVEN IN THE CASE OF A HUMAN CHATTEL YOU SHOULD CONSIDER NOT HOW MUCH HE CAN BE MADE TO SUFFER WITHOUT RETALIATING, BUT HOW MUCH YOU ARE PERMITTED TO INFLICT BY THE PRINCIPLES OF EQUITY AND RIGHT, WHICH REQUIRE THAT MERCY SHOULD BE SHOWN EVEN TO CAPTIVES AND PURCHASED SLAVES."

SENECA HOLDS THAT WHILE IT MIGHT BE LAWFUL TO DO ANYTHING TO A SLAVE, CERTAIN THINGS WERE FORBIDDEN BY THE COMMON LAW OF LIVING THINGS. AT THE SAME TIME SENECA IS DISGUSTED WITH HIS FELLOW MEN. HE THINKS OF A MASS OF MEN LIKE A GROUP OF ANIMALS SHAMELESS AND IMMORAL. HE IS FILLED WITH DIS- TASTE AND INDIGNATION FOR SOCIETY. HIS MORALITY IS ESSENTIALLY SELF- CENTERED, AND HE SHRINKS FROM DEGRADING CONTACTS. HIS ADVICE TO LUCILIUS IS TO AVOID CROWDS AND TO RETIRE INTO HIMSELF, TO MIX ONLY WITH THOSE LIKELY TO MAKE HIM BETTER OR TO BE MADE BETTER BY HIM.¹⁵

WE MIGHT SAY SENECA REGARDED THE TRUE FUNCTION OF PHILOSOPHY AS A

PURELY ETHICAL, REFORMING, GUIDING PRINCIPLE TO CONDUCT. HE IS FAR MORE A PREACHER OR SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR THAN A THINKER. PHILOSOPHY IN ITS HIGHEST AND BEST SENSE IS NOT THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE FOR ITS OWN SAKE, NOR IS IT A DISINTERESTED PLAY OF THE INTELLECT. IT IS ABOVE ALL THE SCIENCE OR ART OF RIGHT LIVING, THAT IS OF A LIFE CONFORMED TO RIGHT REASON. ITS GREAT END IS THE PRODUCTION OF THE SAPIENS, THE MAN WHO SEES THE TRUE PROPORTIONS OF THINGS AND WHO HAS TRAINED HIS AFFECTIONS TO OBEY THE HIGHER LAW. THE TRUE PHILOSOPHER IS NO LONGER THE COLD, DETACHED STUDENT OF INTELLECTUAL PROBLEMS, REMOVED FROM THE STRUGGLES OF HUMAN LIFE. HE IS A TEACHER SENT TO BRING MEN TO THE IDEAL MAN.¹⁶

B. MORAL TEACHINGS.

SENECA'S VIEWS ON THE NATURE OF GOD AND HIS RELATIONS TO THE EXTERNAL WORLD ARE RATHER CLOUDY BUT WOULD SEEM TO FOLLOW THE OLD STOIC TRADITION. HE SEEMS TO WAVER BETWEEN DIFFERENT CONCEPTIONS OF GOD, THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE, THE INCORPOREAL REASON, THE DIVINE BREATH DIFFUSED THROUGH ALL THINGS, FATE, OR THE IMMUTABLE CHAIN OF INTERLINKED CAUSATION. IT IS CLEAR THAT HE TENDS TOWARDS A MORE ETHICAL CONCEPTION OF THE DEITY, AS THE BEING WHO LOVES AND CARES FOR MAN. THE GOD OF THE STOICS IS A VERY ELASTIC OR COMPREHENSIVE CONCEPTION. HE MAY BE VIEWED AS A UBIQUITOUS FORCE FOUND IN AIR, ETHER, OR FIRE. HE IS THE SOUL, THE BREATH, THE ANIMA MUNDI. HE IS ALSO THE UNIVERSAL LAW, THE RATIONAL PRINCIPLE, UNDERLYING ALL THE APPARENTLY CASUAL AND FITFUL PHENOMENA OF PHYSICAL NATURE AND HUMAN LIFE. IN SENECA, GOD IS DEVELOPED INTO A MORAL AND SPIRITUAL BEING, THE SOURCE OF ALL SPIRITUAL INTUITION AND VIRTUOUS EMOTION, THE SECRET POWER WITHIN US MAKING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS, AS HE IS THE SECRET FORCE IN ALL NATURE MAKING

FOR ORDER.

WE FIND IN SENECA'S TEACHINGS ALL THE STOIC GOSPEL AND MORAL IDEALISM. THE FAILURES AND ABBERATIONS OF MEN ARISE FROM A FALSE CONCEPTION OF WHAT IS GOOD, PRODUCED BY THE WARPING EFFECT OF EXTERNAL UPON THE HIGHER PRINCIPLE. THE "KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS WITHIN". IT IS THE FREEDOM, THE PEACE, THE TRANQUIL SENSE OF POWER OVER ALL THAT IS FORTUITOUS AND EXTERNAL AND FLEETING, WHICH ALONE CAN REALIZE THE HIGHEST GOOD OF MAN. IT IS ATTAINED ONLY BY VIRTUE, THAT IS, BY LIVING IN OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW OF REASON, WHICH HAS ITS VOICE AND REPRESENTATIVE IN EACH HUMAN SOUL. NOTHING IS A REAL GOOD WHICH HAS NOT THE STAMP AND HALL-MARK OF REASON, WHICH IS NOT WITHIN THE SOUL ITSELF, THAT IS WITHIN OUR OWN POWER. IF WE GUARD THE DIVINE REASON WITHIN US AND OBEY ITS WARNINGS, WHICH ARE IN TRUTH THE VOICE OF GOD, THEN WE HAVE AN IMPREGNABLE FORTRESS WHICH CANNOT BE STORMED BY ANY ADVERSE FORTUNE. THE RESULT IS A CESSATION OF THE WEARY CONFLICT BETWEEN THE "LAW IN THE MEMBERS" AND "THE LAW OF THE MIND," WHICH ENDS SO OFTEN IN THAT OTHER PEACE OF A "MARE MORTUUM," A STILLNESS OF MORAL DEATH.

AS WE EXPLORE THE GOSPEL OF SENECA WE FIND SOME ESSENTIALS MISSING. FOR INSTANCE, WHERE IS THE SOURCE OF THE FORCE WHICH INDUCES THE REPENTANT TOWARD INDEFECTIBLE VIRTUE? AND WHAT IS THE REWARD WHICH COMPENSATES FOR THIS RENUNCIATION? THE STOIC ANSWER TO THE FIRST QUESTION IS DIVINE REASON OF EVERY HUMAN SOUL WHICH GRAVITATES TOWARD THE DIVINE WORLD. THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS FREEDOM IS TO GRASP THE FUNDAMENTAL LAW - THAT THE ONLY GOOD LIES IN CONFORMITY TO REASON, TO THE HIGHER PART OF OUR BEING. IF WE YIELD TO ITS BIDDING, WE CAN AT ONCE CUT OURSELVES OFF FROM THE DECEITFUL

LIFE OF THE SENSES, AND THE VISION OF THE TRUE HAPPINESS IN VIRTUE IS REVEALED. WHEN THAT VISION IS SEEN, WE MUST THEN SEEK TO FORM A HABIT OF THE SOUL WHICH SHALL STEADILY CONFORM TO THE UNIVERSAL LAW, AND FINALLY RESOLVE UPON A VIRTUOUS ACT. IT IS THIS FIXED AND STABLE RESOLUTION WHICH IS THE STOIC IDEAL ALTHOUGH EXPERIENCE SHOWED IT WAS RARELY ATTAINED.

THE IDEAL SAPIENS UPHELD BY SENECA, LEFT THE GREAT MASS OF MEN GROVELING IN FILTH AND DARKNESS. HE FELT THE MAJORITY OF MEN WERE ALL BAD, THE ONLY VARIATION BEING IN THE VARIOUS FASHION OF VICES. YET, SENECA IS FORCED TO ADMIT THERE WERE SOME MEN ON THE WAY TO BEING FREED FROM THE WORLD AND FLESH. HE EVEN DISTINGUISHES THREE CLASSES OF MORAL PROGRESS. THERE IS THE MAN WHO HAS CONQUERED MANY SERIOUS VICES, BUT IS STILL ATTACHED TO OTHERS. OR THE ONE WHO HAS GOTTEN RID OF HIS WORST FAULTS AND PASSIONS BUT IS NOT SECURE AGAINST RELAPSE. FINALLY, THERE ARE THOSE WHO HAVE ALMOST REACHED THEIR GOAL BUT STILL LACK FULL ASSURANCE RESERVED FOR THE TRULY WISE. SENECA IS STILL IN BONDAGE OF THE HARD STOIC TRADITION, IN SPITE OF HIS ABERATIONS FROM IT. HE HAS NO REAL CONCEPT OF THE VIRTUE OF HUMILITY.

SENECA PREACHES HIS GOSPEL TO A RATHER LIMITED CLASS. DESPITE HIS PROFESSED BELIEF IN EQUALITY OF MANKIND HE IS CONCERNED MAINLY WITH THE ARISTOCRATIC CLASS, THE SLAVES OF WEALTH AND VICE. HE IS TRYING TO SAVE THE MASTERS OF GREAT HOUSEHOLDS AND PALACES, MEN WHO HAVE AWFUL SECRETS AND WHOSE OUTSIDE TRANQUILITY IS DISSOLVED TO FEAR WITHIN. THESE ARE MEN WITH NO RELIGIONS OR PHILOSOPHIC FAITH, WHO ARE TERRIBLY AFRAID OF DEATH. IN DEALING WITH SUCH PEOPLE SENECA RECOGNIZES THE NEED, BOTH OF THE GREAT PRINCIPLES OF RIGHT LIVING AND OF PARTICULAR PRECEPTS, ADAPTED TO VARIETIES

OF CHARACTER AND CIRCUMSTANCE.¹⁷

VIII. EPISTULAE MORALES.

IN ORDER TO GET SOME IDEA OF THE TONE AND STYLE OF SENECA'S WRITINGS WE WILL NOW TAKE A COUPLE SELECTIONS OF SENECA'S EPISTULAE MORALES. THESE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FOUR LETTERS CONTAIN SENECA'S MOST ATTRACTIVE PHILOSOPHICAL WRITINGS. THEY READ LIKE MID-WEEK CHATS OF A SKILLFUL PREACHER. THE SUBJECTS OF THESE LETTERS COVER A WIDE RANGE, BUT THE CENTRAL THEME IS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY OF PHILOSOPHY. PHILOSOPHY OFFERS GUIDANCE TO LIFE AND LIFE'S ONLY TRUE PLEASURE. IT TEACHES MEN TO BE DETACHED FROM THE WORLD, TO SCORN THE FEAR OF DEATH AND PURSUE A VIRTUOUS LIFE. BECAUSE SENECA OFTEN USES EXAMPLES OF DAILY LIFE, THESE LETTERS AFFORD INTIMATE GLIMPSES INTO THE ROMAN SCENE. THE PERSONAL TONE OF THE LETTERS GIVES US AN INSIGHT INTO SENECA'S HABITS OF MIND AND THE DETAILS OF HIS DAILY LIFE.¹⁸

IN THE FIRST SELECTION SENECA IS GIVING LUCILIUS SOME POINTERS ON ATTAINING SPIRITUAL PERFECTION. SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND CONFESSION ARE THE KEYS TO MORAL PROGRESS, THUS, SELF-EXAMINATION IS IMPORTANT. IN THE QUIET OF EACH NIGHT WE SHOULD REVIEW OUR CONDUCT, MARKING CAREFULLY WHERE WE HAVE FALLEN SHORT AND BEING ENCOURAGED BY ANY SIGNS OF SELF-CONQUEST.

"BE TRUE TO YOURSELF, AND EXAMINE YOURSELF WHETHER YOU BE OF THE SAME MIND TODAY THAT YOU WERE YESTERDAY, FOR THAT IS A SIGN OF PERFECT WISDOM. AND YET GIVE ME LEAVE TO TELL YOU, THAT THOUGH CHANGE OF MIND BE A TOKEN OF IMPERFECTION, IT IS THE BUSINESS OF MY AGE TO RECOMMEND IT TO YOUR PRACTICE

TOO, IN MANY CASES; FOR THE ABATEMENT OF OUR APPETITES AND OF OUR ERRORS IS THE BEST ENTERTAINMENT OF MANKIND. IT IS FOR YOUNG MEN TO GATHER KNOWLEDGE, AND FOR OLD MEN TO USE IT; AND ASSURE YOURSELF THAT NO MAN GIVES A FAIRER ACCOUNT OF HIS TIME THAN HE THAT MAKES IT HIS DAILY STUDY TO MAKE HIMSELF BETTER. IF YOU BE IN HEALTH, AND THINK IT WORTH YOUR WHILE TO BECOME THE MASTER OF YOURSELF, IT IS MY DESIRE AND MY ADVICE, THAT YOU APPLY YOURSELF TO WISDOM WITH YOUR WHOLE HEART, AND JUDGE OF YOUR IMPROVEMENT, NOT BY WHAT YOU SPEAK, OR BY WHAT YOU WRITE, BUT BY THE FIRMNESS OF YOUR MIND, AND THE GOVERNMENT OF YOUR PASSIONS. WHAT EXTREMITIES SOME MEN HAVE ENDURED IN SIEGES, EVEN FOR THE AMBITION AND INTEREST OF OTHER PEOPLE."¹⁹

IN THIS NEXT SELECTION, SENECA OUTLINES THE VIRTUES OF THE WISE MAN SO PREVALENT IN STOIC PHILOSOPHY.

"A WISE MAN CARRIES ALL HIS TREASURES WITHIN HIMSELF: WHAT FORTUNE GIVES SHE MAY TAKE; BUT HE LEAVES NOTHING AT HER MERCY. HE STANDS FIRM, AND KEEPS HIS GROUND AGAINST ALL MISFORTUNES, WITHOUT SO MUCH AS CHANGING COUNTENANCE. HE IS FREE, INVIOLEABLE, UNSHAKEN; PROOF AGAINST ALL ACCIDENTS, AND NOT ONLY INVINCIBLE, BUT INFLEXIBLE. SO LONG AS HE CANNOT LOSE ANYTHING OF HIS OWN, HE NEVER TROUBLES HIMSELF FOR WHAT IS ANOTHER'S. HE IS A FRIEND TO PROVIDENCE, AND WILL NOT MURMUR AT ANYTHING THAT COMES TO PASS GOD'S APPOINTMENT. HE IS NOT ONLY RESOLUTE, BUT GENEROUS

AND GOOD-NATURED, AND READY TO LAY DOWN HIS LIFE IN A GOOD CAUSE;
AND FOR THE PUBLIC SAFETY TO SACRIFICE HIS OWN. HE DOES NOT SO
MUCH CONSIDER THE PLEASURE OF HIS LIFE AS THE NEED THAT THE WORLD
HAS OF HIM; NEITHER IS HE WEARY OF HIS LIFE WHILE HE MAY SERVE
EITHER HIS WIFE OR HIS FRIENDS. NOR IS IT ALL THAT HIS LIFE IS
PROFITABLE TO THEM, BUT IT IS LIKEWISE DELIGHTFUL TO HIMSELF,
AND CARRIES ITS OWN REWARD; FOR WHAT CAN BE MORE COMFORTABLE
THAN TO BE SO DEAR TO ANOTHER, AS FOR THAT VERY REASON TO BE-
COME DEARER TO HIMSELF? IF HE LOSE A CHILD, HE IS PENSIVE; HE
IS COMPASSIONATE TO THE SICK, AND ONLY TROUBLED WHEN HE SEES
MEN WALLOWING IN INFAMY AND VICE: WHEREAS; ONE MAN HANKERING
AFTER HIS NEIGHBOR'S WIFE; ANOTHER AS MUCH OUT OF HUMOR FOR
HIS SUCCESS. IF HE LOSE AN ESTATE, HE PARTS WITH IT AS A THING
THAT WAS ONLY ADVENTITIOUS; OR IF IT WAS OF HIS OWN ACQUIRING,
HE COMPUTES THE POSSESSION AND LOSS, AND SAYS THUS TO HIMSELF:
I SHALL LIVE AS WELL AFTERWARD AS I DID BEFORE. OUR HOUSES
(SAYS HE) MAY BE BURNT OR ROBBED; OUR LANDS TAKEN FROM US;
AND WE CAN CALL NOTHING OUR OWN THAT IS UNDER DOMINION OF
FORTUNE. IT IS A FOOLISH AVARICE THAT RESTRAINS ALL THINGS TO
A PROPRIETY, AND BELIEVES NOTHING TO BE A MAN'S OWN THAT IS PUB-
LIC: WHEREAS A WISE MAN JUDGES NOTHING SO MUCH HIS OWN AS THAT
WHEREIN MANKIND IS ALLOWED TO SHARE."²⁰

PERHAPS THE BEST EXAMPLE OF A MAN'S REAL PHILOSOPHY IS THE WAY HE
ACTUALLY LIVES HIS LIFE. THIS NEXT SELECTION IS AN INTERESTING PASSAGE IN
WHICH SENECA DESCRIBES HIS DAILY SCHEDULE.

"THIS DAY I GAVE ENTIRELY TO MYSELF, WITHOUT ANY KNOCKING AT MY DOOR, OR LIFTING UP OF THE HANGING; BUT I HAVE DIVIDED IT BETWIXT MY BOOK AND MY BED, AND BEEN LEFT AT LIBERTY TO DO MY OWN BUSINESS: FOR ALL THE IMPERTINENTS WERE EITHER AT THE THEATER, AT THE BOWLS, OR AT THE HORSE-MATCH. MY BODY DOES NOT REQUIRE MUCH EXERCISE, AND I AM BEHOLDEN TO MY AGE FOR IT: A LITTLE MAKES ME WEARY; AND THAT IS THE END ALSO OF THAT WHICH IS MOST ROBUST. MY DINNER IS A PIECE OF DRY BREAD, WITHOUT A TABLE, AND WITHOUT FOULING MY FINGERS. MY SLEEPS ARE SHORT, AND IN TRUTH A LITTLE DOUBTFUL BETWIXT SLUMBERING AND WAKING. ONE WHILE I AM REFLECTING UPON THE ERRORS OF ANTIQUITY; AND THEN I APPLY MYSELF TO THE CORRECTING OF MY OWN. IN MY READING, WITH REVERENCE TO THE ANCIENTS, SOME THINGS I TAKE, OTHERS I ALTER; AND SOME AGAIN I REJECT, OTHERS I INVENT, WITHOUT ENTHRALLING MYSELF SO TO ANOTHER'S JUDGEMENT AS NOT TO PRESERVE THE FREEDOM OF MY OWN. SOMETIMES, OF A SUDDEN, IN THE MIDDLE OF MY MEDITATIONS, MY EARS ARE STRUCK WITH THE SHOUT OF A THOUSAND PEOPLE TOGETHER, FROM SOME SPECTACLE OR OTHER; THE NOISE DOES NOT AT ALL DISCOMPOSE MY THOUGHT; IT IS NO MORE TO ME THAN THE DASHING OF WAVES, OF THE WIND IN A WOOD; BUT POSSIBLY SOMETIMES IT MAY DIVERT THEM. "GOOD LORD," THINK I, "IF MEN WOULD BUT EXERCISE THEIR BRAINS AS THEY DO THEIR BODIES; AND TAKE AS MUCH PAINS FOR VIRTUE AS THEY DO FOR PLEASURE!" FOR DIFFICULTIES STRENGTHEN THE MIND AS WELL AS LABOR DOES THE BODY."²¹

IX. ANNAEI SENECAE AD LUCILIUM EPISTULAE.

LETTER No. III - ON FRIENDSHIP.

1 YOU HAVE SENT ME A LETTER WHICH YOU SAY WAS DELIVERED BY A FRIEND
OF YOURS. THEN YOU WARN ME NOT TO TALK TO HIM ABOUT THINGS THAT PERTAIN TO YOU, BECAUSE YOU DON'T USUALLY DO THIS YOURSELF. THUS, IN THE
SAME LETTER, YOU SAID HE WAS AND WASN'T YOUR FRIEND. IF YOU USED THAT
PARTICULAR WORD IN ITS POPULAR USAGE AND THUS CALLED HIM 'FRIEND' THE
WAY WE CALL ALL POLITICIANS GOOD MEN, OR THE WAY WE CALL CASUAL AC-
QUAINTANCES 'FRIEND,' OR WHEN WE CAN'T THINK OF A NAME AND WE CALL THE
2 PERSON 'SIR', THAT'S O.K. BUT IF YOU THINK SOMEONE IS A 'FRIEND' WHOM
YOU DON'T TRUST JUST AS MUCH AS YOURSELF, THEN YOU ARE WAY OFF. YOU
DON'T KNOW THE FULL VALUE OF TRUE FRIENDSHIP. YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO
DISCUSS EVERYTHING WITH A FRIEND ---BUT FIRST OF ALL BE ABLE TO DIS-
CUSS THE FRIEND HIMSELF. FRIENDSHIP SHOULD BE SCRUTINIZED BEFORE IT IS
TRUSTED. AGAINST ALL THE RULES OF THEOPHRASTUS, SOME PEOPLE GET ALL
SCREWED UP WHEN THEY LOVE BEFORE THEY JUDGE, INSTEAD OF AFTER. THINK
FOR A LONG WHILE WHETHER OR NOT YOU OUGHT TO ACCEPT SOMEONE AS YOUR
3 FRIEND. WHEN YOU ARE SATISFIED THAT YOU OUGHT, OPEN UP YOUR WHOLE
HEART TO HIM. SPEAK TO HIM AS OPENLY AS YOU WOULD WITH YOURSELF. YOU
MAY LIVE SO AS TO TRUST YOURSELF WITH NOTHING YOU WOULDN'T TRUST YOUR
ENEMY WITH, BUT SINCE THERE ARE THOSE THINGS WHICH GOOD ETIQUETTE WOULD
KEEP SECRET, AT LEAST SHARE ALL YOUR THOUGHTS AND TROUBLES WITH YOUR
FRIEND. IF YOU THINK OF HIM AS BEING LOYAL, YOU WILL MAKE HIM LOYAL.
SOME SAY YOU SHOULD DECEIVE RATHER THAN BE DECEIVED, AND BY SUSPICIONS
HAVE MADE IT RIGHT FOR A FRIEND TO BETRAY A FRIEND. BUT WHY IS THIS?

WHY SHOULD I HOLD BACK ANYTHING IN THE PRESENCE OF MY FRIEND? WHY
SHOULDN'T I CONSIDER MYSELF ALONE IN HIS PRESENCE?

- 4 THERE ARE CERTAIN PEOPLE WHO TELL ANYONE THEY MEET WHAT IS MEANT
FOR FRIENDS ALONE, AND UNLOAD ON THE CHANCE LISTENER WHATEVER IRKS
THEM. OTHERS DREAD CONFIDING IN EVEN THE MOST CONSCIENTIOUS OF LOVED
ONES AND IF THEY COULD, THEY WOULDN'T EVEN TRUST THEMSELVES, BURYING
THEIR SECRETS DEEP WITHIN. WE SHOULDN'T DO EITHER OF THESE THINGS.
IT IS JUST AS BAD TO TRUST EVERYBODY AS NO ONE AT ALL. THE FORMER
5 FAULT IS MORE BECOMING AND THE LATTER MORE SAFE. YOU SHOULD REBUKE
BOTH KINDS OF MEN, THOSE WHO NEVER SHUT UP AND THOSE WHO NEVER SPEAK.
FOR THE LOVE OF CONSTANT ACTION IS NOT DILIGENCE--- JUST THE RESTLESS-
NESS OF A HAUNTED MIND. AND TRUE REPOSE DOESN'T IMPLY CONDEMNING ALL
MOTION AS VEXATION--- THAT'S JUST LAZINESS AND LACK OF INITIATIVE.
6 NOTE THIS PASSAGE I READ IN POMPONIUS, "SOME MEN SEEK REFUGE IN THE
DARK SO MUCH THAT THEY MISTAKE WHAT IS IN THE LIGHT FOR BEING IN THE
DARK." THE TWO OF THEM HAVE GOTTEN MIXED UP. THOSE WHO ARE QUIET
OUGHT TO BE ACTIVE AND THOSE WHO ARE ACTIVE OUGHT TO BE QUIET. DIS-
CUSS THE PROBLEM WITH NATURE; SHE WILL TELL YOU SHE MADE BOTH DAY AND
NIGHT.

LETTER No. XLI - OUR GOD WITHIN US.

- 1 YOU ARE DOING A GOOD AND HEALTHY DEED FOR YOURSELF IF, AS YOU
WRITE, YOU ARE DETERMINED TO PERFECT YOUR MIND. IT IS STUPID TO ASK
HELP IN SUCH AN ENDEAVOR SINCE YOU CAN ACQUIRE IT ON YOUR OWN.
THERE'S NO USE IN LIFTING UP OUR HANDS OR BEGGING THE TEMPLE KEEPER
TO ADMIT US TO A GOLDEN IMAGE AS IF THIS WOULD MAKE OUR PRAYERS HEARD

2 BETTER. I TELL YOU, LUCILIUS, A HOLY SPIRIT DWELLS WITHIN US WHO IS
THE WATCHER AND GUARDIAN OF ALL OUR GOOD OR BAD DEEDS. HE WILL DEAL
WITH US THE SAME WAY WE DEAL WITH HIM. THERE ISN'T A GOOD MAN WITHOUT
GOD. CAN ANYONE RISE ABOVE FORTUNE UNLESS HELPED BY HIM? HE GIVES
ESTEEMED AND UPRIGHT CONSOLATION. IN ANY GOOD MAN,

"GOOD IS THERE WHERE THERE IS UNCERTAINTY."

3 IF YOU HAVE EVER COME UPON A GROVE OF VERY OLD TREES WHICH HAVE GROWN
QUITE HIGH, BLOCKING THE LIGHT AND VIEW OF THE SKY WITH A CEILING OF
BRANCHES SPREADING ALL OVER THE PLACE, THE HEIGHT OF THE FOREST AND
THE SECRECY OF THE PLACE AND THE WONDERFUL DENSE SHADE, BROKEN BY
SPOTS OF SUN, SHOULD CONVINCE YOU OF A CONSTANT FAITH IN GOD. OR IF
A CAVE, FORMED BY THE INNER CRUMBLING OF ROCK, SUPPORTS A MOUNTAIN,
NOT MAN MADE, BUT SCULPTURED BY NATURE INTO AN IMMENSE, EMPTY SPACE,
SUCH A SIGHT IMPRESSES YOUR SOUL WITH CERTAIN RELIGIOUS INCLINATIONS.
WE VENERATE THE MOUTHS OF GREAT RIVERS; WE SET UP ALTARS WHERE A HUGE
HIDDEN STREAM SUDDENLY SPURTS UP; WE WORSHIP HOT STREAMS, AND WE VEN-
4 ERATE POOLS BECAUSE OF THEIR DARK OR IMMEASURABLE WATERS. IF YOU SEE
A MAN UNAFRAID IN THE FACE OF DANGER, UNTOUCHED BY HIS DESIRES, HAPPY
IN THE FACE OF TROUBLE, CALM IN THE MIDDLE OF AN UPROAR, LOOKING AT
MEN FROM A MORE EXALTED POSITION, ON THE SAME LEVEL AS THE GODS,
AREN'T YOU MOVED BY A DEEP RESPECT FOR HIM? WOULDN'T YOU SAY: "THIS
QUALITY IS MUCH GREATER THAN I COULD BELIEVE POSSIBLE TO A MERE HUMAN.
5 SOME DIVINE POWER MUST HAVE COME OVER HIM." A SOUL SO EXCELLENT AND
CONTROLLED, ENCOUNTERING EVERYTHING AS PETTY, LAUGHING AT THE THINGS
WE FEAR AND PRAY FOR, WORKS THROUGH A HEAVENLY POWER. A THING GREAT
CANNOT STAND WITHOUT SOME DIVINE SUPPORT. THEREFORE A GREATER PART OF

IT MUST STILL BE THERE WHERE IT CAME FROM. JUST AS THE SUN'S RAYS SHINE UPON THE EARTH, THEY ARE STILL THERE WHERE THEY WERE SENT FROM. IN THE SAME WAY THE GREAT AND HALLOWED SOUL, SENT TO THIS PLACE SO WE MIGHT HAVE A BETTER KNOWLEDGE OF THE DIVINE, CERTAINLY DOES ASSOCIATE WITH US BUT STILL CLEAVES TO ITS ORIGIN. IT DEPENDS ON THAT SOURCE, AND IS CONSTANTLY LOOKING AND STRIVING TOWARD IT AND IS INTERESTED IN US ONLY AS OUR SUPERIOR.

6 THEN JUST WHAT IS THIS SOUL? THAT WHICH SHINES FORTH WITH NO GOOD EXCEPT ITS OWN. WHAT COULD BE MORE STUPID THAN TO PRAISE IN A MAN WHAT WASN'T HIS OWN? AND WHAT COULD BE MORE INNANE THAN TO COMPLIMENT THOSE THINGS WHICH COULD BE IMMEDIATELY PASSED ON TO ANOTHER. A GOLDEN BIT DOES NOT MAKE A BETTER HORSE. IF ONE LION IS DECORATED WITH A GOLDEN MANE, TRAINED FOR PATIENCE AND FORCED BY FATIGUE TO WEAR ORNAMENTS, AND ANOTHER IS LEFT WILD AND FULL OF SPIRIT, THE LATTER, BOLD IN HIS ATTACK AS NATURE WOULD HAVE IT, FIERCELY BEAUTIFUL IN ALL HIS GLORY, CANNOT BE LOOKED AT WITHOUT FEAR, WHILE THE OTHER IS IGNORED AS ONE BEATEN AND WITHOUT SPIRIT.

7 NO ONE SHOULD BOAST OF ANYTHING UNLESS IT IS HIS OWN. WE PRAISE A VINE IF ITS SHOOTS ARE LOADED WITH FRUIT, IF, BY ITS WEIGHT, IT BENDS TO THE GROUND THE POLES WHICH HOLD IT UP. WOULD ANY MAN PREFER TO THIS VINE ONE FROM WHICH GOLDEN GRAPES AND LEAVES HANG? FERTILITY IS THE PARTICULAR VIRTUE OF A VINE. MAN SHOULD ALSO BE PRAISED FOR THAT WHICH IS HIS OWN. A MAN MAY HAVE A LOT OF ATTRACTIVE SLAVES AND A BEAUTIFUL HOME, A LOT OF LAND AND A BIG INCOME, BUT NONE OF THESE

8 THINGS IS IN THE MAN HIMSELF, BUT MERELY SURROUND HIM. PRAISE THAT QUALITY IN HIM WHICH CANNOT BE GIVEN OR TAKEN AWAY, WHICH IS PROPER

TO THE MAN HIMSELF. YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT IT IS? IT IS THE SOUL AND
THE REASON PERFECTED BY THE SOUL. MAN IS A RATIONAL ANIMAL. MAN'S
HIGHEST GOOD IS ATTAINED IN HIS RATIONALITY, AND BY IT HE FULFILLS
9 WHAT HE WAS BORN FOR. BUT WHAT IS IT THAT REASON DEMANDS OF HIM?
THE EASIEST THING POSSIBLE--TO LIVE ACCORDING TO HIS OWN NATURE. BUT
THIS IS MADE DIFFICULT BY A GENERAL INSANITY. WE PUSH EACH OTHER INTO
VICE. HOW CAN MAN BE RECALLED TO SALVATION IF HE HAS NO ONE TO RE-
STRAIN HIM AND THE WHOLE WORLD TO PUSH HIM ON?

LETTER No. XLIX. ON THE SHORTNESS OF LIFE.

1 A MAN MUST REALLY BE LAZY AND UNCONCERNED, LUCILIUS, IF HE HAS TO
BE REMINDED OF A FRIEND BY SEEING THE COUNTRYSIDE. JUST THE SAME,
REPPRESSED DESIRES IN MY MIND RECALL FAMILIAR PLACES, NOT BRINGING BACK
DEAD MEMORIES BUT STIRING UP DORMANT ONES, JUST AS THE SORROW OF A
MOURNER, EVEN THOUGH SOFTENED BY TIME, IS RENEWED BY THE SIGHT OF HIS
LOST FRIEND'S FAVOURITE SERVANT OF CLOTHES OR HOUSE.

BEHOLD, IT WAS INCREDIBLE HOW THE SIGHT OF CAMPANIA AND ESPECI-
ALLY NEAPOLIS AND OF YOUR POMPEII STIRRED UP MY LONGING FOR YOU AGAIN.
2 I CAN SEE YOU AS IF YOU WERE RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME. NOW I AM ABOUT
READY TO LEAVE YOU. I SEE YOU CHOKING BACK YOUR TEARS AND UNSUCCESS-
FULLY TRYING TO HOLD BACK ALL THOSE EMOTIONS WELLING UP WITHIN YOU.
I SEEM TO HAVE JUST A MOMENT AGO LOST YOU. FOR WHAT HAS NOT BEEN JUST
A MOMENT AGO IF YOU THINK BACK A BIT? A MOMENT AGO, AS A BOY, I SAT
IN SOTION'S SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY; A MOMENT AGO I STARTED MY LAW PRAC-
TICE; A MOMENT AGO I LOST ALL AMBITION FOR LAW; AND, ONLY A MOMENT
AGO I LOST ALL ABILITY IN LAW. AS ONE CAN SEE BY LOOKING BACK, TIME

FLIES WITH AN INFINITE SPEED. WHILE WE ARE INTENT UPON THE PRESENT,
THE INTENSE FLIGHT IS SO SMOOTH WE DON'T EVEN NOTICE ITS PASSAGE. AND
3 YOU WANT TO KNOW THE REASON FOR THIS? ANY TIME THAT HAS PASSED IS IN
THE SAME PLACE. IT IS ALL SEEN FROM THE SAME POINT OF VIEW, IT ALL
SETTLES IN ONE SPOT. IT ALL FALLS TO THE SAME DEPTHS. AND SOMETHING
WHICH IS IN ALL QUITE SHORT, CANNOT HAVE LONG PERIODS OF TIME WITHIN
ITSELF. WE LIVE IN AN INSTANT OF TIME OR EVEN LESS THAN AN INSTANT.
BUT NATURE HAS MOCKED THIS INSTANT OF TIME BY MAKING IT SEEM LONGER
THAN IT IS. SHE CALLS PART OF THIS TIME INFANCY, PART CHILDHOOD, AND
PART THE GRADUAL RISE FROM ADOLESCENCE TO MANHOOD, AND FINALLY COMES
4 OLD AGE. WHAT A SHORT TIME FOR SO MANY STEPS! JUST A MOMENT AGO I
WAS STARTING OFF AFTER YOU, AND NOW THAT MOMENT IS THE BEST PART OF
OUR LIVES WHOSE SHORTNESS WE KNOW WILL SOON BE OVER. I DID NOT ALWAYS
THINK TIME PASSED SO QUICKLY, NOW THE COURSE SEEMS INCREDIBLY SWIFT,
EITHER BECAUSE I FEEL I HAVE MOVED CLOSER TO THE FINISH LINE, OR BE-
CAUSE I HAVE RECOGNIZED AND ACCOUNTED FOR MY LOSSES.

5 THUS I AM ALL THE MORE DISGUSTED THAT SOME PEOPLE USE TIME FOR
USELESS, EMPTY PURSUITS WHICH, EVEN UNDER STRICTEST CONTROL, CANNOT
PROVE WORTHWHILE. CICERO SAID THAT IF HIS LIFETIME WERE DOUBLED, HE
STILL WOULDN'T READ THE LYRIC POETS. YET THE DIALETICS ARE IN THE SAME
WAY SADLY INEPT. THOSE OF THAT PROFESSION PLAY AROUND JUST AS MUCH,
6 BUT CONSIDER THEMSELVES TO BE AT SERIOUS BUSINESS. I'M NOT SAYING
DIALETIC SHOULDN'T BE LOOKED AT, BUT IT ONLY DESERVES A PASSING GLANCE,
WAVE FROM THE DOOR, LEST WORDS FOOL US AND WE GET THE IDEA THEY CON-
TAIN SOME GREAT AND SECRET VALUE.

10 I HAVE NO TIME FOR SUCH FOOLISHNESS. I HAVE A MUCH MORE IMPORTANT

MATTER AT HAND. WHAT SHOULD I DO? DEATH PURSUES ME AND LIFE RUNS AWAY. SHOW ME HOW TO MEET THESE PROBLEMS. FIX IT SO DEATH WON'T CHASE AFTER ME IN THE FACE OF DIFFICULTY, GIVE ME PATIENCE AGAINST THE INEVITABLE. RELAX MY NARROW LIMITS OF TIME. SHOW ME THAT THE GOODNESS OF LIFE DOES NOT DEPEND UPON ITS LENGTH BUT THE USE WE MAKE OF IT, AND THAT IT IS QUITE PROBABLE THAT WHOEVER LIVES A LONG TIME HAS LIVED TOO LITTLE. TELL ME WHEN I GO TO BED "YOU WILL NOT AWAKEN;" AND WHEN I WAKE UP, TELL ME "YOU WILL NOT SLEEP ANY MORE." WHEN I'M LEAVING, 11 TELL ME, "YOU WILL NOT RETURN;" AND WHEN RETURNING "YOU WILL NOT LEAVE?" YOU ARE WRONG IF YOU THINK LIFE AND DEATH ARE JUST A FRACTION APART ONLY DURING AN OCEAN VOYAGE. THE SPACE BETWEEN THEM IS EQUALLY NARROW EVERYWHERE ELSE. DEATH IS NOT SO OBVIOUS EVERYWHERE, BUT IT IS ALWAYS 12 NEAR. GET RID OF THESE DARK FEARS OF MINE, AND YOU WILL MORE EASILY BEND ME OVER TO THAT FOR WHICH I WAS PREPARED. NATURE BROUGHT US FORTH AS TEACHABLE BEINGS AND GAVE US THE POWER OF REASON, WHICH, ALTHOUGH IMPERFECT, CAN STILL BE PERFECTED. TELL ME ABOUT JUSTICE, GOODNESS, THRIFT, AND THAT DOUBLE PURITY, THE ONE WHICH ABSTAINS FROM ANOTHER'S BODY AND THE ONE WHICH CARES FOR ITS OWN SELF. IF YOU DON'T TRY TO LEAD ME THROUGH RAMBLING PATHS, I'LL MUCH MORE EASILY ARRIVE AT MY GOAL. FOR, AS THE TRAGIC POET SAYS; "THE LANGUAGE OF TRUTH IS SIMPLE." THEREFORE WE SHOULD NOT TRY TO COMPLICATE THAT LANGUAGE. THERE IS NOTHING LESS BECOMING THAN FOR A MAN OF HIGH VALUES TO LOWER HIMSELF TO DOUBLE DEALING.

LETTER No. XCVI. ON FACING HARDSHIPS.

1 YOU GET SORE AND COMPLAIN AND DON'T EVEN KNOW THAT THERE'S ANY-

THING WRONG EXCEPT THAT YOU ARE IN A BAD MOOD. IF YOU ASK ME, THERE IS NOTHING IN THE WHOLE WORLD THAT'S MISERABLE FOR A MAN UNLESS HE THINKS IT IS MISERABLE. THE DAY I DON'T THINK I'LL BE ABLE TO ENDURE SOMETHING IS THE DAY I CAN'T ENDURE MYSELF.

I'M NOT DOING SO WELL, BUT THAT'S THE BREAKS. MY SLAVES HAVE GOTTEN SICK, MY INCOME HAS FALLEN OFF, I'VE RUN UP AGAINST ALL KINDS OF BAD LUCK, ACCIDENTS, WORK, AND WORRIES. BUT THAT'S THE WAY IT
2 GOES. WHAT AN UNDERSTATEMENT. IT HAD TO HAPPEN. IT WAS NOT AN ACCIDENT---IT WAS INEVITABLE. BELIEVE ME, I'M TELLING YOU RIGHT NOW WHAT I REALLY FEEL. IN EVERYTHING THAT SEEMS HARD AND DISAGREEABLE, I'VE TRAINED MYSELF NOT TO JUST OBEY GOD BUT TO AGREE WITH HIM. I WILL LIVE HIS WAY BUT NOT JUST BECAUSE I HAVE TO. NOTHING WILL EVER HAPPEN TO ME THAT I'LL ACCEPT AS UNFORTUNATE OR WITH BAD HUMOR. I WILL NOT GRIPE/WHEN I PAY TAXES. EVERYTHING THAT WE GET MAD AND FRUSTRATED OVER IS PART OF THE TAX OF LIFE. THESE ARE THINGS, LUCILIUS, WHICH ONE SHOULD NEVER HOPE TO TRY TO AVOID. AN INTESTINAL MALADY
3 MADE YOU UNEASY. YOUR LETTERS GOT LESS AGREEABLE AND MORE NEGATIVE. TO GET TO THE POINT YOU FEARED FOR YOUR LIFE. DIDN'T YOU KNOW YOU WERE PRAYING FOR THESE TROUBLES WHEN YOU PRAYED FOR OLD AGE? ALL THOSE THINGS GO ALONG WITH A LONG LIFE, JUST AS DUST, MUD AND RAIN GO ALONG WITH A LONG JOURNEY. YOU SAY, "BUT I WANT TO LIVE AND AT THE
4 SAME TIME REMAIN IMMUNE TO ALL ILLS." SUCH AN EFFEMINATE CRY DOES NOT CREDIT A MAN. CONSIDER JUST HOW YOU ACCEPT MY PRAYER. I DO IT NOT JUST IN A GOOD BUT A NOBLE SPIRIT. I HOPE THAT NEITHER THE GODS/OR
5 GODESSES DO ANYTHING TO LET YOU GET RICH. JUST ASK YOURSELF IF SOME GOD WOULD GIVE YOU THE CHANCE, WOULD YOU LIVE IN A PALACE OR A HOVEL?

AND TO LIVE, LUCILIUS, IS TO FIGHT. THOSE WHO ARE TOSSED AROUND ON THE SEA, GO UP AND DOWN THROUGH PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULTIES AND GO ON MOST DANGEROUS EXPEDITIONS, ARE BRAVE, TOP-NOTCH MEN. THOSE WHO HAVE ROTTEN LUXURY AND HAVE IT EASY WHILE OTHERS ARE WORKING, ARE TURTLE DOVES WHO ARE SAFE ONLY BECAUSE OTHERS DESPISE THEM.

LETTER No. CXXIV. ON THE TRUE GOOD AS ATTAINED BY REASON.

1 I COULD QUOTE YOU MANY OLD SAYINGS.
DIDN'T YOU RUN AND FEEL ASHAMED OF
STAYING TO DO THE DIRTY WORK?

BUT YOU DON'T SHY AWAY OR AVOID DETAILS OF STUDY. YOUR LEARNED MIND DOES NOT FREELY STRIVE AFTER SUCH GREAT SUBJECTS. I LIKE THE IDEA THAT YOU MAKE EVERYTHING COUNT TOWARD YOUR GOAL, AND THAT YOU FINALLY GET DISGUSTED ONLY WHEN NOTHING CAN BE DONE BY MEANS OF THE GREATEST SUBTLETY. AND I'LL TRY TO SEE THAT THIS DOESN'T HAPPEN NOW. THE QUESTION IS ASKED WHETHER GOOD IS UNDERSTOOD BY THE SENSES OR THE INTELLECT? ALONG WITH THIS IT IS ASKED WHETHER GOOD IS IN DUMB ANI-

2 MALS AND LITTLE CHILDREN. THERE ARE THOSE WHO HOLD PLEASURE AS THEIR END AND THINK GOOD IS IN THE SENSES. WE, ON THE OTHER HAND, CONSIDER INTELLIGENCE OF GREATER IMPORTANCE AND ASSIGN GOOD TO THE MIND. IF THE SENSES WERE TO DISCRIMINATE GOOD, WE WOULD NEVER TURN DOWN PLEASURE, SINCE PLEASURE IS ENTICING AND PLEASING. AT THE SAME TIME WE

3 WOULD NEVER UNDERGO PAIN, SINCE ALL PAIN OFFENDS THE SENSES. BESIDES, THOSE WHO WERE TOO INDULGENT OR AFRAID OF PAIN WOULD NOT EVEN DESERVE REPREHENSION. BUT WE LOOK DOWN ON THOSE WHO DEPEND ON THEIR APPETITES AND LUSTS AND WE CONDEMN THOSE WHO, THROUGH FEAR OF PAIN, ATTEMPT NO MANLY ACT. BUT HOW WOULD THESE PEOPLE BE WRONG IF THEY USED THE

SENSES TO DECIDE GOOD AND EVIL? AND YET YOU ARE ENTRUSTING THE SENSES
4 AS JUDGE OF THINGS TO BE PURSUED AND THINGS TO BE AVOIDED. BUT SURELY
REASON IS THE ULTIMATE JUDGE IN THESE MATTERS. IT IS THE JUDGE CON-
CERNING THE HAPPY LIFE, HONESTY, VIRTUE, AND IS ALSO ESTABLISHED OVER
BAD AND GOOD. BUT WITH OTHERS THE MOST CORRUPT IS GIVEN JUDGMENT OVER
THE BETTER ALLOWING THE SENSES, FEEBLE AND DULL AND EVEN MORE RETARDED
5 THAN IN OTHER ANIMALS, TO PASS JUDGEMENT ON THE GOOD. WHAT IF YOU
WOULD TRY TO DISCERN VERY SMALL OBJECTS WITH THE SENSE OF TOUCH RATHER
THAN SIGHT? THERE IS NOTHING MORE SUBTLE AND ACUTE THAN THE EYES TO
DISTINGUISH GOOD AND EVIL. SEE HOW OBLIVIOUS OF THE TRUTH MAN FLOU-
RISHES AND HOW THE LOWLY OVERTHROW THE SUBLIME AND DIVINE, AMONG WHOM
THE SENSES JUDGE WHETHER GOOD OR EVIL IS BEST. "IN THE SAME WAY, AS
6 EVERY SCIENCE AND ART OUGHT TO HAVE SOMETHING MANIFEST AND COMPREHEN-
SIBLE TO THE SENSES, FROM WHICH IT ORIGINATES AND GROWS, SO ALSO A
HAPPY LIFE FINDS ITS BEGINNINGS IN OBVIOUS THINGS WHICH FALL UNDER THE
7 REALM OF THE SENSES." SURELY YOU'LL ADMIT THAT THE HAPPY LIFE TAKES
ITS BEGINNINGS IN THE SENSIBLE WORLD. BUT WE DEFINE NATURAL AS THAT
WHICH IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATURE. AND WHATEVER IS IN ACCORDANCE
WITH NATURE, IS JUST AS IMMEDIATELY AND CLEARLY APPARENT, AS THAT WHICH
IS COMPLETE. THAT WHICH IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR NATURE, THAT WHICH
IS BUILT INTO US AT BIRTH, I DO NOT CALL GOOD, BUT POTENTIAL GOOD.
YOU ATTRIBUTE THE HIGHEST GOOD, PLEASURE, TO THE INFANT, SO THAT THE
CHILD JUST BORN BEGINS WHERE THE GROWN MAN HAS FINALLY ARRIVED. YOU
8 ARE PUTTING THE TREE TOP IN PLACE OF THE BRANCHES. IF ANYONE SAYS
THAT THE CHILD LYING IN THE MOTHER'S WOMB, OF UNKNOWN SEX, DELICATE,
NEITHER FORMED NOR WELL DEFINED, IS ALREADY IN THE STATE OF GOODNESS,

THIS PERSON IS OBVIOUSLY WRONG. AND YET HOW LITTLE DIFFERENCE THERE IS BETWEEN A CHILD WHO HAS JUST BEEN BORN AND ONE WHICH STILL LIES IN ITS MOTHER'S WOMB. THEY ARE ABOUT EQUAL IN MATURITY AS FAR AS THE COMPREHENSION OF GOOD AND EVIL, AND YET A CHILD HAS NO MORE CAPABILITIES TOWARD THE GOOD THAN A TREE OR SOME DUMB ANIMAL.

BUT WHY ISN'T GOOD IN A TREE OR A DUMB ANIMAL? BECAUSE NEITHER OF THEM POSSESSES THE FACULTY OF REASON. FOR THE SAME REASON THEN, NEITHER IS THE GOOD IN AN INFANT, SINCE IT ALSO LACKS REASON. RATHER,
9 THE INFANT WILL ACQUIRE GOOD AS HE ACQUIRES REASON. THERE ARE SOME ANIMALS WITHOUT ANY REASON, AND SOME STILL ACQUIRING REASON AND FINALLY THOSE WHO HAVE REASON WHICH IS YET IMPERFECT. GOOD IS NOT IN ANY OF THESE, SINCE REASON BRINGS GOOD ALONG WITH IT. WHAT THEN IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THESE CLASSES? I HAVE JUST ESTABLISHED THAT IN THAT WHICH IS WITHOUT ANY REASON, THERE CAN NEVER BE GOOD. IN THAT WHICH HAS NOT ACQUIRED REASON, THERE CAN BE NO GOOD AT THAT TIME. IN THAT WHICH DOES POSSESS REASON BUT IMPERFECTLY, THERE CAN BE GOOD, BUT IT
10 DOES NOT YET EXIST. SO I SAY, LUCILIUS, GOOD CANNOT BE FOUND IN JUST ANY PERSON OF JUST ANY AGE AND SO IT IS AS FAR FROM INFANCY AS THE FIRST FROM THE LAST OR THE INITIAL FROM THE PERFECT. THEREFORE IT CANNOT EXIST IN THE DELICATE BODY OF AN INFANT JUST FORMED, NOW CAN IT?
11 ---NO MORE THAN IN THE SEED. GRANTING THIS, WE KNOW THERE IS SOME GOOD IN TREES AND PLANTS WHICH NOT IN ITS FIRST SHOOT, BUT COMES OUT WHEN THE PLANT HAS COMPLETELY MATURED. THERE IS ALSO SOME GOOD IN WHEAT BUT THIS IS NOT IN THE SWELLING STALK OR WHEN THE SOFT EAR FORCES ITS WAY OUT OF THE HUSK, BUT WHEN SUMMER DAYS HAVE RIPENED THE GRAIN TO ITS ESTABLISHED MATURITY. IN THE SAME WAY, ALL OF NATURE DOES NOT OFFER

12 ITS GOOD UNLESS IT IS COMPLETELY MATURE, AND LIKEWISE THERE IS NO GOOD
IN MAN UNLESS HIS POWER OF REASON HAS MATURED ALONG WITH HIM. AND
WHAT IS THIS GOOD? I WOULD SAY IT'S A FREE MIND, UPRIGHT, SUBJECTING
OTHER THINGS TO ITSELF AND ITSELF TO NOTHING. THUS INFANCY COULDN'T
POSSIBLY TAKE ON THIS GOOD AND BOYHOOD COULDN'T HOPE FOR IT. EVEN
EARLY MANHOOD LONGS FOR IT WITHOUT GOOD CAUSE. OLD AGE MAY CONSIDER
ITSELF FORTUNATE IF, AFTER LONG AND CONCENTRATED STUDY, IT FINALLY AT-
TAINS THE GOOD. IF THIS IS THE GOOD, THEN IT IS A MATTER OF UNDER-
STANDING.

21 SO NOW YOU ASK WHERE IS ALL THIS LEADING TO, AND WHAT GOOD IS IT
FOR YOU TO KNOW? I'LL TELL YOU. IT BOTH EXERCISES AND SHARPENS THE
MIND AND KEEPS IT HONESTLY OCCUPIED DOING SOMETHING USEFUL. HOWEVER,
EVEN THAT WHICH DELAYS MAN'S RAPID APPROACH TO EVIL HAS SOME MERIT.
BUT I WILL TELL YOU THIS, THAT I CAN HELP YOU IN NO BETTER WAY THAN TO
SHOW YOU YOUR GOOD, SEPARATING YOU FROM THE CLASS OF DUMB ANIMALS AND
22 PLACING YOU ON THE SAME LEVEL AS GOD. I MUST ASK THEN WHY YOU WORK OUT
AND BUILD UP YOUR BODILY STRENGTH. NATURE HAS GRANTED GREATER STRENGTH
TO CATTLE AND WILD BEASTS. WHY DO YOU CULTIVATE YOUR BEAUTY? NO MAT-
TER WHAT YOU DO, DUMB ANIMALS WILL SURPASS YOUR BEAUTY. WHY DO YOU
COMB YOUR HAIR WITH SUCH PERSISTENT CARE? YOU MIGHT LET IT DOWN IN
PARTHIAN FASHION, OR BIND IT UP AS THE GERMANS DO, OR LIKE THE SCYTH-
IANS, JUST LET IT FLY. YET, YOU'LL SEE A MUCH THICKER MANE GRACING ANY
HORSE, AND A MUCH MORE IMPRESSIVE MANE BRISTLING FROM THE NECK OF THE
23 LION. EVEN IF YOU PRACTICE RUNNING EVERY DAY, YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO
MATCH A RABBIT. WILL YOU NOT NOW GIVE UP THESE EXERCISES WHERE YOU
MUST ADMIT DEFEAT STRIVING FOR SOMETHING NOT CONSONANT WITH YOUR OWN

NATURE? TURN BACK TO YOUR OWN TYPE OF GOOD.

WHAT IS THIS GOOD? IT IS A PURE AND FAULTLESS MIND, AN IMITATOR OF GOD, RAISING ITSELF ABOVE THE HUMAN LEVEL, VALUING NOTHING OUTSIDE OF ITSELF. YOU ARE A RATIONAL ANIMAL. AND WHAT GOOD IS IN YOU? PERFECT REASON. WILL YOU FOLLOW IT THROUGH TO THE END----TO THE
24 GREATEST DEGREE TO WHICH IT CAN GROW? CONSIDER YOURSELF HAPPY WHEN YOUR EVERY JOY IS BORN FROM REASON AND WHEN YOU HAVE CONSIDERED ALL THE OBJECTS WHICH MEN CLUTCH AT, HORDE AND GUARD. YOU WILL FIND NOTHING THAT YOU WILL DESIRE, ALTHOUGH YOU MIGHT PREFER IT. I WILL GIVE YOU A SHORT RULE BY WHICH YOU CAN MEASURE YOURSELF BY WHICH YOU MAY ALREADY FEEL TO BE PERFECT. YOU WILL KNOW YOURSELF WHEN YOU KNOW THAT THE WORLD'S HAPPINESS IS NOT TRUE HAPPINESS.

IX. ANNAEI SENECAE AD LUCILIUM EPISTULAE.

EPISTULA III

- 1 EPISTULAS AD ME PERFERENDAS TRADIDISTI, UT SCRIBIS, AMICO TUO;
DEINDE ADMONES ME, NE OMNIA CUM EO AD TE PERTINENTIA COMMUNICEM, QUIA
NON SOLEAS NE IPSE QUIDEM ID FACERE; ITA IN EADEM EPISTULA ILLUM ET
DIXISTI AMICUM ET NEGASTI. ITAQUE SI PROPRIO ILLO VERBO QUASI PUB-
LICO USUS ES ET SIC ILLUM AMICUM VOCASTI, QUOMODO OMNES CANDIDATOS
BONOS VIROS DICIMUS, QUOMODO OBVIOS, SI NOMEN NON SUCCURRIT, DOMINOS
2 SALUTAMUS, HAC ABIERIT. SED SI ALIQUEM AMICUM EXISTIMAS, CUI NON
TANTUNDEM CREDIS QUANTUM TIBI, VEHEMENTER ERRAS ET NON SATIS NOSTI
VIM VERAE AMICITIAE. TU VERO OMNIA CUM AMICO DELIBERA, SED DE PROPRIO
PRIUS. POST AMICITIAM CREDENDUM EST, ANTE AMICITIAM JUDICANDUM. ISTI
VERO PRAEPOSTERO OFFICIA PERMISCENT, QUI CONTRA PRAECEPTA THEOPHRASTI,
CUM AMAVERUNT, JUDICANT, ET NON AMANT, CUM JUDICAVERUNT. DIU COGITA,
AN TIBI IN AMICITIAM ALIQUIS RECIPIENDUS SIT. CUM PLACUERIT FIERI,
3 TOTO ILLUM PECTORE ADMITTE; TAM AUDACITER CUM ILLO LOQUERE QUAM TECUM.
TU QUIDEM ITA VIVE, UT NIHIL TIBI COMMITTAS, NISI QUOD COMMITTERE
ETIAM INIMICO TUO POSSIS; SED QUIA INTERVENIUNT QUAEDAM, QVAE CONSUE-
TUDO FECIT ARCANA, CUM AMICO OMNES CURAS, OMNES COGITATIONES TUAS
MISCE. FIDelem SI PUTAVERIS, FACIES. NAM QUIDAM FALLERE DOCUERUNT, DUM
TIMENT FALLI, ET ILLI JUS PECCANDI SUSPICANDO FECERUNT. QUID EST,
QUARE EGO ULLA VERBA CORAM AMICO MEO RETRAHAM? QUID EST, QUARE ME
CORAM ILLO NON PUTEM SOLEM?
- 4 QUIDAM QVAE TANTUM AMICIS COMMITTENDA SUNT, OBVIIS NARRANT ET IN
QUASLIBET AURES, QUICQUID ILLOS URSERIT, EXONERANT. QUIDAM RURSUS
ETIAM CARISSIMORUM CONSCIENTIAM REFORMIDANT, ET SI POSSENT, NE SIBI

QUIDEM CREDITURI INTERIUS PREMUNT OMNE SECRETUM. NEUTRUM FACIENDUM
EST. UTRUMQUE ENIM VITIUM EST, ET OMNIBUS CREDERE ET NULLI. SED AL-
5 TERUM HONESTIUS DIXERIM VITIUM, ALTERUM TUTIUS; SIC UTROSQUE REPRE-
HENDAS, ET EOS QUI SEMPER INQUIETI SUNT, ET EOS QUI SEMPER QUIESCUNT.
NAM ILLA TUMULTU GAUDENS NON EST INDUSTRIA, SED EXAGITATAE MENTIS
CONCURSATIO. ET HAEC NON EST QUIES, QUAE MOTUM OMNEM MOLESTIAM JUDI-
6 CAT, SED DISSOLUTIO ET LANGUOR. ITAQUE HOC, QUOD APUD POMPONIUM LEGI,
ANIMO MANDABITUR: "QUIDAM ADEO IN LATEBRAS REFUGERUNT, UT PUTENT IN
TURBIDO ESSE, QUICQUID IN LUCE EST." INTER SE ISTA MISCENDA SUNT, ET
QUIESCENTI AGENDUM ET AGENTI QUIESCENDUM EST. CUM RERUM NATURA DELIB-
BERA; ILLA DICET TIBI ET DIEM FECISSE SE ET NOCTEM.

EPISTULA XLI

1 FACIS REM OPTIMAM ET TIBI SALUTAREM, SI, UT SCRIBIS, PERSEVERAS
IRE AD BONAM MENTEM, QUAM STULTUM EST OPTARE, CUM POSSIS A TE IMPE-
TRARE. NON SUNT AD CAELUM ELEVANDAE MANUS NEC EXORANDUS AEDITUUS, UT
NOS AD AUREM SIMULACRI, QUASE MAGES EXAUDIRI POSSIMUS, ADMITTAT;
2 PROPE EST A TE DEUS, TECUM EST, INTUS EST. ITA DICO, LUCILI: SACER
INTRA NOS SPIRITUS SEDET, MALORUM BONORUMQUE NOSTRORUM OBSERVATOR
ET CUSTOS. HIC PROUT A NOBIS TRACTATUS EST, ITA NOS IPSE TRACTAT.
BONUS VERO VIR SINE DEO NEMO EST; AN POTEST ALIQUIS SUPRA FORTUNAM
NISI AB ILLO ADJUTUS EXURGERE? ILLE DAT CONSILIS MAGNIFICA ET ERECTA.
IN UNOQUOQUE VIRORUM BONORUM

"QUIS DEUS INCERTUM EST, HABITAT DEUS."

3 SI TIBI OCCURRERIT VETUSTIS ARBORIBUS ET SOLITAM ALTITUDINEM
EGRESSIS FREQUENS LUCUS ET CONSPECTUM CAELI RAMORUM ALIORUM ALIOS

PROTEGENTIU SUMMOVENS OBTEUTU, ILLA PROCRITAS SILVAE ET SECRETUM LO
LOCI ET ADMIRATIO UMBRAE IN APERTO TAM DENSAE ATQUE CONTINUAE FIDEM
TIBI NUMINIS FACIET. SI QUIS SPECUS SAXIS PENITUS EXESIS MONTEM SUS-
PENDERIT, NON MANU FACTUS, SED NATURALIBUS CAUSIS IN TANTAM LAXITA-
TEM EXCAVATUS, ANIMUM TUUM QUADAM RELIGIONIS SUSPICIONE PERCUTIET.
MAGNORUM FLUMINUM CAPITA VENERAMUR; SUBITA EX ABDITO VASTI AMNIS
ERUPTIO ARAS HADET; COLUNTUR AQUARUM CALENTIUM FONTES, ET STAGNA
4 QUAEDAM VEL OPACITAS VEL INMENZA ALTITUDO SACRAVIT. SI HOMINEM VI-
DERIS INTERRITUM PERICULIS, INTACTUM CUPIDITATIBUS, INTER ADVERSA
FELICEM, IN MEDIIS TEMPESTATIBUS PLACIDUM, EX SUPERIORE LOCO HOMINES
VIDENTEM, EX AEQUO DEOS, NON SUBIBIT TE VENERATIO EIUS? NON DICES:
"ISTA RES MAJOR EST ALTIORQUE QUAM UT CREDI SIMILIS HUIC, IN QUO EST,
5 CORPUSCULO POSSIT? VIS ISTO DIVINA DESCENDIT." ANIMUM EXCELLENTEM,
MODERATUM, OMNIA TAMQUAM MINORA TRANSEUNTEM, QUICQUID TIMEMUS OPTA-
MUSQUE RIDENTEM, CAELESTIS POTENTIA AGITAT. NON POTEST RES TANTA SINE
ADMINICULO NUMINIS STARE, ITAQUE MAIORE SUI PARTE ILLIC EST, UNDE
DESCENDIT. QUEMADMODUM RADII SOLIS CONTINGUNT QUIDEM TERRAM, SED IBI
SUNT, UNDE MITTUNTUR; SIC ANIMUS MAGNUS AC SACER ET IN HOC DEMISSUS,
UT PROPIUS DIVINA NOSSEMUS, CONVERSATUR QUIDEM NOBISCUM, SED HAERET
ORIGINI SUAE; ILLINC PENDET, ILLUC SPECTAT AC NITITUR, NOSTRIS TAM-
QUAM MELIOR INTEREST.
6 QUIS EST ERGO HIC ANIMUS? QUI NULLO BONO NISI SUO NITET; QUID
ENIM EST STULTIUS QUAM IN HOMINE ALIENA LAUDARE? QUID EO DEMENTIUS,
QUI EA MIRATUR, QVAE AD ALIUM TRANSFERRI PROTIUS POSSUNT? NON
FACIUNT MELIOREM EQUUM AUREI FRENI. ALITER LEO AURATA JUBA MITTITUR,
DUM CONTRACTATUR ET AD PATIENTIAM RECIPIENDI ORNAMENTI COGITUR

FATIGATUS, ALITER INCULTUS, INTEGRI SPIRITUS; HIC SCILICET INPETU
ACER, QUALEM ILLUM NATURA ESSE VOLUIT, SPECIOSUS EX HORRIDO, CUIUS
HIC DECOR EST, NON SINE TIMORE ASPICI, PRAEFERTUR ILLI LANGUIDO ET
BRATTEATO.

7 NEMO GLORIARI NISI SUO DEBET. VITEM LAUDAMUS, SI FRUCTU PALMITES
ONERAT, SI IPSA PONDERE AD TERRAM EORUM, QUAE TULIT, ADMINICULA DE-
DUCIT; NUM QUIS HUIC ILLAM PRAEFERRET VITEM, CUI AUREAE UVAE, AUREA
FOLIA DEPENDENT? PROPRIA VIRTUS EST IN VITE FERTILITAS, IN HOMINE
QUOQUE ID LAUDANDUM EST, QUOD IPSIUS EST. FAMILIAM FORMOSAM HABET
ET DOMUM PULCHRAM; MULTUM SERIT, MULTUM FENERAT; NIHIL HORUM IN IPSO
8 EST, SED CIRCA IPSUM. LAUDA IN ILLO, QUOD NEC ERIPĒ POTEST NEC DARI,
QUOD PROPRIUM HOMINIS EST. QUAERIS QUID SIT? ANIMUS ET RATIO IN
ANIMO PERFECTA. RATIONALE ENIM ANIMAL EST HOMO. CONSUMMATUR ITAQUE
9 BONUM EIUS, SI ID INPLEVIT, CUI NASCITUR. QUID EST AUTEM, QUOD AB ILLO
RATIO HAEC EXIGAT? REM FACILLIMAM, SECUNDUM NATURAM SUAM VIVERE.
SED HANC DIFFICILEM FACIT COMMUNIS INSANIA; IN VITIA ALTER ALTERUM
TRUDIMUS. QUOMODO AUTEM REVOCARI AD SALUTEM POSSUNT, QUOS NEMO
RETINET, POPULUS INPELLIT?

EPISTULA XLIX

10 EST QUIDEM, MI LUCILI, SUPINUS ET NEGLEGENS, QUI IN AMICI ME-
MORIAM AB ALIQUA REGIONE ADMONITUS REDUCITUR; TAMEN REPOSITUM IN
ANIMO NOSTRO DESIDERIUM LOCA INTERDUM FAMILIARIA EVOCANT NEC EXTING-
TAM MEMORIAM REDDUNT, SED QUIESCENTEM INRITANT, SICUT DOLOREM LUGEN-
TIUM, ETIAM SI MITIGATUS EST TEMPORE, AUT SERVULUS FAMILIARIS AMIS-
SO AUT VESTIS AUT DOMUS RENOVAT.

ECCE CAMPANIA ET MAXIME NEAPOLIS AC POMPEIORUM TUORUM CONSPEC-
TUS INCREDIBILE EST QUAM RECENS DESIDERIUM TUI FECERINT; TOTUS MIHI
IN OCULIS ES. CUM MAXIME A TE DISCEDO. VIDEO LACRIMAS CONBIBENTEM
ET ADFFECTIBUS TUIS INTER IPSAM COERCITIONEM EXEUNTIBUS ~~NON~~ SATIS
2 RESISTENTEM. MODO AMISISSE TE VIDEOR. QUID ENIM NON "MODO" EST, SI
REORDERIS? MODO APUD SOTIONEM PHILOSOPHUM PUER SEDI, MODO CAUSAS
AGERE COEPI, MODO DESII VELLE AGERE, MODO DESII POSSE. INFINITA EST
VELOCITAS TEMPORIS, QUAE MAGIS APPARET RESPIICIENTIBUS. NAM AD PRAE-
SENTIA INTENTOS FALLIT; ADEO PRAECIPITIS FUGAE TRANSITUS LENIS EST.
3 CAUSAM HUIUS REI QUAEERIS? QUIDQUID TEMPORIS TRANSIT, EODEM LOCO EST;
PARITER ASPICITUR, UNA JACET. OMNIA IN IDEM PROFUNDUM CADUNT. ET
ALIOQUI NON POSSUNT LONGA INTERVALLA ESSE IN EA RE, QUAE TOTA BRE-
VIS EST. PUNCTUM EST QUOD VIVIMUS ET ADHUC PUNCTO MINUS. SED ET HOC
MINIMUM SPECIE QUADAM LONGIORIS SPATII NATURA DERISIT; ALIUD EX HOC
INFANTIAM FECIT, ALIUD PUERITIAM, ALIUD ADULESCENTIAM, ALIUD INCLI-
NATIONEM QUANDAM AB ADULESCENTIA AD SENECTUTEM, ALIUD IPSAM SENEC-
4 TUTEM. IN QUAM ANGUSTO QUODAM QUOT GRADUS POSUIT! MODO TE PROSECUTUS
SUM; ET TAMEN HOC "MODO" AETATIS NOSTRAE BONA PORTIO EST, CUIUS
BREVITATEM ALIQUANDO DEFECTURAM COGITEMUS. NON SOLEBAT MIHI TAM
VELOX TEMPUS VIDERI; NUNC INCREDIBILIS CURSUS APPARET, SIVE QUIA
ADMOVERI LINEAS SENTIO, SIVE QUIA ADTENDERE COEPI ET COMPUTARE DAM-
NUM MEUM.
5 EO MAGIS ITAQUE INDIGNOR ALIQUOS EX HOC TEMPORE, QUOD SUFFICERE
NE AD NECESSARIA QUIDEM POTEST, ETIAM SI CUSTODITUM DILIGENTISSIME
FUERIT, IN SUPERVACUA MAIOREM PARTEM EROGARE. NEGAT CICERO, SI DU-
PLICETUR SIBI AETAS, HABITURUM SE TEMPUS, QUO LEGAT LYRICOS; EODEM

LOCO PONE DIALECTICOS; TRISTIUS INEPTI SUNT. ILLI EX PROFESSO LASCI-
6 VIUNT, HI AGERE IPSOS ALIQUID EXISTIMANT. NEC EGO NEGO PROSPICIENDA
ISTA, SED PROSPICIENDA TANTUM ET A LIMINE SALUTANDA IN HOC UNUM, NE
VERBA NOBIS DENTUR ET ALIQUID ESSE IN ILLIS MAGNI AC SECRETI BONI
JUDICIMUS.

10 QUID AGAM? MORS ME SEQUITUR, FUGIT VITA; ADVERSUS HAEC ME DOCE
ALIQUID. EFFICE, UT EGO MORTEM NON FUGIAM, VITA ME NON EFFUGIAT.
EXHORTARE ADVERSUS DIFFICILIA, ADDE AEQUANIMITATEM ADVERSUS INEVITA-
BILIA. ANGUSTIAS TEMPORIS MEI LAXA. DOCE NON ESSE POSITUM BONUM
VITAE IN SPATIO EJUS, SED IN USU, POSSE FIERI, IMMO SAEPISSIME FIERI,
UT QUI DIU VIXIT, PARUM VIXERIT. DIC MIHI DORMITURO: "POTES NON
EXPERGISCI"; DIC EXPERRECTO: "POTES NON DORMIRE AMPLIUS." DIC EX-
11 EUNTI: "POTES NON REVERTI"; DIC REDEUNTI: "POTES NON EXIRE." ERRAS,
SI IN NAVIGATIONE TANTUM EXISTIMAS MINIMUM ESSE, QUO A MORTE VITA
DIDUCITUR; IN OMNI LOCO AEQUE TENUE INTERVALLUM EST. NON UBIQUE SE
MORS TAM PROPE OSTENDIT; UBIQUE TAM PROPE EST.

HAS TENEBRAS DISCUTE; ET FACILIUS EA TRADES, AD QUAE PRAEPARATUS
12 SUM. DOCILES NATURA NOS EDIDIT ET RATIONEM DEDIT IMPERFECTAM, SED QUAE

PERFICI POSSET. DE JUSTITIA MIHI, DE PIETATE DISPUTA, DE FRUGALITATE,
DE PUDICITIA UTRAQUE, ET ILLA, CUI ALIENI CORPORIS ABSTINENTIA EST,
ET HAC, CUI SUI CURA. SI ME NOLUERIS PER DEVIA DUCERE, FACILIUS AD ID,
QUO TENDO, PERVENIAM. NAM UT AIT ILLE TRAGICUS,

VERITATIS SIMPLEX ORATIO EST.

I DEOQUE ILLAM INPLICARI NON OPORTET; NEC ENIM QUIEQUM MINUS CONVENIT
QUAM SUBDOLA ISTA CALLIDITAS ANIMIS MAGNA CONANTIBUS.

EPISTULA XCVI.

1 TAMEN TU INDIGNARIS ALIQUID AUT QUERERIS ET NON INTELLEGIS NIHIL
ESSE IN ISTIS MALI NISI HOC UNUM, QUOD INDIGNARIS ET QUERERIS? SI ME
INTERROGAS, NIHIL PUTO VIRO MISERUM NISI ALIQUID ESSE IN RERUM NATURA,
QUOD PUTET MISERUM. NON FERAM ME, QUO DIE ALIQUID FERRE NON POTERO.

MALE VALEO; PARS FATI EST. FAMILIA DECUBUIT, FAENUS OFFENDIT,
DOMUS CREPUIT, DAMNA, VULNERA, LABORES, METUS INCUCURRERUNT; SOLET
2 FIERI. HOC PARUM EST; DEBUIT FIERI. DECERNUNTUR ISTA, NON ACCIDUNT.
SI QUID CREDIS MIHI, INTIMOS ADPECTUS MEOS TIBI CUM MAXIME DETEGO; IN
OMNIBUS, QUAE ADVERSA VIDENTUR ET DURA, SIC FORMATUS SUM: NON PAREO
DEO, SED ADSENTIOR. EX ANIMO ILLUM, NON QUIA NECESSE EST, SEQUOR.
NIHIL UMQUAM MIHI INCIDET, QUOD TRISTIS EXCIPIAM, QUOD MALO VULTU.
NULLUM TRIBUTUM INVITUS CONFERAM. OMNIA AUTEM, AD QUAE GEMIMUS, QUAE
EXPAVESCIMUS, TRIBUTA VITAE SUNT; HORUM, MI LUCILI, NEC SPERAVERIS
IMMUNITATEM NEC PETIERIS.

3 VESICAE TE DOLOR INQUIETAVIT, EPISTULAE VENERUNT PARUM DULCES,
DETRIMENTA CONTINUA, PROPIUS ACCEDAM, DE CAPITE TIMUISTI. QUID, TU

NE SCIEBAS HAEC TE OPTARE, CUM OPTARES SENECTUTEM? OMNIA ISTA IN LONGA
VITA SUNT, QUOMODO IN LONGA VIA ET PULVIS ET LUTUM ET PLUVIA. "SED
4. VOLEBAM VIVERE, CARERE TAMEN INCOMMODIS OMNIBUS." TAM EFFEMINATA VOX
VIRUM DEDECET. VIDERIS, QUEMADMODUM HOC VOTUM MEUM EXCIPIAS; EGO
ILLUD MAGNO ANIMO, NON TANTUM BONO FACIO: NEQUE DI NEQUE DEAE FACIANT,
✓ 5 UT TE FORTUNA IN DELICIIS HAVEAT. IPSE TE INTERROGA, SI QUIS POTES-
TATEM TIBI DEUS FACIAT, UTRUM VELIS VIVERE IN MACELLO AN IN CASTRIS.

ATQUI VIVERE, LUCILI, MILITARE EST. ITAQUE HI, QUI JACTANTUR ET
PER OPEROSA ATQUE ARDUA SURSUM AC DEORSUM EUNT ET EXPEDITIONES PERI-
CULOSISSIMAS OBEUNT, FORTES VIRI SUNT PRIMORESQUE CASTRORUM; ISTI,
QUOS PUTIDA QUIES ALIIS LABORANTIBUS MOLLITER HABET, TURTURILLAE SUNT,
TUTI CONTUMELIAE CAUSA.

EPISTULA CXXIV.

1 POSSUM MULTA TIBI VETERUM PRAECEPTA REFERRE,
NI REFUGIS TENUISQUE PIGET COGNOSCERE CURAS.

NON REFUGIS AUTEM NEC ULLA TE SUBTILITAS ABIGIT. NON EST ELEGAN-
TIAE TUAE TAM MAGNA SECTARI SECURE. ILLUD PROBO, QUOD OMNIA AD ALIQUEM
PROFECTUM REDIGIS ET TUNC TANTUM OFFENDERIS, UBI SUMMA SUBTILITATE
NIHIL AGITUR. QUOD NE NUNC QUIDEM FIERI LABORABO. QUAERITUR, UTRUM
SENSU CONPRENDATUR AN INTELLECTU BONUM? HUIC ADJUNCTUM EST IN MUTIS
ANIMALIBUS ET INFANTIBUS NON ESSE.

2 QUICUMQUE VOLUPTATEM IN SUMMO PONUNT, SENSIBILE JUDICANT BONUM,
NOS CONTRA INTELLEGIBILE, QUI ILLUD ANIMO DAMUS. SI DE BONO SENSUS
JUDICARENT, NULLAM VOLUPTATEM REICEREMUS, NULLA ENIM NON INVITAT,

NULLA NON DELECTAT; ET E CONTRARIO NULLUM DOLOREM VOLENTES SUBIREMUS,
3 NULLUS ENIM NON OFFENDIT SENSUM. PRAETEREA NON ESSENT DIGNI REPREEN-
SIONE, QUIBUS NIMIUM VOLUPTAS PLACET QUIBUSQUE SUMMUS EST DOLORIS
TIMOR. ATQUI INPROBAMUS GULAE AC LIBIDINI ADDICTOS ET CONTEMNIMUS
ILLOS, QUI NIHIL VIRILITER AUSURI SUNT DOLORIS METU. QUID AUTEM PEC-
CANT, SI SENSIBUS, ID EST JUDICIBUS BONI AC MALI, PARENT? HIS ENIM
TRADIDISTIS ADPETITIONIS ET FUGAE ARBITRIUM.

4 3 SED VIDELICET RATIO ISTI REI PRAEPOSITA EST; ILLA QUEMADMODUM
DE BEATA VITA, QUEMADMODUM DE VIRTUTE, DE HONESTO, SIC ET DE BONO
MALOQUE CONSTITUIT. NAM APUD ISTOS VILISSIMAE PARTI DATUR DE MELIORE
SENTENTIA, UT DE BONO PRONUNTiet SENSUS, OBTUNSA RES ET HEBES ET IN
5 HOMINE QUAM IN ALIIS ANIMALIBUS TARDIOR. QUID SI QUIS VELLEt NON
OCULIS, SED TACTU MINUTA DISCERNERE? SUBTILIOR AD HOC ACIES NULLA
QUAM OCULORUM ET INTENTIOR DARET BONUM MALUMQUE DINOSCERE, VIDES IN
QUANTA IGNORANTIA VERITATIS VERSETUR ET QUAM HUMI SUBLIMIA AC DIVINA
PROJECERIT, APUD QUEM DE SUMMO, BONO MALO, JUDICAT TACTUS. "QUEM-
6 ADMODUM," INQUIT, "OMNIS SCIENTIA ATQUE ARS ALIQUID DEBET HABERE
MANIFESTUM SENSUQUE CONPREHENSUM, EX QUO ORIATUR ET CRESCAT, SIC
BEATA VITA FUNDAMENTUM ET INITIUM A MANIFESTIS DUCIT ET EO, QUOD SUB
SENSUM CADAT. NEMPE VOS A MANIFESTIS BEATAM VITAM INITIUM SUI CAPERE
7 DICITIS." DICIMUS BEATA ESSE, QVAE SECUNDUM NATURAM SINT. QUID AUTEM
SECUNDUM NATURAM SIT, PALAM ET PROTINUS APPARET, SICUT QUID SIT INTE-
GRUM. QUOD SECUNDUM NATURAM EST, QUOD CONTIGIT PROTINUS NATO, NON
DICO BONUM, SED INITIUM BONI. TU SUMMUM BONUM, VOLUPTATEM, INFANTIAE
DONAS, UT INDE INCIPIAT NASCENS, QUO CONSUMMATUS HOMO PERVENIT.

8 CACUMEN RADICIS LOCO PONIS. SI QUIS DICERET ILLUM IN MATERNO UTERO

LATENTEM, SEXUS QUOQUE INCERTI, TENERUM ET IMPERFECTUM ET INFORMEM
IAM IN ALIQUO BONO ESSE, APERTE VIDERETUR ERRARE. ATQUI QUANTULUM
INTEREST INTER EUM, QUI CUM MAXIME VITAM ACCIPIT, ET ILLUM, QUI MATER-
NORUM VISCERUM LATENS ONUS EST? UTERQUE, QUANTUM AD INTELLECTUM BONI
AC MALI, AEQUE MATURUS EST, ET NON MAGIS INFANS ADHUC BONI CAPAX EST
QUAM ARBOR AUT MUTUM ALIQUOD ANIMAL.

QUARE AUTEM BONUM IN ARBORE ANIMALIQUE MUTO NON EST? QUIA NEC
RATIO. OB HOC IN INFANTE QUOQUE NON EST, NAM, ET HUIC DEEST; TUNC AD
9 BONUM PERVENIET, CUM AD RATIONEM PERVENERIT. EST ALIQUOD INRATIONALE
ANIMAL, EST ALIQUOD NONDUM RATIONALE, EST RATIONALE SED IMPERFECTUM;
IN NULLO HORUM BONUM, RATIO ILLUD SECUM ADFERT. QUID ERGO INTER ISTA,
QUAE RETTULI, DISTAT? IN EO, QUOD INRATIONALE EST, NUMQUAM ERIT BONUM.
IN EO, QUOD NONDUM RATIONALE EST, TUNC ESSE BONUM NON POTEST. ESSE IN
EO, QUOD RATIONALE EST SED IMPERFECTUM, JAM POTEST BONUM, SED NON EST.
10 ITA DICO, LUCILI: BONUM NON IN QUOLIBET CORPORE, NON IN QUALIBET AETATE
INVENTTUR ET TANTUM ABEST AB INFANTIA, QUANTUM A PRIMO ULTIMUM, QUANTUM
AB INITIO PERFECTUM. ERGO NEC IN TENERO, MODO COALESCENTE CORPUSCULO
11 EST. QUIDNI NON SIT? NON MAGIS QUAM IN SEMINE. HOC SI DICAS, ALIQUOD
ARBORIS AC SATI BONUM NOVIMUS; HOC NON EST IN PRIMA FRONDE, QUAE
EMISSA CUM MAXIME SOLUM RUMPT. EST ALIQUOD BONUM TRITICI; HOC NONDUM
EST IN HERBA LACTENTE NEC CUM FOLLICULO SE EXERIT SPICA MOLLIS, SED
CUM FRUMENTUM AESTAS ET DEBITA MATURITAS COXIT. QUEMADMODUM OMNIS
NATURA BONUM SUUM NISI CONSUMMATA NON PROFERT, ITA HOMINIS BONUM NON
12 EST IN HOMINE, NISI CUM ILLI RATIO PERFECTA EST. QUOD AUTEM HOC BONUM?
DICAM: LIBER ANIMUS, ERECTUS, ALIA SUBJCIENS SIBI, SE NULLI. HOC BONUM
ADEO NON RECIPIT INFANTIA, UT PUERITIA NON SPERET, ADULESCENTIA INPROBE

SPERET; BENE AGITUR CUM SENECTUTE, SI AD ILLUD LONGO STUDIO INTENTOQUE PERVENIT. SI HOC EST BONUM, ET INTELLEGIBILE EST.

- 21 QUO NUNC PERTINEAT ISTA DISPUTATIO QUAERIS, ET QUID ANIMO TUO PROFUTURA SIT? DICO: ET EXERCET ILLUM ET ACUIT ET UTIQUE ALIQUID ACTURUM OCCUPATIONE HONESTA TENET. PRODEST AUTEM ETIAM QUO MORATUR AD PRAVA PROPERANTES. SED ET ILLUD DICO: NULLO MODO PRODESSE POSSUM MAGIS, QUAM SI TIBI BONUM TUUM OSTENDO, SI TE A MUTIS ANIMALIBUS SEPARO, SI
- 22 CUM DEO PONO. QUID, INQUAM, VIRES CORPORIS ALIS ET EXERCES? PECUDIBUS ISTAS MAJORES FERISQUE NATURA CONCESSIT. QUID EXCOLIS FORMAM? CUM OMNIA FECERIS, A MUTIS ANIMALIBUS DECORE VINCERIS. QUID CAPILLUM INGENTI DILIGENTIA COMIS? CUM ILLUM VEL EFFUDERIS MORE PARTHURUM VEL GERMANORUM MODO VINXERIS VEL, UT SCYTHAE SOLENT, SPARSERIS, IN QUOLIBET EQUO DENSIORE JACTABITUR JUBA, HORREBIT IN LEONUM CERVICEM FORMOSIOR. CUM TE
- 23 AD VELOCITATEM PARAVERIS, PAR LEPUSCULO NON ERIS. VIS TU RELICTIS, IN QUIBUS VINCI TENECESSE EST, DUM IN ALIENA NETERIS, AD BONUM REVERTI TUUM?

- QUOD EST HOC? ANIMUS SCILICET EMENDATUS AC PURUS, AEMULATOR DEI, SUPER HUMANA SE EXTOLLENS, NIHIL EXTRA SE SUI PONENS. RATIONALE ANIMAL ES. QUOD ERGO IN TE BONUM EST? PERFECTA RATIO. AN TU AD SUUM FINEM HANC EVOCAS, IN QUANTUM POTEST PLURIMUM CRESCERE? TUNC BEATUM ESSE TE
- 24 JUDICA, CUM TIBI EX EA GAUDIUM OMNE NASCETUR, CUM VISIS, QUAE HOMINES ERIPIUNT, OPTANT, CUSTODIUNT, NIHIL INVENERIS, NON DICO QUOD MALIS, SED QUOD VELIS. BREVE TIBI FORMULAM DABO, QUAE TE METIARIS, QUAE PERFECTUM ESSE JAM SENTIAS: TUNC HABEBIS TUUM, CUM INTELLEGES INFELICISSIMOS ESSE FELICES.

FOOTNOTES

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2. ALLAN P. BALL, SELECTED ESSAYS OF SENECA (NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN CO., 1908) PP. XIX - XX.
3. J. W. MACKAIL, LATIN LITERATURE (NEW YORK: CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS, 1902) P. 171.
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5. F. J. MILLER, SENECA'S TRAGEDIES, LOEB ED. (CAMBRIDGE: HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1953) P. VII.
6. R. H. BARROW, THE ROMANS (BALTIMORE: PENGUIN BOOKS, 1949) P. 154.
7. ROBERT D. HICKS, AND ALASTAIR DUNCAN, "STOICS." ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANICA. VOL. 21 (CHICAGO: WILLIAM BENTON, PUBLISHER, 1961) PP. 429 - 433.
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15. M. L. CLARKE, THE ROMAN MIND (CAMBRIDGE: HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1956) p. 129.

16. SAMUEL DILL, ROMAN SOCIETY (NEW YORK: THE MERIDIAN LIBRARY, 1956) pp. 298 - 299.

17. ABOVE SECTION TAKEN MAINLY FROM - SAMUEL DILL, BOOK III, CHP. I, "THE PHILOSOPHIC DIRECTOR," pp 289 - 333.

18. MOSES HADAS, A HISTORY OF LATIN LITERATURE (NEW YORK: COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1952) p. 256.

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20. EPISTULAE MORALES, BOOK XXV.

21. EPISTULAE MORALES, BOOK V.

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