FORM AND CONTENT
IN SENECA'S MORAL ESSAYS

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Form and Content

in Seneca's Moral Essays

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Preface

This thesis is composed of three studies on aspects of form
and content in Seneca's Moral Essays, concentrating on the
Dialogues and in particular on the consolations and <u>De Brevitate</u>
<u>Vitae</u>, <u>De Vita Beata</u> and <u>De Tranquillitate Animi</u>.

The first study looks at these works from a structural side
and re-examines theories which support the influence of rhetorical
techniques on the works and concludes that Seneca's structuring is
much less strictly regulated.

The second study examines the themes of consolation as used
by Seneca. It is introduced by a short account of the development
of literary consolation, and then concentrates on Seneca's use of
the topics, to console for both death and exile.

The third study explores the topic of seriocomic and satirical
elements in Seneca's moral works. After a short examination of the
influence of diatribe in general on Seneca and a comparison with
its influence on other Roman writers, the chapter covers a number
of selected topics and passages in sections on daily life, women,
food and drink, luxury of building, power and politics and the
vanity of scholarship. It concludes that Seneca's initial impetus
from diatribe moralising developed far nearer to the pure satire
of the literary period of which he was at the centre than has
previously been fully appreciated.

The first study is split into two parts, its first part
together with the second study forming half the thesis on the
consolations, the second part introducing the more general
discussion on contemporary influences of rhetoric, diatribe and
satire.

Contents

Chapter 1

The Structure of the Dialogues De Consolatione

The early literary career of Seneca is the outgrowth of his education and practice as a public speaker. In the period before his exile, during the later stages of Gaius' principate and the early part of Claudius' reign, Seneca's activities as a speaker were those which drew greatest public attention[1]. The natural consequence of this sustained exposure, not only as a speaker in his own right, but also to a climate where the public address was a matter of keenest competition demanding a dazzling variety of accomplishments, was that Seneca wrote his early treatises in accordance with the accepted canons of rhetorical composition.

It would be fair to say that this has created more problems than it may have solved, and has subsequently heaped on Seneca greater criticism than he deserves. But there is nothing to suggest that Seneca was dissatisfied with the composition of his consolatory treatises: recent critics have praised the regularity of structure as exemplary, and lamented its loss in later works. But it is this very regularity, it may be objected, that smacks of insincerity, the artificial and contrived. Much later, when Seneca returned to the consolation in the collection of Epistulae Morales, the tone is relaxed, the structure is not

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1   Suet. Cal. 53.2, Tac. Ann. 12.8.3; cp. also Quint. 10.2.129.

rigid, the content is selective[1]. The difference lies in the
writer's absolute control of his subject and confidence in
himself: it is the difference between trying and succeeding.
The contrast may be seen equally between the early dialogues
on consolation and the later writings which are included in the
compass of the present work.

One difficulty when dealing with consolations is the
variety of forms in which they may be composed. The work which
all consolers seem to have looked back on as the first formal
consolation is the treatise περὶ πένθους of Crantor, the
Academic philosopher, together with cognate works περὶ παθῶν
on the other emotions. Cicero included his Consolatio in the
catalogue of his philosophical works (Div.2.3), while the early
books of the Tusculanae Disputationes are a substantial reworking
of the same subject. In contrast to these approaches from the
side of the philosophical treatise, Seneca is the first
prose-writer whose work survives to introduce a strictly
rhetorical form of organisation into his composition: it was
natural for him to think of the consolation in terms of yet
another type of suasoria[2]. This approach seems to have persevered,

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1   e.g. Ep.63; there are many letters on one or two aspects of
     consolatory material, and these will be mentioned in due course.

2   for this type of speech in schools, where the speaker gave
     advice to his audience on how to act in some crisis, cp.
     Clarke (2) 89-90. (All works referred to in text and notes
     are listed in the bibliography; where more than one work of
     an author is cited, these are numbered chronologically.)

and towards the end of the classical period, the rhetor Menander could include the παραμυθητικὸς λόγος in his rhetorical handbook περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν , and offer a dispassionate analysis of the ingredients that compose this particular speech.

To the distinct approaches of treatise and speech, a third form may be added: the letter. All consolations had an addressee, appropriate to and necessary for the situation, but the letters of consolation are separate again. These are the (apparently) spontaneous pieces to which modern taste most readily responds. They were also the most lasting type of consolation: Sulpicius to Cicero (Fam.4.5), Seneca to Lucilius on the death of Serenus (Ep.63), Plutarch to his wife (Moralia 608b-612b), a letter of Jerome (Ep.60). There even seems to have been some distinction between the treatises and letters of earlier philosophers: Epicurus to Hegesianax (Diog.L.10.27) or Panaetius to Tubero (Cic.Fin.4.23).

Certain structural conventions seem to have been recognised by the consolatores. Cicero notes their existence, but these are not specifically structural (Tusc.3.81). Seneca refers to the custom of placing precept before example: scio a praeceptis incipere omnes qui monere aliquem volunt, in exemplis desinere (Ad Marc.2.1). This was a convention of psychotherapeutic writing. But Seneca adds that this is not a hard-and-fast rule, and that it is regularly ignored, in accordance with the circumstances to be treated. In fact, among classical writers there is very little information on this topic, and even Quintilian is quite uninformative.

Menander (whose major achievement is to show how rhetorical thinking aimed to eradicate all spontaneity but the most artificial from any type of work) presents a thorough analysis of the constituents of the παραμυθητικόν (Spengel 3.413=4). The speech is in two parts, the <u>lamentatio</u> (μονῳδία, θρῆνος) and the <u>consolatio</u> (παραμυθητικόν). The first part should include praise of the deceased, <u>laudatio</u>. Lattimore (215) identifies <u>laudatio</u> as an independent part of the speech, but Menander clearly says that the <u>consolatio</u> is the δεύτερον μέρος (413.22), while the <u>lamentatio</u> is "composed of" (συνίσταται 413.10) encomiastic topics. It seems indisputable that Menander made no distinction between separate parts in the <u>lamentatio</u> and its components. In the consolatory section (413.22ff.), he offers a model line of thought, which starts from a reminder of human mortality to the surviving relations, by a quotation from Euripides. (He inserts some advice on the use of quotation.) Then he continues that it would not be tasteless (ἀπειρόκαλον 414.2) to philosophise on the nature of man (περὶ φύσεως ἀνθρωπίνης) and the life the gods have given him; one may add that such a fate is not exclusively human (414.7=8). He prepares for the traditional dilemma: if to live is a benefit, he has had his enjoyment of it; if not, then death is good fortune. Finally, he says one should end with the present situation of the dead man: he is alive on the plains of Elysium (414.16=25). Then one should correct oneself, and say that he is rather living with the gods in heaven, where his soul has returned to its own. To end on a high note, a hymn of praise is thought appropriate (414.25=7). Finally, some solid practical advice: "the length

should be appropriate to the work. It must be known that it is possible to offer consolation both in a concise speech and also in the more extended style of a written work according to choice" (414.27-30)[1].

Menander's account includes the core of consolatory topics, which he distinguishes from philosophy: (1) death is an end to all woes; (2) heaven has made man to die; (3) heroes and (demi-) gods also die; (4) states and peoples have wholly died out. He also illustrates ways to soften the mourners: (1) praise of past achievement; (2) promise of future achievement; (3) respect for the dead man's rhetorical and political prowess[2]; (4) his immortality and life with the gods. These areas will be discussed in detail in due course. He includes the techniques of ornamentation: poetic quotation, historical examples, short narratives and philosophical comment[3]. The account is useful in these respects, in addition to its provision of a sample, but generally standard, line of argument, but it is handicapped by its abbreviated form as a single entry in a handbook.

Seneca's own approach to structure is elusive, to say the least, as was his attitude to the whole question of composition.

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1   cp. the conclusion of περὶ Μονῳδίας : "the speech should not exceed a hundred and fifty words, because mourners cannot bear a long sermon or length of words in misfortunes and disasters" (437.1-4).

2   cp. περὶ Μονῳδίας   passim.

3   This could almost be a recipe for diatribe, with a few stylistic features added.

He would appear to have practised an effacing casualness, although it is never possible to be entirely certain that this may not be coyness which conceals a deliberately mannered casualness. At any rate, he never appears to have practised structuring to any great depth - he does consistently abhor literary subtlety[1]. In philosophical composition, he regarded the ideas as more important than the words[2]. As a rule, it is fair to say that Cato's adage - rem tene, verba sequentur - is equally true of Seneca[3], with the appendage non passibus aequis: for, as with most of his contemporaries, if the opportunity for a virtuoso performance presented itself, he had no compunction in distorting the proportions or symmetry of the work as a whole for the sake of a passing effect.

To get a clearer picture of how the dialogues are put together, it will be helpful to analyse their structure and examine the sequence of thought. To a great extent it is unlikely that these analyses will reflect a careful plan of organization by Seneca. The evidence suggests that preliminary co-ordination of material in his composition was very limited. Instead the analyses reveal different developments at different stages of composition: an initial broad outline followed later by more detailed concentration on specific sections. The

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1   cp. Guillemin 271-3.

2   Ep.100.3-4, 115.1-2;   cp. Cic. Orat.51.

3   Ep.75.7, Tranq.1.13;   cp. Currie 77.

analyses can do no more than examine the final product. They cannot remove the flesh from the skeleton, but they can distinguish the skeleton, and that, Seneca's planned arrangement, together with a close examination of the progress of arguments, the basically unpremeditated material, is a necessary and profitable study in itself.

Attempts to analyse the structure of the earliest dialogue de consolatione, Ad Marciam, have been in superficial agreement, but at times curiously inconsistent or contradictory, even when only the general framework is under examination. Albertini (53-5) finds a superficial regularity, and divides as follows:

Exordium	1
Examples	2-3
Precepts	
(a) general considerations establishing the fault of prolonged grief:	4-11
(b) Marcia has no reason for afflicting herself for her own sake:	12-19.2
(c) nor for the sake of her son:	19.3-25
Peroratio	26

He understands Seneca's statement about the misplacing of examples to be a formal divisio (2.1). He correctly points out that his sub-divisions (b) and (c) are indicated at 12.1, and that each of these is subsequently further subdivided, at least ostensibly (12.1, 19.3). In (a), he maintains that Seneca first presents his own arguments, and then replies to a possible objection (9.1).

Charles Favez, in the introduction to his edition of the dialogue, divides as follows: 1, introduction; 2-5, examples; the consolation in three parts: 6-11 general precepts; 12-19.3 Marcia's situation; 19.4-25 the cause of her affliction; 26, peroration (xlix). This corresponds to his contention in the section on the general characteristics of the ancient consolation where he breaks down the traditional scheme into an introduction stating the nature of the grief and its intended cure; the consolation itself, in two parts - the afflicted and the cause of the affliction (in Ad Marciam, these are preceded by general precepts); and a conclusion (xxvii).

Constantine Grollios (15-9) essentially follows Favez, but, excluding misprints, there are major inconsistencies between the two accounts of the structure he offers. Albertini (52-3) and Favez (lxv-lxxi) both provide summaries, and the latter also analyses the philosophy chapter by chapter (xxviii-xlviii), but neither uses it to take a broader view of the form of the work, while Grollios does. His first division is as follows:

1. Prooemium   1.1-8

2. Examples   2.1-5.6

3. General precepts   6.1-11.5

4. Marcia's situation   12.1-19.2

    (a) does she grieve because she has received no pleasures from her son?

    (b) or because she might have experienced greater pleasure if he had lived?

5.   Metilius' situation   19.3–25.3

   (a)   does Marcia grieve because he died?

   (b)   or because he lived for a short time?

6.   Peroration   26.1–6

In his expanded account, he makes some important additions to
previous analyses.   For a start, he is the first to appreciate
the double <u>exordium</u>, with <u>principia ab auditore</u> and <u>a re</u>.
There is an observable distinction between the two topics which
had not been previously noted.   He still maintains 2.1 is a
<u>divisio</u>[1], but he extends his second section to include 6.1–3
and starts the third section on general precepts at 7.1, which
he splits into two, 7.1–8.3 and 9.1–11.5[2].

   Albertini's choice of 4 as the starting-point for the
general precepts which others place at either 6 or 7 is to some
extent understandable.   Seneca does seem to have finished with
his examples of Octavia and Livia, and to be making a fresh
start at 4.1.   Moreover, the speech of Areus anticipates
certain topics from later in the work[3], but the opening of 4
is clearly only a transition from the example to the moral
conclusion, which, for variety and dramatic effect, Seneca
presents in the form of a prosopopoeia (5), which initially is
only indirectly aimed at Marcia.   This takes the announced

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1.   but cp. his comment on 19, where he refutes Albertini 55.

2.   cp. 28–9 where he divides according to the principles of
     different schools.

3.   Grollios 26–7.

section of examples to at least the end of 5: so Favez and
Grollios (1). Grollios' second account stretches it to the end
of 6, which shows that he is at least aware of a possible confusion;
for 6 so closely resembles a conclusion to Areus' speech, in the
form that Seneca had hitherto avoided as far as he could:
particular application of Areus' precepts to Marcia's own case
(praecepta per exemplum), as the first sentence could hardly state
more clearly. The end of the chapter, with its extended image
of the helmsman, is much more natural as a conclusion, or at
least interrupted cadence, than a simple link in the chain. The
next chapter does, of course, begin with a hypothetical objection,
again unusual for an opening in any normal situation; but in a
case where grief is there first, it would be natural to start
from the opiniones which nourish the grief, rather than any
positive aspect. At 9.1, an objection introduces a fresh topic,
which Albertini understood to have a different function since
he seems to have viewed it in isolation, but if both sections of
the general precepts (7.1-8.3; 9.1-11.5) are seen to be introduced,
not by an objection, but by a false opinion which is then refuted,
a clearer pattern starts to emerge for these sections. It may
not be coincidence, although with Seneca this can never be ruled
out, that 6.1-3, which we put forward as the close of the examples
section, ends with a commonplace on tears - they cannot vanquish
fate - and so does the section of general precepts: tota vita
flebilis est (11.1).

The change at 12.1 to Marcia's situation could not be more
clearly marked than by the first two words: dolor tuus. This
is succeeded by the divisio for the remainder of the dialogue,

between Marcia's ills and those of her son. He subdivides her situation[1] and Metilius'[2]. Between the early divisions, however comes a quantity of material less weighty than that of the first section of precepts. Seneca introduces more than three chapters of pure example (12.6-16.4) to show that others have suffered greater losses than Marcia's. These are followed soon after by a long comparison of life to a visit to Syracuse (17.2-18.8). After this it is not surprising that the course of the argument is slightly astray, and 19.1-2 forms an abrupt recapitulation and conclusion to the thought of the foregoing chapters.

The transition from this section to Metilius' is somewhere in 19.3. Albertini (54) starts at 19.3, Favez (xxxv, xlix) at 19.4, Grollios (17) at 19.3; the Loeb editor, Basore, has a separate paragraph for 19.2-3. The division comes most naturally at the start of 19.3, Marcia's hypothetical objection forming an effective pivot from her situation to her son's. The real difficulty is the role of 19.2, which, although following from the preceding section, looks out of place and can only be explained as a gratuitous remark that Seneca wanted to include before he moved on, and was reduced to including here. This final section is designed to lead up to a climax in Metilius' immortality and the emotional excitement of the _peroratio_, and Seneca achieves this by increasing the measure of _laudatio_ under each topic until it reaches its peak with life in heaven (24.5-

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1   Albertini 54,247; Favez xxxii; Grollios 17.

2   Albertini, Grollios loc.cit.; Favez xxxv.

25.3), which in turn affords an easy transition to the _peroratio_
(26). This seems to be the only explanation of the (valid)
objection that the disposition of arguments in 19.4-25.3 is
disorderly[1].

Certain other structural criticisms have been made.
Albertini's accusation of inconsistency in the use of examples
later in the dialogue after Seneca said he was reversing the
traditional order is the result of a mistake and misreading:
Seneca says nothing about reversal, only change (_mutari_ 2.1),
and he leaves himself uncommitted about later illustrations[2].
Besides, many of Seneca's treatises have some striking examples
at or near their beginning.

A more severe criticism is the imbalance of treatment of
ideas, both in the section on Marcia's condition, and in that
on Metilius. This is the result of a tendency not peculiar to
Seneca to state a proposition in the form of two alternatives.
It gives the impression of neatness and regularity, but the
antithesis is often false and contrived, and it produces the type
of imbalance found here. So, at 12.1, Seneca divides the possible
reasons for Marcia's grief into two: either she had received no
pleasure from her son, or she might have had greater pleasure,
had he survived. As Albertini points out (55), the first
possibility is dismissed in a sentence, the second in two
paragraphs (12.3-4). But between these two is added a third

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1 Albertini 55; Favez 1; Grollios 18.

2 for the criticism, Albertini 54; for an opposite view,
   Grollios 19.

possibility: she did receive sufficient pleasure from him.
Seneca concludes that she should not be ungrateful for these
past blessings (12.1 ad fin. -2). If this is taken with the
first proposition, it provides an almost equal balance: 12.1-2
equals 12.3-4. The division at 19.3 is more realistic, but
the subsequent treatment more confused, although the balance is
more level: the first topic - Marcia may be grieving for Metilius
simply because he died - is covered from 19.4 to 20.6, and the
second - she may grieve because his life was short - from 21.1
to 24.4, with a conclusion appended (24.5-25.3). In both cases
the first proposition is simpler and requires shorter consideration.

There are other points where lack of proportion is evident,
notably the series of examples from 12.6 to 16.4, the _emblema_
of 17-8, the tirade on death (20.1-3) the _narratio_ of Cordus'
last days (22.4-8) or the section on contemporary female morals
(24.1-3), which to a greater or lesser extent protrude on the
flow of the work as a single piece, but these are irritations
only for modern taste: Seneca and his readers would be surprised
to find these passages called faulty. They represent an approach
to composition approved by technician and layman, and, as
presented by Seneca, they are used in a very moderated capacity.
The logic behind their use was based on the practical conviction
that an audience often needed more than an interest in subject-
matter to keep its attention. Hence the oratorical cosmetics
of the declamations. Seneca at least retained a connection of
thought between his _ornatus_ and his subject, but he had no reason
to ignore contemporary practice. So, in _Ad Marciam_, after the
early examples, whose application is carefully worked out, and

a precisely structured section of general precepts, he relaxes
the structure and introduces more colour and more personal
references – to keep the work lively as much as for any other
motive. These are features which, it will emerge, are common
to many of Seneca's longer compositions: a less regulated
structure, and less demanding use of material, for the latter
half of the work.

The following division might be suggested as a final
version. In view of the diffuseness of subject and treatment,
no virtue can be seen in any attempt to over-abbreviate the
analysis:

1. Exordium

    (a) Marcia's exceptional character   1.1-4

    (b) the nature of her cure   5-8

2. Examples   2.1-5.6

    link: tears cannot vanquish fate   6.1-3

3. General precepts

    (a) grief is unnatural   7.1-8.3

    (b) man is never prepared for death   9.1-10.4

    (c) all of life calls for tears   10.5-11.5

4. Marcia's situation

    (a) if Metilius was no pleasure, he is
        no loss   12.1-2

    (b) if she thinks her pleasure might
        have been greater, she should rather
        be thankful for what she had   12.3-5

    (c) consolation of examples   12.6-16.4

    (d) consolation from her family   16.5-8

On the more detailed scale of subdivisions, Seneca does keep the progress of the work adequately signposted. Albertini (247-8) makes some of the following points, but not all. At enim is a rigorous adversative to mark a change of direction at 7.1; the refutation is introduced by sed (7.1 ad fin.), and successive points in the argument marked by autem (7.3) and deinde (8.1). Albertini thinks deinde marks a separate division (247), but it can only mark a development (Basore, e.g., translates "in the second place"). Ergo points a new division at 9.1. Albertini correctly sees a division in the contrast of partes and tota at 11.1. Seneca introduces the argument by dilemma in 12.1 with utrum...an marking the alternatives. In the subsequent discussion, at again marks the turning point (12.3). The gradation of examples from 12.6 to 16.4 is compartmentalized for each new set and category of example, and the iam at 16.5 turns attention back to Marcia and the present situation. 19.1 has its division perfectly clear, apart from its inability to conform to what is actually written. 19.3 once more uses the utrum...an combination.

The final sentence of 20.6 acts as the <u>quod erat demonstrandum</u> to that part of the section on Metilius, and the adversative <u>tamen</u> introduces the second (21.1). The conclusion to this comes prematurely at 21.6 (<u>non est itaque quod</u>...), but is postponed for further elaboration. Development is marked again by <u>praeter hoc quod</u>... (23.1), and the conclusion by <u>proinde</u> (25.1).

The form of <u>Ad Helviam Matrem De Consolatione</u> has none of the blurred edges or false antitheses of <u>Ad Marciam</u>. The most fundamental difference is that Seneca reverses the usual order, so that unconventionally the section on the cause of the affliction (i.e. Seneca's exile), precedes the section on the afflicted person. This is explained by the unusual circumstances in which the victim himself is delivering the consolation. In other respects, the structure is regular and straightforward.

Albertini (64-5) analyses as follows:

<u>Exordium</u>: review of the past   1-3

<u>Divisio</u>   4

A. Helvia must not afflict herself for Seneca:

   (a) a moral thought rules all the argument:

      contempt for the goods of fortune   5

   (b) exile is not formidable in itself   6-9

   (c) or for the inconveniences it involves   10-3

B. Helvia must not afflict herself for her

   own sake:

   (a) either because of self-interest   14

   (b) or because of sentiment   15-6

   (c) there are practical means to overcome

      grief   17-9

Conclusion   20

Favez, in his edition, divides similarly, omitting the
divisio (lv-vi). Coccia (150-63) varies the emphasis while
retaining the same shape:

Exordium	1-3
Divisio	4
Seneca's situation: it is not such as to distress	
Helvia	5-13
(a) exile is not distressing per se	6-9
(b) exile is not distressing for its	
accompanying incommoda:	
(1) poverty	10-2
(2) scorn, disgrace	13
Helvia's situation	14-20

He omits a peroratio, but the adversative ceterum (20.1) and the
change of subject to a reassurance of his continued well-being
are strong evidence in favour of Albertini and Favez.

The exordium is long by Senecan standards, but it divides
into its own compartments. Because it was unusual to offer
consolation to a person other than the exile, this has to be
clearly set out at the start, and Seneca includes a claim for
literary originality in the first chapter. The next section
(2.1-3) is, like the second half of the exordium in Ad Marciam
(1.5-8), on the treatment of the "wound". The final part (2.4-
3.2) retails fortune's persistent cruelty to Helvia, which
culminated in the latest blow of exile.

The divisio combines propositio, and marks the two major
sections which follow (4.1). The remainder of the chapter forms
the introduction to the first of these sections, with the thought

running as follows:

    4.2-3: first, Seneca is happy, and no circumstance can

    change that, for -

    5.1: happiness is independent of external influence.
The introduction to the section on exile is based on the question
of right and wrong conceptions of happiness (4.2-5.6). There
is a slight inconsistency in Favez at this point, for he starts
his philosophical analysis with 6.1 (xliv).

    The major parts of the section follow, and the structure
is marked at 6.1 by the definition (in Senecan terms) of exile.
The progress through the chapters on exile is carefully arranged:
6.2 introduces the statement proposed for refutation, which
begins with _agedum_. First he treats Rome (2-3), then (_deinde_)
towns and islands (4), and finally Corsica (5), the change marked
by a move into the interrogative with the repeated _quid_. The
conclusion is signalled by _ergo_ (6.5 ad fin. -6), and the
transition by the linking relative _quod_ (7). After the review
of the stars, the change to men is shown by _agedum_ and the
_a...ad_ combination (7.1). The conclusion of the argument that
change is the rule is marked by _ita_ (7.10). 8.1 introduces a
new approach, the theories of Varro and Brutus, and a fresh
subdivision in 8.2, to which 8 and 9 correspond.

    10.1 starts the section on the _incommoda_ of exile. They
are dealt with in order: first, poverty (10-2). This requires
certain internal divisions: food (10.2-11), protection from the
elements, clothing and property (11.1-7) with a digression on
human needs with examples (12.1-7). The other _incommoda_ are
ignominia (13.1-6) and _contumelia, contemptio_ (13.7-8).

The section on Helvia starts at 14.1, and it is divided into two: either she has lost some protection, or the loss itself is beyond endurance. The first is dismissed in two paragraphs (14.2-3). The magnitude of her loss is dealt with at greater length (15-9), including examples (16.6-7): he first examines its nature (15.1-16.7), and then looks for a cure, including comfort from the rest of her family, in particular her sister (or sister-in-law), of whom a long account is given (17.1-19.7). To close, he reassures her of his own happiness as he contemplates a more sublime existence (20.1-2).

As in Ad Marciam, there are certain disproportionate passages, but these fit more easily into the overall run of the work. The argument that exile is nempe loci commutatio (6.1-8.6) is a sophistic tour de force in the style of the declaimers, with its examples, references to history, descriptions, in particular of the sky, but it is still central to the work: if this section fails to convince of its truth, or to convince Helvia and other readers of Seneca's belief in its truth, the rest of the work is so much less useful. But if we bear in mind that his original audience would be predisposed to believe the best, it becomes easier to accept the passage, even if other (non-structural) difficulties remain.

The section on exile is only four chapters long (6-9), while the section on exile's disadvantages is also four chapters (10-3). It has been objected that there is an imbalance between the main subject, exile, and these common-

places on the <u>incommoda</u>[1]. The root of the imbalance is in
the <u>incommoda</u> section itself, where the part on <u>paupertas</u>
(10-2) is three times the length of the combined treatment
of <u>ignominia</u> and <u>contemptus</u> (13). Favez points out that
the latter subject can be treated at length, as in <u>De</u>
<u>Constantia Sapientis</u> (1). There may be two reasons for this
disproportionate allocation of space. First, Seneca may be
emphasising the <u>incommodum</u> which seemed to him the hardest
to overcome, sudden restriction of resources. As Favez
notes (l-li), <u>ignominia</u> and <u>contemptus</u> for exiles were
substantially diminished under the emperors, when the decision
was no longer in the hands of the citizen-body. The second
reason is the unnecessary need to repeat the same argument
at the same length for disgrace as was used for poverty: to
the wise man, both were equally insignificant.

The final striking case of a disproportionate passage
is the narrative on Helvia's sister (-in-law?). This
corresponds to the build-up towards the end of <u>Ad Marciam</u>,
where the material becomes increasingly emotional. It is a
similar extended appeal to the heart, and serves the same
purpose as the <u>captatio benevolentiae</u>, since credit for her
sister's virtue also accrues to Helvia herself.

A division for the dialogue can now be presented as
follows:

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1   Favez lvi.

1. <u>Exordium</u>

   (a) on composing his own consolation   1

   (b) Helvia's misfortunes   2-3

2. <u>Divisio</u>   4.1

3. Seneca's situation: it must not distress

Helvia:

   (a) introduction: the nature of

      happiness   4.2-5.6

   (b) exile is not distressing in itself   6-9

   (c) exile is not distressing for its

      <u>incommoda</u>   10-3

      (1) poverty   10-2

      (2) disgrace, contempt   13

4. Helvia's situation: she must not be

distressed for her own sake:

   (a) either because of self-interest   14

   (b) or because of a pure sense of loss   15-6

   (c) she has the means to overcome grief   17-9

5. Peroration   20

<u>Ad Polybium De Consolatione</u> is in a category of its own, because of the difficulties involved in clarifying Seneca's motive behind its composition: consolation, flattery, or satire. The least likely motive is the first, and this matter will be discussed in a later chapter. For the moment, it is adequate to say that the confused motivation produced a decidedly distorted, not to say chaotic, structure. This is not helped by the absence of the opening chapter(s).

In despair, Albertini (66) suggests this analysis:

A	general arguments	1-5.3
B	personal arguments	5.4-8
A[1]	return to general arguments	9-11
B[1]	return to personal arguments	12-3
C	examples	14-7
D	conclusion	18

Later (256-8), when he examines the nature of the composition, he argues that this dialogue belonged to the type which Seneca composed by assembling individual pieces into a whole without prior organisation or close links. He correctly explains the imbalance as the result of his need to emphasize the section which would appeal to Polybius and Claudius. He points out the monotonous formulae which introduce different stages in the dialogue but have only the semblance of logical progression[1], and shows that words like _etiamnunc_[2] and _itaque_[3] lose all logical value.

His classification into general and personal arguments results in some arbitrary divisions: for example, he divides at 5.4, although Seneca has been talking specifically about the brother's reaction to Polybius' grief since 5.1. The chapter begins _illud quoque_, which indicates continuity. This overlapping is not unusual to mark a transition. On the other hand, _illud quoque_ introduces a major break at 9.1.

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1   2.1, 5.1, 5.4, 6.1, 9.1, 10.1.

2   3.3, 7.1, 8.1.

3   14.1, 14.2 (twice), 16.4, 17.1, 18.1.

The use of such phrases, however, is only effective if they are backed by a corresponding development of thought. Albertini only starts his section of examples at 14, but Claudius is introduced as early as 12.3: a split between 13 and 14 is hard to see, and harder to understand.

As a rule, it has been found that consolations included one section on the person in distress and one on the cause of the distress, normally in this order. In the case of Ad Marciam, they were preceded by a section of general precepts, and the personal situations never excluded further general consideration. If this were applied to the present dialogue, and allowance were made for the absence of the exordium, the first two-thirds fall approximately into place: 1.1-5.3 deals with precepts of a general nature, introduced by the two commonplaces "all men must die" (1.1) and "tears achieve nothing" (2.1), which treat the situation of those who are affected by a misfortune, particularly men of standing like Polybius, and Seneca himself. From 5.1, Polybius' own position is expanded vis-a-vis his dead brother, in ascending order of importance. 9.1 marks a change of direction, with the explicit division: does he grieve for his own sake, or for that of the dead man? The section on Helvia's situation in Ad Helviam began with a similar emphasis on self-interest (14.1-2), but more important is the fact that the section on the cause of Marcia's grief also began this way (19.1-3). Both ended with a demonstration of practical means of consolation, both from study and from the surviving family. In Ad Helviam, this latter section concluded with an extended account of the most important consoler. Polybius' consolation from study

is mentioned throughout the work[1], but here the sequence of
living consolers corresponds to that in Ad Helviam: family,
then one particularly important person — in the case of
family bereavement, another member of the family; in the
case of a public figure, the head of his "public" household.
In Ad Helviam, Seneca separates the examples from this
narrative; here, the examples, still de rigueur, come
appropriately from the current leader of Rome, whose bereave-
ments all these previous deaths have been. To this extent,
Seneca has tidied up his structure by amalgamating two
devices into one. A further consideration is his liking for
a prosopopoeia at or near the end of a dialogue: so, Cordus
in Ad Marciam (26). It admits a more emotional tone, and
takes the edge off the repetitions which inevitably occur.
It is worth noting that Seneca seems to change the purpose
of this insertion: when it starts, Claudius himself is the
consolation; at the end, Seneca advises Polybius to imitate
the examples, almost as if Claudius had not been there
(17.1-2). But these chapters (13-7) still remain out of
proportion to the rest of the dialogue, and while we can see
how their role fits them in, it is another matter to find a
wholly suitable classification for them in any divisio.

 With reaffirmed reservations, a scheme for this
dialogue might take the following shape:

 [1. Exordium   not extant]

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1 2.6,8.1-4,11.5-6,18.1.

Chapter 2
Themes of Consolation

This chapter will approach the dialogues de consolatione
from a generic angle and examine the themes which Seneca uses
in his dialogues, and their development from non-consolatory
works to the commonplaces and cliches of the later classical
period. To achieve this, it is necessary to begin with a
survey of consolatory themes in funerary literature that is
not specifically concerned with consolation.

The original consolation was concerned with the relief
of sorrow following a bereavement. In the course of time,
other types developed to cover different misfortunes, mainly,
if we are to believe Cicero, under the influence of the
rhetorical schools[1]. The process reached its reductio ad
absurdum in works like Seneca's own De Remediis Fortuitorum.
The major cause of this decline was the insistence, under
philosophical influence, on purely rational arguments to
combat grief. This process of refinement collapsed to be
succeeded by an approach more tolerant of human weakness.
Cicero is the great illustration of the ineffectiveness of
rational consolation, and in the following century Seneca
made the first vital concessions to human irrationality,
which start the move towards later, Christian consolations.

One reason for the fall of rationalism was the fact
that the motivation for consolation was tha absence of
rationalism from the untrained mind: while the majority of

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1   Tusc. 3.81; cp. 1.7 for scholae.

philosophical works were written for men of learning, consolations
were ostensibly written for ordinary people. One result of
this fact was the popularization and simplification of
consolatory topics by readers who in turn caused subsequent
writers to produce the original arguments in this amended,
and debased, form. This popular interest, which apparently
reached the proportions of absolute fascination, is reflected
in the recurrence of consolatory topics, some quite sophisticated,
on gravestones as epitaphs[1].

The history of consolation

Even the earliest Greek literature contains the expressions
which became commonplaces for later writers. The prime
example of consolation in the Homeric poems is Achilles'
speech to Priam when he comes to the Greek camp to claim
Hector's body (Iliad 24.507-620). Here a device of considerable
importance to later consolers, the use of examples, is
illustrated by the case of Niobe, already a type for the
excessive mourner[2]. Other familiar topics are also exemplified
in the poems. The commonest consolation - "all men must die" -
is here (6.486-9), and any attempt to avoid death is futile
(12.326). Human life moves in a cycle, and death is as necessary
as birth for the continuation of life (6.145-9). The poem
also considers the position of the gods, and, apart from

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1   Lier "Topica Carminum Sepulcralium Latinorum", Lattimore
    Themes in Greek and Latin Epitaphs.

2   cp. Willcock 141-2.

community of suffering (5.381=404; Willcock 145), offers
consolation with the thought of divine providence, an
anticipation of Stoic doctrine (3.65). The gods also display
their concern for man by the gift of endurance which helps
him to overcome severe loss (24.49[1]). It is also true that
the gods take those they love while still young (Odyssey
15.245=6; Lattimore 259). Conversely, the indiscriminate
behaviour of Fate which ignores virtue and takes men at
random is also mentioned (Iliad 5.53=4).

Greek tragedy is another source of consolatory topics
on which Cicero and, most of all, the author of the Consolatio
ad Apollonium (Plutarch Moralia 101f=122a) frequently drew.
The consolation "all men die" is often used[2]. Regret for having
children (Eur. Supp. 786=93) or scorn for all human life (Soph
OC 1225; Eur.Tro.636, fr.449 quoted by Cicero Tusc.1.115) are
the symptoms consolers cure. Death is equivalent to the state
before birth (Adesp.fr.430), which anticipates the Epicurean view
(Lucr.3.840=2). Consequently, since nothing can happen to one
who is not, death is no evil, and hence not to be lamented[3].
Death is a release from all ills (Aesch.fr.255,353; Adesp.fr.369,
371). It is man's responsibility to face death in the proper
frame of mind: he must always be prepared[4], and resigned to this

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1   cp. Lloyd Jones 38.

2   Aesch.Sept.263; Soph.El.153ff.,289ff., fr.454; Eur.Alc.416=8,
    905, fr.332.3.

3   Lier 593 and n.44; Aesch.fr.255; Soph.El.1170; Eur.Tro.636.

4   Eur.Thes. quoted by Cicero Tusc.3.29; cp.Dougan/Henry's
    n.ad loc.

inevitability (Eur.fr.505,965), and he must leave life content
without trying to lengthen it (Eur.Supp.1108-13). After all,
man lives on the suffrance of Fortune: life is not his to command
(Eur.Phoen.555-8, Supp.534-5). This leads to the commonplace of
death collecting its due from man[1]. Death takes all the best
(Soph.Phil.436) and Fortune's choice is indiscriminate and incon-
sistent (Eur.Alc.782). Early death is a blessing, however, as
old age is so undesirable (Soph OT 1528-30, OC 1235-8; Eur.fr.25).
As it is, death is unpredictable, and men, like fruit, fall
whether ripe or not (Eur.fr.415,420), but, as the gods know best,
they must be trusted (Soph.El.173-8).

Greek prose had its special funerary genre in the funeral
oration[2]. The extant examples of the ἐπιτάφιος [3] show progress
towards stylization, and the growing importance of consolation
at the expense of lament. As Kennedy remarks (154), these
speeches display a formulaic approach towards general structure
and detailed organization of topics. Later rhetorical writers
continued to provide instructions for the composition of
ἐπιτάφιοι: Dionysius of Halicarnassus in his Ars Rhetorica
(6.1-6), and Menander (Spengel 3.418.5-422.4), who groups it
with other speeches about the dead.

The development of moral philosophy was accompanied by
the desire to control emotion, and the question of grief was
a subject for repeated discussion. The pseudo-Platonic Axiochus

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1   Soph.El.1173, Phil.1421; Eur.Alc.419,702,780, Andr.1271ff.,
     fr.10.

2   Buresch 72-94; Kennedy 156-66.

3   in particular, Gorgias in Diels-Kranz Die Fragmente Der
     Vorsokratiker 2.284-6; Thuc.2.35-46; Plato Menexenus;
     Lysias 2; Demosthenes 60; Hyperides 6.

is the earliest work recognised as a consolation in its own
right; it was followed by Xenophon's Apology, and a collection
of Academic works, including a respected treatise by Theophrastus[1].
The acknowledged founder of the consolation, however, was the
Academic Crantor, whose work was universally admired and copied[2].

At Rome, early drama shows the same anticipation of later
formalized themes as its Greek equivalent. Characters like
Niobe (Cic.Tusc.3.63) were taken over as examples in later
consolations. Ennius' Telamon was also quoted by Cicero (Tusc.
3.28 and Dougan/Henry n.ad loc.). It is likely that Cicero
used much Roman poetry in his own Consolatio: for example, he
may be the intermediary between the authors and Jerome of
quotations from Naevius ("life has many woes") and Ennius
(the public responsibility of the bereaved)[3]. Ennius also used
the image of death as a harbour (Tusc.1.101). The influence
of tragedy did not exclude comedy as a source of consolatory
aphorisms[4]. Seneca even used the mime[5]. Among the lyric and
elegiac poets, consolatory themes appear regularly in funerary

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1   Καλλισθένης ἢ περὶ πένθους   : as a consolation, Diog.L.
    5.44, Cic.Tusc.3.21,5.25; Plut.Mor.104d; for the period
    from Democritus to the Cynics, Buresch 7-37.

2   Diog.L.4.24-7; Cic.Ac.2.135; Buresch 38-57.

3   these quotations are found in Jerome's letter of consolation,
    Ep.60.14; the connection with Cicero is suggested by Buresch 100.

4   e.g. on praemeditatio, Ter.Phorm.241-6 quoted in Tusc.3.30;
    criticism of the inordinate grief of the speaker, Ter.Heaut.
    147-8 at Tusc.3.65.

5   Pubilius Syrus, quoted in Ad Marciam 9.5; cp.Ep.8.8-9.

contexts[1].

The contributions of Lucretius (3.830=1094) and Cicero
to Roman consolatory philosophical writing were considerable.
Cicero's greatest contributions were his own <u>Consolatio</u>
(<u>Div</u>.2.3; Buresch 95=107) and the first and third books of
<u>Tusculan Disputations</u>, but the rest of the corpus provides
more cases of consolation, both in philosophy (Buresch 107)
and in the letters (ibid.95,107). In the first century,
Seneca added greatly to the literature of the genre. There
are as many as nineteen <u>Epistulae Morales</u> that cover an area
of the subject[2]. He wrote the three dialogues <u>de consolatione</u>
and the curious <u>De Remediis Fortuitorum</u>. In addition, topics
of consolation recur in <u>De Brevitate Vitae</u>, <u>De Tranquillitate</u>
<u>Animi</u>, <u>De Constantia Sapientis</u> and <u>De Providentia</u>. To these
must be added the lost works <u>De Immatura Morte</u> and <u>Exhortationes</u>.

The foregoing survey has attempted to combine an account
of early consolation with a collection of the themes that
reappear in Seneca. A complete study would have occupied
several volumes: instead, a selective history can prepare the
ground for the treatment of Seneca's own consolations as part
of a distinctive genre with its own tradition of thought.

Consolation for bereavement

The dialogues have already been analysed structurally

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1   e.g. Hor.<u>Carm</u>.1.4.13=5,9.13=5,24.5,28.4=6;2.3.27,14.9=12,
    18.29=32;4.7.17=8; Prop.1.19.2,2.15.23,3.18.11,21,4.11.1;
    Ov.<u>Am</u>.3.9.21.

2   13,24,26,30,36,37,49,54,63,77,78,81,91,93,94,98,99,102,
    107; Buresch (108) omits <u>Ep</u>.81 and 102.

into what we have good reason to believe was the arrangement planned by Seneca before he began to write. Certain deviations from his original plans and some inconsistencies also came to light. It was argued that Seneca was more concerned to present a continuously unfolding process of thought with some clarity but no necessary sequential significance in the arrangement, than to follow any strict literary rule of composition and order apart from the barest conventions of consolatory writing. Now, when we turn from the larger sections of the works to the smaller components, the themes and commonplaces of his subject, it becomes evident how he was thinking in terms of composition by the well-worn topics of his chosen genre. With the exception of personal references there is scarcely any new material in these works: it all fits the rules for this type of composition, and only the arrangement and recombination of old material create the sense of novelty.

This section will first detail the individual topics and secondly add some comment on their role in the context and development of Seneca's argument. Most have clear literary antecedents and in each case a representative sample will be given. Where Seneca puts a topic to a different, contrasting or novel use, some additional comment will be made. Some distinction is necessary between the full treatment of a topic, with a paragraph or chapter to itself, and a brief allusion, perhaps even in the course of a longer discussion of a completely different topic. A further distinction can be made between general and particular versions of the same topic; in this case, the former will be discussed first, and the

latter will be treated as a subdivision of the same topic.

There are certain topics which do not fall into the category of pure consolation, but do not necessarily correspond to the prescriptions for the prooemium either. In some cases, however, they do fulfil the role of captatio benevolentiae, despite recurring throughout the work. Other topics come under Menander's heading of laudatio, which he says precedes the lamentatio and consolatio (Spengel 3.413.9-23). In another context on funerary speeches (περὶ μονῳδίας), he stresses the importance of continual praise in the course of the lament "so that the lamentation is not absolutely an encomium, but so that the expression of the lament is the praise" (434.18-23). These are treated first under the title "encomiastic topics".

Encomiastic topics

(1)   praise of the recipient

Ad Marciam 1.1[1],4.1   Ad Polybium 2.2-6,7.1,8.2

Standard procedure at the start of any attempt to persuade or dissuade is to win the listener's sympathy and support, and in a difficult case, also to bolster his confidence. Praise and compliment can do this. It is specially apposite in consolations.

In Ad Marciam, Seneca begins with an implied compliment about Marcia's exceptional qualities in comparison to the common position of women (infirmitas muliebris animi). The

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1   underlined passages are particularly explicit or notable examples of the topic; bracketed passages are where the topic is only implicit in the expression.

second instance is an indirect piece of flattery which makes
Livia a close friend of Marcia and should therefore stir
feelings of self-importance.

In Ad Polybium, the first passage flatters Polybius for
his sense of justice and loyalty (2), his independence from
money (3), worldly friendships (4), popular reputation and
good health (5), and his indifference to life itself (6).
At the end of the passage, he praises his literary abilities
(which we may assume were in need of a good word from such
as Seneca (6)), which he repeats at greater length in the
last passage (8.2). The other passage stresses Polybius'
responsibility to Claudius and includes a comparison to
Atlas. In this dialogue, praise of the recipient (and his
master) comes thick and fast, for besides the "consolation",
Seneca has a further motive which he does not trouble to
conceal (13.2-3).

(2)   reminder of previous occasions when courage was displayed.

   Ad Marc. 1.1-4

   If the consoler can show that his addressee survived
misfortunes in the past, he can encourage him to repeat
this determination: cp. Cic.Fam.4.5.6,5.16.5; Plut.Mor.609d-e.
This is a development of the general praise in (1).

   Seneca reminds Marcia of the time she bore the enforced
loss of her father and restored his histories after the
suppression of Sejanus.

(3)   women can bear troubles equally with men.

<u>Ad Marc.</u> 16.1

The statement is a form of reassurance. Seneca's argument has been that many others have suffered even greater loss than Marcia, yet bore it with fortitude. To an objection that these are men, he introduces his reply, and a list of heroic ladies, with this statement (cp. Musonius Rufus 18.5-7).

The unusual position leads Seneca into a delicate situation where he finds himself involved in self-contradiction. Here he asserts almost an equality of talents with men, but at 1.1 he talks of a general <u>infirmitas muliebris animi</u> to which Marcia is only an exception. He supports a similar view at 7.3. The distance between statements disguises their opposition. This has been explained as rhetorical opportunism (Favez (2) 1), but it can also be the result of using formulaic material that is only contradictory if carelessly introduced.

(4)   the aggrieved and his/her surviving relatives and friends:

(a)   those who are still alive give comfort by their presence and help;

(b)   the aggrieved has a responsibility for the survivor's welfare.

<u>Ad Marc.</u> 4.1,16.6-8   <u>Ad Pol.</u> 5.4-5,7.4,12.1

In addition to the <u>solacium</u> of these statements which will be discussed later, these again aim at flattery by praising the recipient for having a worthy family or distinguished friends, as in the case of Marcia's friendship with Livia.

(5)   praise of the dead man's virtues and good fortune.

   Ad Marc. 24.1-4   Ad Pol. 3.1-2,5.3,18.8

This corresponds to the laudatio in Menander. It is designed to conjure up happier memories of the departed, although it is easy to see that the opposite effect could be produced.

   The passage from Ad Marciam details Metilius' domestic virtues, and concentrates on his respectful behaviour as a son, appropriate where the mother is addressed. Similarly, the first two passages from Ad Polybium stress the devotion shown by Polybius' brother. In both cases Seneca wrings out plenty of flattery by complimentary allusions: "your brother was a virtuous man, but that was no surprise with an example like you". The final passage is a list of qualities which should be consolation in themselves.

(6)   the virtues of mind and/or body failed in medias res.

   Ad Marc. 12.3,17.1   Ad Pol. 3.1,9.7-8

Menander says one topic of the laudatio should be the potential of the dead man: if he had survived, he would have been famous (435.1/29;413.15,419.30; cp.Lier 454-6). This is part of the theme of immatura mors.

   In the first passage from Ad Marciam, Seneca uses the theme not in propria persona, but as an imagined objection to his advice to appreciate all she had had: at potuit longior esse, maior. In this way, he brings out the alternatives to Marcia's good fortune: either never to have had a son at all or to have a son who brings disgrace on the family. His

conclusion is that a short period of happiness is better than none at all. The second passage also uses the theme as an objection, which is countered by the reply: of course it is hard to lose a son, _sed humanum est._

The instances in _Ad Polybium_ are not objections but statements of the author. The first case is only an allusion to the thought: _interceptam inter prima incrementa indolem._ The second depicts Fortune giving her abundant gifts to him, and then he dies before she can change from generosity to cruelty, the usual feature of Fortune in consolations, particularly in _Ad Polybium_ (e.g.2.2,3.4,4.1,16.4-5). This instance comes from a strictly consolatory chapter, and it serves Seneca's purpose by linking the sections on life and death. Earlier in the chapter Seneca mentions the mixture of good and bad in life, and how life fluctuates like a sea; in contrast, Polybius' brother experienced sustained good fortune, in which state he died, and he has now moved on to greater good fortune in a higher world (9.4-8).

(7)   when virtue reaches maturity, there is nothing further
        to achieve.

Ad Marc. 21.4,<u>23.3-5</u>,24.1-5

This is closely connected with the idea that those favoured by the gods die young (Plut.119e-120c). It is also related to the topic: length of life is unimportant, but quality is not (see below, consolatory topic (7)). But because it specifically conveys praise for the dead it is included in this category.

The instances in _Ad Marciam_ are all found in the approach to the climax in the prosopopoeia of Cordus. Seneca's appeal in this build-up is divided between the mind and the emotions, and the heavy emphasis laid on personal qualities, particularly after 21.1, must have been intended to create an emotional reaction in Marcia.

The first example states the topic as part of a wider argument on the relativity of time in the life of men and animals, and the world as a whole: they all have different points of maturity. The second is a self-contained section on the topic that maturity necessarily heralds destruction. The third, which immediately follows this, varies the emphasis, to say that if life is judged by _virtutes_, not _anni_, he had lived long enough.

Cicero also says that ripeness is followed by the fall of fruit (_Sen_.5; the image is adapted to express _immatura mors_ in _Sen_.71, for which cp. Eur.fr.420,415).

Consolatory topics

(1)   all men must die[1]

  Ad Marc.11.1-2,12.4,17.1   _Ad Pol_.1.1,1.3-4,10.6,11.1,11.4

This is the simplest form of consolation. As Lattimore remarks, it is the consolation _par excellence_, from which every attempt to alleviate must begin. In itself it lacks any

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1   Lier 563, Favez (2) xxxi, Kassel 70-4, Coccia 166, Lattimore 250-1.

sophistication, which is one reason why it carries a good deal more weight than most of the ingenuities of the consolers. Seneca uses the word <u>humanum</u> (<u>Ad Marc</u>.17.1, <u>Ad Pol</u>.10.6) or <u>publicum</u> (<u>Ad Marc</u>.11.1) to describe the common condition.

The motif is found throughout this literature: Cic.<u>Tusc</u>.1.76, 83,5.25; Plutarch quoting Crantor 103f-104d; also Sen. <u>Rem.Fort</u>. 2.1.

(2) whoever is born is destined for death[1].

    <u>Ad Marc</u>.10.5,21.6   <u>Ad Pol</u>.(1.1),11.2-3

The first short passage states the theme as an introduction to a description of the vicissitudes of life as ruled by Fortune. It was a commonplace of philosophy that birth was as tragic as it was happy an event (cp. the Lucretian passage on the new-born child, 5.222-34).

The second passage retells the story of Telamon and his reaction to his son's death. Telamon was one of the prime examples of the resilient parent who stood up to a serious bereavement. Crantor used him as an illustration, as Jerome testifies (<u>Ep</u>.60.5), and this suggests that Cicero deliberately followed him (<u>Tusc</u>.3.28,58). Seneca uses quotations from Ennius' version of the story to dramatise the anecdote, and concludes with a crisp <u>sententia</u> : <u>quisquis ad vitam editur, ad mortem destinatur</u> (cp. also <u>Tranq</u>.11.6, <u>Rem.Fort</u>.2.5).

(3) death is not punishment but law[2].

    <u>Ad Pol</u>.11.1,11.4

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1   Favez 31, Kassel 74, Coccia 167-8   2   Lier 586

In the two dialogues under discussion, these are the only two allusions to this topic, and even here one is only implied in the word necessitas. In Ad Helviam it is stated in complete form as part of an argument to demonstrate the ability of reason to defeat all man's false fears (13.2). Lier cites two instances in Seneca (Epigr.1.7 (= Baehrens PLM 4.1), Nat.6.32.12), but there are several other cases (e.g. Prov.5.9, Rem.Fort.2.1).

(4) (a) the dead man's sors is compared to that of other men.

Ad Marc.12.4   Ad Pol.1.4,11.4

The first example states the principle behind this topic. If a mourner is reminded that other men have died and their relatives have withstood the loss, the community of experience is supposed to mitigate his own sorrow by putting it into a broader perspective. This is the topic that introduces the long series of examples found in consolations (e.g. Ad Pol.11.4; for the theory cp. Cic.Tusc.3.58). Cicero formulated the Latin phrase non tibi hoc soli to describe this consolation (Tusc.3.79), and it was comfortably the most hackneyed commonplace in the genre. It is found in Cicero's consolatory letters (e.g. Fam. 5.16.2) and Plutarch (118d), and all over the place in Seneca (Ira 3.25.1, Tranq.11.7-8, Prov.5.8, Rem.Fort.2.3, Ep.77.12).

(b) even the great must die.

This is the introduction to the consolers' examples:
(i) gods: Ad Marc.12.4,15.1
It is unusual for a Stoic to say that even gods can die. No doubt a partial explanation is the rhetorical structure of

the sentence in the first example, which makes gods the
climactic element of an ascending tricolon: generals, princes
and gods all have losses. In fact, while he says dii have
losses, it is the divina that die. Divina must obviously be
demi-gods like Heracles whose deaths are famous in mythology.
The second example is similarly vague about the nature of its
gods, and is probably influenced by lines of Virgil (A 9.641-2).
In his instructions Menander couples heroes and children of
the gods (414.2-6).

(ii) kings: Ad Marc.15.1-3   Ad Pol.11.4

The same principle applies, although Seneca uses as many
contemporary examples from the Julio-Claudian line as he does
from tradition. Lier (577) cites the Persians and Croesus
(whom Seneca uses elsewhere) (Lucian Char.9ff., Juv.10.173-87),
among others (Lucr.3.1024-52, Hor.Carm.2.14.11-2, Prop.3.18.
27-8).

(iii) the famous: Ad Marc.12.6-14.3,16.3-5
                      Ad Pol.14.3-16.3

Under this heading all other examples can be grouped.
They were generally chosen from distinguished Roman families
like the Scipiones (Ad Marc.16.5). Cicero makes great use of
many names in Roman history: in particular, Tusc.3.58 and 70,
for which cp. Jerome's comment in Ep.60.5; also Plutarch 118d-
119e.

(c) whole cities and nations have passed away.

Ad Pol. 1.2, 11.4, 18.2

The first example deals specifically with the destruction
of cities (cp.Ep.91.9; Cic.Fam.4.5.4, Tusc.3.53). The
magnitude of such a disaster should dwarf the loss of one indivi-
dual, and show that Fortune is at least consistently random,
and not simply careless of small matters through concern for
the greater. It is hard to reconcile this with Stoic divine
providence, but this was a problem even for ancient interpreters
(cp. the confusion in Cic. ND 2.164-5).

The second case covers the loss of a nation, presumably
in battle, perhaps implying the Persians under Xerxes, and the
third is a general statement of the impermanence of all human
creations.

(5) death takes all the best[1].

Ad Marc. 23.3

In this instance the thought is combined with the imminent
destruction of mature virtue, but it is implied in the expression.

(6) (a) Fate takes both good and bad indiscriminately[2].

Ad Marc.16.8   Ad Pol.3.4-5

The first example is in the form of an imagined speech by
Marcia in which she resigns herself to the ways of Fortune who
acts exempto discrimine. It is a general statement of the
human condition.

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1   Lier 477.   2   Lier 461-2, Lattimore 250-1.

The second example is another speech, an invective against Fortune's all encompassing rules. It is an impassioned plea for a better deal for the virtuous. The speech is livened by a series of questions, continuous asyndeton, a number of instances of anaphora. Plutarch criticises this type of complaint as useless (117a-b).

(b) Fortune is unjust in the use of its omnipotence[1].

Ad Marc.9.3,10.1,10.6,16.5,22.1,26.2 Ad Pol.2.2,3.4,4.1,16.5

This develops, and often completes, the criticism of Fortune's behaviour towards mankind. Favez (lix-x) traces this to the commonplace of declaimers (e.g. Sen.Controversiae1.1.3,5,16; 1.8.16;2.1.1,7;2.4.3). The figure of the tyrant, another commonplace, is linked with Fortune, and Seneca implicitly contrasts the chaos of Fortune's rule with the order of Claudius' government (cp. his praise at 7.1-4,8.2, and the contrast with Gaius,17.3). He emphasises Claudius' mercy in comparison to Fortune's ruthlessness (4.1,13.3-4).

(c) men complain of Fortune's inconstancy[2].

Ad Marc. 23.1   Ad Pol.3.4-5,16.4-5

Not greatly differing from the previous topic, this is distinguished by the factor of complaint, based on accusations of inconstancy, one of the features of which was topic (6a), as in the second example of this section.

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1   Favez xxxi, lix-x.   2   Lier 469-71.

The first example is a statement of the unpredictability of future events, in contrast to the after-life of the soul. The dead man sometimes expresses his pleasure to be free from Fortune's rule (Lier 471-2, including Seneca's epitaph in Haase's edition 3.482).

(d) Fortune is accused of envy[1].

Ad Marc. 13.3   Ad Pol. 2.2

Both accusations are based on the implication that Fortune was envious of a man's success and exacted a penalty to restore the balance.

(7) length of life is unimportant compared to its quality.

Ad Marc. 21.4, 23.3-5

This theme is specially appropriate in cases of immatura mors. Seneca makes no exception of Metilius, whose position as son allows Seneca to use the thought to console the mother, who was expected to die first. The argument is based on the premise that virtue cannot grow infinitely, but reaches a point where further improvement is impossible (perfecta virtus 23.3). Seneca devotes a complete letter to this topic (Ep.93; cp. Brev.1.3, 6.4, 11.2), and it recurs in Cicero (Sen.69-70) and Plutarch (111a-c).

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1 Lier 473-6.

(8) length of life is only relative, and nothing compared to

the life of empires, the universe or eternity[1].

Ad Marc. 11.5,21.1-3   Ad Pol. 1.1-3

In terms of infinity, human life is next to nothing: it
is an insignificant dot in eternity (cp.Ep.49.3). For the
Stoic, with his belief in the continuous cycle of creation and
destruction, any attempt to add to life was ludicrous. Life is
finite and measurable, but death is not. On these subjects,
Seneca has the weakness of waxing lyrical, and Plutarch gives
a more practical explanation (111c-d; the Loeb editors refer
to Aristotle Hist.animal.5.19.3-4 = Pliny Nat.9.36(43); also
Aelian De nat.animal.5.43; in Seneca, cp.Brev.1.2). The thought
is more briefly expressed in Cicero (Tusc.1.94) and again in
Plutarch (117e) as a philosophical commonplace in tune with the
moralising natural historians. It is first found in the pseudo-
Platonic Axiochus (365d), and Crantor almost certainly used
it (Buresch 50 from the evidence of Jerome Ep.60.14). Lucretius
points out that death is infinitely long for everyone no matter
when they die (3.1087-94).

(9) (a) it is best never to have been born, or at least to die

as soon as possible.

Ad Marc. 22.3

Based on the premise that life is essentially bad, this
doctrine of pessimism supports the value of an early death as

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1   Buresch 62.

an escape from all the necessary evils of life. Seneca reviews

his contemporary world and sees nothing to encourage living:

on the contrary, even the virtuous are discouraged by lack of

reward or recognition, and this is the conclusion which he

reaches.

According to Cicero, Crantor used the idea (Tusc.1.115) and

Cicero (1.114) and Plutarch (115b-d) follow him.

Seneca's agility with these consolatory arguments is well

well illustrated here, because four chapters earlier he argued

for a directly opposite view as his conclusion to the chapters

in which life was compared to a hazardous journey to Syracuse

(17.1-18.8). There, life is worth its accompanying troubles.

(b) it is better to have been happy for a short time than
not at all[1].

Ad Marc. 12.3   Ad Pol. 18.7

Cicero states the idea as melius...aliquam partem quam

nullam attingere (Tusc.1.93). It is the basis of both Seneca's

statements (cp.Ep.99.3; Hense (ed.), Teles 60.14).

(10) (a) life is given by nature non propria sed mutua[2].

Ad Marc. 10.1-2   Ad Pol. 10.4-5,11.3,12.1

This well-worn topic warns the mourner not to be ungrateful

and complain that he has been cruelly separated if Fortune (or

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1   Grollios 53.

2   Buresch 104, Lier 578-82, Kassel 75, Lattimore 170-1.

Nature) suddenly requires what was not so much generously given as supplied for an unspecified period. In fact only life's use and enjoyment, not the full power of living and dying, is granted (cp.Tranq.11.1-3). The main feature of this topic is its use of financial terms, where life is a loan collected by Fortune the creditor from man the debtor. The terms of life are as binding as those of a legal contract, and repayment can be demanded at any time.

This was traditional language. Crantor used it, as we can deduce from instances in Cicero (Tusc.1.93) and Plutarch (106f, 116a; cp.Buresch 96). It is also found in Axiochus (367b). In diatribe, Bion (quoted by Kenney on Lucr.3.971) said the rich had their possessions on loan from Fortune. Lucretius also used legal terminology to describe man's hold on life (3.971).

In Seneca's other works, the financial image is very common (e.g. Rem.Fort.2.1,2.4; Ep.8.10,93.8).

(b) death is due the debt from the start of life[1].

Ad Marc.10.3-4,(13.3),15.4,17.1   Ad Pol.10.2

This is a metaphorical elaboration of topic (2), but in view of its expression, needs separate consideration in the financial group. Seneca uses it as a supplement to the previous topic in other works too (Rem.Fort.2.1,2.2,2.5; Ep.99.8; cp. Cic.Tusc.3.59, Fam.5.16.2).

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1   Lier 584-5.

(11) it is inconsistent to lament mortality only after death.

<u>Ad Marc</u>. 10.5,19.3

When Seneca turns to the treatment of grief itself, he
uses a <u>reductio ad absurdum</u> to demonstrate its irrational
motivation: the mourner always knew that the dead man was going
to die, but waited for death before starting to lament. By
rights, grief should start at birth, which is palpably ridiculous.
Both cited passages repeat the theme with elaboration.

(12) all life is lamentable, so that tears should be saved.

<u>Ad Marc</u>. 11.1   <u>Ad Pol</u>.4.2-3

This again involves an accusation of inconsistency, because
people weep for some things but do not regret other equally
lamentable aspects of life, of which they appear to be unaware.

(13) tears and prayers are useless against Fate[1].

<u>Ad Marc</u>. 6.1-2,21.6   <u>Ad Pol</u>. 2.1,4.1

Fate or Fortune is inexorable, and man's life is fixed.
Since there is nothing that can change destiny, human attempts
are wasted effort (cp. <u>VB</u> 15.6, <u>Prov</u>.5.4, <u>Ep</u>.77.11-2; also Teles
61.2)

The first example is a self-contained chapter (less one
paragraph) which Seneca uses as a transition in the argument.
The possibilities of success or failure of tears and prayers
are weighed in two sentences which Seneca puts together carefully,

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1   Lier 571-4, Kassel 70, Coccia 174-5.

using anaphora, asyndeton, chiasmus, alliteration and antithesis. The next two examples are bald statements, but the last is again dramatised by short, abrupt phrasing, the initial monosyllabic stant, anaphora of nemo with asyndeton and so on.

The locus classicus in Roman literature for this thought is the concluding passage of Juvenal's tenth satire (10.289- 366; cp. Dick 242-4). The futility of opposing nature is expressed by Cicero's elder Cato (Sen.5; for a poetic develop- ment of the image cp. Virg.A.4.438-40).

(14) (a) when the body dissolves, so does the soul[1].

This is the basic Epicurean consolation (Lucr.3.832-42). It does not appear in the dialogues under discussion quite in this form, but Seneca does quote a similar statement by Bion (Tranq.15.4; cp. Cic.Sen.74,85 where the Epicureans are called minuti philosophi).

(b) nothing can harm one who is not.

Ad Marc. 19.4-6   Ad Pol. 9.2

Seneca presents this argument in detail in the passage from Ad Marciam. It follows Epicurean thought very closely in dispelling fears of death and the underworld (see below (15c)), and in saying that the state of death is equivalent to that before birth (cp.Cic.Fin.1.49). This nothingness by definition is quite immune from every harassment (Epicurus Kuria Doxa 2; Cic.Fin.2.100).

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1   Lier 590-1.

Consolers, who generally avoided too close an identification with any particular philosophy in their consolations, often used this argument as one horn of a dilemma of which the other is topic (c). It is regularly found: Cic.Fam.5.16.4; Sen.Tranq. 11.4, Ep.93.10; Plutarch 109e.

It frequently began a discussion on whether the dead retained their feelings, as in the case from Ad Polybium, or in Tusculan Disputations, where Cicero says that not only the state of death but the departure too is painless (1.82; cp.Sen.74).

(c) death releases men from vitia incommoda[1].

Ad Marc.19.6,22.1-3,26.4   Ad Pol.4.2-3,9.4,9.7

Schools committed to an after-life for the soul used this consolation. It is particularly Stoic, but also Platonic. It completes the dilemma: death is not an evil, for either it is nothing at all, or it is a release from life's troubles and a peaceful new life in a happier world. Seneca combines the topic with lists, short or long, of human vitia or contemporary political and social vices. The second passage is more convincingly handled than most, since he makes some connection between current immorality and Metilius' character. It is at least more appropriate than lists elsewhere that endow the dead with preoccupation for plagues, wars and politics (e.g. Cic.Fam. 4.5.5,5.16.4) which resemble propaganda rather than consolation.

When, however, philosophy confined itself to the individual and his human problems, the consolation is one of the better

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1   Lier 592, Favez xxxv.

ones (<u>Axiochus</u> 366d; Cic.<u>Tusc</u>.1.76,83,87; Plut.113e,115e,117e).

(d)   the longer is life, the more <u>mala</u>[1].

Ad Marc. 20.4

A commonplace not best exemplified by the above instance, it was particularly useful as a consolation in cases of <u>immatura mors</u>. Old age was often said to be the most miserable part of life and better avoided.

(15) (a)   the dead pass to a happier life[2].

Ad Marc.19.6,23.2,24.5,25.1,26.4   Ad Pol.9.3,9.8

If the soul does survive, then it certainly goes to a happier life, which is the opposite of human life and is characterised as peaceful, hospitable, unrestricted and high in the literal and metaphorical senses of the word - it is high above the world (Favez xli) and also intellectually superior.

(b)   the pious live with the gods and learn the universal secrets[3].

Ad Marc. 25-26   Ad Pol. 9.3

The closing chapters of <u>Ad Marciam</u> are an exaltation of the after-life, which have already been noted for their emotional tone. Seneca makes them personally relevant to Marcia by depicting her son and father in these privileged

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1   Lier 596.   2   Lier 597, Coccia 172-4.

3   Favez xliii-iv.

surroundings and by having Cordus describe the place. There
is far less emphasis on the after-life in <u>Ad Polybium</u>, and when
Seneca says Polybius' brother has gone to this happier world,
there is not the same personal involvement that was created
for Marcia. (For the gods summoning a mortal to their company
cp. <u>Tranq</u>.16.3).

The mind's new home supplies purely intellectual pleasures.
Freedom from care allows the mind to relax and appreciate its
new home in comparison to its former resting-place (<u>Ad Marc</u>.26.4,
<u>Ad Pol</u>.9.3; Favez compares Cicero's <u>Somnium Scipionis</u>,
particularly <u>Rep</u>.6.17 and 20). The greatest pleasure comes from
the revelation of nature's mysteries (<u>Ad Marc</u>.25.2,26.4, <u>Ad Pol</u>.
9.3; cp.<u>Ep</u>.102.28; also Cic.<u>Tusc</u>.1.44, Plut 108d).

(c)   stories of Hell's torments are false.

<u>Ad Marc</u>. 19.4

Seneca must convinve Marcia that if the dead retain
sensation in the after-life, it is confined to pleasant
experience. One of the causes of fear of death was fear of
punishment in the life to come, and it was one of Epicurus'
motives in the formulation of his philosophy to dispel this
fear. It is hard to believe that the educated and intelligent
audience that most consolers addressed could still accept
any suggestion of literal truth in these legends, even if the
common people may have had lingering superstitions. But the
consolation for the most part was composed of statements that
in any other context would be scoffed at as truisms and
glaringly obvious.

The Epicurean argument (Lucr.3.978-1023) was that the
legendary punishments were allegories not of the after-life
but of the effect of self-inflicted passions on men in their
present life. A modern account of the concept would add guilt
as the subconscious cause which leads man to torment himself
(cp. Democritus fr.297). Seneca scoffs at the obviousness of
this Epicurea cantilena (Ep.24.18, cp.82.16), but he still
cannot exclude it from his own consolation, although its
purpose is restricted to introducing the topic that the dead
are free from life's woes (cp. Bion quoted Diog.L.4.50).

As an illustration of the prevailing view, Cicero has a
number of passages in which he maintains that man has created
an after-life and a divine life only to satisfy his personal
needs, and that ignorance has modelled that after-life on life
itself (Tusc.1.36-8; cp.ND 1.42,2.70 and Pease's nn. ad loc.).

Plutarch says all fear is caused by belief in anthropo-
morphic religion (167d-e).

(16) death is freedom from the body's prison[1].

Ad Marc.19.5,20.1-3,23.2,24.5   Ad Pol.9.3,9.8

The underlined examples apply the words vincula and carcer
to the body. The cases in Ad Polybium are less elaborate and
only give a bare statement of the image. The passage in Ad
Marciam explains the concept behind the idea: only the imago fili
has died while the man or his soul is eternal. This is because

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1 Lier 602-3, Coccia 172.

the body and its trappings are obstacles against which the soul struggles but from which it cannot escape until death. As soon as the body dies, the soul is free and happy. The second passage above approaches the idea of death as a liberating agent with wider reference to all human life, while the remaining examples are simple allusions to the theme (cp. _Brev._ 15.5, _Tranq._10.3; also Cic._Rep._6.14, _Tusc._1.75,118, _Div._1.110).

(17) (a)   death may be a timely blessing (_opportunitas mortis_)[1].

    Ad Marc. 20.4-6,22.1,26.2   _Ad Pol._ 9.9,14.2

Here again, the examples from _Ad Marciam_ are the more important and complete. Soon after Seneca starts on Metilius' situation (19.3), he has to face the question of his apparently premature death. The first case was an argument from experience: an earlier death would have saved many great men. Pompey, Cicero and Cato are chosen as examples. Cicero was first to use the case of Pompey to illustrate _opportunitas mortis_ (_Tusc._ 1.86), and he also used himself as an example (1.84, 109). Cato was an important figure for later Stoics, and no doubt this together with his association with the others as a third martyr of the civil war induced Seneca to add his name to the list to complete the illustrative tricolon.

The repetition of the motif in the second example allows Seneca the opportunity to praise Metilius' character again. This theme conveniently connects with the theme that he was a favourite of Fortune and died before his good luck turned to

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1   Favez xxxvi, Coccia 165.

bad. Even an early death, then, can be twisted to praise the deceased. The final example from Ad Marciam adds nothing to what has already been said.

Favez notes the following instances of this theme: Cic. Brut.4, de Orat.3.12, Fam.5.16.3=4 (to which add 4.5.3); Tac. Ag.45; Plut.114b,117d (to which add 110e=f); Jerome Ep.60.15.1, 17.1.

(b) immatura mors reverses nature's laws[1].

Ad Marc. 17.7

Seneca includes a warning to be prepared for this reversal in Nature's speech on the conditions for accepting life. He says that this is not unusual even though it is a natural expectation that children should bury parents, and not vice versa. (Cp. Demosthenes 60.36; Cic. Sen.71,84.)

(18) if the grief is for him who grieves, it is selfish; if it is for the dead, it is either envy for bliss or wasted on nothing at all[2].

Ad Marc. 12.1   Ad Pol. 9.1=3

This is a complicated topic which is a complete argument in itself. It is used to question the motives of the mourner, and to demonstrate that, whatever his motives may be, they are untenable. If he grieves to satisfy himself, he is not being true to the memory of the departed. If, on the other hand, the

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1 Lier 456.   2 Favez xxxii=iii.

grief is unselfish, it is quite useless if the dead retain no feeling, while it is a sign of envy to lament someone whose state has not deteriorated but changed from bad to infinitely good (cp. Cic.Sen.66-7,74; Plut.111e-f).

(19) death is a matter of indifference; the real cause of pain is opinio[1].

Ad Marc. 7.1, 19.1, 19.5

The Stoics had only one good and one evil, moral good and evil (VB 4.3, Ep.71.5,94.8). Everything else was completely indifferent, including death and bereavement (Ep.82.10-3). Seneca states this categorically in the third example: mors nec bonum nec malum est. Any classification to which men care to assign death is simply the result of erroneus judgement, opinio (κενὴ δόξα), which conjures up fictional ideas with no rational justification (cp. Cons.5.2, Ep.13.4,42.10,78.13). These judgements are emotions, for the Stoics argued that the soul was pure reason and could not therefore produce something without reason. Similarly, then, reason was the only cure for these false opinions (Ad Marc.7.3, Ad Pol.4.1, Ep.63.12).

Cicero also uses opinio as the cause of unreasonable grief (Tusc.1.36-8,83,93,100,3.31-2) and provides the same solution (Fam.5.16.5, Att.12.10; cp.Plut.102c-d,112c,609e-f).

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1   Oltramare 269, Favez xxix-xxx, Grollios 40-2.

(20) (a) grief must be kept within proper limits[1].

    <u>Ad Marc</u>. 7.1   <u>Ad Pol</u>. 17.2,18.4,18.6

Seneca here moves away from a strictly Stoic position and admits grief so long as it is natural and moderate (<u>modicus</u>). We can tell human grief is unnaturally prolonged by study of animal behaviour: beasts overcome a loss without the excesses which men practise (cp.<u>Ep</u>.63.1).

    (b) mitigation of former philosophical severity[2].

    <u>Ad Marc</u>. 4.1   <u>Ad Pol</u>. 18.5-6

In both these examples, Seneca dissociates himself from the stern practitioners who demand total apathy to losses. It is not human to ignore a bereavement: it is callous (cp. also <u>Cons</u>.10.4, <u>Ep</u>.63.1,99.15). This is an unorthodox position for a Stoic, since Cicero attributed the view to the Peripatetics (<u>Tusc</u>.3.22,4.38, <u>Ac</u>.1.38,2.135). Seneca knows it is wrong to surrender to emotion (Ep.104.11,116.2), but he is wise enough to have learnt from personal experience that grief is a difficult opponent to master (<u>Ep</u>.63.14; <u>Ad Helv</u>.17.1). And so he admits grief as long as it is kept within bounds (<u>Ep</u>.99.16,27), and this is what Seneca develops in <u>Ad Marciam</u> 7 and 8. (Cp.Cic. <u>Tusc</u>.3.12, Plut.102c-d).

    (c) the fault of sorrow is its excess and ostentation[3].

    <u>Ad Marc</u>. 3.4,7.1-2   <u>Ad Pol</u>. 4.1,9.1,18.5-6

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1   Grollios 41-2, Coccia 175-6.

2   Favez xxix, Grollios 29-36.   3   Favez xxix.

If sorrow is not kept within limits, then it is reprehensible. Having admitted emotion, Seneca takes pains to stress that it must not be displayed or exaggerated for other people to see. Seneca uses such words as _modestia_, _modicum_ and _modum_ to convey the need for propriety and decorum. A display of passion is a wilful act and can therefore be avoided. The _libido dolendi_ has to be curbed before the mind can settle to normality: cp. _Tranq_.15.6, _Ep_.63.2,99.16,21; also Cic._Tusc_.3.70, Plut.608f-609, Martial 1.33.

(21) (a)   time lessens grief (_naturale remedium temporis_)[1].

Ad Marc. 7.2, 8.1-2, (26.6)

In the first passage, Seneca uses an analogy with animal life to show how grief is unnaturally magnified by men to greater proportions than it should properly have. Part of the evidence is that animals overcome a loss faster than men, and this displays the operation of time's natural healing power, unhindered by _opiniones_. It is stubbornness, as he says in the second example, that causes grief to persist, but as it too is unnatural, it wears away with time as well. This is all related to the Stoic version of the fundamental purpose of life, which was to live in accordance with nature (_SVF_ 3.2-19; cp.Sen._Otio_ 5.1). They argued that the natural was constant and unchanging but emotions are temporary, contradictory, and so unnatural. (The topic is also found in _Tranq_.10.2).

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1   Favez xxxii, Grollios 22-3.

Cicero presents the commonplace without assigning it to any specific school, and avoiding the Stoic connotations (Tusc. 3.35,53). However, during his exile he was less certain of time's healing properties: one moment he has confidence in it (Att.3.7.2), the next the process is reversed and time actually magnifies misery (Att.3.15.2). The statement was such a standard one, however, that he could equally well be going for a special effect with the inversion, playing with the topic to make his statement more startling.

(b) it is better for reason to defeat grief.

Ad Marc. 8.3   Ad Pol. 4.2,18.6

The unaligned commonplace was time's natural healing agencies. The Stoics, however, were committed to life governed by reason. Reason should master the irrational, for no man could be virtuous without displaying proper use of reason and control of the irrational. It therefore comes naturally in a Stoic consolation to include the advice that reason should stop grief even while it is in full flight (Tranq.10.4). It may be used to compliment the mourner, as in the first passage: it is more in accord with Marcia's distinguished character to force an end to her luctus without waiting for time. (Cp.Ira 3.27.4 for the same topic used with another emotion, anger.)

In the third passage, Seneca combines this idea with his unorthodox (for a Stoic) view which admits μετριοπάθεια in grief (cp.Grollios 33), and says not that reason should put an end to grief, but that it should eliminate quod et superest et abundat. He does not see this as incompatible with self-

control, as he still uses the word _regere_ of the mind. Earlier
in the dialogue, he further complicates the issue by flatly
denying the efficacy of time (4.2), where, as Cicero did in the
previous category, he says that _fortuna_ (which here replaces
time) will never end grief, and the only solution will come
from _ratio_. The expression takes its significance, however,
from the immediate context where Fortune is the victim of a
series of violent insults and invectives (2.2,4.1), and the
comparison is intrinsically a sharper _sententia_ if the contrast
is between the forces of order and disorder, instead of a pair
of unequivalent agents (rhetorically speaking) like reason and
time.

Cicero uses the idea in a number of cases (_Att_.12.10.1, _Fam_.
4.5.6,5.16.5-6) and it is also found in later consolers (Plut.
112b-c, Jerome _Ep_.39.5.2; cp._Ep_.63.12 and Favez xxxii).

(c) deep-seated grief needs radical treatment.

Ad Marc. 1.6-8

Seneca uses this topic as part of his _captatio benevolentiae_:
time, nature's own healer which cures the greatest sorrows, has
lost its power in Marcia's case alone. The purpose of the
captatio was to put the recipient at his ease, and one method
was to make him feel special or exceptional. Even in grief and
bereavement then, Seneca has given his addressee some distinction
that separates her from all normal cases. It is of course only
a rhetorical trick, since Seneca goes on to use the standard
arguments about time's healing agencies later in the dialogue.

(22) (a) anticipation removes the shock of bereavement[1].

Ad Marc. 9.1-5,16.1   Ad Pol. 11.1-3

Praemeditatio was originally a Cyrenaic concept (Cic. Tusc.3.76), since they believed that grief was caused by the unexpectedness of shock (3.28). Seneca says that man is taken by surprise only because he takes no notice of what happens all around him (Ad Marc.9.2), and never thinks that any misfortune will happen to him until it does (9.4). The chapter presents the proposition in the first paragraph; in the second it proceeds to a description of everyday misfortunes; the third describes life in terms of a battle with Fortune; the fourth says no one ever thought of his own life in these terms, and the final paragraph returns to the initial proposition by concluding that man is at fault because of his delusion.

The second example is a brief statement based on the idea under discussion. In face of an objection that Seneca's examples of endurance are men, he replies that women too have the strength to overcome loss provided they accustom (consuescere) themselves to suffering (dolor, labor).

The passage from Ad Polybium substantially repeats the first from Ad Marciam. For all of life, death is approaching and we have daily illustration of mortality, but when it comes it still takes us by surprise. The chapter as a whole succeeds to an accusation of ingratitude and lack of appreciation for

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1   Favez xxx-i, Grollios 44-51, Kassel 66-8, Coccia 168-70.

the blessings men have. Complaints are only the product of
ignorance and forgetfulness.

This Cyrenaic thought accommodates well to Stoic philosophy
in its value of the importance of reason for overcoming sorrow,
and it became a part of Stoicism by the time of Chrysippus
(Cic.Tusc.3.52). In fact, it was a concept accepted by most
schools according to Cicero. In addition to Cyrenaic, Stoic and
Cynic, Carneades is also said to have used it (Diog.L.6.63; cp.
Grollios 48-9). Only the Epicureans avoided it, because they
said that sustained thought about future evils was likely to
distress men (Cic.Tusc.3.32-3), and because Epicurean epistemology
said mental pleasure or pain could come equally from past and
future events as from immediate sensations.

Predictably there are innumerable instances in consolatory
and semiconsolatory literature: Ad Helv.5.3, Tranq.11.6, Ep.63.7,
14-5,67.10,70.18,82.16,91.3,8,93.6,99.32,107.4; Nat.6.32.12;
Musonius 18.6-7,27.11-5; Cic.Fam.5.16.2; Plut.112c-e.

Contained within this thought, but quite distinct, is the
advice to the mourner not only to be prepared for the loss of
relatives or friends, but also to be ready at all times to meet
death. Exactly the same arguments apply in this case, but the
circumstances are clearly different (cp.Ep.61.1-4,63.15,70.18).
Summers (250) notes the Platonic origin (Phaedo 67e,80e) which
is translated by Cicero (Tusc.1.74) and which reappears elsewhere
(Brev.7.3 and Grimal ad loc.; cp.Cic.Sen.4,74, Plut.112c). The
two topics, preparation for the deaths of oneself and one's
relations, are also combined (Ep.74.30; cp.Teles 56.14-57.1).

(b)   recollection of past misfortune strengthens the
       resistance of the mind.

Ad Marc. 1.1-4

The natural corollary to anticipation of future misfortunes
is the reassurance to be gained from the thought that previous
misfortunes were faced and finally overcome.

(23)   be thankful for what was had and enjoy the happy memories[1].

Ad Marc. 3.4, 5.1-3, 12.1-3   Ad Pol. 10.1-4, 18.7-8

Perhaps the topic may be divided into two separate thoughts,
but they are generally found together, and one implies the other.
Cicero ascribes the consolation specifically to Epicurus (Tusc.
3.33,76), and it follows his belief that pleasure was achieved
not only from immediate experience but from the recollection of
previous events (Fin. 1.41; Tusc. 5.95; cp. Diog.L. 10.122).

As a result, Seneca recommends Marcia to remember all
the pleasure she had from raising Metilius, the fructus laborum,
and to count her blessings.   In the first two examples, he uses
the example of Livia to persuade her that memories can be
enjoyed after a son has died, and through the mouth of Areus,
argues that it is better to allow free conversation about her
son.   This exposure to memories that may be initially painful
is the present equivalent of the future praemeditatio.   This
is clearer in the final passage from Ad Polybium, which says

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1   Favez xxxiii, Grollios 52-5, Kassel 52, Coccia 178.

that continuous thought of Polybius' brother should condition
the mind to accept loss. According to another statement, this
recordatio eventually becomes pure pleasure (Ep.63.4-7; cp.98.11,
99.4,24-5; also Jerome Ep.60.7).

(24) consolation is to be found in study.

Ad Pol. 8.2-4

Seneca recommends that Polybius should occupy his mind,
particularly when left on his own, with literary study. The
consolation is appropriate for Polybius, who had produced a
Latin version of Homer and a Greek one of Virgil. Seneca
suggests he might write a history of Claudius' achievements as
emperor, to be followed by less demanding subjects when the
mind's needs are similarly less demanding.

Seneca's solution for Polybius is a variation of the
standard topos which directs the mourner, not to literature,
but to philosophy (cp.Ad Helv.17.3, Brev.15.5). The Epicureans
had a similar solution (Lucr.3.1053-75), but the schools saw
philosophy as providing an answer, not a distraction. This was
certainly not how it worked for Cicero, who buried himself in
philosophical composition to keep his mind off Tullia's death
(cp.Fam.5.15.3, Att.12.40.2,13.26.2; Tusc.1.84, Ac.1.11, ND
1.9 and Pease nn. ad loc.; also Plut. Cicero 41.5).

(25) (a) surviving relatives and friends are a consolation[1].

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1   Favez xxxiv-v, Grollios 67-8, Coccia 178-9.

<u>Ad Marc</u>.2.4,4.2,<u>16.6-8</u>   <u>Ad Pol</u>.7.1-4,<u>12.1-4</u>

This is unconventional treatment in a work on philosophical

consolation, for the simple reason that it caters for an

irrational motivation in the human spirit, instead of the

strictly logical operation that consolatory arguments most

frequently demand. In nonphilosophical work the topic is not

out of place: Cicero adapts the idea to his own situation in

his letters and says that he would be consoled by his daughter

and friends if they had survived, but with their loss all

consolation is gone too (<u>Fam</u>.4.6.2,5.15.2).

The fifth example, from <u>Ad Polybium</u>, is the simplest

statement of the theme; the third, from <u>Ad Marciam</u>, presents

the idea worked out at length. Seneca uses the situation of

<u>Ad Polybium</u> to vary the topic slightly and makes Polybius'

master, Claudius, a source of consolation in the role of

personal friend (7.1-4,12.3-4). The examples of Octavia and

Livia at the start of <u>Ad Marciam</u> are worked out in such a way

as to introduce this among its other topics: in the first

example, Octavia is criticised for ignoring this source of

consolation. The second is more complex: Livia willingly

accepts consolation; it comes from a philosopher, but she

was also helped by the Roman people, Augustus and Tiberius.

Their help, however, was second to that of philosophy in a

position superior to family affection as a consolation. It

also stresses the value of family affection, since it was a

compliment to describe anything or anyone as second only to

the best, in this case the best being philosophy.

(b) the mourner has a responsibility to these survivors[1].

Ad Marc.2.4,5.1-2,16.6-8   Ad Pol.5.4-5,12.1-2

A development of (a), this stresses the addressee's responsibility for others, to turn his attention from self-pity to altruistic concern.

(c) the mourner has a responsibility to the public[2].

Ad Marc.4.3-4   Ad Pol.6.1-5,11.6

This expands (b) to include not only family and friends but all people with whom the mourner has any connection. A consolation clearly relevant only to those already in the public eye, Seneca uses it primarily of Polybius, in particular in a long excursus on his public position in which he reminds him that he stands in public view, famous for his official and literary work, and grief is unbecoming for such a public figure (6.1-2); men expect more from him than from his brothers: his life is not free (3-4); to perform his job as hearer of petitions he must dry his own tears (5). In a later allusion, Seneca advises him not to disillusion his admirers (11.6). The use of the theme in Ad Marciam is confined to the examples at the start in which Areus reminds Livia that she must observe propriety.

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1 Grollios 67-8.   2 Grollios 27, Coccia 176.

Sulpicius uses the idea in his consolation to Cicero (Fam.
4.5.5) and Cicero in his to Brutus (ad Brut.1.9.2). Grollios
(27) compares the theme to "living as if you are before the eyes
of all", and gives references (Ep.43.3; Epictetus 3.22.14),
but, despite an overlap, the two topics are distinct (cp.VB 20.4).

(26) (a) laments distress the dead man's soul[1].

    Ad Marc. 3.4   Ad Pol. 5.1-3,9.3

If the soul retains sensation, it can only be distressed
to see the laments of the mourner. The argument is presented
in the form of a dilemma in Ad Polybium: Seneca first deals with
the dead brother and his attitude towards grief, complete
disapproval, before approaching his relationship with the other
surviving brothers. The argument suggests that to lament the
dead is tantamount to dishonour and disrespect.

Lier (55) cites many examples, but apart from Seneca, he
includes only one other prose writer, Tacitus: [virtutes tuae]
quas neque lugeri neque plangi fas est (Ag.46.1).

  (b)   the dead man consoles his distraught relatives by
           declaring his happiness[2].

    Ad Marc. 26.2-7

Menander says the consoler should take the mourners to
task for not seeing that the soul is eager to return to its
cognate life with the gods (414.21-3; cp.421.14-7). Seneca does

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1   Lier 466, 55.   2   Lier 600-2.

this at length in Cordus' prosopopoeia on the excellences of
heaven and the after-life (cp. Favez xliii-iv).

(27) (a) life is a journey[1].

    Ad Marc.9.1,11.2,21.6,22.6,25.3   Ad Pol.9.8-9,11.2,11.4

Lier finds the origin of the figure in Plato (Apol.40e,
41a; Phaedo 61e,67b,115a; Axiochus 365b). It was taken over
and popularised by the Cynics and Stoics (Teles 29.13,30.9
[Lier's reff. to these are to Hense's first edition and are
quite different from editio secunda]; Cic.Sen.6,33).

    The journey towards death (mortis iter) starts at birth
and continues throughout life, with its ups and downs like any
ordinary journey. It is complete when death, the destination,
is reached, but unlike conventional journeys, this journey is
not measured in distance: the way to death is equal for all
men (Cic.Tusc.1.104; Sen.Rem.Fort.3.2). The long comparison
in Ad Marciam between life and a journey to Syracuse is based
on this accepted correspondence (17.2-18.8).

    In one form or another the image recurs throughout Seneca's
works, either as a straightforward statement (Prov.5.9,6.7, Ep.
99.7) or in some derivative form: for example, Seneca describes
the way to virtue as a steep path to climb (Cons.1.1-2), and
the way to vice, a so much easier alternative to virtue, is an
enticing downward slope, on which the descending person acceler-
ates as he approaches the bottom (Ira 2.1.1,13.1; cp.Ad Marciam

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1   Lier 564-6, Lattimore 169.

for <u>life</u> as a downward movement)[1].

(b) the dead man only precedes the living.

<u>Ad Marc</u>. 19.1   <u>Ad Pol</u>. 9.9

If we accept life as a journey, then we must also accept that we are all at some stage on that road, only we do not know what our position is. We must therefore think of the dead man only as going on before us, and we will see him again when we reach the common destination.

A natural progression from the previous image, this offers consolation by repeating the community of man's fate and by a promise of reunion after death: cp.<u>Rem.Fort</u>.2.3, <u>Ep</u>.63.16,93.12, 99.7; Cic.<u>Sen</u>.83-4, Plut.113c.

(c) the dead man is only absent, not dead.

<u>Ad Marc</u>. 19.1

We do not lament relations or friends if they are only

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1   This use of language was almost subconscious by Seneca's
     time. As a contrast we can see the imposition of the image
     on to a novel to create a conscious pattern for a work of
     art in e.g., Charles Dickens' <u>Little Dorrit</u>:
          And thus ever, by day and night, under the sun and
          under the stars, climbing the dusty hills and toiling
          along the weary plains, journeying by land and journeying
          by sea, coming and going so strangely, to meet and to
          act and to react on one another, move all we restless
          travellers through the pilgrimage of life (ch.2, final
          paragraph).
     This could hardly make it clearer that Seneca never used the
     image to turn his work into a pilgrim's progress.

absent, and so we have no grounds for lamenting when they die, since it is just another kind of absence, and we are assured of reunion (cp.Ep.63.8). Cicero says that in true friendship, absent friends are always present (Amic.23).

Seneca uses this as a consolation for Marcia despite the fact that earlier in the dialogue he says that not only death but absence of dear ones is enough to bring grief (7.1).

(28) life is like a sea-voyage[1].

> Ad Marc.5.5,6.3,10.6,15.4,17.2-6,(22.3),26.2
>
> Ad Pol.9.6-7

Seneca states the image and then describes its application most comprehensively in the passage from Ad Polybium. Whereas in the land journey the movement came only from the traveller, here the traveller is a victim of all the dangers of the sea (Ad Marc.17.2, Prov.5.9). Death is the only safe portus (Ad Pol. 9.7; cp. Ad Marc.22.3 in tutum recipere; also Cic.Sen.71, Tusc. 1.107,118). Man must be a skilful navigator to steer his craft safely through rough seas, but it is only in rough seas and in face of adversity that he can show his skill (Ad Marc.5.5,6.3; cp.Prov.4.5,4.6; also Teles 62.2, Cic.Fin.1.42). This theme is often suggested by a single word or phrase like tempestas (15.4) or fortunae procellae (26.2).

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1 Lier 566-7.

(29) (a) Death/Fortune is an enemy with whom men fight[1].

    Ad Marc.9.3,10.4,16.5   Ad Pol.2.2,2.7,6.2

One use of the military imagery so prevalent in this brand of moralising, this topic appears in detail with great regularity and is depicted with relish. The impulse to consider life a constant battle with the forces of misfortune and disaster is quite spontaneous, viz. "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune", but the cultivated use adds a distinct literary quality to the descriptions.

    (b) the mourner is having a battle with grief.

    Ad Marc.1.5,1.8,14.3   Ad Pol.8.1,15.3,17.5

Grief is a wound inflicted by Fortune (1.5,1.8). Alternatively, it is the antagonist, and must be defeated like other enemies (Ad Marc.14.3, Ad Pol.15.3). This second idea was most attractive when used with a figure whose worldly conquests were enormous, so that any declaration "he defeated sorrow with as much ease as all his other conquests" creates a striking paradoxical sententia (for similar expressions cp.Ep. 71.37 of metus mortis, 94.61 of cupiditas).

(30) life is a sojourn at an inn[2].

    Ad Marc. 21.1

There is one instance in these dialogues of another popular image (Hense cxvi), which is found elsewhere in Seneca

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1   Lier 569-70.   2 Oltramare 275, Lattimore 168-9.

(Tranq.11.7, Ep.61.4,70.16,102.24,120.14). The conclusion is

that one should leave life when satisfied, as stated by

Lucretius: cur non ut plenus vitae conviva recedis? (3.938,

cp.960; cp.Sen.Ep.98.15; Hor.S.1.1.118-9, Ep.2.2.214; also

Teles 16.2 and n.). It is also found in the consolation to

Apollonius (120b)[1].

Consolation for exile: Ad Helviam Matrem De Consolatione

Encomiastic topics

(1)   praise of the recipient (= (1))[2].

2.2-3, 14.2-3, 16.3-5

Initially Seneca praises Helvia's resilience in adversity.

In the later part of the work, he freely flatters his mother

twice in quick succession: the first of these passages praises

her for her unselfishness in raising her son with no thought of

using him to further her own interests, and the second for her

virtuous life in comparison to contemporary permissiveness.

Each of these passages has a part in the flow of the

argument on top of their laudatory effect, which shows Seneca's

skilled use of the compliment so that it does not immediately

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1   This section was completed before Jacoby's article
     "Composizione ed Elementi Costitutivi delle Consolazioni
     Senecane A Marcia e A Polibio" became available to the
     writer. Although another useful work of reference, it has
     nothing substantial to add to the material presented here.

2   Where there is an equivalent topic in the consolations for
     bereavement, it will be given after the title of the topic
     in this category.

reveal its nature. The second passage listed above is part of the rejection of the first alternative in the dilemma about Helvia's grief: either she thinks she has lost praesidium aliquod or she cannot endure desiderium ipsum (14.1); but it cannot be the former because her affection was never self-interest. The last passage follows the claim that as Helvia has never shown any of the weaknesses of a woman, she cannot plead such weakness as an excuse for her present misery: non potes itaque ad obtinendum dolorem muliebre nomen praetendere (16.5).

(2)   reminder of previous occasions when courage was displayed

(= (2)).

2.3-5, 3.2, 15.4

The fact that Helvia has overcome many previous misfortunes should encourage her to be more resolute against the present cause of sorrow.

(3)   praise of the recipient's family (= (4)).

18.1 - 19.7

Seneca lists the Annaeus family to remind Helvia of all the blessings for which she must be thankful. He devotes a complete chapter to her sister, which is a compliment to both women, and uses the case of the death of Helvia's brother-in-law to persuade her that she can overcome her present grief as her sister did that loss. In addition, after saying this woman was a second mother to him (19.2), Seneca describes her integrity

(19.2, 6-7) in terms very similar to the description of his

mother (16.3-4).

(4)   praise of the exile (= (5)).

    3.1

    Seneca emphasises the novel position he occupies as the

author of a consolation for his own misfortune (1.3). His

claim to originality (nova verba as opposed to vulgaris et

cotidiana adlocutio) may be viewed with some scepticism, but

the fact that he makes it is important as an example of the

traditional way of stressing the singular and exceptional

nature of the misfortune under consideration. A more explicit

case of this practice comes when he states that his exile is

the culmination of all other misfortunes (2.5) and proceeds to

explain that this latest woe is the worst that Helvia has had

to bear (3.1).

Consolatory topics

(1) (a)   all men travel and wander (= (1))[1].

    6.2-5

    The argument, clearly parallel to the "all men die" of

earlier consolations, is much less effective than its predecessor:

while no-one can dispute a definition of death, the definition

of exile as commutatio loci (6.1) is open to many objections.

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1   Favez (1) xliv-v.

It ignores the fact that exile is made what it is by compulsion
and imposition, while all the movements Seneca describes in
these chapters are voluntary or self-imposed. The definition
is formulated to suit the argument, a sophism, rather than as
an integral part of its development.

(b) even good and great men travel/suffer exile (= (4b)).

(6.2-3), 13.8

A topic not fully developed in this dialogue, it still
received a mention. In the second example, Seneca stresses that
a great man can suffer exile like anyone else. In De Providentia,
he says that good men will suffer hardships like exile that
they may teach others to do the same (6.2): but is not exile
supposed to be no hardship? Plutarch uses the topic at length
in De Exilio (604d-605d) and it also appears (less specifically)
in Musonius Rufus (47.1-15).

(c) entire nations move (= (4c)).

7.1-10

Entire nations are wiped out according to the consolations
for bereavement, and here they embark on wholesale migrations.
Here again the parallel between the two types of consolation
is very weak, and so is the correspondence between exile and
migration (cp. Plut.603b).

(d) islands are occupied by choice.

6.4-5

Men freely choose to go and live on islands like Corsica, Gyarus and the rest despite their apparent discomfort (cp.Plut. 602c). Some think this provides protection, as in the case of Tiberius (Plut.602d; cp.Sen.Ep.89.20).

(2)   the nature of the soul dictates man's nature as a rover[1].

6.6-8

The Stoics said that the soul was made of divine πνεῦμα as is found in greater quantities among the stars (Cic.Ac.2.126, ND 1.36,2.71; for the composition of the soul, cp.SVF 1.134-8, 3.773-89; also Cic.Tusc.1.42-3). Seneca argues that the soul gives man an impulse to perpetual movement just as the stars can be seen to move continuously. This argument succeeds that on the migration of individuals, before he is faced with the problem of explaining how nations and communities have a collective soul that prompts them to move in a group.

Of course, this is another sophism. Even if man is inclined to move, and his soul is divine πνεῦμα, it still does not behave in the regular pattern of the stars, completing fixed circuits according to the lex et naturae necessitas (Prov.1.2; cp.Cic.ND 2.43). The point of exile is its irregularity and unpredictability. Besides, this "natural" inclination for movement is elsewhere attacked by Seneca as a symptom of the unhealthy soul (Tranq.2.13-4, Ep.2.1,28.1-8; cp.Hor.Ep.1.11.25-9).

Plutarch also uses this topic (607d-e).

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1   Favez xlv-vi.

(3)   the whole world is our native land[1].

8.1-2, 8.4-6, 9.2, 9.7

An extremely important concept of ancient philosophical thought, this topic is part of the theory of the world-state. The argument is that the wise man will not be influenced by a change of place or external circumstance, since it in no way affects his wisdom which is the only possession he needs for happiness. Only things that are constant are in accordance with nature, and man's soul does not change if he moves. The divisions of the world are human creations and so temporal, the soul is eternal (in some cases), and wherever it is it can still enjoy contemplation of the heavens and the divine.

In Hellenistic and later philosophy this idea belonged particularly to the Stoics, but its origin is considerably earlier. Cicero quotes Socrates' statement that he is a citizen of the world (Tusc.5.108), but the thought is also among the aphorisms of Democritus (fr.247), and Thucydides put the idea into Pericles' mouth for the funeral oration (2.43.3). Before its Stoic adoption, the Cynics used the idea (Diogenes in Diog.L.6.63; Crates 6.98). It was absorbed into Stoic doctrine by Zeno (SVF 1.262) and developed by Chrysippus (SVF 3.323), so that it was a commonplace in later philosophy: Cic. Leg.1.61, Parad.18, Fin.3.64, ND 2.78,2.154 and Pease's n.; Musonius 41.6,42.1; Epictetus 1.9.1,2.5.26,3.24.66[2]. Seneca

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1   Giesecke 43-50, Favez xlvi-viii, Oltramare 285, Grollios 57-9.

2   for the later history of cosmopolitanism cp. Stanton 183-195.

uses the thought several times: <u>Ad Marc</u>.18.1, <u>VB</u> 20.3, <u>Otio</u> 4.1, <u>Tranq</u>.4.4, <u>Ben</u>.7.1.7, <u>Rem.Fort</u>.8.1, <u>Ep</u>.28.4.

Seneca appears to have understood the obvious objection to this truism: namely, logic and reason have nothing to do with man's attachment to a place: that is the product of emotion and sentiment. This seems to be the case in one of the letters (<u>Ep</u>.66.26; cp.Plut.601c on the Athenian and the moon). We may conclude that his argument in <u>Ad Helviam</u> is therefore doubly insecure, as he does not even believe in it himself.

Connected with this thought was the dispute over the question of burial. Superstition still required conventional burial rites in case the life of the soul should suffer from neglect (cp.e.g., Plin.<u>Ep</u>.7.27.4-11). Most philosophers tried to dispel this, arguing that it is irrelevant first where in the world one dies, and secondly where, how or whether one is buried: Sen.<u>Tranq</u>.14.3, <u>Rem.Fort</u>.5.2-5, <u>Ep</u>.92.34-5; cp.Teles 29.12ff.,31.1 and Hense's n.; Lucr.3.888-93, Cic.<u>Tusc</u>.1.103-8; Petronius' Senecan parody, 115.12-9[1]; on the dead of battle, Thuc.2.43.3, Luc.7.819.

(4) real possessions like virtue are inseparable from man[2].

5.1, 8.1-3, 8.5

There is consolation for the exile in the thought that even in exile he retains his virtues. The practice of virtue lay in following nature. The Stoics said the only good was

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1   Sullivan (1) 202-4.   2   Favez xlii-iii, xlviii, Coccia 156.

moral good, the only evil moral evil and everything else was indifferent (VB 4.1-3, 8.6, 9.3; Cons.5.3; Ep.82.10; cp.Cic. Parad.6-15,16-9). Therefore a man can suffer no loss from exile.

Favez (xlviii) suggests Stilpo as originator of this commonplace because of a saying of his quoted by Teles (22.1-4). It recurs in Musonius (50.6-15, cp.42.6-8) and Plutarch (607f).

(5)   the wise man regards nothing as a disgrace[1].

13.4-8

Part of Seneca's treatment of the incommoda includes a dismissal of contemptus and ignominia. The section is short as it would only repeat the argument about poverty: namely, these things are nothing in themselves. Both Teles and Plutarch in their works on exile face and answer the same claim that exile brings disgrace on its victim (25.8-10; 607a). Musonius also treats the problem (42.6-8,47.1-6; cp.Diogenes in Diog.L.6.54).

Cicero's exile, in contrast, he considered an absolute disaster: no man, he declared, had fallen so far or lost so much (Att 3.10.2, cp.3.15.2). This is opposed to his later, philosophical, views on the subject (Tusc.5.107), and to a later evaluation of his own exile (Parad.29). Favez (l-li) suggests that exile in the Republic was a more ignominious punishment because it was inflicted by the citizens as a

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1   Giesecke 52-6.

governing body, whereas exile under the Empire was frequently casual and capricious, imposed by one man who was often unpopular himself.

(6) (a) exile may be timely (= (17a)).

Not used in Ad Helviam, this topic nevertheless deserves mention because of its correspondence to the theme of opportunitas mortis. In De Tranquillitate Animi Seneca says that exilia and calamitates have proved of advantage (in remedium). Presumably he means that exile has often saved men from worse misfortunes such as death, as in his own case (Ad Pol.13.2), although such a rescue in itself is indifferent. But exile also helps men by allowing them the opportunity to turn their thoughts to philosophy and contemplation (cp.Musonius 43.8-44.1; for Diogenes cp.Diog.L.6.49, Plut.87a).

(b) exile allows men to achieve great ends.

7.6-7

Teles uses the example of Phoenix to show how exile can make men more famous (22.10). As early Cynic diatribe used ethical examples from the Homeric poems[1], Seneca in turn uses the Roman equivalent and here takes his examples from the legendary immigrants to Italy after the Trojan War, the most important of whom was Aeneas, who would never have founded so great an empire had he not fled from Troy.

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1 Weber 28-9.

(7) (a)   the wise man has no dependence on <u>adventiciae res</u>[1].

   <u>5.4-6</u>, 9.1-3, 11.5

   Seneca's purpose is to prove that he is not only not
unhappy, but can never become so.   The wise man is independent
of all external influences, supposed goods or evils.   As all
happiness is internal, these can have no bearing on the inner
life.   The wise man accordingly feels no difference if he is
living in luxury or meanest poverty.   This is a strictly Stoic
argument.   (Cp.<u>Cons</u>.5.5,8.3; Cicero on the loss of his property
in Rome to Clodius during his exile: <u>Parad</u>.29; for the
independence of virtue cp.<u>Fin</u>.5.79).

   (b)   the evil of exile is only imagined (= (19))[2].

   5.6

   It is only <u>opinio</u> that makes people think exile is an
evil (<u>opinio volgi</u>), which only shows the unreliability of
popular report (<u>consensus</u>).   Plutarch says that the pain of
exile is founded on κενὴ δόξα (600d-e, cp.599d).   In reality,
exile, like everything else in the external life, is indifferent
(<u>Ep</u>.82.10-4; cp.V.Max.2.10.5).   Elsewhere it is to be avoided
(ἀποπροηγμένον : <u>Ep</u>.85.40), or indeed inadvertantly called a
<u>malum</u> (<u>Ad Pol</u>.18.9).

   (c)   only fools see value in external objects.

   9.2, 10.2-10, 11.2-6

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1   Favez xxi, xlii.   2   Oltramare 267.

The corollary of (a), this is not really a consolatory topic: it is straightforward Stoic doctrine (cp.Prov.6.3, VB 26.1), but it merits inclusion on the grounds of its reference to the low standard of living of exile.

(8)   man's natural needs are easily satisfied[1].

10.1-11, 11.1-7

This is another topic common to all classical philosophy. Cicero says that the burden of poverty is eased by teaching how small and few nature's requirements are, and that he avoids argument or polemic (subtilitas disputendi) in favour of examples like Socrates, Diogenes or Caecilius (Tusc.3.58). He repeats the first two of this mixed bag later at greater length (5.91-2). Apart from Socrates and the Cynics, the Epicureans upheld the same belief that man's needs can be easily satisfied (Diog.L.10.130-1; Cic.Fin.2.90). Epicurus himself is quoted as saying that hunger can be satisfied quite simply (Tusc.3.49, 5.89; Sen.Ep.4.10-1,25.4; cp.Rist (2) 104-5,117-9; cp. Democritus fr.246). The idea is appropriate to the Stoic doctrine of living in accordance with nature.

Seneca states his proposition in the first paragraph of 10 and in the next lists the basic needs for human life, which he follows with an attack on the refinements and fastidiousness of luxury (2-3), taking Gaius as an example (4). Their taste is governed not by usefulness or intrinsic value but by rarity

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1   Giesecke 84-8, 90-1, Favez xlix, Coccia 156-9.

(5-6). In contrast, the Roman maiores lived an austere and ascetic life and were better men for it (7-8). Now society's heroes are men like Apicius, who killed himself because he was afraid of poverty, having spent all his money on banquets (8-10). In the concluding paragraph Seneca brings out the contrast he has been working on between natura or ratio and cupiditas (11).

In the following chapter Seneca moves from the question of nourishment to that of shelter. Again he states the proposition in the opening paragraph: nihil homini natura, quod necessarium faciebat, fecit operosum (1). By the image of the fevered man's thirst, he argues that satisfaction of individual desires only increases the inclination for greed: natural needs are simply met, unnatural can never be met (2-4; cp. Cons. 13.3)[1]. True wealth comes from the mind, and so it cannot be diminished even by exile: the mind can soar in contemplation (5-6), and while the body is subjected to external effects, it is sacer et aeternus (7).

Elsewhere Seneca repeats this topic (e.g. Ep. 4.10, 119.7). In De Constantia he compares the wise man's simple life to a modest house (15.5; cp. Ad Helv. 9.3). The beggar is superior to the king, wanting less than him (13.3). The dialogues abound with praise for the simple life (e.g. Prov. 3.6, Tranq. 9.2, Rem. Fort. 10.1, Ep. 25.4).

Other writers on exile also use the theme (Mus. 44.16-45.9; Plut. 601e, 603d-e).

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1   for the comparison of the greedy man with the dropsical man, cp. Hense on Teles 39.3, Fiske 200.

(9) (a) time will cure (= (21a)).

1.2

The <u>naturale remedium temporis</u> is applicable to every grief in addition to that caused by death.

(b) reason is the only effective cure (= (21b))[1].

17.2

It is possible to cheat, cover or disguise sorrow, but these measures are only temporary and it will always return. The use of reason is the only permanent solution: <u>quisquis</u> <u>[dolor] rationi cessit, in perpetuum componitur</u>.

(c) deep-rooted grief needs radical treatment (= (21c)).

2.1-2

A part of the <u>captatio benevolentiae</u>, it prepares for supposedly violent measures to treat the symptoms of grief's victim. This is to say that Seneca will not mince his words in the succeeding arguments - and to some extent he does not (cp.16.3-4).

(10) (a) anticipation removes the shock (= (22a)).

5.3, 12.3, 17.3-5

The Peripatetic <u>praemeditatio</u> also applies to exile. Anticipation helps the exile to bear his punishment more easily, and his friends and relations to bear the loss. In the first

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1   Favez li-ii.

example he explains that philosophy is his refuge, and, in a
military image, that, like a soldier on guard, he watches for
the attacks of fortune, who only harms when she comes unexpectedly
(repentina).

The second example introduces the motif of the luxurious
rich man playing poor (cp.Ep.18.7). This is a grotesque parody
of praemeditatio in the way these men take pleasure from
pretending to be what they fear most in reality. But Seneca
says elsewhere that it has validity as an exercise (Tranq.9.2).

The final passage shows how real preparation for the events
of life can be found only in philosophy.

(b)   recollection of previous misfortunes strengthens (= (22b)).

2.2-5, 3.1-2, 15.4

The first two passages are a continuous account of fortune's
persistent victimization of Helvia which culminated in Seneca's
exile. He introduces the account with his proposition: adsidua
infelicitas.., quos semper vexat, novissime indurat (2.3). His
conclusion is a confirmation of this based on his enumeration
of her misfortunes: perdidisti...tot mala, si nondum misera esse
didicisti. The final example also emphasises the help of
experience.

(11) (a)   the relatives who remain provide consolation (= (25)).

18.1-19.7

Though one person is absent or dead, others are left to
help and support the aggrieved. Seneca lists her family to

turn Helvia's attention from his own position. Family affection
can soothe this form of distress. Plutarch uses the same
consolation but includes wealth as a good, which Seneca could
not accept (601f, 602a, 604b).

  (b) the mourner has a reponsibility for the remaining
         relatives (= (25b)).

18.7-9

Seneca reminds Helvia that some of her family rely upon
her to fulfil certain responsibilities due to them. His niece
Novatilla needs her attention, because she has lost her mother
and needs a substitute to care for her. Helvia must also take
account of her father (cp.Diog.L.7.108).

It is significant that Seneca gives equal power against
grief to philosophy (ratio) and family affection (honesta
occupatio 18.8). This would be apostasy for a Stoic, were it
not more likely to be rhetorical opportunism. Although it is
possible to find cases where he admits the importance of
affection (e.g.Ep.63.10), the proper solution always remains
philosophy.

(12) grief should be moderate and avoid ostentation (= (20a,c)).

3.2, 16.1-2

In Ad Marciam Seneca talks about infirmitas muliebris
animi (1.1). In the present dialogue he uses the phrases
muliebris dolor (3.2) and muliebris maeror (16.1). It seems to
have been a feature of consolations to women to stress female

weakness in general and then to contrast it with the exceptional
strength of the particular lady in question. It follows that
Seneca holds up Helvia as an exemplar of fortitude.

The second passage presents the case for μετριοπάθεια
in preference to the earlier orthodox ἀπάθεια. His loyalties
are here split between Stoicism and traditional, though
apparently sincere, respect for the practices of the Roman
maiores. He explains their provisions for grief among women,
his point being that they had the practical good sense not to
try to ban it completely, but to limit it. They saw that
extravagant mourning was indulgence and none at all was callous-
ness. The implication is that they were wiser than the hard-line
Stoics Seneca criticises elsewhere (Ad Pol.18.5-6; cp.SVF 3.574).
The solution is to steer a course between extremes.

After settling the extent to which we should feel grief,
he deals with the way grief should appear. It should not be
shown simply for appearance's sake, but decorum should be
observed even in this context (3.2,16.2; cp.Tranq.15.6,Ep.99.21).

(13) the soul is imprisoned in the body (= (16)).

   (10.6), 11.6-7

The image is standard in popular philosophy (in Seneca,
cp. also Ep.24.17,65.16,79.12,88.34). Only implied in the first
instance in the contrast between the limitation of the body
compared to the infinite desires men have, it is quite explicit
in the second, where it builds up from the initial suggestion
in gravis sarcina to the bold statement with emphatic diminutive:

corpusculum hoc, custodia et vinculum animi.

(14) life is a journey (= (27a)).

8.5

The image is present in Seneca's declaration that man should go eager, erect and undaunted wherever life leads him.

(15) life is like a sea-voyage (= (28)).

11.7, 18.1, (19.4-7)

The first case simply uses the phrase huc et illuc iactatur, which gives the picture of a stormy sea. The second calls philosophy the portus where there is peace.

The final passage comes from the story of how Seneca's aunt lost her husband in a shipwreck. Of course the story is based on fact, but Seneca tells it in a way that is so stylized that it looks like a simple allegory: she loses her husband in the course of the voyage (in ipsa...navigatione), that is, while life is still incomplete; she overcomes grief, and, when the storms are mastered (evictis tempestatibus), she brings her husband's body from the shipwreck. Tempestas is used figuratively so often that a similar undertone here cannot be ruled out.

(16) (a) man must withstand the attacks of Fortune (= (29a)).

5.2-4, 15.4

Seneca describes the vicissitudes of Fortune like the actions of a military campaign where Fortune is an unpredictable

and perfidious opponent, even when offering peace. But it is easier for Helvia to face Fortune as she is a seasoned campaigner.

(b) the mourner is having a battle with grief (= (29b)).

1.1, 2.1, 2.5, 3.1, 15.4

All the examples except one (underlined) refer to the wounds of grief that Helvia has suffered at various times. Seneca talks about their treatment (1.1,2.1), their magnitude (3.1), or the way in which they should become less painful through the experience of a veteran (3.1,15.4). The other example refers to previous onsets (incursantes) of grief.

(17) (a) philosophy brings consolation (= (24))[1].

17.3-5

Philosophy strengthens the reason, which is the means for defeating the passions. Belief in the consolatory power of study was a commonplace (Ad Pol.8.2,18.2; Lucr.3.1053-75; Cic.Fin.5.50-4; Hor.Ep.1.2.34-5; the last two examples are critical of the motives for study).

Seneca adds an original aspect to the idea through the fact that Helvia has already shown an interest in and aptitude for philosophy, which ought to be an advantage when she returns to it. Her interest was originally stifled by the elder Seneca's antiquus rigor and dislike of philosophy (cp.Ep.108.22).

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1   Favez li-ii, Coccia 161.

His traditional austerity, a quality for which Seneca frequently expresses respect but whose act of repression meant Helvia was not sufficiently prepared for her present situation, is treated with affectionate tolerance in memory of his father, virorum optimus, who emerges as rather old-fashioned and reactionary about the position of women in his society. Seneca defends him on the grounds of the fashion among society women to pursue studies only so that they can show off their erudition (cp.Juv, 6.434-56).

(b) the exile has time for thought and study[1].

20.1-2

This is a topic original to works on exile in the way Seneca uses it, but not original to consolations. What he seems to have done is to take the situation of the dead as portrayed in consolations and then apply it to the exile, to create an emotional and lyrical peroration to the work. Of course, in literal terms (the only way Favez interprets the passage) he is saying that he has plenty of time to read, and at the start of the dialogue (1.2) he made it clear that he had access to books, in particular to consolations (for the leisure of the exile cp.Rem.Fort.8.3; Cic.Tusc.5.105). His interest in the natural world, and the sky in particular, is equally evident, not only from this dialogue (6.7,8.6,20.2)

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1 Giesecke 88-90, Favez xxiv-v.

but also from other works (Prov.1.2, Otio 5.3,6, Nat.6.4.2).
However, the description of his spiritual activity in exile is
very like that of the soul after death: he is as happy as he
ever was; his mind is free from all distraction and at liberty
to act as it chooses. His subjects of study progress from the
earth - land and sea - through the lower regions of the sky,
up to heaven and the divine world. This progress is exactly
that of the soul after death: it was first purified, Plutarch
said in the area between the earth and the moon (943c), and
then it rose to heaven where it remained in perfect peace
(Cic.Tusc.1.42-3; cp.Rep.6.16). Heaven is here the summa: in
Ad Marciam, for example, it is excelsa (25.1), in summo (25.3),
arx caelestis (26.1). The after-life, as has been noted, was
a time of intellectual happiness and revelation. This included
the contemplation of the world from above (Ad Marc.25.3) and
the revelation of natural mysteries (25.2; cp.Cic.Rep.6.17,20-1,
Tusc.1.44-5), both of which Seneca describes in the peroration
of the present work.

The accumulation of parallels would suggest that Seneca
is using the traditional version of the after-life to make his
own situation appear that much more attractive, and also that
he is using it in a (semi-)traditional position as the peroration,
which is frequently a prosopopoeia, sometimes spoken by the dead
man (e.g. Ad Marciam) declaring his happiness, but which is
here delivered by Seneca, the equivalent of the dead man, in

propria persona[1].

In conclusion we may make some general observations on
Seneca's use of the topoi in his consolations. These common-
places are innumerable, overlapping and often used one on top
of the other. They cover the complete dialogues: Seneca
hardly uses an original thought, even if he introduces an
original variation. However, he treats the commonplaces in
such a way that they acquire a wholly Senecan identity apart
from their origin in the mainstream of popular or scholastic
philosophy. Our examination of individual topics has
attempted to cover their general use in this field together
with their treatment by Seneca. What emerges is a personal
flavour in them, augmented by a sense of appropriateness in
the choice of topics to suit each addressee and his or her
circumstances. This prudent selection contributes further to
the creation of an apparent originality already suggested by
contemporary reference, example and description, so that the
final product is for all its repetition something undeniably
new, a further stage in the history of literary consolation.

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1   Favez discusses traditional elements in the description of
     the after-life in a detailed comparison of the last two
     chapters of Ad Marciam and Cicero's Somnium Scipionis, in
     his edition of Ad Marc. xliii-xliv. For a discussion of
     the commonplace of the imaginative flight of the mind, cp.
     Jones, particularly 108-13.

Chapter 3

The Composition of Some Moral Essays

In this chapter it is intended to outline the structure
of three more dialogues, the moral essays <u>De Brevitate Vitae</u>,
<u>De Vita Beata</u> and <u>De Tranquillitate Animi</u>. It has proved
impossible to accept completely the wholly orderly disposition
of arguments with which Seneca has been credited. Instead
the elements of ordered composition are present, but they lack
the cohesion that would turn these essays into rigidly organised
works. The evidence leads to the conclusion that the dialogues
were written with some preconceived ideas on content and
disposition, with a certain (limited) number of features that
Seneca was particularly eager to introduce even at the risk of
some imbalance or incongruity, and with some basic rhetorical
features of structural framework. The other aim of this
chapter is to add some brief conclusions on Seneca's use of
rhetorical technique.

The first dialogue for examination is <u>De Brevitate Vitae</u>.
Albertini (68-9) does not accept the order of the text as it
stands, and places 7.3-10 between 10 and 11, 7.2 between 12.1
and 12.2, and 7.1 between 12.4 and 12.5. With these alterations,
he analyses the dialogue into the following sections:

introduction stating the general thesis	1-3
examples illustrating the thesis	4-6
man's regular conduct; arguments which	
demonstrate its absurdity; account of the	
different types of <u>occupati</u>	8-13

the life of the philosopher opposed to

that of the worldling   14-7

application of these ideas to Paulinus

as conclusion   18-20

He notes that 10.1 is the only point at which Seneca approaches
a divisio, but that overall Seneca follows the view of Fabianus
in a piecemeal presentation, with the exception of the
reconstructed section 10,7.3-10,11. Albertini's conclusion is
that the work came together by spontaneous composition and
association of ideas, with the additional possibility that it
contains pieces (he mentions 13, but one might add 12 and the
exempla of Gaius, 18.5-6, and Turannius, 20.3-4) which were
written separately, stand as entities and were included here
without revision or reduction (259-62)[1].

In the introduction to his edition, Grimal, the supporter
of rhetorical structure, analyses the dialogue along the
considerably more formal lines of a speech of the genus
demonstrativum, an exhortatio ad philosophiam (5-13):

exordium: all men complain of life's shortness   1

exposition of otium (2-6):

(a) men's ceaseless activities are obstacles   2-3
    to personal autonomy

(b) historical examples   4-6

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1   Bourgery, the Bude editor, also suggests this in his
     introduction (Tome 2.45).

(c) the very fact of <u>occupatio</u> prevents

men from using their life 7.1-5

(d) examples and evidence; analysis of

the consciousness of time 7.6-9.5

<u>propositio</u>: <u>brevissimam esse occupatorum</u>

<u>vitam</u> 10.1

<u>argumentatio</u>

<u>otium</u> is <u>utile</u> (10.2-17)

(a) inability of the <u>occupatus</u> to utilise

time 10-3

(b) utility of <u>otium</u> 14-5

(c) dissipation of time by <u>occupati</u> 16-7

<u>otium</u> is <u>honestum</u> (18-20)

(a) Paulinus has the right to retire 18.1

(b) <u>otium</u> is more honourable than the

<u>praefectura annonae</u> 18.2-19

(c) the life of the <u>occupati</u> is not

consistent with true human dignity;

<u>peroratio</u> in the form of an anecdote 20^{1}.

Grimal's construction of the dialogue allows a break-down

into <u>exordium</u>, <u>narratio</u>, <u>propositio</u>, <u>argumentatio</u>, <u>peroratio</u>.

The <u>argumentatio</u> is subdivided into the <u>locus de utilitate</u> and

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1 The editors mark the division between 19 and 20 in two
different places: Basore (Loeb), Bourgery (Bude) and Duff
give 19 three paragraphs; Grimal and Haase start 20 after
only the first two paragraphs of 19. As elsewhere, I
follow the Loeb numeration.

the <u>locus de honesto</u>.

One immediate remark about the presentation of this analysis is that (c) and (d) (7-9) under the heading "exposition of <u>otium</u>" come outside the specified section for this topic (2-6) with no explanation. The crucial point, however, in Grimal's analysis is the nature of 10.1, which he accepts as a <u>divisio</u> stating the intention to proceed with a logical order of demonstration and marking a major turning-point in the dialogue. Both these conclusions are unjustifiable on closer examination of the passage itself, and its context in the development of the dialogue.

For a start, the crucial sentence with which 10 begins is an unreal conditional and states no fact: "if I wanted to divide my subject into two parts with separate proofs, then many arguments would occur to me with which I could prove that busy men have the shortest life". This is hardly a definitive statement: the mood of <u>velim</u> must indicate that it is not Seneca's wish to make a categorical division. Furthermore, the use of <u>occurrent</u> does not really signify a necessarily methodical approach. <u>Occurrere</u> is not confined to orderly movement - in fact quite the opposite - and Seneca's use of it to introduce the example of Turannius at the end of this dialogue is no support of its use as a word expressing logical progression: <u>praeterire quod mihi occurrit exemplum non possum</u> (20.3).

The rest of the paragraph deals with Fabianus' attitude to combating the passions, which, he said, should be overthrown by force. This could not be done by clever arguments (<u>suptilitas</u>,

<u>cavillatio</u>): the only effective method was force (<u>impetus</u>).
Fabianus' argument supports the rejection of a <u>divisio</u>.
Seneca puts this in such a way as to suggest that he agrees
with the opinion as far as it goes, but would add his own
comment that this emotional approach (<u>deplorandi</u>) is not
sufficient on its own and needs the support of more reasoned
treatment (<u>docendi</u>). Seneca emends the terms of Fabianus'
comparison from <u>impetus</u>/<u>suptilitas</u>, <u>cavillatio</u>, of which the
former he would probably approve, the latter not[1], to his own
contrast of <u>deplorare</u>/<u>docere</u>, where the emphasis on both terms
changes and reverses their values. This change of terms really
says that some formal arguments may be needed as well as
emotional force, that is, the <u>minutiae</u> of regularly organised
arguments with <u>divisiones</u> as well as more sweeping attacks.
This may be a statement on the nature of philosophical writing,
but in only one respect is it possible to interpret it as an
indication of division in this dialogue, and that is as a
comment signifying a change of tone, and transition from an
emotional to a more reasoned treatment of the same subject[2].

This becomes more obvious if 10.1 is considered in relation
to the text on either side. At 8.1 Seneca starts a new topic,
the use of time in relation to its value[3]. The first chapter

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1   for rejection of <u>cavillationes</u> cp.<u>Ep</u>.102.20 and Leeman (2)
     267,277; Cicero refers to this type of argument in his
     criticism of Stoic composition (<u>Parad</u>.2).

2   cp.<u>Ep</u>.45.3–5 and Leeman (1) 307.

3   for arguments in favour of leaving 7.1–10 <u>in situ</u> see below.

discusses the nature of time in terms of a possession whose
essential difference from other possessions is its incorporeality:
because man cannot see how much time he wastes, he is more
careless of it than of tangible property that is also liable
to misuse and wastage. The next step in the exposition is to
show how this casualness leads to continued postponement of
right-living until man's time runs out before he has lived, or
is even ready to live (9.1-5). This chapter is an emotional
treatment of the subject. Seneca uses a quotation from Virgil
(G 3.66-7) whom he praises for divine inspiration (vates,
divino ore, carmen canere). He extends the quotation with a
prosopopoeia by Virgil, a series of rhetorical questions, a
paradox which portrays the old as still childish in mind, and
finally an image of a traveller who has distracted himself on
his journey so that he reaches his destination before he knows
he is approaching it. The chapter reaches a fair level of
emotional excitement, in a rhetorical, indignatory way, but
there is no sign of any conclusion drawn from the preceding
reasoning.

Now 10.1 is introduced as a corrective to redirect the
emphasis, but not the line of argument[1]. 10.2 makes a division
in the subject, the conventional division of life into three
periods, past, present and future. The occupati have no reason

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1   Leeman (1), particularly 312-3, notes a tendency in
     Seneca's very late works to treat the same problem both in
     an "ethical" and in a dialectical way. This may be an
     early example of such a tendency.

to recall anything from the past (2), as no one willingly
remembers shameful acts (3), but this part of life, beyond the
control of Fortune, should bring lasting pleasure (4). In
contrast, the present is very short and will not be subject to
delay, but this is the very object to which the occupati devote
all their attention, although it is gone before they can catch
it (5-6). The next chapter (11) begins with denique, which
should signify the approach of a conclusion, and the chapter
does seem to summarise the foregoing exposition and lead to
the conclusion that only those who neglect the value of time
regret death (1), but the wise man will find even the smallest
quantity (quantulacumque) enough and will meet death without
wavering (6). The introduction of the sapiens at the close is
also appropriate to its interpretation as a (temporary)
conclusion.

This account has shown 8 to 11 to be a single section on
the value of time and the right and wrong attitudes towards
the periods of life, past, present and future. 10.1 only
explains a shift of emphasis from emotional to logical
argumentation, and the division of time in 10.2 is followed,
as so often in Seneca, by an incomplete treatment of the division
in that no section corresponds explicitly to the future. The
conclusion is signified by denique in 11.1[1]. To this central
section of the dialogue is appended a long purely descriptive

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1   Grimal appears to accept the unity of this passage, although
     he does not state so explicitly, in a more recent work
     ("Place et Role du Temps" 96-9).

passage explaining who the occupati Seneca mentions are (12-3).

If this section is accepted, it cuts across Grimal's
outline of the dialogue. Although there are references to the
uselessness of wasting time (nihil prodest, 10.5; frustra, 11.1),
the practical point-of-view is not clarified in any way[1]. The
first four chapters of utilitarian arguments remain not proven.
Grimal's definition of the section on honestas also requires
scrutiny. He considers that the closing chapters addressed to
Paulinus (18-20) form this section. Albertini, on the other
hand, sees them as a conclusion to the dialogue, in which
Seneca applies his general remarks to the case of Paulinus (69).
There must certainly be a pause after 17.6: the repetition of
numquam, the anaphora of vel and two incisive sententiae close
a passage on the occupati. 18.1 begins with itaque which might
indicate that a conclusion is being drawn and not that a
totally different line of argument is being initiated. Seneca
is trying to persuade Paulinus to retire from his public
appointment to a life of leisure. Such a life is certainly
considered honesta, but the first reference to withdrawal from
public life must also look back to the immediately preceding
chapter and its remarks on public servants (17.5-6), and
particularly the general statements on the vanity of all public
honores (17.5,6; cp.15.4). The contrast introduced in 18.1
and sustained to the end is not only between honestum and turpe

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1   A very clear indication of the beginning of a locus de
    utilitate may be found in De Ira 1.9.1.

(cp.20.2) but also between private and public. Seneca's advice
in 18.5-6 to withdraw from public life for the sake of personal
safety is of course utilitarian, but the balance does favour
honestas. Seneca's ultimate injunction is to be above all
one's own master, a theme that has already been used as a
general topic earlier in the dialogue (19.3; cp.7.8).

The climax of the conclusion is placed centrally in the
passage and describes the activity of the otiosi, a life of
contemplation (19.1-2). We have already seen, in the consideration
of the dialogues de consolatione, that this was a favourite
peroratory device of Seneca (Ad Marc.25.2, Ad Helv.20.1-2; of
course, there are similar passages on the employment of leisure
outside perorations as, e.g., Otio 5.3-8). This description
of the retired life is paralleled by a section on those who
remain embroiled in public life, which concludes with the
example of Gaius' praefectus Turannius. Grimal correctly notes
that the treatise could end comfortably after 19.2, but argues
that to do so would leave the locus de honesto incomplete and
that Seneca uses an antithetical presentation, the diptych, to
present the argument. We have tried to show that while this
section is very probably composed under the influence of
arguments de honesto, it is not parallel with any section
de utilitate, but nevertheless, in its role as peroratio, it
still admits a two-sided structure: the first half, on leisure,
ends with a laus studiorum, one possible form of close, the
second, on occupatio, ends with an anecdote, another accepted

device. The whole is rounded off by a single paragraph (20.5), summarising in elevated style (anaphora of dum, sine, nemo, alliteration, homoioteleuta, exclamation, antithesis, bathos) the failure of a ratio vitae.

Two sections of the work are now established (8-13, 18-20). In the remaining chapters, the next problem is the status of 7. Albertini advocated its drastic redistribution (67-8, 178-81). Grimal defends the status quo in his note on 7.1, and with good reason. Chapters 4 to 6 deal with men who have been excessively occupied by political activity despite their expressed desires for rest. 7 begins with what seems to Albertini a volte-face, but the connection admits explanation. Seneca has criticised three prominent men of state, Augustus (4), Cicero (5) and Livius Drusus (6), for discontent with lives of activity, but of course he knew that the first two at least are men who were considerably respected. He chose these examples, first, for their paradoxical effect - these are men who would be considered least discontented; secondly, for their auctoritas - we have again the commonplace: even the great man can be disaffected with his lot; thirdly, for their relevance to the case of Paulinus, who is in primis occupied with public business. But Seneca cannot allow his reader to think that Augustus or Cicero is the typical occupatus, and so he adds this corrective, that there are many turpiores occupationes, like wine and lust: however vana gloria may be, it at least has a fine appearance.

The chapter is quite long (but Seneca could not anticipate the later practices of editorial numeration) and is somewhat

miscellaneous, but this is often the case with conclusions
drawn from lists of _exempla_ which cannot conveniently be broken
up, and it is not alone in respect of its miscellaneousness in
Seneca's work. There is, however, a discernible line of
thought: many men undertake too many pursuits (3), which is
unwise as learning to live is a lifetime occupation in itself
(4-5); these people are often aware that they have lost time
(6-7), but their continual discontent with the present makes
them always wish for the future (8). In contrast, the man who
manages his own time well is never at a loss (9), and, to
conclude, the man who does nothing and achieves nothing, gets
nowhere (10). It is hard to see the final paragraph of the
chapter as anything but a distinct punctuation mark to signal
a pause. It begins with the obvious indication of _itaque_.
Seneca plays on the meaning of _vivere_, then introduces an image
from sea travel to present his conclusion in the clearer form
of an analogy, and closes with a smart _sententia_ on the idea of
"busy going nowhere".

It now seems possible to suggest a division of the
dialogue as the product of the foregoing discussion. How far
it reflects a predetermined plan is now beyond ascertaining,
but it does show certain features of his composition technique,
the most important being its relative looseness. While Seneca
was not altogether undisciplined, he seems to have had one style
(we do not exclude other more formal approaches where they
were relevant) in which he composed by accumulating groups of
ideas (in this dialogue, four including the _peroratio_), which

often repeated material of earlier groups but with the addition of further perspective. This style should be distinguished from composition by the loosely designated "association of ideas".

One other pattern which emerges in the following analysis is, in this instance at least, an elementary form of equivalence within each section, where Seneca presents both sides in balance. Grimal has already mentioned this feature in the treatment of his sections on _utile_ and _honestum_ (7-8), where he draws attention to the diptych-style antithetical demonstrations. These certainly exist on a larger or smaller scale throughout the work: the larger instances are 14-5 to 16-7 and 18-19.2 to 19.3-20.4. Elsewhere they are a basic structural device in chapters: so 7.1-8 balances with 7.9-10, 11.1 with 11.2, 13.1 with 13.9 (here there is an intervening digression of seven paragraphs arising from 13.1). There is perhaps a balance intended between 8-9 and 10-1, one excited, the other reasoned and logical. The same principle may be at work in the presentation of the _occupati_ in 12 as _desidiosi_ and in 13 as _negotiosi_, its opposite. Both begin with a _praeteritio_ of the other. There is a clash between ideas of _honestum_ and _turpe_ in the latter chapters (e.g.19.1,20.2), and the use of paradox (e.g.9.1,9.4,12.2,18.2), where phrases are deliberately used in an unconventional way to draw attention to their real meaning, is another manifestation of this style. The technique is appropriate where the merits and demerits of _occupatio_ and _otium_ are being weighed up.

The division may be made as follows:

1. Exordium (principium a re): men
   complain that life is short; it is
   long enough, but time wasted   1.1-4

2. (a) men are preoccupied with the
       external life, and cannot retire   2-3

   (b) examples: Augustus, Cicero,
       Livius Drusus   4-6

   (c) preoccupation prevents true success   7

3. (a) the proper use of time   8-11

   (b) [digression] description of the
       occupati and their abuse of time   12-3

4. (a) true otium and the function of
       philosophy; its use of time   14-5

   (b) the ignorance of time among the
       occupati and the vulnerability of
       their pleasures to the passage of time 16-7

5. Peroratio:

   (a) peace of otium is preferable to
       instability of office   18-19.2

   (b) a long life of public responsibility
       is miserable and deserves pity   19.3-20.4

   (c) conclusion   20.5.

At only one point might there be some overlapping: sections
12-3 and 14-5 may be parallel. Both do begin with the promise
of a definition and description, but the division is equally
well-balanced as it now stands, and the diptych argument goes
against this.

A final point for observation is the frequent repetition
of certain thoughts as the dialogue progresses. The following
have been noted: 7.6-7 cp.3.2, awareness of the loss of time;
7.8 cp.4.1, wishing for the future; 8.1 cp.3.4, prodigality of
men's use of time; 8.2-3 cp.3.1, possessiveness for tangible
property; 9.1-2 cp.3.5,4.1, postponement of right-living; 11.1
cp.8.2, terror of dying and prayers for longer life; 11.2 cp.
7.9, the preparedness of the _sapiens_; 14.2 cp.10.2-6, importance
of the past; 16.1-2 cp.9.5, the _occupati_ reach death after doing
nothing; 16.3-4 cp.7.8, the discontent of the _occupati_ with life.

De Vita Beata has a casual, schematic structure similar
to De Brevitate Vitae. Albertini (79) distinguishes only three
parts, as follows:

definition of happiness   1-5.3

polemic against a morality based on

pleasure   5.4-15

reply of the philosophers, and in particular

of Seneca, to the attacks of envy   16-28.

He sees the second part as complementary to the first, but he
thinks the third part does not fit naturally to what has
preceded. He finds a contradiction between Seneca's attack on
Epicureanism in the early sections and his alliance with the
same school, and others, in the final section, which amounts
to juxtaposition rather than to compatibility. He points out
that an apparent division at the very beginning of the work
fails to materialise in the subsequent exposition: proponendum
est itaque primum quid sit quod adpetamus; tunc circumspiciendum

qua contendere illo celerrime possimus (1.1). This follows a
brief introductory statement of the theme, in the natural
position for a division, but, as we have seen with the consolations
and with De Brevitate Vitae, these statements of apparent
organisation are often only superficial. They are a stylistic
mannerism, which arranges and categorises, but does so with
little control over the subsequent orderly development of the
argument. It should, however, be noted that he generally
produces the information promised, but not always in the order
suggested. It is not reassuring for the reliability of
Seneca's "division" here that he repeats it, shortened and more
tersely, only a few lines later: decernatur itaque, et quo
tendamus et qua...(1.2). A common feature of writers who find
it difficult to make a start to their work is to use this sort
of empty division and to repeat their ideas with slight changes,
just so that they can get something on paper.

In this case, Grimal is unable to apply his rhetorical
divisions and settles for a broad outline of the work[1]. It
has two parts, 1-16 and 17-28, where 16 serves as a transition
to the second in addition to being a conclusion to the first
part. Within the first section, he considers 1.1 as a statement
of Seneca's general intention: to define happiness, the end of
all men. The early sections attempt to find a definition for
happiness (1.2-5.4). This is followed by the question of pleasure

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1   in his edition, 7-17; for chapters 1-15, cp. also Grimal
    (4) 396-402.

and its relation to the highest good, which occupies 6 to 15,
subdivided into a long polemic against Epicurean pleasure (6-14)
and a short conclusion on a compromise good, the blending of
virtue and pleasure into one, as expounded by Aristotle (15).
16 brings the foregoing arguments to a conclusion. The
remainder of the dialogue is a defence of philosophy against
the attacks and criticisms of public opinion (17-28).

This final section has often been considered in isolation
and has come, through force of habit, to be regarded as wholly
detachable from the work itself. This is not helped by the fact
that the end of the work has not survived, although it is
generally accepted that only a short concluding section has
been lost. Those who separate this part are historians or
biographers who use these chapters as, first, a defence of
Seneca's wealth _per se_ and, secondly, a reply to the criticism
which followed Publius Suillius' action against Seneca in 58[1].

There is little with which to disagree in these analyses.
The composition does tend to sprawl, but it certainly keeps
moving forward. There are none of the hold-ups caused by
digressions which can be found in other dialogues. The early
chapters (1-5) present an attempt to define happiness which
Grimal might have classed as a separate unit. 5 forms a
transition, introducing the topic of Epicureanism in the final

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1   A selection of such works includes: Alexander (3) 318-21,
    Wedeck 540-4, Motto (1) 257-8.

sentence. The section on pleasure begins with an attempt to compromise the Stoic position with the claim by an imaginary speaker that the mind has its own pleasures, a standard Epicurean thought. But the Epicureans still made mental pleasure dependent on the body and hence on external circumstances, and this was unacceptable to the Stoics, who stipulated that the wise man must be independent of external influence. This is Seneca's reply here: the wise man is self-contained in his happiness by reason of his iudicium and ratio (6.2). The argument can now deal exclusively with Epicureanism, which it does up to 14. As a conclusion, Seneca deals with a variation of the theory of mental pleasure which is intended to accommodate physical and mental activity in a single end (15.1-4), and from which he turns to praise of virtue (15.5-7) and what it promises its adherents (16.1-3). It is perhaps significant that Seneca starts and ends his treatment of pleasure with two different attempts to include mental pleasure in the summum bonum (6.1-2, 15.1).

The connection between the two halves of the dialogue is established by the statement in 16.3 that virtue will bring all it promises, not only to the purely virtuous but also to those who are only approaching virtue. They, though not yet free, will be as good as free in comparison to the rest. The next chapter begins by following up this claim and saying that if the critics of philosophy make their usual accusations of inconsistency, Seneca will not claim to be perfect, but at least to be better than most. So, a connection of a kind is

established. Although typically Senecan in its tenuousness, this is not, I think, another case of Albertini's association of ideas, as he suggests (268) that the mention of the sage is enough to spark off prolonged irrelevance by Seneca. He adds parallel cases, none of which really seem appropriate to the point he is making. The relation of parts takes the form of a movement from theoretical to practical: the early part makes the negative conclusion that pleasure is not happiness and leaves virtue as the alternative (Seneca is quite unapologetic about his dogmatism (3.2)), while the latter part considers the implications of this decision in practical life at every level. Albertini is correct to observe that the structure is one of apposition, not composition (79).

As for the internal development of these final chapters, they are clearly based on a less distinct progression of thought. They are an _apologia_ rather than a treatise, and Albertini has pointed out the careless use of conjunctions like _ergo_ and _itaque_ (269).

There are certain features which unify the dialogue in a non-structural respect which show that Seneca at least believed a correspondence could exist between the two parts. The first is the sympathetic treatment of philosophers in both sections. Seneca has no patience with popular opinion. The first point he makes in the dialogue is that it is wrong to follow the crowd (1.3) and this is carefully elaborated (1.3-2.4), leading to the conclusion that man should be independent and self-sufficient. This is a necessary starting-point for the rest of

the discussion. The crowd reappears as the opponent of philosophy in the later part of the dialogue (17.1,19.2-3,20.6, 22.5,27.4-6). It is also blamed for the poor standing of Epicurean philosophy. Seneca has no time for the Epicurean doctrine of pleasure but he does treat it as a serious rival that needs adequate refutation. He shows ample respect for Epicurus (12.4,13.1-3), which is confirmed from elsewhere in his work (e.g.Ep.8.8,12.1,18.9,33.2,79.15), despite the simultaneous rebuttal of his philosophy. Seneca sees that he was not responsible for other people's views. His defence of Epicurus (18.1,27.5) and of Diodorus, a contemporary Epicurean (19.1), are not signs of a fatal contradiction which Albertini suggests exists between the two parts of the dialogue.

Seneca uses one important technical device to give his structure some regular pattern: the imaginary interlocutor, who is present for the whole dialogue. As was observed in the case of the consolations (e.g.Ad Marc.7.1), Seneca can use this device not only to make an objection but, much more importantly, actually to initiate a line of argument. So, here the imaginary opponent is responsible for introducing the discussion on whether the mind has its own pleasures (6.1), and he continues to play into Seneca's hands (9.1,10.1,12.1,15.1,16.3). The last interruption shows that his initial sympathies have been undermined.

The imaginary interlocutor of the final part is of different character, representing, not one school against another, but the untrained against the trained. Again a speech

serves as introduction to the new topic (17.1-2), and he makes
fresh complaints at 18.1, 20.1, 21.1, 22.5, 24.2. The argument
develops into a dramatised debate in the confrontation of two
types, the destructive, ignorant critic and the wise man (ille
Socrates 25.4: 24.4-25.4, 26.1, 26.5-7, 27.1-3).

A plan may be suggested for De Vita Beata as follows.

1. Statement of theme (exordium: principium   1.1

  a re)

2. Definition of happiness   1.2-4.5

  link: the role of the mind in happiness   5.1-4

3. Pleasure is no part of the summum bonum

  (a) as expressed by Epicurus   6.1-14.3

  (b) in a modified form   15.1-5

  link: the role of virtue and the position

  of the philosopher in everyday life   16.1-3

4. No man may attain absolute perfection but

  those who respect and practise virtue do

  not deserve the insults and envy of their

  inferiors   17.1-28.1

De Tranquillitate Animi has a very clear basic plan, but
one that permits a good deal of formlessness, and certainly not
designed in rhetorical style. It states simply the nature of
the subject for treatment, and then presents solutions under a
variety of headings. Such a structure can be quite open-ended,
in no way bound by demands of proportion or balance, but Seneca
uses some sort of balance in an exposition in which the topics
are divided almost exactly between the practical and the

theoretical, and the discussion is shaped to move from the quite practical question of wealth to the purely abstract matters of the disturbing effects of the human situation, and the destructive demands of a life of pretence.

As our own division of the dialogue will correspond almost exactly with that of Albertini (99), there is no need to give his version as a preliminary to discussion, and we can start with the dialogue immediately. It is unique in the length of its introductory speech in the mouth of a second speaker. Other dialogues also start with complaints (e.g. Prov.1.1 and the consolations), but none with such detail and careful characterisation, nor at such length. The first two chapters present respectively the symptoms and the diagnosis of a lack of tranquillitas. This is an unconventional opening in place of the customary exordium, but it also fulfils the role of narratio in the way it presents a full case-history. Still it is neither exordium nor narratio: there is no term to cover its role here, and this demonstrates how misleading the application of technical terms can be when they are not equivalent.

The third chapter is the point of departure for Seneca's investigation for a cure. He begins by repeating in simple form Serenus' original question: adversus hoc taedium quo auxilio putem utendum quaeris (3.1). He first uses a reply of the Stoic Athenodorus (3.1-8). Although introduced as optimum, Seneca finds it necessary to emend Athenodorus' version of when one should withdraw from public life to safeguard one's tranquillity (4.1-8). The topic of participation outside

private life is continued to the end of 7. Typically, Seneca

uses a wholly incongruous _divisio_ which is given highly

portentous presentation although it is only for two chapters

(6-7: the three divisions in 6.1 correspond to 6.2, 6.3, 7.1-6[1];

cp. the division at _Brev_.10.2 which also covers only a short

passage). Seneca is possibly influenced by Athenodorus for

these chapters too, as he reappears in 7.2. However, as

Albertini points out (280), by the latter part of 7 (3-6),

Seneca has moved from the earlier contention that public life

and service are a cure for lack of tranquillity, to believing

that they are one of its causes. The final paragraph of this

section (7.6) serves as a transition by which Seneca can bring

the discussion up-to-date and use arguments on matters of

contemporary relevance. His sudden readjustment - "one cannot

now be so demanding as to require a man like Cato for a friend,

but should still avoid those who complain" - may suggest that

he is turning from the arguments of Athenodorus to other

material, but such an assertion must be viewed with great

caution, and it is not immediately relevant to the structure

of the work.

8, as Albertini notes, is the beginning of a series of

causes of mental inquietude. The change is marked by _transeamus_.

The next two chapters deal with wealth and its correct and

incorrect uses (8-9). The following two chapters (10-1) cover

other cases where men become tied to fortune. This general

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1   Haase's transfer of the second half of 7.2 to the end of
     6.2 seems very probable.

treatment was perhaps foreshadowed by the grouping of ills at the beginning of 8.1, and its treatment of the theme _omnis vita servitium est_ (10.3) is relevant to all potential human disasters. The next section has the abrupt introduction _proximum ab his erit_...(12.1), and it also occupies two chapters (12-3). They discuss the topic that men should avoid useless affairs, like the daily round of social calls (12.3-7), and give a Democritean ideal of conduct (13.1-3).

At this point, Albertini marks a change in the nature of the topics from _modes d'action_ to _dispositions morales_. It is perhaps not quite so easy to draw such a distinct boundary line: that Seneca would have been aware of the contrast is doubtful. Although the subject matter is becoming progressively more theoretical, the conjunction here is only _etiam_. In 14, Seneca argues for the independence of the mind from external influences. 15 introduces the two themes with which the remainder of the dialogue is concerned, simplicity (15.1) and moderation (15.5). 15.1 indicates a transition from the treatment of particular (in 14) to general sorrow, that is, sorrow which is the result of reflection on human affairs. These two chapters face the problem of the apparent iniquities of human life. The final chapter is again introduced casually: _est et illa sollicitudinum non mediocris materia_ (17.1). It is about the anxieties of leading a false life, and the tranquillity inherent in a simple life according to nature (17.2), and gives guidance on how simply life may be satisfied. The unifying themes of the chapter are simplicity (2) and moderation (2,6,9), but it is

sprawling in the arrangement of ideas. By a very awkward transition, Seneca manages to make drunkenness (in moderation!) equivalent to the state of inspiration of the creative mind (17.10-1), which allows him briefly to indulge his weakness for praising the activities of the intellect, after which he winds up the dialogue.

The conclusion - habes...quae possint - suggests almost the conclusion of a hand-book: "you have the equipment with which you can...". It would seem that Seneca was relatively aware of the nature of the technique he had used, and the instructional style survives even in the final sentence. As for the retrospective division which Albertini would like to see in this paragraph, it is more likely that Seneca is using a rhetorical division to cover all time, in the prescribed order of present, past, future, in preference to a single word such as "infallibly", than that he is classifying his arguments.

A plan of this dialogue might be framed as follows:

1. Description of the infirmity requiring

   treatment   1-2

2. The cure by participation in public service   3-7.2

   link: public life may even endanger

   tranquillitas   7.3-6

3. dangers to tranquillitas and means to avoid them

   (a) wealth   8-9

   (b) situations which depend on external

        circumstances and fortune   10-1

   (c) useless preoccupations of social life   12-3

   (d) inflexibility of desires and interests   14

It is not worth having a plan or structure if it is not going to be seen. Such an organisation is after all intended as a guide to help the reader to follow the development of a work. There are, however, many different ways of allowing a work to develop, and we have tried to demonstrate, both in the immediately preceding chapter and in the earlier chapter on the structure of the consolations, that there was no standard predetermined arrangement which all Seneca's dialogues can be made to fit. In some cases, it is probable that no plan as we understand it really existed over and above a number of topics which the author wanted to include. Consequently, investigations to unravel layer upon layer of rhetorical artifice seem destined to fail. No author would take such pains to give his work an appearance of casual organisation on the one hand, and on the other construct a subtle framework of logical progression that no one can subsequently discover to the satisfaction and credibility of anyone else.

This is why the divisions of Albertini remain so much more satisfactory than those of later critics who find a more rhetorical scheme in the dialogues. The consolations certainly have a rhetorical air to them, both in their relation to the

laudatio funebris and the other funerary genres, and in their correspondence to the contemporary technique of the suasoria, but they get no closer to a speech: while there are parts of Tacitus' Agricola that can be imagined as part of a laudatio, at no point in the consolations do they give the impression that they might ever be delivered as speeches. Similarly, the arguments in favour of interpreting De Brevitate Vitae in this form have been found inaccurate and misleading.

Certain classifications clearly overlap. Arguments which Seneca uses fall under the prescribed categories - utile, honestum, naturale - but their proportions are wildly varying. They are out of balance, and often out of order. The development is governed by common sense rather than a fixed plan, which frequently concealed a lack of coherence in other ways, but where a passage fulfils some function which has its equivalent in rhetoric, it is immediately labelled narratio, argumentatio and so on. It is known that no orator made a divisio after Porcius Latro (Sen.Con.1 pref.21[1]), but there are still criticisms if Seneca allows any exaggerated developments. So, one critic actually describes such digressions as faults of composition[2]. They are, however, only faults by one set of standards, and that set was outmoded when the dialogues were written. Seneca cannot be criticised because he did not compose his works like Cicero: all that can be asked is for Seneca to write like Seneca.

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1   cp.Tac.Dial.19.2 and Currie 80.   2   Favez (2) xlix.

Grimal has contributed some useful considerations on the aspects in which Seneca was influenced by rhetorical technique in his analysis of De Constantia and De Providentia[1]. He notes a feature common to Cicero and Seneca where two successive demonstrations comprise first a dialectic proof (Stoicorum more) and then a rhetorical proof[2], or else again first a succession of arguments and secondly a collection of sparkling morceaux (261). He also notes the way in which Seneca uses arguments which share common ground with other schools of philosophy (communia) together with those confined to Stoicism (propria[3]). He also appreciates the effect which Seneca achieves from repetition towards clarifying the themes of his work (253-4).

The influence of contemporary rhetoric and declamation on the structure of Seneca's work is evident only in the negative capacity in which the works lack a regular pattern and have lost the classical proportions of earlier oratory. The writers of the empire all develop the part at the expense of the whole in their efforts no longer to teach but purely to please (so Votienus Montanus in Sen.Con.9 pref.1). But Seneca still intended to inform, if not teach, about Stoicism. The greatest creative influence of this rhetoric is not in organisation, but in the content of the works. Sententiae, poetic colour, lavish descriptions, historical examples and

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1   Grimal (1) and (2).

2   (1) 253; Leeman reaches a similar conclusion independently in (1) 307-13.

3   (2) 251; cp.,e.g.,Ira.1.6.5, VB 3.2.

apocryphal stories are all accepted as part of his work, but the most relevant innovation is the commonplace, which always had a part in oratory (Cic. De Orat. 2.130, Part. 104ff., Quint. Inst. 2.4.24ff.), but which developed in the hands of the declaimers from a means to an end in itself, designed simply to conceal the inadequacy of their material. Seneca's use of common arguments is evidence of this influence. So too are the invectives against contemporary mores, but this will receive more complete examination in the following chapter[1].

In conclusion, the value of these analyses is greater as an aid towards understanding the works than as a means of estimating rhetorical influence on Seneca's methods of composition. It is impossible to know whether Seneca thought of the works in terms of the divisions now made, although it does seem probable to some extent. The organisation of this work was influenced by the value put on the material and content at the expense of pattern and design. We must then end as we began with the adage of Cato: rem tene, verba sequentur.

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1   The evidence in this paragraph is based on information
     from the following sources: Albertini 310-3, Favez (1)
     liv-xvi, Leeman (2) 260-8, 278-82.

Chapter 4

Seriocomic and Satirical Elements

This chapter will examine some of the many facets which Seneca took over from that line of popular moralising that started with the diatribe and developed in Roman literature specifically into satire. It will concentrate in particular on satirical passages in the moral essays, examining them in context and estimating their status in the development of Roman seriocomic moralising.

The overriding feature of Seneca's philosophical work is its tolerance of all philosophy in the moral sphere: every school has the same solution to practical ethics, no matter how they may differ in other respects. He argues for philosophy rather than Stoicism in the face of uninformed criticism (VB 17-28). In the dialogues he argues in support of a life of leisure for his contemporaries in office and uses the opinions of Epicurus to back his case (Otio 1.4-3.1). Other passages add to this picture of a plea for community of feeling (e.g. Brev.14. 1-2,5). Points of similarity never passed unnoticed by Seneca (Otio 3.2, VB 3.2,13.1; Motto (2) 166 sv. "Philosophy" no.29). This was, of course, by no means a new approach to philosophy (cp. Cic. Tusc.5.86-91).

The influence of diatribe

The broader treatment of the subject matter of morality is more clearly explained by the influence on Seneca of popular philosophical work. This type of teaching, aiming to present philosophy to a non-philosophical audience, left as its literary

heritage the diatribe. The original diatribists like Bion and Teles belonged, if such a definitive term may be used, to the Cynic school. Seneca expresses disapproval of the indiscriminate approach of the Cynics in the transmission of moral advice (Ep. 29.11), but their contribution to non-polemical moral teaching influenced the Stoics at an early stage in their development and later Stoics such as Seneca, Musonius and Epictetus had a large fund of ideas from which they could borrow as common property (cp. Fiske 178-80).

At Rome the diatribe developed a pronounced literary flavour which had not been present in its earlier stages, although sub-literary forms must also have continued to exist (cp.,e.g.,Hor.S.2.7). Cicero found its style a useful and appealing means of communication. Most of his theoretical works display some features of the form but there are certain works which rely almost entirely on diatribe material and technique. His first comprehensive use of the style is Paradoxa Stoicorum, which Oltramare suggests is the first work of popular philosophy in which examples from Roman history are present (118). While this must be a matter of some uncertainty, their importance is great. Cicero was not generally sympathetic to this form of Stoic doctrine (Fin.4.74-7, Tusc.5.40-72), but, when he removes the excessively subtle turns of argument which he so disliked in Stoic composition (Parad.2-3; cp. Leeman (2) 204) and instead uses loci communes, descriptiones and sententiae

(3-4), he finds the work more easily treated[1]. His sincerity is irrelevant to the treatment itself. It is significant that Paradoxa Stoicorum is not included in his list of philosophical works in De Divinatione (2.1-4).

Of the major works, the Tusculanae Disputationes, in particular the first, fourth and fifth books, display diatribe characteristics, including dialogue with its imagined (or not) opponent, extensive quotation from poetry, historical examples and moral tales (Oltramare 118-24). Among the others, De Finibus has similar characteristics, some of which appear later as examples in this chapter. The two works Laelius De Amicitia and Cato Maior De Senectute are particularly representative of the popular style. The works in Varro's Logistorici seem to have been along very similar lines (Leeman (2) 214).

From the time of Augustus diatribe came strongly into its own in the fields of philosophy, satire and rhetoric. Its popular, and in truth easy, way of treating philosophical subjects made it an appealing style in which to work. Development of the new rhetorical style, and performance, accelerated its influence, and in due course the two merged to produce a single type - moral-satirical in subject-matter and rhetorical in presentation (Favez (1) liv-xvi: he is writing about the influence of declamation on the dialogues but everything he

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1   Cicero accepts the paradox as a means of philosophical
     exposition; he respects its Socratic heritage (Ac.2.136,
     Parad.4). It is the doctrine itself that is the obstacle.
     In the same way he begins the Tusculans with a defence of
     the dialogue form as traditionally Socratic (1.8).

describes could apply to the diatribe without exception).
In fact, while traditional diatribe survived at least until
Epictetus, a distinct literary type also was firmly established
in the first century.

The topics of diatribe are exclusively in the field of
morality. There were themes on the conduct of the good life
as practised by the wise man, but the type of material with
which this popular moralism is overwhelmingly associated is
the invective or tirade against the excesses of contemporary
behaviour[1]. Topics on wealth and luxury were the most common
themes (Hense lxxxii-iii), but there was a very wide variety
of material for invective (lix,xci,lxxxiv; Oltramare loc.cit.).
This critical aspect became wholly prominent in the rhetorically
biased diatribes of Roman declaimers in the first century
(Favez (1) lxv). They were based on increasing standards of
luxury, but the declamations were always inferior to the
imagination, observation and detail of satire.

The corollary to criticism of contemporary life was an
idealisation of the past (Oltramare 51). To the Romans, with
their already considerable respect and pride for their traditions,
the sentiment came easily. It was the kind of patriotic
nostalgia in which only a self-confirmed master race can indulge,
and the theme is much more important in Roman than Greek

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1   for a wide range of themes in Greek diatribe, Oltramare
    44-65; for a more detailed study, which was discovered
    only when this chapter was essentially complete, Van
    Geytenbeek Musonius Rufus.

literature (cp.,e.g., Oltramare's entry for this topic in his
Senecan list, 271-2). Traditional Roman mores and virtus are
extolled as noble examples to contemporary life. All writers
praised the traditional aspects of life that now seemed
endangered by affluence and foreign influence. Cicero's Cato
praises the hardiness of early Roman farmers (Sen.23-5,51-60;
cp.Sen.Ep.86.5), and describes the rejection of Epicureanism
by such heroes as Dentatus and Coruncanius (43). Other writers
stress different aspects of ancient life. Horace praises the
simplicity of all primitive societies (S 2.2.92-3) besides the
first Romans (Carm.2.15.10-1). Valerius Maximus put great
stress on the Roman tradition at expense of the Greek: his
chapter de abstinentia et continentia is built on Roman
exemplars (Oltramare 237-41). It is only grudgingly that he
ever goes beyond the frontiers of his national history (2.7.6,
4.7.ext.1,6.9.ext.1,8.15.ext.1: Leeman (2) 254). Even a non-
partisan author like Columella can make a contribution to this
sentiment (1 pref.5,13-4,1.8.12: Oltramare 248-9). The acme
of this historical romanticism is to be found in the Aeneid.

This aspect has several forms which will be relevant to
this study in due course and which it is appropriate to
introduce at this point. The mos maiorum was always spoken
of with deference (Sen.Tranq.9.2). Writers bow to the wisdom
of the ancient law-makers, like Cato speaking about the
exemption of the old from arduous physical work (Cic.Sen.34),
or Seneca on the provisions for women's grief (Ad Helv.16.1,
Ep.63.13), again on the exemption of old age from public duties

(Brev.20.4), or on the establishment of public holidays as a break from continuous hard work (Tranq.17.7). The traditional patriarch ruled wisely with a rod of iron, and his family submitted without question (Cic.Sen.37, Sen.Ad Helv.16.3,17.3). One mark of those times was the sexual restraint of the people: family honour was of prime importance (V.Max.6.1.1, Lucretia, 2, Verginius) and sexual practices (antiquae mores) were more reserved (Mart.11.104). The women of Rome were proverbially virtuous (Hor.Carm.3.6.21-4, Epod.2.39-44, Prop.2.32.47-56), and there were few such paragons in the first century (Sen. Ad Marc.1.1, Ad Helv.16.3). Virtus was shown by a stolid acceptance of the inevitability of death, as described by Seneca (Ad Pol.15.5,17.6). To poverty and possessions the founders of Rome were quite indifferent (Cic.Parad.10-3). The maiores' religious views were even thought to be an anticipation of Stoic beliefs (Sen.Ep.110.1).

This nationalism develops even further in popular and serious literature into a suspicion and dislike of foreigners as a whole. The Romans' contempt for the Greeks needs no elaboration. Initially this antipathy may have been produced by a sense of inferiority but it grew into a genuine spirit of rivalry (aemulatio) of fiercely intense nature. The exordium of the Tusculanae Disputationes (1.1-8) illustrates this attitude in its state of greatest conviction: Cicero claims complete superiority, and bases his description of virtus on the traditional qualities of gravitas, constantia, magnitudo animi, probitas and fides (2). Foreigners were thought to be out to take advantage of native Romans, a

prejudice evident even in Seneca's list of motives for migration
to Rome (Ad Helv.6.2-4). Juvenal maintains the prejudice in
his satires, which show Greeks in all the guises of parasite,
while he frequently associates them with sexual perversion
(6.181-99,294-313; cp.Mart.10.68).

While there was unanimous contempt for the civilised
barbari of the east (Brev.17.1-6, Ira 3.16.1-17.1), the un-
civilised races aroused a unique fascination. The ethno-
graphical excursus was long a part of historical writing
(Sal.Jug.17-9, Caes. in Gal.), before the emergence of the
monograph in its own right (Tacitus' Germania, Seneca on India
and Egypt, also on Corsica, Ad Helv.7.8-9; such excursuses appear
in poetry too). Seneca explains the appeal of such works as
cupido ignota noscendi, the desire for knowledge of the unknown,
which embraces the mores barbararum gentium, the natural reaction
of man's curiosum ingenium and a proof that nature intended man
for a life of contemplation (Otio 5.1-3).

Seneca uses the behaviour of the barbari to make a number
of points. They have weaknesses of character which flaw their
natural nobility: susceptibility to anger (Ira 1.11.1-4,2.15.
1-5) and grief (Ad Marc.7.3), and an uneducated naivety (VB 26.
3). But their natural dignity was their greatest facet in the
eyes of the writers of a degraded society. Their freedom from
luxury led to idealisation as noble savages (Ira 3.2.1-6, Prov.
4.14-5; cp.Caes.Civ.1.57.3, Liv.9.13.7). This simplicity of life was
life according to nature, and consequently of special
significance to the Stoics (Ad Helv.11.1, Ep.90.16-7). These

tribes were said to live under stern morality (Hor.Carm.3.24.
35-6; V.Max.2.6.14,6.1.ext3; Tac.Ger.19.5). This was ideal
material for moralists conducting campaigns against contemporary
permissiveness. As a result, the enervating effect of civil-
isation on man's natural hardiness was constantly played on
(Prov.4.9-10). Luxury reduces man to slavery, as Cicero
expanded at length (Parad.35-40), and the civilising process
which the Romans imposed on their conquests was not a means
of liberation but an introduction to slavery (Tac.Ag.21.2).
Of course, the relation of this refined image to reality is a
matter of debate, but, despite Stoic and Senecan protestations
in favour of this simplicity, the appeal of the savage life was
to a greater or lesser degree another symptom of first-century
utopian primitivism as exemplified in the taste for playing
the poor man. This question will be discussed later.

Interest in the past as a model for the present resulted
in the use of examples of a specifically historical nature in
Roman popular philosophy (cp.Rawson 33-45). The writer of
the treatise Ad Herennium explains their effect in moral works:
an exemplum makes the subject-matter ornatior because of its
dignitas (a term frequently synonymous with κατασκευή,
ornamentum), apertior by its clarity, probabilior because it
carries conviction, and it provides concrete evidence of fact
(4.62). Cicero explains the use of examples as of greater
appeal to the emotions than lentes disputationes because of
their humanity (Parad.10). He puts an ironical remark on this
use of historical "evidence" to prove a particular point into

the mouth of Atticus: <u>concessum est rhetoribus ementiri in</u>
<u>historiis, ut aliquid dicere possint argutius</u> (Brut.42)[1].

Seneca attached great value to this form of moral
illustration (<u>Ep</u>.6.5-6). All his works use examples in their
arguments. He was aware of their overuse in literature -
<u>decantatae in omnibus scholis fabulae</u> (<u>Ep</u>.24.6) - but he added
nothing new to traditional usage. The only change was the
innovation of more contemporary examples, while less recent
historical figures continued to lose their historical
individuality as they developed into types[2]. This disregard
of detail in many cases led to genuine mistakes of fact[3].

Examples are only one stylistic feature of the diatribe.
They were, however, more prominent than many. Detailed
accounts are available of the others elsewhere, and these must
speak for themselves[4]. It is also necessary to omit comment
on the poetic tone or reminiscence as it finally appears in

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1   There were even rules to dictate the number of examples:
     three were sufficient to establish a case (Quint.4.5.3;
     Plin.<u>Ep</u>.2.20.9). Of course Cicero recognised that historio-
     graphy was quite a different matter from historical rhetoric
     (<u>De Orat</u>.2.62; cp.Alexander (3) 270-1).

2   e.g. Cicero was the unfortunate politician; Cato was
     converted from political to philosophical significance, and
     was the type of the noble suicide (cp. Syme 557); for
     historical examples in general in Seneca, Favez (1) lxi-ii,
     (2) lxi-ii.

3   e.g. <u>Ad Helv</u>.12.4-7, a confusion between the daughters of
     Publius Scipio and Gnaeus; Albertini (222) adds 7.8,10.8,
     13.7; also <u>Ad Pol</u>.15.1; for such mistakes in Cicero, Rawson
     33 n.5.

4   Weber <u>passim</u>; Hense lxx; Albertini 310.

Seneca's dialogues[1].

A major aspect that does require comment is the use of imagery from a wide field of common experience. Surprisingly when the Stoic stylistic virtues included brevity and precision, this form of ornatus was still acceptable, although rigorously avoided as an end in itself (Cic.Parad.2; cp. Smiley 53-4). Certain common images of life and death have already been covered in the chapter on topics of consolation. There are other traditional forms of comparison which Seneca also uses. The medical metaphor was already old when it first appeared in diatribe (cp. Weber 10-1,17, Hense lxxiii), and Seneca uses it freely[2]. For a Stoic in particular a troubled mind was a diseased mind: πάθος could mean disease, as Cato says in De Finibus where it is rendered morbus (3.35), and philosophy was the healing art of the soul (Tusc.2.11). Hence the idea of healthy mind in healthy body was firmly Stoic (e.g.Sen.VB 3.3). Bion popularised the image of life as a stage (Hense cvi-ix; for its use by Aristo, Diog.L 7.160). It was favoured by the Stoics (e.g.Cic.Parad.26, Tusc.4.55; Epict.4.2.10), although also found in non-Stoic contexts (Cic.Fin.1.49, Sen.5,64,70),

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1   for poetry in diatribe, particularly Bion, Hense xcv-vii; in Seneca, Wirth passim, Albertini 213-4,220; on the use of poetic colour in prose, Favez (1) lix-x.

2   in the dialogues under discussion: Ad Marc.8.1-2,10.6, 22.2-3; Ad Pol.8.1,12.4,13.1,14.1,19.9; Ad Helv.1.1-2,2.2, 3.1,10.1,10.3,11.3,15.4,16.5,17.2-3,20.1; Brev.4.6; VB 3.3,17.4,22.2,27.4,27.6; Tranq.2.1,2.7,2.11-2,4.7,7.4,8.2, 17.3,17.8; cp.Prov.3.2; Cons.1.1,9.1,13.1-2,19.3.

and it is no surprise to find it in Seneca[1]. The other major
images are from military action and sea travel, which appear
widely apart from their use in consolatory contexts[2].

One final feature of diatribe composition remains before
we turn to the treatment of seriocomic topics in the moral
essays. This is the personification of abstract concepts,
conformatio. The most common use for this device was to
introduce a prosopopoeia, where the appropriate concept presents
its case in propria persona. The advantages in terms of more
vivid expression and dramatic presentation of thought are
clear (e.g. the speech of Natura, Lucr.3.931-77; cp. Weber 20-2;
Fiske 184). Seneca introduces an apostrophe by Natura between
his parallel descriptions of life and a journey to Syracuse in
Ad Marciam (17.6-7). The most frequent personification in the
dialogues, however, is of Fortuna. This has been illustrated
at length among the consolatory topics. In one way or another,
Fortuna is presented as a destructive, merciless and invincible
mistress (Ad Marc.10.5-7,15.1,26.2; Ad Pol.2.2,4.1; Ad Helv.
5.3; Brev.10.4). The cases in Ad Polybium have added point
from the implied contrast with the ironical portrayal of Claudius

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1 Ad Marc.10.1; Ad Pol.6.1; Tranq.17.1; cp.Ep.77.20.

2 military: Brev.9.4,10.1; VB 2.3,4.1,5.3,5.4,7.4,8.2,8.4,
   8.6,11.2,14.1,15.3,15.5,15.7,21.2,26.3,27.2,27.3,27.6;
   Tranq.1.1,3.5,4.1-2,4.5-6,10.2,11.1,11.5; cp.Prov.4.4-5,
   4.7,4.8,4.13,5.1; Cons.3.5,4.1,4.3,5.5,7.6,8.3,9.5,19.3;
   navigation: Brev.7.10,18.1; VB 4.5,14.1,19.3,28.1; Tranq.
   1.17,2.1,4.7,5.5,11.7; cp.Prov.4.5,4.6,4.13,5.9; Otio 8.4.

as benign despot (4.1; cp.12.3-4,13.3-4). Fortuna possesses
many of the characteristics of the furious tyrant of the
declaimers (cp. Dionysius in Ad Marc.17.5; also Sen.Contr.1.7,
2.5,3.6,4.7,5.8,7.6,9.4; Juv.7.151; Favez (2) lx-xi).

The personification of Fortuna is straightforward. Others
are more complex. Most interesting of these are the person-
ifications of Virtue and Vice or Pleasure (for Seneca these
are equivalent and interchangeable). The traditional Stoic
polemic against Epicurus contained an image credited to
Cleanthes, of Voluptas, a richly adorned queen, surrounded by
the Virtutes as her ancillulae (Cic.Fin.2.69 = SVF 1.553).
The vestiges of this image remain in Seneca, where voluptates
are dominia (4.4), and more specifically Virtus is an
excelsissima domina, not voluptatis ancilla (13.4). The nature
of the image, however, is changing, and following new literary
interests, with the result that Seneca repeats the same
contrast between Virtus and Voluptas but gives them new roles
as master and praegustator at the dinner table - very much a
first-century literary conceit (VB 11.2). The real place for
Virtus is at the head of her forces (11.2,13.4,14.1). This
accords with the contemporary view of a philosophia militans
(cp.Brev.10.1 on Fabianus; Ep.59.7-8 on Sextius; also Ep.65.
18,96.5). Virtus has in fact taken on all the characteristics
of traditional Roman, not philosophical, virtue. In many cases
it is synonymous with pietas. So Seneca depicts her in all the
admired practices of the Roman nobility: virtutem in templo
convenies, in foro, in curia, pro muris stantem (VB 7.3).

Conversely _voluptas_ is presented as a dissolute profligate,
in the same terms as we shall see applied by Seneca to modern
luxury: _humile, servile, imbecillum_; it is to be found in the
fornices, _popinae_, _balinea_, _sudatoria_; it keeps to the darkness
and is _mollis_, _enervis_, _mero atque unguento madens_, _pallida_,
fucata, _medicamentis pollincta_ (7.3). _Voluptas_ is no more or
less than a _meretrix_. In a different passage, these character-
istics are repeated without the process of personification
being complete, to which is added a personification of Fortuna
(_Prov_.5.3=4).

There is more to these Senecan examples than simple
variation. They demonstrate a shift of emphasis. Previously,
the tone was almost reverent as it described a court scene in
tableau. These _similitudines_ were a conscious form of ornament
in Cleanthes (Smiley 58) and Chrysippus (Gel.14.4; cp. Weber
60=1). Cicero takes them over, but Roman sentiment transforms
them to fill a different role. _Virtus_ becomes heroic and
public=spirited (cp. the _imagines_ of _paupertas_, _Ad Helv_.12.7).
Voluptas becomes another character from that peculiarly Roman
manifestation of diatribe, satire. This swing of the balance
can best be illustrated by the fact that, while Seneca refers
only allusively to Cleanthes' extended image as it is found in
Cicero, he treats at length (_VB_ 7.3, _Prov_.5.3=4) the topic
which is only in its formative stages and equally allusive
in _De Finibus_: _quid enim necesse est, tamquam meretricem in
matronarum coetum, sic voluptatem in virtutum concilium adducere?_
(2.12). This type of personification, which allows a concept

to fulfil an individual dramatic role became one of the classic
features of satire[1].

This section has gone through those features of diatribe
and popular literature that had the greatest influence on
Seneca in respect of his own contribution to moralising
literature. They have mixed origins, in particular Greek
diatribe but also through the intermediary of early Roman
satire (Fiske 143-218) and the influence of Roman tradition
that adopted and absorbed appropriate topics. It is with the
satirical elements in Seneca's moral essays that the remainder
of this work will be concerned.

Themes of satire

Satire was an offshoot of the broad, exaggerated descrip-
tions of diatribe which have been classified as σπουδογέλοιον.
It was thought that if human behaviour could be made to look
ridiculous and generate laughter, it would discourage others
from similar behaviour. Horace describes this type of satire
as <u>Bionei sermones</u> and <u>sal niger</u> (Ep.2.2.60). The style -
<u>sermo...modo tristis saepe iocosus</u> - is often more effective
than sustained seriousness:

ridiculum acri

fortius et melius magnas plerumque secat res (<u>S</u> 1.10.14-5,
cp.11-4). It is still possible to convey the truth though
laughing: <u>ridentem dicere verum quid vetat</u>? (<u>S</u> 1.1.24-5). The

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1   e.g. Juv.6.1 (Pudicitia), 605 (Fortuna); one of the classic
    works for personifications is the fourth book of Pope's
    <u>Dunciad</u>.

idea that the reader should be delighted while he is acquiring
an ethical education was long-standing in ancient philosophy
(Plato Laws 2,659e), but appealed to Romans especially and
received its fullest statement from Lucretius (1.936-42) while
Horace also uses it in one of the passages already mentioned
(S.1.1.25-6; cp. Quint.3.1.3-4 for its use in the transmission
of rhetorical teaching). Ethical precepts were thought to be
made more palatable, either by the delights of poetry or the
laughter excited by comic or satirical hyperbole. It is a form
of psychological relief, as Seneca understood: nec in eadem
intentione aequaliter retinenda mens est, sed ad iocos devocanda
(Tranq.17.4).

This aspect has been noticed consistently in Seneca (e.g.
Albertini 232-3). It fits into the general pattern of
philosophical composition at Rome, as seen in our account of
the diatribe's influence on Cicero and in the development of
personification as a literary device. For example, a passage
of σπουδογέλοιον appears in De Finibus in the course of the
refutation of Epicureanism (2.23-5). Taking the belief that
summum bonum voluptas est, Cicero attacks various types of
voluptuary: the glutton, the man who sleeps during the day,
the spendthrift, all with their trappings of slaves and lavish
furniture. He takes as a contrast the simple life of Laelius.
All Epicurus ever said was that luxury should not be criticised
if it did not bring pain of any kind: Cicero's luxury clearly
does bring pain. His treatment of the argument is characteristic
of the form, with quotations and examples. What it obviously

lacks is logical accuracy and consistency: the effect of such excursuses was wholly emotional.

In Seneca there are many passages, long or short, which resemble this instance from Cicero. In each case they are intended to make a point of ethics, but in many the point has become far removed from the expression, which is often left to stand on its own as a satirical comment on contemporary or pseudo-contemporary behaviour. It is with this in mind that we may be justified in calling these passages satire although they do not immediately fall into any formal generic classification of satire (if indeed Roman satire admitted such classification) which may have been familiar to classical authors. There existed, however, certain topics common to all seriocomic work which cut across generic barriers. Whereas ancient satura covered a broad, if at all defined, field of subjects, in time certain topics became more frequent, and, as J.P. Sullivan continues:

> it is from these, and their growing preponderance in the
> originally more flexible Roman tradition of satura, that
> the later notion of "satire" evolved. It is this later
> concept, not quite settled for Horace but self-evident
> to Juvenal, that we have inherited. Once the quality is
> more or less isolated, the critic may look back and
> discover satire of a sort in genres quite different
> from satura or even claim ... the dependence of certain
> types of satura on quite different literary forms
> (Sullivan (1) 90).

Sullivan is talking about elements in _Satyricon_, but the statement is equally applicable to Seneca's moral writings. It is partly demonstrated by the use of Senecan material by later humorists. (Parody of serious material, of course, is a different matter.) What makes it more difficult to appreciate Seneca's satire now is that satire has subsequently become so much more sophisticated. Seneca contributed to the growth of this sophistication but, as it was not present to the same extent in his own time, he cannot be faulted simply because his satire is straightforward. For example, he describes a man receiving a rub-down at the baths (_Ep._56.1), but Juvenal takes this idea and makes an entirely different humorous point, with more subtlety and smartness (6.418-23[1]). The same applies to Petronius' use of Senecan material (cp. Sullivan (1) 129-39). Sullivan has another useful comment:

> these passages are a subtler deployment of Senecan
> themes and materials for other and more amusing
> purposes ... Petronius takes material in which Seneca
> may be seen at his best, namely vivid satirical or
> indignant description, and turns it to quite different
> uses ((2) 463).

He is arguing here for the existence of an outright literary feud between Petronius on the one hand and Seneca and Lucan on the other, but, feud or not, this type of _aemulatio_, where

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1   I am indebted for this point, and other Juvenalian details,
    to an unpublished doctoral thesis by J.Y. Nadeau, _A
    Commentary on the Sixth Satire of Juvenal_.

a writer took non-original material and tried to outdo previous uses of it, was an inherent part of classical literary convention[1].

A useful point of departure, common to diatribe and satire, is the general topic of discontent with life, μεμψιμοιρία (Weber 2). Self-consistency was an essential part of <u>virtus</u> and <u>inconstantia</u> was a <u>vitium</u> (Cic.<u>Leg</u>.1.45). <u>Constantia</u> was a prerequisite for wisdom according to Seneca (<u>VB</u> 8.3, <u>Ep</u>.35.4, 120.22). In Roman satire, this theme is most prominent in Horace's first satire. Clearly to include it in what is the programmatic position indicates the importance with which he regarded it (cp. Fiske 192-3, 219-47). The fullest illustration of the theme in Seneca is Serenus' account of his symptoms in <u>De Tranquillitate Animi</u> (1.1-17). Such discontent leads to continually changing desires, always for the opposite from the present (<u>Ad Pol</u>.4.2), and creates a habit of wishing away all life because of boredom and impatience for new or exciting experience (<u>Brev</u>.16.3). As a result, valuable time is wasted (<u>Brev</u>.2.5,3.2,7.2),, and man is unprepared for the eventual arrival of death (<u>Brev</u>.11.1, <u>Tranq</u>.11.7).

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1   It is necessary to note that Petronius' and Juvenal's exuberant use of material is explained by their intention to amuse and entertain: laughter was never Seneca's sole end. The relationship between Seneca and Juvenal on the creative level is still relatively unexplored: Schneider is a useful source of parallels but barren of critical analysis; Anderson takes the satire too seriously and emotionally; Dick's article "Seneca and Juvenal 10" is the most objective (and persuasive) study of this field I have found despite the emotional criticism of L. Giangrande (118-9).

Such a theme belongs to the mainstream of popular philosophy. More typically Roman and overtly satirical is the picture of the _luxuriosa urbs_, for Seneca's satirical descriptions are very good indeed. What is more, even if Juvenal had his tongue in his cheek when claiming _indignatio_ as his spur to satire, in Seneca's case, with all considerations of his character to one side, there appears present an outraged moral righteousness under which it is impossible to trace any Juvenalian sneer or irony to undercut the ethical criticism. In other words, while the satire is still smart and clever, it remains what it appears to be.

One extended passage can indicate the variety of this style. In _De Brevitate Vitae_ we have seen how the account of the proper use of time (8-11) is followed by a digression to describe the _occupati_ (12-3). These are of two kinds, the _desidiosi_ (12) and the _negotiosi_ (13). The section on the _desidiosi_ is an exemplary case of this style in Seneca. It begins with a _praeteritio_ saying that Seneca not only means obvious cases of wastefulness: the persistent litigant, patrons surrounded by clients, or the man who is preoccupied with all sorts of unworthy social activity. In fact, these are _negotiosi_. Some men are even occupied in their leisure. (Seneca reverses this process in the next chapter, and begins with a _praeteritio_ of the _desidiosi_, 13.1). He specifies where these men are to be found and then defines their condition: _desidiosa occupatio_ (12.2)[1]. He proceeds to list some of these _occupati_: collectors

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1   cp. the opposite condition, _inquieta inertia_ Tranq.12.3; both exemplify the use of a paradoxical phrase to achieve a startling effect.

of Corinthian bronze, who are described in mock-serious terms as in the way they attend to their pieces <u>anxia suptilitate</u>, or in the description of the bronze by the inflated terms <u>aeruginosis lamellis</u>. The next occupation is wrestling, characterised by the Greek word <u>ceroma</u>, which draws the comment that the vices are not even traditionally Roman. The picture is further undercut by the description of the wrestlers as brawling boys, <u>pueri rixantes</u>. Next are obsessions with mule-breeding and young athletes, each treated in a single sentence. There is a more extended look at a man <u>apud tonsorem</u> (3). In the first sentences the excessive care and attention to appearance are described[1]. Men spend hours at the barber every day, and their preoccupation is described in mock-serious terms as they conduct a debate on how the hair is to be styled: <u>consilium itur</u>, with the impersonal construction and the use of the noun in this context, emphasises the gap between the serious conduct of the debate and its trivial subject-matter. It seems that baldness was a matter for concealment even at Rome, and this astute observation of human vanity adds to the humour. Seneca then comments that if there is any mistake, men get excessively angry: again the gap between the seriousness of the emotion and triviality of its cause is emphasised. Seneca concludes that all these men would show more concern for the orderliness of their hair than for the order of the state.

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1   for this obsession cp.Col.1 pref.5; according to Musonius
     Rufus (114.10-116.20), Zeno specified hair-cutting as a
     particularly unnatural practice.

He progresses to the man who is always humming (4) - an innocuous pastime, on the face of it, but it offends Stoic conformity to nature by twisting the voice unnaturally. Such men are so involved in their music that they sing even at serious occasions. Seneca may well be referring to the association of music and debauchery in contemporary literature, and in particular to perverted foreign musicians (cp. Tranq.17.4 of dancing to such music; for singing, Juv.6.0 23-6). This is followed by a brief vignette of a cena which will be studied later (5). Next comes the type of person who can do nothing for himself: Seneca reduces their dependence on others to absurdity in his assertion that they cannot even tell for themselves if they are hungry (6), or that they have to ask someone if they are sitting. He neatly captures the infantile mentality in limiting himself to two words: iam sedeo? (7). They even affect additional vitia which do not come automatically like the others, because they believe it to be smart. He turns a comparison between life and the mimes on its head by saying that the mimes, generally considered outrageous and indecent, are a pale reflection of the truth (for mimes, cp.Juv.6.41-6, 246-50).

In the final paragraph (9), Seneca makes his general conclusions. If a man cannot tell he is seated, he also cannot tell if he is at leisure: no man, however, can be at leisure who does not know he is so. No dependence on the external world, whether on people or things, is compatible with the necessary self-mastery required for a life of wisdom and

happiness. It is easy to see how the preceding topics lead to this comfortable Stoic moral, but Seneca has treated them as more than a mere list of vices: imagination and observation are blended with wit to create an entertaining series of cameos that, despite their occasional grotesqueness, still bear a startling resemblance to human nature in some of its embodiments.

To illustrate Seneca's satirical technique, it will be best to look in greater detail at a selection of episodes that demonstrate both Seneca's debts and his own originality. His picture of the general spectrum of daily life in the metropolis is a good starting-point. In De Tranquillitate Animi, he devotes one section of the account of disturbing facets of life to useless social activity (12-3). In the first of these chapters, he depicts the social whirl at Rome which carries men off without any control over their behaviour. The passage begins with motion: concursatio, pererrantium (12.2). The vagueness of purpose is expressed in the repeated use of aliquid, and the neutral verb agere. The sense of wandering is repeated in vagantur. The contradictory nature of this behaviour is expressed by quaerentes negotia: what men should ideally be seeking is otium, not its opposite. (It is always worthwhile to remember that negotium is after all the negative form.) They lack an end (quae destinaverunt); every activity is the product of chance (incucurrerunt, inconsultus). The image of the ant, so characteristic of the diatribe, maintains the picture of a community involved in frenzied movement, and the

choice of creature puts man into a more real perspective (3).
The picture speeds up with men running as if to a fire: their
real impetus to run is quite the reverse of this worthwhile
motive. Their aims are undercut by comments on the recipients
of their attentions: non resalutaturum, ignoti, saepe litigantis,
saepe nubentis, each of which emphasises the futility of the
action: it has no significance because it has no meaning. They
are at a loss to account for their wasted actions, but will
repeat the same procedure next day anyway (4). The theme is
once more the undesirability of acquiring a reliance on external
existence to the detriment of personal independence, but again
it is captured in a humorous presentation that is quite different
from conventional ethical demonstration.

Of the city itself, Seneca lists the hazards in Ad Marciam
(22.2-3). This includes many of the standard topics. The city
itself is luxuriosa, an all-embracing epithet. It is first
unhealthy (cp.Ep.104.1; Hor.Ep.1.7.1-13, Juv.4.57-9), but
disease threatens not only death but (worse?) loss of formae
decus. The animus can also be corrupted, either by foedior
luxuria or by the indulgences of the stomach. These remain
the two cardinal vices in Seneca's work, they are coupled so
often: for example, in primis...et illos numero, qui nulli rei
nisi vino ac libidini vacant; quam exiguae noctes videntur,
quas in complexu scortorum aut vino exigunt (Brev.7.1,16.4).
To this he adds fires and falling buildings (cp.VB 26.2, Ep.
90.8; Juv.3.190-222), and - surprising danger in a city -
shipwreck. Next are the doctors, about whom Seneca leaves it

ambiguous whether they create the pain in their patient, or just that their presence is the natural consequence of pain. Either way, their work is depicted with nauseating vividness. This free use of strong physical language was a special feature of diatribe (Weber 8-11,13-4)[1]. For the rest of the chapter, Seneca develops the theme along rhetorical lines.

The most significant feature of Roman society of that time was the relationship of patron and client. Any influential or rich man might expect to be plagued by a throng of those who claimed to be his friends but were in fact only after their share of the client's dole or sportula. His large following of clients flattered the vanity of the rich man, whose influence was supposedly bolstered by his clientela, but only the foolish failed to realise that it was only a respectable confidence trick (Ep.19.4; for Cicero's remarks on the parasitic client, Am.91,98-9).

Seneca mentions this relationship as a feature of Roman life (Ad Marc.10.1, Ad Pol.4.2, Brev.2.1). To some extent the situation has been exaggerated by the moralist and satirists, but it seems that a fair number of Romans still participated in the salutatio paid by client to patron. This picture is neatly epitomised in De Brevitate Vitae (14.3-4). The situation is rendered humorous by the portrayal of the urgent, agitated

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1   Doctors were the victims of unsympathetic treatment in
    much contemporary literature, for their incompetence (Sen.
    fr.18, Mart.1.47,5.9; also Hense lxxiii) or their depravity
    (Mart.11.71, Juv.3.77).

client expending excessive energy when the end-product turns
out to be that he has scarcely seen anyone (3). The client,
desperately eager to see his patron, is as desperately avoided
by him. Not, however, because he wishes to discourage the
client for charitable reasons: his motives are tedium and
callous disinterest. Instead he runs away from his own house
(simulata festinatione transcurrant), or slips away in secret.
This in itself is inhumanum. If he does meet the waiting
clients, he is still recovering from the excesses of a previous
evening's party and treats the clients with complete contempt,
receiving them with a scornful yawn of disinterest (oscitatione
superbissima), requiring a nomenclator but still unable to get
the names correct (4).

This procedure was universally condemned as a degradation
by first-century writers[1]. For those men who imagined they
might be insulted by a patron's negligence (Cons.10.2; cp.Cic.
Am.72-3) or by the insolence of his servants (Cons.14.1-2; cp.
Juv.5.59-66), Stoicism provided an answer, for, as the wise man
is unaffected by matters of external nature, he will not be
affected by any contumelia. Susceptibility to insult is
caused by humilitas animi, while the sapiens possesses magnitudo
and conviction in his immunity to emotions. In fact, he cannot
even feel an insult: [miserias] non vincit sed ne sentit quidem
(10.3; cp.Vincit nos Fortuna, nisi tota vincitur, 15.3).

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[1]   Cons.14.2, Tranq.12.6, Ben.6.33.4-34.5, Ep.84.11-2; Mart.
      2.18,3.4,4.8,5.20,7.39,9.6,10.19,12.18,12.68; Juv.1.95-126,
      5.19.

The proper solution to choice of companions is explained in the succeeding chapters of De Brevitate Vitae (14.5-15.2), where Seneca cleverly describes the advantages of philosophy in terms of the patron-client relationship. In the first sentence, he introduces the vera officia, duties of life, which pick up the officia of the obsessed client (14.5,3; for definition of the καθήκοντα, Diog.L.7.108). People can only fulfil these duties if they make friends (familiarissimos) with the philosophers. They are quite the opposite of the modern patronus, friendly, generous and always available. There is no danger in their friendship (15.1). They promise a long life and contented old age if men join their clientela. They return to the proper role of patronus: a dominus who is ready to give advice and help to solve the problems of daily life (2). As in other cases (e.g. Socrates and triumphs VB 25.4), Seneca adapts a Roman motif to make a moral point to act as conclusion to his criticism of this social practice and its practitioners.

So, advice on the choice of friends is based on whether they are worthy of attention (Tranq.7.1-2[1]). They must be grateful for other men's friendship and not take it for granted, or actually reckon their own interest as more valuable. Athenodorus is said to have refused to dine with such men (cp. Ep.19.10). Even less, Seneca adds, would he have approved of the present practice of accepting meals from a rich man at any cost. Such a man has guests only to swell his pride (7.2).

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1   on friendship in Bion, Lucilius and Horace, Fiske 195-9.

This tedious and degrading feature of the client's role is another topic of satirical literature: Martial is merciless in his depiction of the invitation-hunter (2.11,2.18,2.27,3.27, 3.60,6.48,9.85,11.77). When they are invited, they are given inferior food (Mart.3.60, Juv.5.146-55; criticised by Pliny, Ep. 2.6) but still are expected to load the host with adulation (cp. the clients in Hor.Ars 422-5, S 2.8; Juv.5).

Apart from involvement on which we can only speculate in this area of Roman social life, it is unlikely that Seneca and the addressees of the dialogues in which the topic is covered would have anything to learn from this advice, certainly not in the role of clients[1]. Criticism of early rising to attend the salutatio must, then, find a place in the moral essays on the strength of its association with satirical writing in general. However, it is necessary to note that at least until the time of Augustus this facet of society life was still quite respectable. Although literary evidence is limited, it remains possible that Seneca is among the earliest to emphasise the demeaning developments of the practice in the early years of the Empire, which later humorists elaborated still further.

The ideal day should start and end early. When expressing his admiration for ancient customs, Seneca includes the allocation of time specifically for otium (Tranq.17.7-8). Otium restores the mind's strength: in contrast, sleep can be positively

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1   Pliny, for example, does not mention the salutatio in the account of his daily round at Rome (Ep.1.9).

harmful if taken to excess (17.6). Extended into the day it is equivalent to death (cp.Brev.12.9). Oversleeping was treated as a genuine sign of moral decline, and the wise man must refrain from it (Ad Pol.6.4). Apparently quite a trivial point and just another example of soft-living, there is more to this topic by way of its history than might have been expected, for it is a development from the topic on the human antipodes and their improper timing of sleep. In the Epistulae Morales Seneca raises the subject of those who turn night into day: sunt qui officia lucis noctisque pervertent (122.2; cp.Brev.16.5). He introduces a literary conceit by taking Virgil's lines from the Georgics (1.250-1) and says there are antipodes living in Rome itself. Cato apparently said: nec orientem umquam solem viderunt nec occidentem. The same words are used by Cicero as if a proverb (ut aiunt), in an exactly corresponding context (Fin.2.23). These night-creatures are the opponents of philosophy and the good life (VB 20.6). It is not inconceivable that these really were the words of Cato, the sentiment is so closely associated with the decline of values after the defeat of Carthage (cp.Sal.Cat.13, Vell.2.1.1). Labor (cp.Sal.Cat.10) and somni breves were signs of the hardiness of early Romans, satirised in their turn by Juvenal (6.286-91)[1].

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1   In slight contrast, to express his new-found freedom on retirement to Spain, Martial adds a long-lie as one of the pleasures of country life (12.18.13-6), even if he does call it improbus somnus in mock-criticism.

Seneca's dislike of the arena is well-known (Ep.7).
Public entertainment was associated with a wide variety of
distasteful subsidiary subjects (cp.Ep.97.8; Juv. on gladiators
etc.). Spectacula are one of the distractions to be avoided
by the statesman (Ad Pol.6.4). Seneca, however, can add more
to this criticism by a careful choice of context to create, if
not a shock, at least a telling impact. In De Vita Beata he
depicts those who lounge in circo aut theatro while a death in
the family of which their lack of concern makes them ignorant
has turned their home into a house of mourning (28.1). Juvenal
takes the man who, like the desidens here, is out in the city
and has him killed (humorously, of course, with sly digs at
both Stoics (Sen.Ep.57.7) and Epicureans (Diog.L.10.39, Lucr.
1.215-64)), while at home domestic activities continue unaware
of the disaster (3.254-63). This passage may be a distant echo
of Lucretius' ironic description of the paterfamilias who will
never again return to his blissful picture of domesticity (3.
894-9). There is a sense of pathos in Seneca with less of the
irony of Lucretius or Juvenal, or the parody of Petronius (115.
9-10).

One of the great topics of Roman satire was the art of
legacy-hunting (Lejay 481-2, Rudd 224-7). Captatio was found
from the time of Cicero at least (Parad.39,43). It was used by
Horace (S 2.5) and is the basis of a section of Petronius'
narrative (124-5,140-1). Martial (5.39,6.63,8.27,9.100,10.97,
11.67) and Juvenal (3.128-30,5.98,12.93-120) also use the topic
(cp.Tac.Dial.6). Seneca finds a place for it too (Ad Marc.19.2,
Brev.7.7, Ben.4.20.3,6.38.4, Ep.17.10,19.4,68.10,95.43). From

the instances in the moral essays, the most interesting is in
Ad Marciam, simply because of its incongruity in context (19.2).
Seneca suggests that childlessness does not mean loneliness in
Rome, where the childless receive constant attention. This is
one of those cases where the flow of the argument is lost for
the sake of making a gratuitous and irrelevant moral point
which the writer apparently finds irresistible (cp. on Sejanus
Ad Marc.15.3). Presumably we are to make a favourable contrast
between Marcia and these victims of childlessness, but the
indications to do so are weak.

One facet of affluent life was the ability to travel.
But travel was always criticised as a symptom of μεμψιμοιρία,
the continuous need for change. Travel was considered a cure
for mental disturbance (Cic.Tusc.3.25), but avoiding other
people was thought a symptom of the disturbed mind (Prop.1.1.29-30).
Horace said travel was useless as a remedy for discontent
(Oltramare 143-4: Carm.2.16.19-21,3.1.37, Ep.1.1.45; cp. Giesecke
80). Oltramare locates only four examples of the topic in
Seneca (291: Tranq.2.13-4, Ep.2.2,28.1,104.6-8) but he is
perhaps overrestricting himself[1]. The most complete treatment
is in the Epistulae Morales (28.1-8). In the dialogues, Seneca
discusses travel after describing the way sick men use change as
a remedy (mutationibus ut remediis uti: Tranq.2.12). Travellers
are attracted to one different place after another for the
different things they have to offer and differing tastes they

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1   cp.,e.g., Ad Pol.6.4, Ad Helv.17.2.

they satisfy. These tastes are themselves subject to criticism:
the luxury of Campania, the fascination for wild places, for
crowds and violence. Seneca's ancient traveller merely works
his way through the plus ca change syndrome. The moral, with
Epicurean support from Lucretius (3.1068), is that the problems
from which the traveller is trying to escape are carried around
inside him. This is the corollary of Seneca's consolation for
exile that a man's virtue remains constant wherever he is: if
a man's character is vicious, that too will remain constant
throughout the world (Ad Helv.8.1-6). It is therefore possible
for Seneca to recommend change (mutata regio, Tranq.17.8) as a
healthy stimulant for the mind. For a Stoic, the motive and
state of mind with which an act is performed is the only
criterion for determining whether an act is honestum or turpe
(Ep.95.57; cp.Cic.Fin.3.22,24). The continuous traveller is
only constant in his travelling, but a constant mind, not
susceptible to change, is a prerequisite for sapientia. The
situation is somewhat complicated by Seneca's statement that it
is natural for men to travel as a part of their nature (Ad Helv.
6.6-8): travel is an integral part of human life, that is,
κατὰ φύσιν; everyone changes his home at some time (7.5). The
contradiction can only be resolved by another appeal to the
criterion for evaluation of an act by its motive.

One area that was never neglected by moralists was sexual
depravity: libido is one of Seneca's cardinal vices (Brev.7.1,

16.4)[1]. The proper reason for desire was to maintain the human race, but it could become a violent, uncontrollable passion (Ad Helv.13.3). The specific target of satirists, however, was sexual deviation, and the prime deviation among men was refined effeminacy. Maecenas is the victim of such vituperation (Ep.114.4,21). He walked in an affected fashion (cp. for men, Tranq.17.4, Petr.126.2; for women Cat.42.8). Such men wore extravagantly coloured clothes, often transparent[2]. This behaviour is criticised on the grounds that it is unnatural: non videntur tibi contra naturam vivere qui commutant cum feminis vestem? (Ep.122.7). Seneca takes Scipio as an example of healthy ancient male behaviour (Tranq.17.4): he danced not in modern style but in a dignified and manly way. Modern dancing, as it always has been, was consistently accused of immorality by first-century moralists: the mimae and meretrices were bad enough (Juv.6.246-50; cp.Ov.Fast.4.945,5.183-378, V.Max.2.10.8, Sen.Ep.97.8), but they were topped by effeminate male dancers, the cinaedi (Juv.6.01-6,023-6; cp.Cic.Pis.89, Petr.23).

The most familiar target, however, in the treatment of moral depravity was the libidinous female. In an age of permissiveness such as the Neronian, such women appear to have

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1   on this topic in Greek diatribe, Van Geytenbeck 62-77.

2   for rich colours with no suggestion of depravity, Ad Helv. 11.2, Cons.13.2, Ep.94.70; for transparent clothes, Ep.114. 21, Juv.2.65-7,76-8,82-5.

been in constant supply, and the topic seems extremely popular[1].

In <u>Ad Helviam</u> (16.3-4), Seneca elaborates on Helvia's virtuousness as part of his consolation: he maintains that since she has not succumbed to grief in the past - and he admits that a woman <u>qua</u> woman is entitled to grief in moderation - and since she has shown no other female weaknesses (16.2), she cannot plead such weakness in the present case. Seneca states his proposition: <u>impudicitia</u> is the greatest evil of the time, to be found in most women. He lists its features: (1) weakness for money and jewellry; (2) imitation of social inferiors; (3) hostility to raising a family, shown by concern that many children will betray a woman's age, and by disguising a pregnancy or actually procuring an abortion; (4) use of cosmetics; (5) wearing lascivious clothes. In contrast, Helvia has one overriding superiority, <u>pudicitia</u>, the mention of which balances <u>impudicitia</u> at the beginning.

The correspondence of <u>impudicitia</u> and <u>pudicitia</u> represents the way one opposite is used to suggest the other. Seneca says some consider <u>divitiae</u> the <u>maximum bonum</u>, while the Stoic good is <u>virtus</u>. The philosophical colouring is reinforced by the reference to Helvia's old-fashioned strict up-bringing in contrast to present style. This popular nostalgia is repeated later in a passage on Helvia's sister, who is said to have <u>modestia rustica</u> in comparison to contemporary <u>feminarum petulantia</u> (19.2; for this use of <u>rusticus</u> cp.<u>Ep</u>.86.5). Seneca

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1   cp. Sullivan (1) 119-25; a representative selection from
      Martial might include 4.38,4.71,6.45,7.58,10.90,11.62.

follows Stoic belief in saying that desire should be satisfied as simply as possible: marriage was merely to ensure the continuation of the race (Ad Helv.13.3)[1].

A typical evaluation of women can be seen in De Constantia Sapientis (14.1). Arguing that the sapiens never feels insults, Seneca adds that some men believe they may be offended by barbers, porters, butlers - or women. In women wealth and social standing are irrelevant: they are all equally creatures of animal instinct (cp.Ad Marc.24.3, Ep.95.21). He does add a qualification that admits the possibility of education to strengthen Helvia against external influence, but even so Seneca was by no means a feminist!

The generalities of the criticism in Ad Helviam are the common property of seriocomic literature in all its manifest-ations. The most general criticism is the accusation of imitatio peiorum, imitation of social inferiors. There was widespread disapproval if a respectable matron assumed the manners and appearance of the lower classes (Hor.S 1.2; Juv. 6.418-23). In Satyricon, Trimalchio's wife is not capable of the behaviour appropriate to the respectable hostess, while the woman who cannot resist the appeal of men of lower class is exemplified in Circe, who is attracted to Encolpius because she thinks he is a slave, while her slave Chrysis is only attracted to free men (126; cp. Sullivan (1) 119-22 on Circe and her literary forbears). This sort of behaviour no doubt appeared to the Stoics as an obvious reversal of the order of nature.

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1 After some debate in the school the Stoics decided that
   marriage accorded with man's nature and so was permissible
   (Cic.Fin.3.68, Sen.Ep.9.17).

A second moral commonplace was the disinclination to have children. The motif is found in the elegiac poets and even Ovid appears to criticise abortion, imputing all the less laudable motives (<u>Am</u>.2.13,14). Juvenal describes the work of the abortionist, but adds another turn of the screw about the wife's infidelity at the same time. He even sees abortion as a possible cure for the social misery of the poor (6.592-601).

Seneca attacks the use of cosmetics: it is not in accordance with nature, and it is done with a view to strictly adventitious concerns. Antipathy to this artificiality was an old moral theme. It retains its moral tone even in comedy and elegy. In comedy, the <u>lena</u>, the reverse of the typical bawd, claims the uselessness in turn of make-up - it cannot improve nature; perfume - a woman's best smell is no smell; extravagant clothes - a fine figure is sufficient ornament (Pl.<u>Mos</u>.254-92). While the purpose and conclusion of the material differ from Seneca, the material itself is from a common source. It is also found in elegy, where Propertius reproves Cynthia for appearing like a <u>meretrix</u> (1.2): he says she has fine qualities that can never be seen, in her case artistic talents, in Helvia's intellectual ability[1]. Juvenal, using material from the elegists, turns the topic to more gruesome effect (6.142-8, 461-73): the product of beauty preparations is horrible deformity, whereas Ovid only said that the lover, excited by the result

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1   for use of cosmetics cp.Prop.1.15, Tib.1.8.9-16, Ov.<u>Am</u>.1.14, and above all <u>Ars</u> and <u>Med</u>. <u>passim</u>.

of the preparations, is put off by the sight of the process
(cp. Nadeau ad loc.; cp. Ars 3.209-18, Rem.351-6).

Seneca refers to the attraction of precious stones: it is a
recurrent theme in diatribe (Oltramare 52). Each field of
literature concerned with female vanity took up the topic, and
it can be found in elegiac poets (Prop.1.2.21,3.13.11-2; Ov.Med.
21-2, Ars 3.129-32, Rem.343-6), in Horace (Carm.3.24.47, Ep.1.6.18)
and the later satirists (Petr.67; Juv.6.457-9). It also receives
Seneca's attention (Oltramare 273: Ad Helv.11.3, Cons.14.1, VB
17.2, Ben.7.9.4, Nat.7.31.2).

The final commonplace is the choice of dress. Helvia is
praised for her modest choice of dress. A woman who wore a
revealing costume was recognised as a meretrix, a woman of lower
rank than the courtesans who were mistresses of the elegiac
poets[1]. This explains Propertius' reaction to Cynthia's dress of
Coan silk and her Syrian perfume (1.2). The reference is to the
famous Syrian prostitutes of Rome, also mentioned by Juvenal as
part of the distasteful influx of foreigners and one of Umbricius'
reasons for leaving the city (3.62-6, cp.Sen.Ad Helv.6.2: for
Greeks in Rome, Juv.6.294-313, Mart.10.68; for Spaniards - Seneca
please note - Mart.5.78.26-8, Juv.11.162-8). Horace distinguishes
between the matron's dress and that of lower social levels, who
show their availability in their choice of dress (S 1.2.94-103;

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1   for the behaviour and status of the meretrix cp. VB 7.3; for
     other instances of this type of dress cp.Ep.90.2, Ben.7.9.5.

cp.Ov.<u>Am</u>.1.5.13-4). Juvenal sees a peculiar perversion in the matron who wears gladiators' equipment and then complains about the roughness of the finest and softest material on her skin (6.259-60). The topic is also used by the declaimers (Sen.<u>Con</u>. 2.7.4 (Latro), 2.5.7 (Fabianus); cp. Favez (1) lxv-vi). The sexual undertones of this kind of dress for men have already been noted.

Seneca makes these remarks to his mother, but the way these moral axioms flow off the pen would suggest that he is working closely within the confines of traditional diatribe and consolation, as he stresses at the start of the dialogue (1.2). It is possible that he was paying no more than superficial attention to the specific circumstances. In <u>Ad Marciam</u>, for example, he includes in a list of fortune's gifts a <u>nobilis aut formosa coniunx</u>, whereas, speaking as he is to a woman, a <u>formosus coniunx</u> might have been more appropriate (10.1). However, there is evidence to suggest that Seneca viewed the relationship of mother to son as quite open on these topics. In <u>Ad Marciam</u> (24.1-3), although it is impossible to calculate how far he adapts the facts to suit the situation and ease the consolation for Metilius' death, he praises the devotion of son for mother[1]. The passage continues to say that he avoided military service to remain with her, and that despite the attractiveness of his family's female acquaintances, if any woman made approaches to him, he chastely repudiated her in favour of mother.

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1   Laelius includes <u>pietas in matrem</u> as one of Scipio's fine
     points of character in another context of <u>immatura mors</u>
     (<u>Cic.Am</u>.11).

One other point of significance for the passage from **Ad Helviam** is that, although on the face of it addressing Helvia, Seneca was not likely to be writing exclusively for her. The work seems to have been written about a year after the start of his exile: it is improbable that he had neither written to nor attempted to console Helvia during this period. Moreover, the polished form of the dialogue points to composition for a wider public[1]. In Seneca's predicament this moral standpoint is not without its relevance, particularly if we accept that he intended to exhibit a moral uprightness after being exiled on a charge of adultery with Caligula's sister[2]. This passage has the additional advantage of stressing a family history of sexual temperance.

As a postscript to this section on women, two other features may be noted. One is mothers who are ambitious and exploit their children for their own ends (**Ad Helv**.14.2). This type of possessive maternal ambition is the object of criticism in Juvenal too (10.289-328; cp.Sen.**Ep**.60.1). The other is an amusing account of a perennial female peccadillo, obsession for pets (**Ad Marc**.12.2). This is another reversal of nature, where a woman's natural children are replaced by animals. Seneca uses some invidious philosophical terms for a Stoic (**voluptas**, **tactus**), and plays on the meaning of **adulatio** by its juxtaposition with **mutorum**[3].

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1   Ferrill 255; Martha (2) explains the careful construction as specifically intended to arouse **orgueil maternel** (178).

2   Stewart 83-4 and n.86; for the charge, **schol.Juv**.5.109.

3   for Roman women and their pets, Cat.2 and 3, made fun of by Mart.1.7,1.109, Juv.6.5-6; also Ov.**Am**.2.6.

A topic which Seneca could scarcely avoid is that of food and drink. Seneca coupled the vices of the stomach with sexual depravity as the two cardinal vices (Brev.7.1,16.4; these specify vinum). Elsewhere Seneca expands the vice to include both food and drink explicitly: in popinam ventremque procubuerunt toti summaque illis curarum fuit, quid essent, quid biberent (Ad Marc. 22.2). To make food the highest good is clearly totally opposed to Stoic thought (cp. the use of bona, VB 11.4), yet men consistently submit to the demands of appetite: in iliis qui summum bonum dixerunt (VB 7.1; cp.Ep.60.4 quoting Sal.Cat.1.1). In fact, like all pleasures, its effect is wholly destructive: cruditatibus ebrietatibusque et ceteris quae necant per voluptatem (Prov.3.2). In Roman literature, this topic was a matter for moral criticism and descriptive delight.

The most thorough treatment in the dialogues appears in Ad Helviam, where Seneca is arguing that man's physical needs can be easily satisfied: corporis exigua desideria sunt (10.1-11)[1]. The first part of this section criticises the practice of valuing food because it is rare or unusual: such refined tastes are ridiculous when satisfactory food is always at hand. Seneca satirises this world-hunt for exotic dishes by applying to it the language of imperialism: the empire of food-hunters is so ambitious that it extends beyond the limits of Rome's empire, and from the Parthians, who have not yet paid the penalty for defeating

1   for a list of this topic in Seneca, Oltramare 270; for the
     history of asceticism in Greek diatribe, Van Geytenbeck 96-
     111.

Roman armies, they get birds, _aves_[1]. The purpose of this ransacking process was merely to titillate the palate, which, dulled by continuous excess, is always needing something new.

Seneca introduces the practice of vomiting to make room for more food, but he suggests that the diners are confused about their intention, and he reverses the process: men not only vomit to eat, but eat for the sake of being able to vomit: _vomunt ut edant, edunt ut vomant_. The use of emetics goes completely against the processes of nature as displayed in the digestion of food. Drink can have the same effect, and deliberately induce vomiting. It is so used by Juvenal's woman-athlete whose exercise develops an unquenchable thirst which she uses to stimulate her appetite: she only drinks to vomit and clear her stomach for a meal (6.424-33). The brief statement _bibit et vomit_ may well owe something to Seneca's words. Seneca has a similar picture of women who follow male practices, including wrestling, followed by drinking and vomiting (_Ep_.95.21), while he repeats the phrase to describe the effects of drink in another dialogue (_Prov_.3.13). The behaviour by Juvenal's athlete of drinking on an empty stomach is paralleled by young men at the baths (_Ep_.15.3,122.6), an unhealthy practice criticised by Pliny (_Nat_.14.139). Young men scorn traditional drinking habits as

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1   It is not impossible that _aves_ could be a play on words to recall the Roman _signa_ which the Parthians captured, but it would be difficult to produce evidence to confirm this. Other cases of searching the seas for food etc.: _Prov_.3.6, _Ep_.60.2,89.22,110.13; also Sal._Cat_.13, Juv.5.94,11.14.

unable to appreciate <u>vera voluptas</u> (<u>Ep</u>.122.6; cp. Nadeau on Juv. 6.418-33).

Seneca proceeds to illustrate gastronomic excess and selects Gaius Caesar as the epitome of all vice (10.4). The target for criticism on all counts in Seneca's work, he showed pride and ambition to compare with Xerxes (<u>Brev</u>.18.5-6), excessive grief after the loss of his sister (<u>Ad Pol</u>.17.4-5), anger (<u>Ira</u> 1.20.8), lack of mercy (2.33.3-6), and is even mocked for his appearance (<u>Cons</u>.18.1). Here Seneca portrays the misuse of considerable public funds to pay for a single dinner. This criticism was repeated by Juvenal about a later tyrant, Domitian: it is a most appealing form of criticism to show a man of absolute power misusing it for such trivial purposes. Juvenal's fourth satire treats the topic at length[1].

Seneca launches into a prosopopoeia on the uselessness of ambition and greed, and then, typically, compares present tastes with the simplicity of the <u>maiores</u> (6-8). Their simple expect-ations of a home are compared to contemporary luxury, while their simple tastes in food are illustrated by the case of Manius Curius. He was an established folk-figure even for Ennius (<u>Cic</u>. <u>Rep</u>.3.6), but more so in the works of Cicero (<u>Rep</u>.3.40, <u>Parad</u>.12, 38,48, <u>Sen</u>.15,43), Horace (<u>Ep</u>.1.1.64) and Valerius Maximus (4.3. 5; cp.Plut.<u>Mor</u>.194e, <u>Vit</u>.337a; Athenaeus 419a). He was among the

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1   for comparison with Seneca cp. particularly 4.28-33; Juvenal's major source was a poem by Statius on Domitian's German wars, which explains the mock-heroic language, and he was also indebted to two epigrams of Martial on serving large fish (13.81,14.97).

early Roman farmers whose hardiness was idealised (Cic.Sen.23-5).
Cicero has Cato include a long digressive passage on the pleasures
of farming in De Senectute (51-60), which contains a chapter
specifically on the wholesome diet of natural food which the
farmers used to eat (57). All the satirists at some time praise
simple food (Hor.S.2.2, cp. Fiske 378-87; Mart.5.78, Juv.11.56-
116).

Curius' frugality suggests a comparison with arch-gourmand
Apicius, with whom this chapter closes (10.8-10). Interest in
gastronomic theory survived side by side with its satirical
counterpart, and Apicius was himself the author of the now
fragmentary De Re Coquinaria. Seneca makes an ironical contrast
between Curius and Apicius, suggesting the former lived minus
beate, but clearly indicating by scilicet, that the opposite
meaning is intended. Apicius is treated contemptuously, but
Seneca does not modify his criticism of Rome itself: the
implication of the clause aliquando philosophi velut corruptores
iuventutis abire iussi sunt criticises by attacking a policy of
expulsion for philosophers at all and by questioning a scale of
values which rejects philosophy but accepts the pretensions of
food theorists (cp.Ep.95.23; also Col. 1 pref.5 for such schools).
Such academic terms as scientia, professus, disciplina are
undercut by a word like popina (for this use cp.Ad Marc.22.2,
VB 7.3). Here the prosopopoeia ends, and Seneca describes the
events which lead to Apicius' suicide (9-10). He attacks the
sort of luxury that can consider an enormous fortune poverty, and
goes on to his desired conclusion: cupiditati nihil satis est,

naturae satis est etiam parum (11). That natural needs can be
easily satisfied was a commonplace (VB 12.4, Ep.4.10-1 (quoting
Epicurus), 60.3,114.27,119.7; Cic.Parad.44, Juv.14.316-21).

Apicius appears twice in the dialogues, the second time
in De Vita Beata (11.4), where he is coupled with Nomentanus, a
traditional epicure (Rudd 142-3). Their definition of bona is
modified by the clause ut isti vocant, and they are further
alienated by the accusatory pronoun isti. The use of concoquere
is complex: the colourful word carries several meanings which all
overlap here: "cook together" (not in the one pot, as Grimal
suggests!), "digest" and "consider deeply" (a figurative use
found elsewhere in Seneca: Ep.2.4,84.7). On analogy with the
compound decoquere, and with Apicius' ultimate fate in mind, it
may also carry the idea of bankruptcy. In addition it is worth
noting that in Ad Helviam Seneca plays on the similarity of
concoquere and conquirere: epulas quas toto orbe conquirunt, nec
concoquere dignantur (10.3). There it can only mean "digest", but
here the idea of ransacking the world may have been at the back
of Seneca's mind, and this possibility receives some weight from
the military connotations of recognoscentis which follows. The
incongruous picture of a review of animalia arrayed on a table
adds to the comic hyperbole. The couple are further depicted in
the process of stimulating all their senses, but - whether
deliberately on Seneca's part or not - the natural order is upset:
they enjoy the touch, not the scent, of the roses (for roses'
scent cp. Ira 2.25.2), and the sight, not the taste, of their
kitchen. The use of lacessitur is ironic: there is a play on the

idea of life as a battle with pleasure (Oltramare 280-1). The
perfume is sacrificed to luxury, and this mock-religious image adds
to the ironic tone.

Apicius also appears twice in the letters: once in connection
with the purchase of a large mullet (95.42); in the other, he is
challenged about the extravagance of his cenae by a rival (120.9).
A character with reliable historical testimonia (Tac.Ann.4.1,
Cass. Dio 57.19.5), and with ample evidence for his study of
food (Plin.Nat.8.209,9.66,10.133,19.137,143), he was at his peak
in the reign of Tiberius and for a time was patron to the young
Sejanus. In Seneca's work, however, it is possible to trace how
this tremendously individual character was transmuted into a
representative type-figure[1].

In Friedlaender's index to his edition of Martial, he
distinguishes between the historical use of the name and the
name of a representative figure: in the first category he lists
four instances (2.69,2.89,3.22,10.73), in the latter, two, (3.80,
7.55), but two from his first category seem much closer to a
type-figure (2.89,10.73). Juvenal uses his name twice: he is
described as miser ac frugi in comparison to Crispinus (4.23),

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1   Athenaeus mentions three men of this name: one was responsible
    for the banishment of Rutilius in 83 B.C. (7d); the third was
    an epicure of Trajan's reign (168d). Between them came this
    Apicius. It is strange that three outstanding gourmets
    should all have had this name; on the other hand, if it had
    been a soubriquet, it would reasonably be expected that the
    earliest should originate the name, but the one whose name is
    irrefutably attested is the middle man (Cass. Dio 57.19.5).

and in the other case, he represents the proverbial gourmand (11.2-3).

In Martial, Juvenal and Pliny, and certainly by the time of Tertullian, this name has become a by-word for gastronomic profligacy. Seneca's contribution to this development to stylisation is sizeable. In particular this is achieved by combination with other type-figures: he is matched with Maecenas (Ep.120.19), while in Martial he is paired with Antony and again Maecenas. In Tertullian he is named the originator of the school of cooks, as if it were a serious philosophical school (Apol.3.6). He is combined with Nomentanus (Sen. VB 11.4), who is of Lucilian origin and a stock-character in Horace's Satires (1.1.102,8.11; 2.1.22,3.175,224,8.23,25,60), and of course Apicius is opposed to Curius, as he is also in Juvenal (11.77-81; cp. the contrast of Nomentanus and the Scipionic circle in Hor.S 2.1).

Apart from the luxury of food, Roman satire turned the symposiastic party into a comic medium in its own right (Fiske 162-6, Rudd 213-6). Seneca includes in the dialogues a vignette of a cena which includes many of the topics of satire of the extravagant host (Brev.12.5). It belongs in context to the chapter on the occupationes of the desidiosi which was examined above.

The description is in fact a straightforward list of topics which more creative writers expanded or omitted as they chose. First is the host's sollicitous concern for the arrangement of his silver. In Ad Helviam Seneca describes how the connoisseur arranges his collection of antique gold, silver and bronze, and

in <u>De Vita Beata</u> the uneducated critic asks: <u>quare ars est apud</u>
<u>te ministrare nec temere et ut libet conlocatur argentum sed</u>
<u>perite servitur?</u> (17.2; cp.<u>Ep</u>.119.3; Weber 3). Horace refers
to silverware (<u>S</u> 1.2.114) and Juvenal considers them one aspect
of an extravagant dinner, contrasting them either with the
client guest's cracked cup (5.37-48) or with his own simple cups
(11.145-6). He compares the use of silver on armour in early
Rome, and credits the ancient heroes with eating off earthenware
(11.109-10), a point also made by Cicero (<u>Parad</u>.11). Even Pliny
remarks on the vagaries of this fashion, also using comparisons
with early Romans (<u>Nat</u>.33.139-46,153)[1].

There are smartly dressed slaves at this <u>cena</u>, a feature
mentioned elsewhere (<u>VB</u> 17.2; <u>Ep</u>.47.7, where the trouble taken to
keep slaves young and beautiful is detailed). Such beautiful,
effeminate slaves are frequently present (<u>Ep</u>.95.24; Hor.<u>S</u> 2.8.
13-5, Petr.70.8-9, Mart.9.23,9.60,9.74,11.56). They invite
comparison with coarser peasant retainers (Mart.10.98, Juv.5.
52-62,11.145-50). These slaves are all part of an efficiently
organised service: at the master's call they respond impressively
(<u>Ep</u>.122.16; Hor.<u>S</u> 2.8.13-5). The archetype of organisation is
the <u>cena Trimalchionis</u>, where much is done in time with music
(34.1,36.1; cp.Crassus' slaves, Plut.<u>Vit</u>.544a).

The host displays sollicitous concern for the meal. Here
Seneca uses a boar to represent the standard main-course of the
dinner. It was considered the centre-piece of every banquet:

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1   for this topic in Seneca, Oltramare 273 (th.38 and 38a); in
     <u>Ep</u>.5.1-2, he includes the self-imposed use of earthenware,
     when better ware can be afforded, merely to display asceticism
     as rather overdoing the hard life.

Catius recommends an Umbrian boar (Hor.S 2.4.40-2); Nasidienus

serves a boar for the gustatio, a measure of his extravagance

(8.6-9); in Satyricon Encolpius (wrongly) thinks the meal is all

but over after the boar (40.3). Seneca mentions the absence of

a boar from a gourmand's table because it was not extravagant

enough (Ep.78.24). Another of the pretentious domestic sciences

mentioned here was the skill of carving (VB 17.2, Ep.47.6; for

the trained carver cp.Petr.36.5-8, Juv.5.120-4,11.136-41).

Finally in Seneca's cena come the slaves who have to clean up

the guests' refuse (cp.Ep.47.6; Hor.S 2.8.11-3, Juv.5.56-62).

It is necessary to append some words on drinking and

drunkenness, in addition to the remarks on the physical effects

of wine on the bather's empty stomach. Seneca wrote a letter

on the subject (Ep.83) and he advocated abstinence elsewhere

(Ep.77.16,108.16; Oltramare 271). Wine enslaved men (Brev.2.1,

Ira 2.12.4, Ep.18.4), and it was inextricably involved with

anger (Ira 1.13.3,2.19.5,20.2,3.14.1-6) and other improprieties

(Ira 3.37.1; cp.Cic.ND 2.60, Ov.Ars 3.761-6, Juv.6.300-5). Drink,

he says categorically, kills (Prov.3.2). Seneca also uses

drunkenness as an image for the stupor of unenlightened living

(Prov.4.9).

With this in mind, it is surprising to find Seneca

recommending ebrietas as a release for the mind (Tranq.17.7-10).

He indulges in typical Stoic etymologising of the name of Liber

for Bacchus, as the releaser, not of the tongue, but from

servitude to cares (cp.Cic.ND 2.62). But, as in the rest of this

concluding chapter, he insists on a mean: ut libertatis ita vini

<u>salubris moderatio est</u>. He uses distinguished examples to help his case. The Stoic position seems to have been that the wise man will not get drunk (<u>Ep</u>.83.9 = <u>SVF</u> 1.229), because in that state he risks losing <u>virtus</u>: <u>omne vitium ebrietas et incendit et detegit</u> (83.19; the view of Chrysippus (Diog.L.7.127) and Panaetius (Sen.<u>Ep</u>.116.5)). It could, however, be argued that drinking was indifferent, and so might be permitted, although, as it did not contribute to the formation of virtue, it was not to be preferred (Rist (1) 18-9). Diogenes Laertius does say that the wise man may take wine in moderation (7.118). In fact, this appears to be the only favourable reference to drinking in Seneca (Motto (2) 69-70).

An entirely different area of moral disapprobation is found in the topic of lavish building[1]. This feature of sophisticated life was criticised as another element of soft-living by late Republican writers (Cic.<u>Leg</u>.2.1.2, <u>Parad</u>.6,13,26; Sal.<u>Cat</u>.13; cp. Cic. on the <u>piscinarii</u>, <u>Att</u>.1.18.6,19.6,20.3,2.1.7, <u>Parad</u>.38). Increased affluence made the erection of lavish homes a feature of the Augustan age which is censured by Horace (<u>Carm</u>.2.15.1-4, 16.1-2, <u>Ep</u>.1.10.19-25). What he objects to most of all is that Nature is being driven out of her domain (cp.<u>Ep</u>.1.10.24-5), and this is particularly evident in the way the sea is being driven back to make way for new structures (<u>Carm</u>.3.1.33-7). In one poem he talks about building on land and sea (2.18.1-5,17-22), but

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1   Fiske 152 n.35; Oltramare 51; Van Geytenbeck 111-4.

warns that the finest _aula_ awaits the rich man after death, and then no amount of wealth or ostentation helps. Characteristically, Ovid approves of these monuments (_Ars_ 3.125-6). The Horatian themes are those of serious poetry, not moral platitudes, although they do derive initially from popular thought.

In the first century, the declaimers carried the torch (Sen._Con_.2.1.11 (Fabianus)), and Martial (4.64) and Juvenal (6.4) both touch the subject. Statius, again characteristically, cannot praise these edifices too highly (_Silv_.1.3,2.2). But again Seneca leads the way in moral criticism (Oltramare 272). By various means he conveys disapproval as philosopher (although he himself admittedly had some of the finest property in Italy). So a series of hyperbolical questions cover all possible locations for amenity-building - lakeside, riverside, seaside (_Ep_.89.21). He points out that the gods are happy without large estates (_Tranq_.8.5). The dialogue, however, in which the topic most naturally arises is again _Ad Helviam_, where, after arguing that hunger can be simply satisfied, he goes on to make the same point about the need for shelter (11.1,10.7; cp._Ben_.7.10.5, _Ep_.90.17). In the same work, he claims that a man is only cutting himself off from nature by building larger homes: he shuts out the sky, which is the ideal subject for contemplation (9.2). This applies to all decorations, like marble (Oltramare 272 (th. 35a): _Ep_.90. 15 to which add _Ad Helv_.9.1, _Ep_.90.10), richly adorned walls (th 35b), and mosaics (th 35c; cp._Hor_._Ep_.1.10.19), and equally to all movable furniture (Oltramare 273 (th 37): _Ira_ 1.21.1, _Ben_. 7.9.2, _Ep_.18.7 to which add _Ad Helv_.11.1-6, _Brev_.12.2, _Tranq_.9.6;

cp.Cic.<u>Parad</u>.13,36-8,49, <u>Fin</u>.2.23-4).

There was, then, a distinct taste among Romans for garish and gawdy decorations in their houses (particularly freedmen cp. <u>Ep</u>.86.7 and Petr.29.1-6). Another luxury without which no truly sophisticated house was complete was the <u>pauperis cella</u>. Sheer boredom with wealth seems to have suggested to the rich to play at living poorly and simply, as a new refinement and affectation. Seneca refers directly to these <u>cellae</u> twice (<u>Ad Helv</u>.12.3, <u>Ep</u>.18. 7), and once uses the metaphor of a luxury villa to explain literary style: his style will have no extravagant refinements but will aim for simplicity - it will be a <u>domus recta</u> (<u>Ep</u>.100.6). Martial's two-line epigram (3.48) neatly contrasts the nature of the <u>pauperis cella</u> in imagination and reality, the peculiar contradiction already noted by Seneca (<u>Ad Helv</u>.12.3).

Those who live in the country still live an unreal life of comfort. They occupy fashionable country villas, not a countryman's house (Hor.<u>Carm</u>.2.15, Mart.3.47,3.58). In fact, the rich landowners occupied separate quarters on their farms from the farmer himself (Vitr.6.6.1; Col.1.6). In contrast, the ancient agricultural household lived under a single roof (Juv.6.4).

With this traditionalism in mind, Seneca compares the <u>sapiens</u> to a modest house (<u>Cons</u>.15.5). Its characteristics are important: <u>angusta, sine cultu, sine strepitu, sine apparatu</u>. There is nothing there which belongs to Fortune. This unassuming type of home was traditionally Roman: either the elegant but austere manor belonging to past nobility (Curius, Cic.<u>Parad</u>.38;

Scipio, Sen.Ep.86), or the primitive huts of earlier Romans (Hor.Carm.1.12.41; Juv.6.2-3,286-91,11.77-9).

Among those primitive huts was the casa Romuli, to which Seneca refers in Ad Helviam (9.3), when contrasting the dwellings of the rich and the wise. Like the sapiens' home in De Constantia (15.5), it is a small hut but can contain all the virtues. The passage introduces the casa and then follows a brief prosopopoeia, by which Seneca appears to want to mark a change of voice, for greater formality and reverence. The casa was maintained on the Palatine as a monument to Rome's early days (Dion.H.Rom.Ant.1.79. 11; Vitr.2.1.5), and it was used as a model of the simple life (V.Max.4.4.11; cp. also Ov.Fast.1.199,3.183-6). But there is more than a casual reminiscence of a passage from the Aeneid in this description of the casa, for it is close both in thought and expression to the account of Aeneas entering Evander's house on the Palatine (8.362-7).

In that passage aude and finge both convey moral effort, dignum expresses moral worth, while ingens is delicately poised between physical and figurative usage. The house is narrow for the size of man, as it is in Seneca (Ad Helv.9.3, Cons.15.5). In Virgil it is egena, in Seneca, humile. Both cases contain knowledge of the divine. The passages are, to say the least, very close. Virgil himself refers to the casa Romuli in the same book (on Aeneas' shield 8.654), and in Ad Helviam Seneca has already referred to Evander, Diomedes and Aeneas (7.6-7), the latter for founding Rome despite his exile.

These lines of Virgil are quoted elsewhere by Seneca (Ep. 18.12,31.11), and he considered him a subject for philosophical study rather than for analysis by pedants (Ep.108.24-9; Wirth 4-5). It is possible that Seneca found these lines closely parallel to his own, and Stoic, thought (cp.e.g., the Stoic attitude to Heracles, SVF 2.300,306, although disparaged by Seneca, Cons.2.1). In Horace there are lines closely approximate to the paradox that only the wise man is rich: fuge magna: licet sub paupere tecto Reges et regum vita praecurrere amicos (Ep.1.10. 32-3; cp.Cic.Parad.42-52). This is a sentiment repeated in epigrams supposedly written by Seneca while in exile (Baehrens PLM 4. nos.17,18). And so in the passage from Ad Helviam, if the prosopopoeia which contains this possible paraphrased quotation were to end not after comitatu but after scientia, and the final sentence were read as a comment on the preceding, the suggestion that Seneca may be using this Virgilian topic becomes still more convincing[1].

With a personal interest, Seneca also covers the subject of power and politics: the insecurity of a position that puts man at the top of Fortune's pinnacle invited the moralist's comment, and so too did the ambition which drives a man to aim for such a precarious perch (Brev.4.1,17.4,20.1; Tranq.10.5-6). For this purpose Seneca uses the traditional examples like Croesus and Ptolemy, or chooses long-standing opponents of Roman

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1   There is a curious parallel in the seventeenth-century poet
     Andrew Marvell's Upon Appleton House (25-40).

imperialism like Jugurtha and Mithridates, and shows their humiliation (Tranq.11.12). Xerxes, a popular subject for diatribe and declamation, recurs as the archetypal man of power, whose arrogance can only be equalled by utter defeat either by the inexorable forces of time or, more immediately, by a dramatic reversal of fortune. The final disaster is nature's justice for his ambition to exceed the limits she has set (Brev.17.1-6). Juvenal's account of the Persian peripeteia is no more emphatic (10.173-87). In the end, Xerxes is damned irrevocably in a comparison with Caligula (Brev.18.5).

With contemporary events, Seneca's moralising use of ironical technique is more recognisable. In Ad Marciam Sejanus is the figure around whom many of the events in the dialogue revolve, since he initiated the sequence that concluded with the death of Marcia's son (cp. Stewart 70-85). At one point, however, he appears in the dialogue outside his capacity as agent provocateur, when Seneca, listing the traditional bereavements of great families, concludes with Tiberius, and he appends to the description of Tiberius' calmness a reference to Sejanus' overthrow some years later, in what seems a gratuitous and irrelevant moral aside.

In De Tranquillitate Animi, the portrait of Sejanus becomes a more stylised type (11.11). The section as a whole is on the necessity to be prepared for any turn of fortune: it is foolish to disregard evidence, daily visible, of other people's experiences: a rich man loses his wealth, and a powerful man, such as Sejanus, his power. The passage, a series of extremes,

contrasts the regular official with Sejanus. Point is added to
the antithesis by representing summi honores as inferior to
those of Sejanus. The behaviour of Senate and people is contrasted:
in one day Sejanus was led in procession by the Senate and
savaged by the people. He built up great tangible wealth, but
in the end could not prevent even his corpse from being torn
apart. Short as it is, the passage is neatly studied, using
antithesis, a question, an exclamation, a delayed climax and a
case of anaphora.

A comparison with Juvenal's treatment of the same character
shows how much Seneca kept within the tradition, or else
contributed to it. As Seneca builds up to the name at the end
of the first sentence, Juvenal describes the smelting of the
statues for two lines before stating the name at the start of
the third, and then pausing (10.61-3). Juvenal also contrasts
the extremes of favour, not, as in Seneca, a contrast between
Senate and people, but between two different reactions of the mob,
which Juvenal calls comprehensively turba Remi (74). Both fasten
on the detail of the corpse being dragged (66), and both conclude
with the same uncertainty about whether anyone would want power
on such conditions (cp. Dick 241)[1].

As in the case of Apicius, Sejanus became a moral type by
his appearance in conjunction with legendary victims of mutatio

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[1] Juvenal's comment on the mob - sequitur fortunam ut semper
(74) - is characteristic of the criticism in all periods:
the fickleness of the mob in Athens or Rome was an old
political slogan. The moralist in particular shows no
respect for popular opinion: VB 1.5-2.2; Otio 1.3; cp.
Oltramare 265; also Hor.S 1.6.15-6,24-6, Ep.1.16.33.

fortunae. In fact, while Seneca uses four examples of fallen kings, Sejanus alone shows the susceptibility of the politician. A similar unequal balance is found in Juvenal.

Another stock example of the unfortunate politician was Cicero, about whom Seneca has two interesting passages in the dialogues. In De Brevitate Vitae (5.1-2), he encapsulates the main events of Cicero's career: the incidents with Catiline and Clodius, and his relationship with the triumvirate, which Pompey and Crassus represent (with the tactful omission of Caesar; for a similar indirect reference to Caesar cp.Juv.10. 108-9). It includes references to the Civil War and last years of the Republic, and is a fairly orthodox account. In Ad Marciam (20.5), Seneca repeats a similar view, with a different purpose. Before, he was arguing for retirement, here he is arguing in favour of an early death, particularly if it comes at an opportune moment, of which there were several in Cicero's life. This would have been better than having to suffer the consequences of Caesar's death (cp.Ira 2.2.3, Tranq.16.3, Cons.17.3, Ben.5.17. 2).

The description is not original: it comes from Cicero's own work. The sentiment, common in his letters, receives its most elegant expression in the Tusculanae Disputationes, where, as in Ad Marciam, the context is consolatory, presenting an argument to estimate the success of life by its quality not quantity (1.109). Cicero does the same for Pompey, who also appears in Ad Marciam as a candidate for opportuna mors during his illness at Naples (20.4 cp.Tusc.1.85-6), although elsewhere

Seneca accuses him of being out for personal domination like
Caesar (Ben.2.20.2, Ep.94.64,104.30-1), and he praises Cato for
denouncing them both (Ep.104.33; cp. Griffin (2) 373-5, also
Syme 557). But Pompey still suffered a death more ignominious
than he deserved (Ad Marc.20.4, Ep.4.7). This topic on Pompey's
illness was repeated by Juvenal (10.283-6).

It is possible to see how Seneca isolated the figure of
Cicero from its historical setting and transformed it into a
moral cameo. The most telling technique is the navigation
metaphor in the first sentence (Brev.5.1). Cicero is described
in terms of a helmsman (iactatus, fluctuatur, tenet). This
image was used by many including Cicero for the statesman on
the ship of state, but Seneca is doubling it with that of man's
life as a stormy sea journey (cp. Cicero's own use of the image:
Parad.20, Fin.1.42): the sapiens can only display his virtue in
the face of adversity, not in calm waters. In the rest of the
passage, an air of generality is achieved by the plural forms of
proper names. There is a mild suggestion of disapproval in the
remark on the consulship, because he so continuously praised it.
The insistence on Cicero's persistent dissatisfaction, in
prosperity or adversity, with past, present and future (a
rhetorical periphrasis in the form of a tricolon for "all time";
cp.Tranq.17.12), is necessarily criticised, since it was a sign
of lack of constantia. For his purpose here, Seneca does not
mention Cicero's philosophical work, which would contradict the
point he wants to make.

Juvenal also used Cicero as an example of the misfortunes

which accompany success (10.114-32). He shares with Seneca the
opinion that eloquence can create many enemies (Ep.14.11):
Seneca includes among the stulti those who have eloquentiae
fiducia (Tranq.6.2). Juvenal also explains eloquence alone as
the cause of Cicero's death: if he had stuck to poetry he would
never have roused Antony. The whole passage is heavily ironic
and undercut by the contrast between the mock-heroic language
praising Cicero's poetry and the sincere praise for the Philippic:
Juvenal means that composing Philippics is better, but bad
poetry is safer. He has no suggestions for the possibility of
Cicero's sticking to philosophy. That this thought, particularly
in the present context where Cicero is paired with Demosthenes,
was a rhetorical moral commonplace, is shown from Seneca's
curious work De Remediis Fortuitorum: si muti fuissent Cicero et
Demosthenes, et diutius vixissent et lenius obiissent (12.4)

The Stoic position on public life which appears in Seneca
is in fact ambivalent: he says that a political career, such as
that of Cato's, is the ideal opportunity to display ability to
handle the hazards of this type of life (Cons1.3-2.3, Ep.104.
29-34). In De Otio he argues that as no state can be perfectly
virtuous, practicality demands participation by the sapiens (8;
cp. Griffin (2)), and elsewhere he disapproves of too rapid a
withdrawal from public life (Tranq.4.1-2).

For the last topic of this examination of satirical
elements in the dialogues, we can examine a less familiar aspect:
the ostentation and wasted effort of the greater part of scholar-

ship. In De Tranquillitate Animi, Seneca contrasts the value of external appearance with an object's practical utility. In keeping with much of the dialogue, he advocates moderation in studies, where expense is only reasonable as long as it is within bounds: the man with innumerable books is simply burdened by them (9.4).

He chooses a curious example for attack, since he turns on the library at Alexandria, destroyed by fire in 47 B.C. The attack is based on the assumption that the library was built as the logical extreme of the ostentation of the private collector. Again strangely, he selects Livy for censure - strangely, because he also ranked Livy as the third prose writer of history and philosophy in Roman letters, behind Cicero and Asinius Pollio (Ep.100.9 cp. Ira 1.20.6). No doubt Livy had abused the historian's role by spreading a false judgement on the library. He quotes Livy's description, corrects it, and then by a correctio qualifies his own adjustment. There is a play on studiosa in studiosa luxuria, which combines the meanings "learned" and "over-zealous", in harmony with the censure on wasted effort. He compares the founders of the library to illiterates who like only the appearance of books. At this point he offers the provisional conclusion: only acquire as many books as are enough, and none for show alone (5). An imaginary opponent lodges the claim that it is at least more noble (honestius, the term for moral good) than other forms of collecting. Excess, however, is always a fault. No man can be excused who equates books with their book-cases, and who buys books only for their appearance.

As a result, the desidiosissimi have the most complete collections, but they only serve as decorations (6-7).

The passage is in two parts: the first criticises the library, the second the individual amateur. In the first, such phrases as regiae opulentiae monimentum and elegantiae regum curaeque egregium opus suggest that Seneca is making a parallel between the library of Alexandria and the monuments raised by emperors to display their greatness. The connection of thought is unclear, but an association of ideas seems to be at work here, that leads Seneca to the thought that no concrete memorial can last for ever. The theme is common in his expressed thoughts on death: in Ad Polybium, he notes that cities and stone monuments all perish in time (1.1-2,18.2). In De Brevitate Vitae, he says that ambitious projects to be carried out after death are pointless and among these he includes operum publicorum dedicationes (20.5). In fact, the tomb and its contents are meaningless (Ad Marc.25.1). A sepulchral inscription (titulus sepulcri) is an insignificant reward for a life of public service (Brev.20.1). The only lasting memorial is in words and ideas (Ad Marc.1.4). A man's actions determine whether he deserves the only possible form of immortality, fame (Ep.102.3; cp. Plin.Ep.9.19.6). Seneca combines the ideas when he says that only the works of philosophy are immortal, while all other honours and monuments perish (Brev.15.4). The theme is best exemplified by Horace's ode Exegi monimentum (3.30; cp.Prop.3.2), and is used in one of Martial's serious, though less laudable, epigrams (on Domitian's

palace: 8.36).

Seneca must have had more cause than this, however, to attack a home of learning. The cause probably rests in the country of the library, Egypt. The poems of Horace and Martial refer specifically to pyramids, but there are other poems attributed to Seneca which contain similar (critical) references (PLM 4.nos.27,28). The Romans always identified the Egyptians with megolamaniac fantasies, and Seneca speaks contemptuously of Ptolemy (Tranq.11.2) and Cleopatra (Ep.83.25). His knowledge of the country was sufficient to produce a monograph De Situ et Sacris Aegyptiorum (fr.12), but he is merciless to the Egyptians in his ethical writings: they are arrogant (Ad Marc.14.2), treacherous (Ad Marc.20.4, Ad Helv.9.8), but above all they had no respect for virtus (Ad Helv.19.6). The country was also supposed to be immoral (e.g. Canopus is compared to Baiae, Ep. 51.3; cp.Juv.6.82-4,15.46). The influence of this dislike, combined with the influence of the previous theme, must go some way to explain this otherwise curious attack on the library of Alexandria.

The second half of the passage (5-7) attacks the private connoisseur, whose book collecting is as much a vice as any other preoccupation with external possessions such as furniture, which we have already examined. In first-century literature, this is exemplified by Trimalchio's boast to have two libraries, one Latin, one Greek (Petr.48.4). In Juvenal, when the rich man's house burns down, his friends replenish his collection of furniture and ornaments, and among the gifts are books (3.219-20).

In contrast, the poor scholar keeps his books in an old chest, where they are eaten by uneducated barbarous (opici) mice (3. 206-7). The ideal simple book-shelf is described by Pliny in his villa (Ep.2.17.8). Most of these topics, with many more, are covered in Lucian's satire on the ignorant book-collector, Adversus indoctum (particularly 1-5)[1].

Seneca makes an equally virulent attack on the misuse of scholastic energy[2]. In De Brevitate Vitae this is the main vice of the negotiosi occupati (13.1-9), in a chapter balancing that on the desidiosi which was examined as an introduction to this study of Seneca's satire.

He traces the obsession for antiquarian study back to its beginning among the Greeks. Morbus means "ruling passion", but it also is equivalent to πάθος as the affection of the mind (Cic. Fin.3.35), and connects with the commonplace that vice is a sickness. This Greek preoccupation is illustrated by a number of recondite topics of Homeric study, which are representative of the early days after literary history broke away from philosophy (13.2). However, this type of speculation remained a feature of scholarship: Suetonius says Tiberius took an interest in such problems (Tib.70), and Aulus Gellius notes the offer of a common-place book which recorded among its choice pieces of information

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1   The theme recurs in English satire in Pope's fourth Moral
     Essay (Of the Use of Riches), 133-40, together with Pope's
     own note, probably after the influence of La Bruyère's
     Characters (the section "Of the Fashion" in eighteenth century
     translations).

2   cp. Fiske 145 for Bion's criticism of philosophers.

the names of Ulysses' sailors who were snatched by Scylla (14.6).
The pedant in Juvenal treats similar problems in the Aeneid (7.
231-6; for another case of enarratio historiarum cp.6.434-7,448-
51). Ancient criticism made no distinction between these trivia
and genuine problems like the date and authorship of the poems.
Seneca valued their use only as practical guides: he said that
such inquiries, if unpublished, in no way advance the cause of
inner virtue, if published, are only a source of irritation to
others (Ep.88.6-7; for allegorical interpretation of Homer cp.
Hor.S 1.2).

Moving from Greeks to Romans, he changes the topic from
literature to history, and describes a lecture on Roman antiquities,
which again leads to the conclusion that it lacks any practical
value. To convey his criticism, in fact, he indulges in the
excess himself, showing ironically what he wishes to censure, even
to the point of recalling himself from a useless digression within
a digression (8).

This lecture includes a short disquisition which represents
the type of study that combines history and etymology (cp. Rawson
37). It explains how Appius Claudius Caudex was the first Roman
admiral (in 261 B.C.), and how he acquired his cognomen. The
investigations are presented in the person of the investigator,
who makes them tedious and disconnected apart from the common
word caudex. Historical speculation was a rampant obsession in
Roman circles, and there was no more fanatical a devotee than
Claudius himself. There is evidence to suggest that Seneca
directed some personal satire here against him, before his death

and the composition of <u>Apocolocyntosis</u>.

In <u>Ad Polybium</u>, one apparent means of consolation was to eulogise both Polybius and Claudius, and it was long thought that this was abject flattery with the sole motive of bringing about Seneca's recall from exile. This view has been qualified quite considerably by the suggestion that the dialogue, in whole or in part, while framed within the consolatory genre, is in fact a covert satire on master and servant (Alexander (1) 33-55). Every compliment addressed to Claudius is the reverse of the truth, or a very one-sided version of it: he is praised for the equity of his justice, when in fact Seneca draws attention to Claudius' obsession for litigation, which is later attacked openly in <u>Apocolocyntosis</u> (7.5 and Russo's n.); he is praised for his mercy, but <u>saevitia</u> is one of the chief charges against him in <u>Apocolocyntosis</u> (10.3) and Suetonius' life (<u>Cl</u>.34). He is praised for his memory and eloquence, whereas he was notorious for lapses of memory and a delivery of speech that was badly impeded by a stammer. Seneca advises Polybius to look for consolation in writing history, particularly about his emperor (8.2). Had he simply recommended Claudius as a model, the advice would have been relatively straightforward, but he also recommends him as a subject, and in view of Claudius' limited military experience, it seems Seneca is only superficially complimentary. Everyone who read the work would know that the truth was quite the reverse.

Suetonius gives a full account of Claudius' literary work (<u>Cl</u>.41.2). Its bulk and tediousness were an invitation not to take it seriously, and this erudition certainly attracted

amusement after his death (<u>Apoc</u>.5.4). In <u>Ad Polybium</u>, Seneca portrays him making his own consolation to Polybius, in which he lists at length great men of Roman history who also suffered bereavement (14.2-16.3). This exegesis is in many ways similar to the historical pedantry of the curiosities in the passage from <u>De Brevitate Vitae</u> (cp. Syme 514-5).

Apart from the other curiosities, two stand out. The first is about Claudius and the ships (13.4). It was a favourite occupation of the Roman nobility to trace in its line of descent distinguished men who brought credit to the family by their achievements - if possible, by being first to do something. Appius Claudius was not an ancestor of Claudius in a direct line (Grimal's note is innacurate on this point), his family being distinct from the Claudii Nerones, but a connection nevertheless remains between the two. Claudius wrote a history of the Carthaginians, and Appius was one of Rome's generals in the First Punic War. It may be the case that the obscure detail of the ships would have had greater interest for Claudius' recondite mind than a consulship and naval triumph.

The second reference of note is to the extension of the <u>pomoerium</u> (13.8). The lecturer said that the last Roman to extend it was Sulla, in accordance with the ancient tradition that allowed extension only after the acquisition of Italian, not provincial, territory. Some time in 49, Claudius extended the <u>pomoerium</u>, and this reference may be to the debates at court on the legality of the measure. Elsewhere it is claimed that Julius Caesar (Cass. Dio 43.50.1) and Augustus (Tac.<u>Ann</u>.12.23.5;

Cass. Dio 55.6.6) also extended the boundary, but neither in accordance with this tradition, and it is therefore possible that here Seneca is putting either a self-condemnation or at least a self-contradiction into Claudius' mouth[1]. Certainly any mention of the pomoerium at this time cannot be neglected as insignificant, and in this particular dialogue, where special stress is also put on the annona, another specific interest of the emperor, it is hard to deny its relevance.

It seems possible, then, that Seneca not only satirised pedantry in general, using the example of Claudius, but actually set out to satirise his activities in particular, long before the conception of Apocolocyntosis.

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1   cp. Syme 705 (App.40); for a different view, Griffin (1), which also discusses the date of the dialogue in connection with this reference to the pomoerium. The present interpretation does not commit itself to any particular date.

Conclusion

This work has deliberately avoided any involvement in technical discussions of points of philosophy: such would have expanded the scope of the thesis out of all proportion to its declared interests. Nevertheless, the philosophy that has inevitably and necessarily introduced itself in the course of the accounts of consolation and satire has shown Seneca's grasp on a wide range of ethical thought, both the common property of all moralists and the theories derived from traditional Stoic philosophy. In many cases Seneca followed the dogma with a total conviction that balances his criticism of traditional austerity and severity. The founders of Stoicism are given the epithet noster, the only exception to this rule being Virgil, so that despite his criticisms Seneca remained loyal to his teachers.

As we have already noted, however, the overriding feature of the moral essays is tolerance of all philosophy. While the consolations could only have been written by a Stoic, they are not exclusively Stoic and the whole range of consolatory literature is allowed to add weight to the Stoic arguments: what is important is not how the end is achieved but the achievement of the end itself, the control and eradication of grief.

In his treatment of satirical topics, too, Seneca displays a relentless sense of the application of the theoretical issues of philosophy to the problems of everyday contemporary life, as the comparisons between his work and the less elaborate approach of earlier non-satirical moralists show. But here, of course, we are much more aware of the tradition of eclecticism and

popular moralising which Seneca fashions to the taste of a
first-century literary audience.

His wide use of literary convention is the principal
conclusion of this thesis, not in a general, nonspecific sense
but in the way that his compositions display a sensitivity to
all previous literature of consolation, diatribe or satire and
an awareness of current literary trends. At the same time he
generates a powerful enough sense of originality to show that
he has not merely fallen in with convention but is actively
contributing to it.

The use of commonplaces in the consolations shows his
familiarity with the heritage of that genre, and, as we have
remarked, there is very little that Seneca creates from nothing
to use in these works: the originality comes from his selection
and redeployment of the well-tried commonplaces that people
expected in such works. This is what makes these essays veritable
treasure-houses for students of the consolation.

The question of Seneca's use of satirical topics is more
problematic. Nevertheless, the cumulative evidence gathered in
the preceding pages strongly suggests a conscious effort to
follow the satirists in their intention to generate real laughter
to achieve a moral end. The reciprocal relationship, between
earlier satirists and Seneca and then between Seneca and the
satirists who succeeded him, shows how much their intentions,
literary and ethical, overlapped. Seneca's personal contribution
to this genre too was considerable.

Perhaps the influence of contemporary convention is most

evident in the structure of the moral essays. Of all his debts to convention this has generated the most uneasiness, but we have tried to show that there is little in the structures that cannot be explained. In fact Seneca is close to modern writers in the way he adapts his structure to suit the specific demands of his subject, and uses internal structuring devices in place of a rigid framework.

Seneca's philosophy was not a rigid one, nor was his approach to literature and composition. This flexibility accounts for much of the appeal, but also for most of the problems of interpretation, of his work. If this work has solved the problems it set out to discuss, it has more than achieved its purpose, even though many similar problems remain.

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