Curating the Future in Seneca's *Epistulae Morales*

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

(Classics)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

2021

Date of final oral examination: 05/20/2021

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For my parents

Si agricolam arbor ad fructum perducta delectat, si pastor ex fetu gregis sui capit voluptatem, si alumnum suum nemo aliter intuetur quam ut adulescentiam illius suam iudicet, quid evenire credis iis qui ingenia educaverunt et quae tenera formaverunt adulta subito vident? – Ep. 34.1

Acknowledgments

Graduate education is not a walk in the park, and completing my dissertation in the midst of a global pandemic has not lessened this fact. Any thanks that I give here cannot possibly sum up the contributions that each fo the following and more have made to bringing me to this point, but I hope that I can do brief justice to it by including mention of it here. As such, I am incredibly grateful for the support that has allowed me to continue to survive and produce this dissertationver the last two years. I give great thanks that the Classical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies department extended me financial support to complete my dissertation by nominating for fellowships both from the Graduate School and through the Institute for Research in the Humanities, and I would like to thank Carl Reinhold for his generous support of the Robert J. Reinhold Dissertation Fellowship.

This dissertation would not have been possible without the kind, rigorous, and patient support and feedback of Dr. Alex Dressler, my advisor, without whom this dissertation would not exist. I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Jeffrey Beneker, Dr. Emily Fletcher, and Dr. Grant Nelsestuen, whose feedback on the final product and on my previous years' coursework throughout my graduate education has been invaluable. The faculty in the Classical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies department have provided me with incredible support, shaping my approach to Greek and Roman language and culture, preparing me for life in the wider world, and providing a welcoming environment to talk about ancient language or the Premier League or what have you. So, I would like to thank Dr. William Aylward, Dr. Will Brockliss, Dr. Paula Gottlieb, Dr. Jeremy Hutton, Dr. Dan Kapust, Dr. Laura McClure, Dr. Jim McKeown, Dr. Nandini Pandey, and Dr. Patricia Rosenmeyer. Also, without the guidance and care of Bill Bach and Toni Landis, I would never have been able to put everything together to

reach this point. I could not possibly name all of my classmates over the years, graduate and undergraduate, whose insights, discussions, or flippant comments formed my understanding of Latin and Greek language and culture, but I hope that these individuals know how much value they have added to my work and my life.

If it is hard to thank my academic mentors and peers, it is impossible to give enough thanks to my friends and family who have supported me throughout this time. I am so appreciative of the labor that Claire Trivax, Ryan Scott, Pete Thomas, and Kyle Winn put into reading and editing things so beyond their concern just to help me. Thank you to Anne-Marie and Martin, without whose love and hospitality my life in Madison would be immeasurably worse. Thank you to my parents, Pat and Kevin, who have loved and nurtured me and my curiosity from an early age, even when it comes to Latin philosophy. Without you, none of this or anything else would be possible. I also want to thank my partner, Bailey, who has put up with me throughout all of my graduate career and especially during the year and a half of lockdown and stress that aligned with the dissertation. I love you, and I could not have done this without you. Finally, I want to send special thanks to Woodford and Susan, the two best dogs and friends to go outside and recharge with.

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Mise en Seneca

In what is considered to be his *magnum opus*, 1927's *Being and Time*, Martin Heidegger

discusses his conception of *Sorge*, "care or concern," by appealing to the antiquity of his position

through a juxtaposition of two Latin authors. On the one hand, he brings forth a myth from the

Fabulae of Hyginus, No. CCXX, which discusses how Cura, the divine personification of care,

shapes human beings out of clay from a riverbed. On the other, he turns to Lucius Annaeus

Seneca, better known as Seneca the Younger, who explains in the final extant letter of his

Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium (*EM*), "Nature accomplishes the good of the one (i.e., god), and

care that of the other (i.e., the human being)" (*Ep*. 124.14, *ex his ergo unius bonum natura*

perficit, dei scilicet, alterius cura, hominis). This positive connotation differs from the use of the

word by previous authors, who use care largely in the sense of anxieties or troubles, like Horace

does at *Satires* II.7.113-5:

> …teque ipsum vitas fugitivus et erro,
> iam vino quaerens, iam somno fallere curam,
> frustra: nam comes atra premit sequiturque fugacem.[1]

> And you flee yourself, a fugitive and a wanderer, seeking to deceive your trouble
> in vain, now with wine, now with sleep: for the dark companion presses you and
> follows you as you flee.

The alignment of the Good and the divine in Seneca stands out markedly compared to the dark

companion, which Horace describes. As Luciano Perelli (1994) points out, Seneca stands out

from other Latin authors in having a largely positive conception of care (*cura*) that is more akin

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[1] Traina (2011: 15) links this passage via Ovid (*Met*. 4.461) to Seneca in terms of the image of fleeing oneself, but he does not comment on the change of the connotation of *cura*.

to Heidegger's.[2] For Seneca, care is not a trouble, for it is care which "accomplishes" the Good

for human beings.

In this dissertation, I take Heidegger's unexpected reference to the obscure and critically

denigrated mythographer Hyginus as a clue to how to read Seneca and understand his definition

of the Good in a human life. I explore the *EM* through close philological and etymological study

of the concept of care in order to show its centrality to the work, building on the analyses of Brad

Inwood (2005), Jula Wildberger (2006b), Shadi Bartsch (2006), Alex Dressler (2016), and

others, who have sought to rehabilitate the image of Seneca as a philosopher from the evaluation

of previous generations. Current scholarship pushes back against the evaluation of Seneca as a

sourcebook for previous Greek philosophical positions that is both too bombastic when it comes

to morality and too freewheeling to present a coherent philosophical system. However, this

dissertation joins the efforts of those above to show Seneca as a proper philosopher in his own

right, one who understands philosophy in a practical way and uses concrete, imagistic language

to communicate this practical understanding of philosophy. Using the mythical and allegorical

work of Hyginus as a guide—highlighted by Heidegger but generally ignored by classicists—this

dissertation will show how Seneca systematically evokes care in a conscious network of images

throughout the *EM* as a key concept which ties together all of the letters and Seneca's entire

philosophical project. The common tie of Seneca's use of care in the *EM* is care as the proper use

of time, and the activity of care is that which emphasizes the future over and above the past and

present.

The overarching metaphor, to which Seneca's descriptions of care as a physical activity

appeal, is what I shall refer to as the "hand of care." Seneca uses the language of hands—direct

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[2] This dissertation does not seek to make any definitive claims about the relationship of Heidegger and Seneca, but the connection of Stoicism to existentialism is made (and illustrated) by Mounier (1962).

references to the body part as well as to activities such as lifting, throwing, crafting—to develop a positive conception of care as a key to self-realization; this also extends to include imagery of manual labor and slavery. My approach owes much to the spirit of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's (2003) approach to everyday metaphorization in language, which resonates with Seneca's project of using the quotidian as a path toward philosophical instruction.[3] I also argue that the metaphorical hand of care which Seneca deploys in the *EM* appeals specifically to the Latin myth of Cura, which personifies her as an artisan. *Fabulae* 220 of Hyginus, a 1st Century CE Latin mythographer,[4] reads as follows:

> Cura cum quendam fluvium transieret, vidit cretosum lutum, sustulit cogitabunda et coepit fingere hominem. Dum deliberat secum quidnam fecisset, intervenit Iovis; rogat eum Cura ut ei daret spiritum quod facile ab Iove impetravit. Cui cum vellet Cura nomen suum imponere, Iovis prohibuit suumque nomen ei dandum esse dixit. Dum de nomine Cura et Iovis disceptarent, surrexit et Tellus suumque nomen ei imponi debere dicebat, quandoquidem corpus suum praebuisset. Sumpserunt Saturnum iudicem; quibus Saturnus aequus videtur iudicasse: "Tu Iovis quoniam spiritum dedisti <animam post mortem accipe; Tellus, quoniam corpus praebuit> corpus recipito. Cura quoniam prima eum finxit, quamdiu vixerit Cura eum possideat; sed quoniam de nomine eius controversia est, homo vocetur quoniam ex humo videtur esse factus.[5]

> When Cura was going across a certain river, she saw some clay-filled mud, wrapped in thought she lifted it up and began to fashion a person. While she is deliberating with herself just what she had made, Jove interrupts; Cura asks him to give to this spirit, which she easily obtained from Jove. When Cura wanted to put her own name on it, Jove held her back and said that his name was to be given to it. While Cura and Jove were debating about the name, Tellus also rose up and was saying that *her* name ought to be put on it, seeing as she had offered up her own body. They got hold of Saturn as a judge: Saturn seems to them to have judged fair: "You, Jove, since you gave the spirit, take the soul after death; Tellus, since you offered up the body, take back the body. Cura, since she first fashioned this, for as long as it has lived let Cura possess it; but since there is dispute concerning its name, let it be called *homo* since it seems to have been made from the dirt.

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[3] Bartsch, 2009: 213; Wildberger, 2006b: xi–xix
[4] For more on the figure of Hyginus, cf. iii below
[5] The text used is that of Marshall (1993), and the notes on the text are those from his edition. Translation is my own, with some reference to that of Hamilton (2013).

Cura's activity in the myth is described by verbs for making (*fingere, facere*) as she crafts human beings with her hands, and the other activities, in which she engages, like lifting (*tollere*) and taking (*sumere*), underscore the link between hands and care through metaphors based in human physicality.

The etymology which the myth offers, connecting humans to the dirt from which they were made (*humus → homo*), is specifically Latin, which makes this myth a specifically Roman or Italic story.[6] Among the Stoic authors extant for us today, Seneca is unique in writing in Latin, even including his native Italian contemporary Stoic, Musonius Rufus.[7] This authorial linguistic choice, as shall be discussed below,[8] marks Seneca as a philosopher addressing a specifically Latin speaking crowd, taking full advantage of the conventions of Roman literature and Latin language. Seneca's turn to Hyginus follows this same pattern, adding on traditional Latin-Italic religious and mythographical content to this self-conscious Latin philosophical style. To fully appreciate the presentation of Stoic moral pedagogy, time, and the Good that the *Epistulae Morales* portray, we must reckon with Seneca's use of the backdrop of this Roman myth of Cura. Seneca uses the concept of care throughout the work to take technical elements of Stoic philosophy and apply them concretely in a specific Latin-speaking Roman cultural milieu.

"The Care of the Self"

The discussion of care as it appears in the work of Seneca must call to mind the study of Michel Foucault (1986), who wrote the eponymous book on the "care of the self," chronicling

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[6] Werth, 1901: 25-7; Smith and Trzaskoma, 2007:xlviii; Guidorizzi, 2000: 488 n. 955

[7] Ross and Griffin (2012) for a brief summary of Musonius Rufus' biography; compare also the "Imperial Stoics" Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, as well as the summaries from Hierocles and Aëtius discussed in Reydams-Schils (2005)

[8] Cf ii below.

the change in sexual and marital relations from Classical Greece into the Roman Imperial period. Foucault helpfully elaborates several techniques which were deployed in a move towards a renegotiation of social relations between these periods in response to the differing political orders which arose during the shift from Classical Greece through Imperial Rome. These practices include the daily review (*meditatio*), as well as the practice of journaling (ὑπομνήματα).[9] Foucault takes his title from a reformulation of Seneca's use of "care for myself" (*cura mei*) at *Ep.* 121.17. He equates Seneca's concept with the Greek ἐπιμελεία ἑαυτοῦ, placing Seneca's formulation of care in a tradition leading back to Socrates.[10]

However, many scholars have argued, and I agree, that in pushing back against pre-existing "individualist" theses,[11] Foucault overemphasizes the social construction of this attitude, particularly in terms of what he calls the "crisis of subjectification."[12] Martha Nussbaum (1994: 5) points out the absence of philosophical argument as a force of shaping the ethical subject in Foucault's analysis.[13] As Pierre Hadot (1995: 206-7) notes: "The description M. Foucault gives of what… he prefers to call 'techniques of the self,' is precisely focused far too much on the 'self,' or at least on a specific conception of the self." In light of this project, Foucault is right to highlight the aspect of care as *labor*, as something which requires physical exertion and work, but the nature of this labor is not particularly aesthetic, as Foucault would have it.[14] Given the

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[9]Foucault, 1986: 49-53; cf. Foucault, 1997.

[10] Foucault, 1986: 47. Warren (2001: 102-5) discusses this in terms of μελετή θανάτου and the *Phaedo*, and this morbid concern is picked up by Hamilton (2013: 81), with reference to Foucault (2007: 128-9). While Foucault turns to ἐπιμελεία as Greek equivalent for Latin *cura*, Heidegger (*SZ* 199 n. vii) provides Greek μέριμνα in a conscious effort to build off of a "Helleno-Christian" interpretation, linking Augustine to Aristotle. As we shall see, neither appeals to the Greek adequately captures what Seneca is doing in the *EM*.

[11] Foucault, 1986: 42

[12] On the "crisis of subjectification", Foucault, 1986: 95. Bartsch (2006: 251-5), in addition to her own unique criticisms, provides a bibliography of previous objectors to Foucault's interpretation, both in terms of his aesthetic criterion as well as his social thesis.

[13] Though, one may perhaps forgive Foucault's omission when it comes to Seneca among his chosen authors, given the Latin philosophers' varied attacks on syllogisms. cf. Cooper 2006.

[14] So Hadot, (1995:211), who also accuses Foucault of misrepresenting ancient sculpture in his picture of aestheticization, saying that (1995: 102) "for the ancients, sculpture was an art which 'took away,' as opposed to

image of Cura from Hyginus as a goddess working with the dirt, the aesthetic value of beauty has to be reevaluated in terms of the humble material and the varied and vile deaths, which Seneca counts among proper Stoic lives.[15]

Because of Foucault's description of the many methods by which students of philosophy, particularly Stoics, practiced their meditation and internal review of their activity, the question of the relation of care to the self has been relegated to the background in favor of grappling with the larger question of the nature of the self in antiquity. As Hadot notes in the above quotation, Foucault has a particular conception of the self which underlies his thesis, a post-Cartesian concept based on the interiority of the mental,[16] which he sees developing in the Roman imperial period and which Christopher Gill (2006) characterizes as "subjective-individualist." Instead, Gill appeals to the Stoics' belief in psychophysical and psychological holism – that matter and soul are an inseparable unity and that the soul itself is an indivisible unit – to argue that Stoics including Seneca had an "objective-participant" model of the self, since the self is ultimately on display for all and woven into a fabric of social relations in which the individual participates.[17] In her discussion of the Senecan self, Shadi Bartsch notes the diminished role of the social in Seneca's corpus,[18] and in the *EM* in particular the outside world is nearly anonymized, apart from a few pointed scenes, as John Henderson catalogues.[19] Thus, in this reflection to oneself—

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painting, an art which 'added on.' Given Foucault's genealogical-cum-archaeological method, it is not surprising that his thesis shares elements of the Nietzschean ideal of living beautifully; on the link to Nietzsche in Foucault's thinking on Mediterranean antiquity and reinterpretations of the debate on the self, Nehamas (2005:128–88), Dressler (2016: 167–72), Porter (2017:113–33).

[15] In particular, suicide by asphyxiation on a toilet sponge and by cervical fracture via cartwheel, described in *Ep*. 70. These deaths which Seneca praises are of (sociologically) enslaved persons, which seems to contradict Foucault and others' focus on providing new avenues for elite representation under the principate.

[16] Inwood (2009) takes Foucault to task over his somewhat tendentious reading of *Alcibiades* I, though he allows that Seneca may be trending more in the subjective-individualist direction by writing as a Latin author; about which, see below.

[17] Gill (2009) applies this structure in discussion of Medea; Cf. Reydams-Schils, 2005: 34-45

[18] Bartsch, 2006: 230-81 and 2015

[19] Henderson, 2004 *passim* and 2006.

literally and metaphorically—Bartsch traces the emergences of a new conception of the self she calls "objective-individualist", between the "first-order self" that acts and the "second-order self" that evaluates action.[20] This position resonates with that of James Ker (2009b), whose study of the *De Ira* suggests that Seneca's language of reflexivity builds on the use of the medium of metaphor, particularly as a means of engaging through rhetoric with a Roman audience.[21]

Many of the themes of these scholars' discussion and debate about the nature of the self in Seneca will appear in the chapters to follow, but the subject of the self will not be approached as such in what follows. Given the introduction of Martin Heidegger on the very first page of this dissertation, the reader will gather that I have strong sympathies with the "subjective-individualist" conception of the self and some kind of transhistorical application of this concept.[22] However, the purpose of my analysis is to recenter the question of the "care of the self" in the study of Seneca and particularly his *Epistulae Morales* around the concept of *care* rather than the *self*. Future study may help to show how bolster a connection between Seneca and existential phenomenology more specifically, but the present effort aims at a more functionalist approach to the titular "care of the self" when it comes to Seneca. Thus, my goal is to illustrate what the self *does*, rather than what the self *is*, and I see care as the crucial element in the *EM*, since it is care which accomplishes the Good. Following Ker, as well as those cited above, I

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[20] Bartsch, 2006:250. She appeals to the modern philosophical position of Frankfurt (1971), as well as to Inwood (2000)

[21] About which more below, section ii.

[22] See CAMWS 2019's "*Counting Out Time: Senecan Stoicism and Human Temporality*." Also, Perelli (1994) builds on the connection made by Mounier (1962) to analyze the ways in which Heidegger and Seneca share similar focuses on death and the influence of the crowd (or in Heideggerian terminology, *Das Man*). Deleuze (1990) applies some elements of existential phenomenology to his approach to Stoicism, though his endeavor is creative rather than historical, which clearly informs the sympathetic approach of Viparelli (2000: 5-10) who notes Seneca's position on time focuses much more on the lived individual experience compared to older Stoic theories of time, up to the point of a morbid fascination with suicide near comparable to Heidegger's being-toward-death (though for criticisms, see n.80 below), see also the connection of Seneca and Husserl made by Dressler (2016). For a contrasting view, Citti and Neri (2001:16).

begin with the fact that Seneca writes as a Roman for a Roman audience by means of Latin, rather than the traditional philosophical Greek.[23]

Seneca in and of Latin Literature

While the techniques which scholars such as Foucault and Bartsch discuss fit under the banner of a concern for the moral individual, their discussion also builds on a larger philosophical tradition. Situating Seneca in the history of philosophy is certainly not an incorrect move, but the timeline they produce makes Seneca a representative of history framed in terms of Greek language philosophers. In this picture, Seneca is an heir to philosophical positions and methodologies passed down from Archaic Greece in Empedocles and Pythagoras, down through their interpretation by Plato and Aristotle in Classical Greece, and then to the leading figures of the old Stoa, like Zeno and Chrysippus, as well as Epicurus in the Hellenistic period. Seneca then goes on to influence the "Roman" Stoics writing in Greek, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, and in Foucault's work he is connected with later authors such as Artemidorus of Daldi,[24] (Pseudo)-Lucian, and Plutarch.[25] With the exception of Cicero—who, though often sympathetic to Stoic positions, was a student of the skeptical Academy—Seneca is the only author educed in this lineage who wrote in Latin for a Latin-speaking Roman audience.[26] Thus, the equation of "the

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[23] In particular, Inwood (2005: 13) on producing "primary philosophy" as opposed to commentary, and Dressler (2016: 34–7) on overcoming the supposed "eclecticism" of Roman/Latin philosophers.

[24] Shout out to David Sick of Rhodes College, who had the wherewithal to study Artemidorus and make an upper-level Greek class read the *Oneirocritica*

[25] Foucault, 1986, *passim*

[26] Even in his *De Officiis*, which is rightly connected to a precursor work by the Middle Stoic Panaetius, Cicero explicitly states that he does not differ much from the Peripatetics, who had been somewhat reintegrated into the Academy by way of Socrates at this period (so Sedley, 1989). For a brief treatment of Cicero's relation to the Greeks vis-à-vis mythography, see Ch. 3.

care of the self" (*cura sui*) with Greek terminology for similar concepts (ἐπιμελεία ἑαυτοῦ)

does not do justice to Seneca as a Roman writing in Latin as opposed to Greek.[27]

The specific linguistic context also speaks to the social context Seneca's audience,

namely wealthy elite males in Rome, as crystallized in the figure of the collection's epistolary

addressee, Lucilius Junior.[28] As Matthew Roller (2001:88-124) explores, Seneca's imagery and

use of *exempla* from the past appeals to the shared cultural history of the Roman senatorial elite

while at the same time trying to refigure these exempla in light of both the political shifts

brought about through the principate as well as Seneca's understanding of the tenets of Stoicism.

John Henderson (2004:139-70) shows how Seneca does this through the frames of particular

letters as well, particularly in the visit to Scipio's Villa in *Ep*. 86, bringing together the image of

Scipio Africanus, exiled to Campania after his martial victories, and the arboricultural precepts

and stylings of Virgil's *Georgics* II. The use of these specific Roman historical and literary

touchstones forms an important part of Seneca's literary presentation as well as his philosophical

exposition (as we shall discuss below), and these figures either were not used by other Stoics or

actively dismissed.

As an example of the dismissal of Latin literature by the Greek Stoics, one may compare

the practice of Seneca's close contemporary, Annaeus Cornutus.[29] In the *Greek Theology*

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[27] Reydams-Schils' (2005) project, while important in elevating the "Roman Stoics" as competent and fully instructed philosophers in their own right, also treats these Greek Roman Stoics together with Seneca and Cicero (to the extent that Cicero preserves Stoic positions). In this, I tend toward Dressler's (2016:38) assessment of a "Latin culture" distinct, though not wholly separate from Greek speaking as well.

[28] Despite the gender disparity in Seneca's day, where possible I use the singular "they" or "human beings" to translate singular agents, with the exception of the discussion of gender hierarchies and personification in Ch. 3. On Lucilius' life, Griffin (1976: 91-4); on the fictional nature of the correspondence, rather than the man, Griffin (1976:347-53)

[29] In his discussion of Cornutus' biography and work, Boys-Stones (2018:3 n. 5) cites previous attempts to connect the one Annaeus to the other, from the erroneous and largely wishful hypothesis that Cornutus was a freedman of Seneca the Elder (on analogy with the Stoic freedman Epictetus) to the idea that Cornutus may be a target of some Senecan polemic. In any case, Boys-Stones states it is "unthinkable" that Cornutus would not have been aware of Seneca the Younger, since the *Life of Persius* makes clear he tutored his nephew Lucan, but whether a connection in the other direction occurred is speculative at best.

(ἐπιδρομὴ τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἑλληνικὴν θεολογίαν παραδεδομένων), Cornutus engages in the

very Stoic practice of etymologizing the names of divinities to reveal their original meanings and

connections with Stoic concepts. Specifically, Cornutus turns to Hesiod as a repository of ancient

wisdom that just needs the proper allegorical understanding to be approached philosophically.[30]

On the other hand, Servius, Macrobius and Aulus Gellius record how Cornutus did not think that

the Roman poet had the same level of wisdom as Hesiod because of excessive fabrications,

including his portrayal of Vulcan and Venus marriage in *Aeneid* 8.[31]

 Meanwhile, Seneca does not hesitate to avail himself with lines and quotations from

Virgil's works throughout the *EM*, though he does caution in *Ep.* 86.15 that the *Georgics*,

didactic in form, are only meant to delight readers.[32] Meanwhile, in Seneca's *De Beneficiis*,

where he does provide etymologies of Roman deities like Jupiter Stator,[33] he also disparages

people who, like Cornutus, are so "enslaved to the Greeks" that they would privilege the names

that Hesiod made up for the gods over Roman ones.[34] He even accuses Chrysippus, the "second

founder" of the Stoa,[35] of running afoul of such an obsession, summing up his position on the

philosopher thus: "a great man, by Hercules, but nevertheless a Greek" (*De Ben.* I.4.1, *magnum*

mehercules virum, sed tamen Graecum). Seneca shares the same methodology as his Greek Stoic

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[30] *Greek Theology* 17.29 makes explicit reference to *Theogony* 127 which explains the pairing of Earth and Heaven as an explanation of the formation of aether out of the terrestrial elements in Stoic cosmogony; for more on aether specifically, ch.1

[31] Setaioli, 2004: 356-64, with the full list of these fragments of Cornutus.

[32] Mazzoli (1970: 215-32) provides statistics, as well as the qualification that Seneca only means *agricultural* truths and not *philosophical* truth. Setaioli (2000:193-4) sees this line as an admonition against allegorical reading of poetry, though not etymological practice as such. For a discussion of this comment in the context of *Ep.* 86, Henderson (2004: 129-38). For a particular interpretation of Virgilian intertext in the *EM*, Mann (2006).

[33] *De Beneficiis* IV.7.1, discussed in Ch. 3

[34] I.3.6

[35] For a timeline of the Hellenistic Stoa, Dorandi (2008: 37-43)

forebears and contemporaries, but he chooses to apply these philosophical tools to specifically

Roman and Latin materials and places them as superior to their Greek language materials.[36]

As Brad Inwood (2009: 54) sums up, "A Roman, writing about philosophy *as a Roman* –

that is, in Latin – asserts himself with a kind of defiant pride." This writing in Latin, Inwood also

acknowledges, shapes the philosophical positions themselves, and are more than just "window

dressing."[37] Part of this owes to the brute fact of language difference: Greek has different words

and structures than Latin, and so to philosophize in Latin means rephrasing and reframing.[38] As

Henderson (2004: 149) describes, Seneca builds off the translatory and creative philosophy of his

Republican predecessor Cicero by challenging "Philosophy to transcend its Greekness… In the

less sublimated, pragmatic, terms of moral reformation, the challenge is to prove that the world

through Roman eyes *is* indeed always already philosophized." The epistolary format of the *EM*

synthesizes this challenge to Greekness and Seneca's intention to move beyond Cicero. The most

famous previous writer of philosophical epistles, to whom Seneca appeals in his own collection,

was his philosophical rival Epicurus; so, in writing his own moralizing epistles Seneca

appropriates the Greek format for proper—i.e., Roman and Stoic—edification.[39]

Meanwhile, Seneca's closest Roman forebear in the literary tradition is Cicero. Seneca

was familiar with Cicero's contributions in bringing Greek thought into Latin literature, but he

departs from Cicero's style—one of the charges leveled against Seneca by Quintilian and

Fronto—and also criticizes the contents of his predecessor's letters.[40] At *Ep*. 118.1-2, Seneca

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[36] A nationalistic instance of the "self-conscious Latinization" of Roman philosophy, for which Trapp (2007); Dressler (2016: 37).

[37] So Ker (2009b: 161) in his discussion of the self in Seneca's *De Ira*

[38] "Translate-or-neologize" as Henderson (2004: 149) frames it; cf. Armisen-Marchetti (1991:106).

[39] Schiesaro (2015:239-51) provides an overview of Seneca's use of Epicurus and the Latin epicurean Lucretius

[40] Setaioli (2007: 336) and Setaioli (2000: 112-120), building on Hadot's (1969: 184) contention that Seneca cares more about "proving" and "moving" (*probare*, *movere*) than Cicero's ideal of simply "teaching" (*docere*); cf. Traina (2011) and Henderson (2004: 2 and 31), connecting Cicero and Epicurus. Seneca's dismissal of Cicero may be

forgives Lucilius for not writing so often and tells him not to gossip by quoting Cicero as a

negative example, who tells his friend Atticus "If he does not have anything, he should write

whatever has come to his mouth" (*Ad Att. I.12.4, si rem nullam habebit, quod in buccam venerit*

scribat).[41] Seneca's format may be epistolary and make use of particular occasions to spark

conversation like Cicero's correspondence, but this veneer hides a carefully crafted program of

Stoic instruction, beginning with more direct and concrete practical advice and leading towards

more in-depth philosophical discussions.[42] Alfonso Traina (2011) shows how Seneca innovates

in the use of reflexive pronouns and dative constructions previously unattested, building off of

innovations in philosophical vocabulary from Cicero to develop a new Roman philosophical

style for himself, one shaped by a rhetoric of phrases borrowed from declamation.[43] Thus,

through his "epistoliterarity," Seneca makes a Roman philosophy which combines and refashions

but also overcomes the contributions of his philosophical and literary rivals.[44]

By focalizing the world through Roman eyes, Seneca relies heavily on *exempla*, as noted

above, and metaphors drawn from Roman daily life, which include appeals to slavery, military

service, and jurisprudence.[45] As Bartsch (2009:213) describes, Seneca's use of metaphors

"almost always tries to exploit a pre-existing mode of thought or attitude by coopting it for a less

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occasioned by Cicero's own denigration of Stoic rhetoric arising from their theory of language, for which see
Armisen-Marchetti (1989:36-44) and Schenkveld and Barnes (2008: 177-255).

[41] Cooper (2006: 44-5) believes that if Cicero had been more conversational in his philosophy, like Seneca, his texts
would have been more popular.

[42] Setaioli (2000: 111-20), Schafer (2009, esp. 67-83); Consonant with the quasi-fictional nature of the
correspondence (n. 28 above), Schafer (2011) shows how the particulars and occasional elements of the letter form a
dramatized relationship of teacher and student.

[43] This style, likely owing to that of Seneca the Elder, earned Seneca opprobrium from ensuing rhetoricians,
including Fronto – cf. Traina (2011: 25), Bartsch (2009: 188) – and Quintilian (*IO* X.1.125-31)

[44] A term used by Henderson (2004: *passim*). Seneca's synthesis is part and parcel of his recommended style of
reading and writing advocated in *Ep*. 84 through the metaphor of bees.

[45] For specific discussion of slavery, Edwards (2009); for military conquest, Roller (2001: 98-123), Asmis (2009);
Armisen-Marchetti (1989: 69-202) provides an exhaustive catalogue of the images used in Seneca's prose.

familiar way of thinking."[46] Seneca's preference for imagery and rhetorical or "epistoliterary"

presentation also surfaces in explicit denigration of the kind of syllogistic proofs drafted by Zeno

and Chrysippus, and this sometimes leads Seneca to say things which appear contradictory to the

tenets of Stoicism.[47] However, as John M. Cooper (2006) shows, it is not the case that Seneca is

not familiar with the technicalities of logic or a particularly aberrant thinker.[48] Rather, his

preference for appeals to literature, rhetorical positioning, and metaphor are part and parcel of his

self-conscious choice to develop Stoicism as a Latin author and appeal to a Roman audience.

Seneca's fondness for Latin language and Roman cultural touchstones justifies the "practical"

approach to care adopted in this dissertation by appealing to the everyday experience of the

(Roman) reader of their daily movements in Roman society. This facet of Seneca's philosophical

presentation also positions Hyginus' unique Latin mythography and the Italic myth of Cura as a

prime target for Seneca to develop in his Roman Stoicism.

Hyginus: The Man, the Myths and Legends

Commentators agree that the myth of Cura must be of Latin origin,[49] and Guidorizzi

(2000: 488) notes that it has certain Stoic elements, linking this to *Ep*. 124.14 above.

Additionally, Hyginus' *Fabulae* represent a rare representative of mythography written in

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[46] Following Henderson (2004: 149): "All Seneca's writing is a double shift between Stoic terminology and Roman perspective"

[47] On his criticisms of syllogisms, e.g., *Epp*. 87, where Seneca gathers various Stoic paradoxes and arguments to ridicule them. See also Cooper (2006: 49–50). Janine Fillion-Lahille (1984) and Jula Wildberger (2006b: XI-XIX) among others have pushed back on the un-Stoic quality of certain positions, such as the Platonizing picture of the soul which Seneca takes from Posidonius in *Ep*. 92, to show the coherence with core Stoic beliefs while highlighting the creative developments these images represent.

[48] In a similar vein, Wildberger (2006a: 82-3) likens the *EM* to Aristotle's *Organon* for Senecan Stoicism.

[49] See above, n. 6

Latin.[50] This collection shares a similar orientation to Seneca's self-conscious choice to write philosophy in Latin for a Latin-speaking Roman audience, and so the choice of including the myth of Cura points toward recording a Roman or Italic story for a literary public to take up and redeploy in their own work.[51] As such, it provides a cultural thread for Seneca to weave together with the philosophical threads of Stoicism, the generic thread of Epicurus' letters, and the Roman literary threads of Cicero and Virgil. I separate Hyginus' story from the "literary" here because the general consensus of previous scholars has barred him from this on stylistic grounds,[52] but in what follows I hope to show why Hyginus is relevant to Seneca and deserves a bit more consideration as an important literary reference point for ancient authors.

It is generally agreed that the text of Hyginus' *Fabulae* circulated in antiquity, thanks to a citation by the schoolteacher Pseudo-Dositheus, who undertakes to provide some translations in Greek and Latin of a few of the stories from the collection which he labels "known to all" (III.4.2588/2613, πᾶσιν γνωστήν/*omnibus notam*).[53] Based on the consular attribution which he makes, we have the exact date of Ps.-Dositheus' transcription: September 11, 207 AD. However, this date is about the extent of any certainty there is concerning the text. First, the thing that is "known to all" is Hyginus' *Genealogy*, a different name from the modern collection. This later appellation was likely thanks to the first editor of the collection, Micyllus, also known as Jakob Molsheim.[54] Micyllus published his collection in 1535 CE based on a very worn 9th/10th Century-CE manuscript in tryingly legible Beneventan script. Subsequent fragmentary portions

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[50] Smith and Trzaskoma (2007: xxvi) notes that two of the best examples before Late Antiquity and Fulgentius are both by Hyginus – the *Fabulae*/*Genealogiae* and the *De Astronomia*, reliably linked to the same author, *pace* Rose (1967).

[51] On the use of mythographies as handbooks, Guidorizzi (2000: XXII-XXIV), Smith and Trzaskoma (2007: x-xvi)

[52] Including Werth, 1901; Rose, 1967, continuing up to Smith and Trzaskoma (2007: liv)

[53] Arabic numerals refer to the Greek and Latin text of Flammini (2004).

[54] Guidorizzi, 2000:xx; Smith and Trzaskoma, 2007: xliv

discovered elsewhere testify to Micyllus' difficulties in transcribing his manuscript and reveal

parts where it appears he changed words based on wear or illegibility.[55] In any case, his text

presents the fullest complement of myths preserved, but his manuscript was lost or repurposed

within twenty-five years of original publication, leaving the print-edition as the standard.[56] In

addition to being the most complete collection, Micyllus' text also supposedly carried with it the

appellation of G. Julius Hyginus, though it is possible that the only name attached was just

Hyginus like the collection named by Ps.-Dositheus. [57]

Connecting the text to G. Julius Hyginus, the freedman of Augustus who was the first

Palatine librarian, would place the collection much earlier than the *terminus ante quem* which

Ps.-Dositheus provides. Suetonius writes that this Hyginus was also a friend of Ovid, whose

work in the *Fasti* and *Metamorphoses* constitutes perhaps the greatest literary exercise in

mythography in Latin.[58] However, Rose (1967) questions the credentials of our author to be the

kind of learned figure that Suetonius portrays, given the less than literary style and some a few

strange errors, which he felt a proper scholar would not make, and so he calls our author

dismissively some "half-way learned guy" (*semidoctus*).[59] However, Guidorizzi is much more

sanguine about the positive identification of the author as the freedman librarian, saying the

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[55] Smith and Trzaskoma, 2007: l
[56] Guidorizzi (2000: xlii) also offers the name Möltzer.
[57] Smith and Trzaskoma, 2007: xliii
[58] Guidorizzi's (2000: xxx) evaluation reflects the generally negative appraisal of the style of Hyginus. As Smith and Trzaskoma (liv) note, the Latin is "crabbed and clumsy" with a such unique use of subordination that Werth (1901:1) believes the text is in fact split between a Greek translation and some Latin additions. Suetonius' brief biography at *De Grammaticis* 20 notes that later in life fell into poverty and was supported by Clodius Licinus, a consular and historian, which suggested to van de Woestjine (1929) that Hyginus was caught up in the same courtly intrigue which got his friend Ovid exiled. Given that Werth (1901:21-4) finds the most intertext with Ovid in the work, this may suggest a stronger case for the collection being attributed to the Palatine librarian.
[59] Rose, 1933: iii. One of Rose's criticisms concerns *Fabula* 186 about Melanippe, who is labelled "daughter of Desmon" based on a misreading of Euripides' "Μελανίππη ἡ δεσμῶτις." However, Smith and Trzaskoma (2007: xlvii) note that Hyginus' sources were largely from *hypotheseis* of Euripides' plays, and so it is entirely likely that Hyginus' source was to blame as much as the man. Were Rose around today to witness the rise of e.g., Jordan Peterson, he may be less ready to assume that academic credentials suggest general intellectual rigor and honesty.

arguments against this are "very crumbly and subjective," particularly given the way similar antiquarian literary works have come to us likewise with evidence of heavy emendation and interpolation.[60] In any case, Rose does agree with Guidorizzi that the Hyginus of our *Fabulae* is the same as the Hyginus who wrote the extant *De Astronomica*, a poem about astrological phenomena which makes reference to our collection as the *Genealogiae*, a work which some date to the late 1st century CE thanks to a possible reference to Quintilian.[61] These references place our work closer to Seneca's time than the edge of the Ps.-Dosithean *terminus*.

Given the evidence of many hands going through the text, the extent to which the Cura myth preserved is original to the collection may be in some doubt. However, among the fables which Ps.-Dositheus reports to translate is one which is about the creation of humans (III.4.2604-5/2628, περὶ ἀνθρωποπλασίας/*de hominum factura*). Both Flammini (2004: 103) and Smith and Trzaskoma (2007: 194) take it to be that this myth is Hyginus' *Fab.* 220, the myth of Cura. Hyginus' *Fabulae* does contain other stories of anthropogenesis, but none take up the entirety of their individual stories like the myth of Cura does.[62] Additionally, among these it is only the myth of Cura where human beings are specifically "made" (*fecisset, factus esse*), and the Greek compound ἀνθρωποπλασία contains a form of the verb πλάττειν, itself the translational

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[60] "*molto friabili e soggetivi*" (2000:xli-xlii)

[61] Smith and Trzaskoma, 2007: xliv

[62] *Fab.* 142, ostensibly the story of Pandora, mentions that Prometheus created men (*homines ex luto finxit*) and Vulcan made the image of a woman, following the account of Hesiod (*Theogony* 570-80); in addition to this being a passing mention of creation, it seems clear from the focus on Pandora that there is a specific sexual difference lacking in the general creation in *Fab.* 220. While *Fab.* 145 focuses on Prometheus himself – reproduced by Ps.-Dositheus – this myth only relates the theft of fire and his imprisonment until Hercules' labors. *Fab.* 153 recounts the repopulation of the earth by Deucalion and Pyrrha after the great flood (and is sexually segregated into creation of *viri* and *mulieres* akin to the creation of the *mulier* Pandora). However, this story opens with the "cataclysm," which Ps.-Dositheus mentions as a separate story immediately after the story *de factura hominum*. This story ends on an etymological explanation, similar to the myth of Cura, but it is a specifically Greek one (λαός from λᾶας), and unlike the myth of Cura this is an explanation in the voice of the mythographer rather than put into the mouth of a divinity.

equivalent of Latin *fingere* used to describe Cura's creative act (*fingere*, *finxit*).[63] With these lexical similarities in mind, it appears safe to assume that the myth of Cura would have been present in the original *Genealogia*.

Despite the arguments above in favor of placing the availability of Hyginus' text in Seneca's ambit, it is still reasonable to assume that the myth of Cura would have been available to Seneca, even if the collection we have is of later Antonine origin,[64] and this relates to the practice of ancient mythography more generally. The title which our text bore in antiquity, *Genealogia*, places it in long line of mythographical treatises dating back to the late 6th/early 5th BCE and Acusilaus and Hecataeus, each bridging the gap between Greek myth and history.[65] This genealogical format was common in Greek mythography over time, exemplified by the *Bibliotheke* of Apollodorus, a similarly shadowy figure but one whose dates correspond to those of our Hyginus and who provides our fullest extant mythography in Greek.[66] The genealogical form was necessitated by the nature of the Greek divinities themselves, who had sexual pairings between them and produced new offspring and pairings all the way down through the heroes into the historical period.[67] Thus, in as much as Greek mythographical collections followed genealogical lines, Hyginus' work constitutes in itself a *Genealogia* as Ps.-Dositheus terms it. In his discussion, the schoolteacher notes that Hyginus' work has a genealogy, but this is only part

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[63] On the translation of πλάττειν, Setaioli (2004:363) connects this with also to Cornutus specifically, who also uses πλάσμα and *fingere* to describe poetic fictions invented by e.g. Virgil.

[64] Rose (1967:viii)

[65] Smith and Trzaskoma, 2007:xx

[66] Smith and Trzaskoma, 2007: xxix-xxx

[67] On sexual pairings, Corbeille (2015:109, 111); on the historical (and political) use of divine genealogy, Smith and Trzaskoma (2007) cite the early efforts of Pherecydes (fl. 475-450) to link Miltiades' line back to Ajax, and this Hellenistic practice is taken up as well by the gens Iulia in linking to Aeneas and Venus (Guidorizzi, 2000: xxxvi).

of the work, as it already has the tripartite structure of the text which we have of a genealogy or

theogony, individual stories, and catalogues of important figures.[68]

When it comes to Latin mythological storytelling, the nature of the Latin divinities

themselves as numinous forces rather than anthropomorphic pairs led to a different kind of

explanation linked etymologically to names for divinities. As I discuss in more depth in Chapter

3, the "conceptual transparency" of traditional Roman deities obviated the need for extensive

mythography, and what stories there were existed in an oral tradition largely kept out of the

literary world thanks to the ready-made narratives from Greece as well as their cultural weight.[69]

In writing the *EM* as a Latin philosophical text for Romans, I argue that Seneca turns back the

clock on this cultural adoption of Greek literature and culture, returning to an indigenous myth as

a source of truth befitting his status as a Stoic, seeking the primordial truth that later culture has

occluded.[70] This focus on etymology points toward the use of the figure of Cura as a guide for

how Seneca deploys care in the *EM* as a distinct traditional Roman touchstone for proper Stoic

moral edification in Latin.[71]

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[68] Guidorizzi, 2000: xxv. Smith and Trzaskoma (2007:l) suggest that the singular *genealogia* means that this text had already been severely edited by the time a copy survived for Pseudo-Dositheus.

[69] Horace's contention that "Once taken, Greece took her wild captor and brought the arts into rustic Latium" (*Ep*. II.1.156, G*raecia capta ferum victorem cepit et artes intulit agresti Latio*) comes to mind here, and though much debated as to the actual truth of the statement, it attests to the cultural force which Greek literature had in Roman (elite) society. Guidorizzi (2000: 123) notes this "elite suppression" of the native Italic divinities in favor of the Greeks as well as a similar phenomenon alongside a certain iconographic syncretism amongst the Etruscans (cf. Pallottino (1955:140). Thus, the *Fasti* and *Metamorphoses* (and the *EM*) stand out for engaging with Italic stories in any depth whatsoever.

[70] Compare the comparison of Cornutus and Seneca above. cf. Setaioli, 2004: 343 and 358; Barnes, 2008: 65-76; Corbeill (2016:132) connecting Stoicism and mythology through Cicero's Hellenizing interpretation of Liber (*De Natura Deorum* 2.62); I return to Cicero's mythological exegesis in Ch. 3

[71] For an example of how far others have taken Seneca's use of etymology, Henderson (2004: 142) argues that the hapax "with big branches" (*grandiscapiae*) at *Ep*. 86.19 is a play on the etymology of Scipio, whose home is visiting. The elite preference for Greek stories and culture highlights the status of the author of the *Fabulae* as well: as a freedman, Hyginus represents a link from the elite to the underclasses of Rome, and thus his inclusion of the myth of Cura may arise from his connection to other areas of Roman life apart from the Hellenizing elite.

A Brief History of (Stoic) Time

The myth of Cura's focus on lived time and death matches Seneca's widespread morbid fixation on death and his sanguine approval of suicide. Part of this, as I discuss in Chapter 1, is Seneca's focus on the future as the division of time which provides access to the Good, as opposed to the present or the past.[72] However, Seneca's focus on futurity puts him somewhat at odds with the larger Stoic tradition, at least superficially. In their discussions, both Victor Goldschmidt (1953) and Valeria Viparelli (2000) focus on the expanded present as the proper domain of activity, and they neglect the future. Goldschmidt's analysis, because it treats of the whole of the Stoa from Zeno through Marcus Aurelius, seeks to present the single "Stoic" picture of time, rather than the different Stoics' takes, and it also for this reason ignores the figurative presentation of Seneca as a Latin author writing for a Roman audience. As such, Goldschmidt focuses on the ideal use of time, whereas Seneca directs much of his attention to moral students instead.[73] While he acknowledges a methodological time for learners who act in a series of steps, the main focus is on how the sage's activities are viewed *in toto* like the always-already of the divine.[74] Part of this is the sage's full knowledge of the sympathetic causal chain of events, the dual-edge of god as both necessity and as providence, as well as their place within this causal web, such that they will their fate at all times.[75] In this, Goldschmidt does not account for Seneca's sanguine appraisal of suicide as the path toward freedom, and by omission regards it as an aberration compared to the more staid appraisals of Chrysippus and Epictetus. Viparelli (2000:121) does reckon with the morbid aspect of Seneca, equating the mastery of fear of death

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[72] Rist (1969: 247) calls *Ep.* 70's "virtually a paean to suicide," though Evenepoel (2004: 217) notes the hyperbole of the suggestion.

[73] Setaioli 2000: 142-53; Cooper, 2006. Reydams-Schils (2005) extends this evaluation to the Roman Stoics more generally.

[74] 1953: 62-3

[75] 1953: 80-90, not without hints of Nietzsche's *amor fati*.

with a hope for death and joining in with the whole of the cosmos so as to become one with all of time. At the same time, Viparelli along with Goldschmidt hold to the (Greek) Stoic distrust of both past and future as domains for mental torment.[76] Thus, Viparelli disagrees with Joseph Moreau's (1969: 122) insight that Seneca's idea of possessing time includes the past and future, chalking this up not to a creative aspect of his thought but rather to "Stoic thought transferred to the literary page," coupled with a psychoanalysis of the Latin philosopher as a man wracked by anxiety in the face of the precariousness of life.[77]

The general temporal trajectory between these two authors is not wrong, particularly in a synthetic picture of Stoicism on the whole. Seneca's progression of moral time does move from the infinitesimal present of the *aion* to the always-already present of the divine *chronos*, but they neglect the diachronic growth of human beings overtime to be able to achieve this expanded present. It is not just a literary fancy that leads Seneca to consider both the past and the future alongside the present,[78] but it is into these domains that the moral agent must expand their present activity in order to rise up from the infinitesimal present on the plane of sensation to the cosmic present on the plane of the understanding. Each also ignore the import of Seneca's discussion at *Ep*. 124.18 of the unique access to the future for human beings as rational animals.

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[76] Goldschmidt (1953: 171-74) links care (*souci*, the same word from Foucault's (1986) French title) to *sollicitus* specifically in a negative manner, but later (177-8) when discussing the Stoic doctrine of reservation in action, does allow for a reading of care (here, *cura*) in a unitary manner, akin to Heidegger's (*SZ* 199) use.

[77] 2000:83. Here and elsewhere, Viparelli betrays a strong tendency toward phenomenological eisegesis, importing concepts from Kierkegaard/Heidegger (a particular definition of anxiety and explicit use of *Dasein*), Sartre (the in-itself/for-itself distinction), and directly using the texts of Merleau-Ponty (2013 (Eng.)) and Deleuze (1990 (Eng.)). While I am sympathetic to the use of these authors, and indeed do draw particularly from the last of these, Viparelli's overly theoretical approach is not justified within the work and overrides the way that Seneca's language and metaphors contribute to his unique contribution to Stoicism and to Latin literature as a practice.

[78] Cf. Wildberger (2006: 125-32), calling Seneca's image that of *Das Gegenwartsfenster* which makes of time a passing force, citing the mention of Heraclitus' River at *Ep*. 58.22, while Moreau (1969: 119) rightly notes that for Seneca time is a thing (*res*), which is not inconsistent with Stoic corporalism, especially given Seneca's use of the term *incorporalis res* at *de Brevitate Vitae* 8.1; though Wildberger (2006:115) disputes this as being an appeal to the "everyday," I agree with Bartsch (2009) that this is precisely how Seneca's philosophical and pedagogical program works, by making the everyday philosophical and the philosophical everyday.

At *Ep*. 1.2, Seneca forecloses the use of the past portion of this expanded present: "whatever of a lifetime is behind, death holds" (*quicquid aetatis retro est, mors tenet*). Because the past is no longer a possible domain for activity, the only way to properly expand the present to rival the divine *chronos* is by working toward the future. Seneca's task, as an author focused on moral pedagogy for those still struggling to attain wisdom rather than on discussing the ideal sage, is to deploy methods which allow for the individual to act to create the good in the future by exposing them to something in the present which encourages them to see their proper end and learn to die.

James Ker (2009a:147-76) has shown how the structure of the *EM* themselves enact this different conception of temporality, which allows for the past and the future as well. This is a product of the interaction between two axes which Ker identifies. The first is that of the letters' "momentum," such that each letter together enacts a full growth from the beginner to the fully competent Stoic. Thus, earlier letters are heavy with parenetic use of admonition and *praecepta*, "precepts" and *sententiae*, little aphorisms meant to catch the ear of the student, while later letters focus on deeper conversations about the doctrinal content of Stoic philosophy, *decreta*.[79] The second is the letters' "multiplicity," where every letter itself, from "hello" to "goodbye," acts as an example of a full life. Along both of these axes, Seneca allows the reader to confront death, the end goal of the imitation of Nature, as each letter of different lengths models the Senecan dictum that it is quality and not quantity of life which matters.[80] Ker, as well as Schafer (2011) also note the element of time-travel encapsulated in the choice of addressee, Lucilius Iunior, a "Seneca writ small."[81] As such, the letters are in a way addressed to the public and to

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[79] Schafer, 2009; Setaioli, 2000: 111-22; Graver (1998: 625) notes that the sentential style was also favored by Epicurus, and Schiesaro's (2015: 241) survey notes that Lucilius was likely previously an Epicurean, and so this style is a way to wean him from the rival school and set him up for success as a Stoic. For more on education and care, Ch. 4

[80] E.g., *Ep*. 92.2-3

[81] Schafer (2011: 44).

Seneca's friend, but also to Seneca himself, as a way to combat the preoccupation of his lived time by worldly and sensuous distractions in the present. The course of the letters models the rise from the development individual letters as well as overtime, and it does so for the author himself as well as the addressee and larger readership.

To discuss the way that Seneca conceives of time in relationship to care, I use a schematization based on the spatial paradigm set up by the myth of Hyginus, which Seneca also uses in his discussions in *Ep*. 124.[82] I refer to the "plane of sensation" as the starting point, based in the sublunary and perceptible world, that tied most closely to Tellus, as well as the "plane of the understanding," connected with the ethereal astral realm, connected with that of Jupiter.[83] In Stoicism, this corresponds to the range of concentration of divine *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), the combination of the lightest elements (air and fire), which is connected with the activity of god as the divine reason (λόγος) in the material universe: the earth has the least concentration of *pneuma*, while the stars have the highest concentration.[84] The trajectory of moral development on the metaphorical level appears as follows (Figure 1):
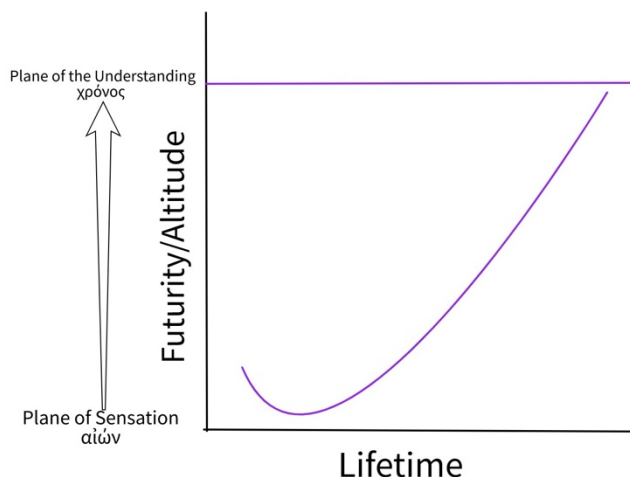
In terms of access to time, the vertical axis from earth to the astral is also shared by the temporal change from the infinitesimal present as *aion* to the eternal present as *chronos*. The hand of care begins its work on the sublunary level with the least *pneuma* characterized by the momentary *aion*, and these elements together characterize the "plane of sensation." In order for care to approximate the work of Nature for humans to achieve the divine good, it must work up toward the "plane of the understanding"—the astral realm, where the highest concentration of the divine pneuma is and corresponds to the *chronos*. The way that the hand of care accomplishes this and the Good is through a focus on the future available to human reason.[85] How care accomplishes this task will be explored in the following chapters.

Outline of the Dissertation

In the first chapter, I provide close etymological readings of selections of both *Epp*. 121 and 124, letters which come late in the collection in an area recognized as a portion characterized by more theoretically oriented conceptual discussions.[86] Leaving Hyginus' Cura behind for the moment, I analyze the use of *cura* in light of *Ep*. 124's insistence that the Good is accomplished by care comes in the context of a discussion of the Stoic *scala naturae*. The connections with animals, plants, and god are also brought up in the discussion on self-consciousness in *Ep*. 121. In order to demonstrate the work of the hand and its centrality to Seneca's concept of care , I analyze the verbiage and metaphors which he uses to discuss the human being's relation to the other three rungs of the *scala naturae*: god, plant, and speechless animals. Seneca's language of

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[85]The dip in the trajectory is a nod to the force of preoccupation, discussed in Ch. 2, a concept shared with the "distortion" (διαστροφή) of human reason brought on by social influences (SVF III.53-55 and Bénatouïl, 2007: 113–18)

[86] Cf. n. 43 about the structure/dramatic presentation of the letters.

care and the manual image of care draws elements from each of these to allow it to create the human Good. First, from the divine, care takes on the knowledge and ability to act with the future in mind. Then, from plants, it takes on characteristics of diachronic development of the moral subject. Lastly, from animals, it takes on a unitary power of both sense-perception and understanding. The hand of care which Seneca appeals to is not without precedent in earlier Greek Stoics, as the school's founder, Zeno, conceived of the mind as a hand through the concepts of "anticipated" innate notions (προλήψεις) and the "full grasp" of perfect cognition (κατάληψις). Seneca takes the hand image of the earlier Stoics and the hand of the roman Cura and combines them to exemplify the qualities of care which are key to its activities: self-directed activity aimed at the future, practically and theoretically creating the Good for the complete and perfect state of the individual in the future.

The second chapter addresses the fact that human beings do not achieve the Good, for Seneca notes it can only be reasonably expected with intense dedication over a long period of time. This occurs through misapplication of care from the future Good to be accomplished and onto work in and for the present. In this, I argue that Seneca recasts Roman institutional slavery not in terms of master/enslaved person (*dominus*/*servus*) but rather in terms of philosophers and morally enslaved individuals, who are taken by the hands of others (*mancipia*). Seneca separates those individuals who are "sociologically enslaved" (*servi*), the actual humans held as property and instruments in the Roman social hierarchy, from the morally or "pathologically enslaved" (*mancipia*), whose status is determined by the misuse of their time and their care. I first trace and discuss this process of "occupation" (*occupatio*) through its connection with Cura in *Epp.* 15 and 124, where I show that positive moral application of care is *cura* proper, while the negative application of the hand of care results in moral occupation. Next, through a reading of *Epp.* 18,

50, and 76, I analyze military-cum-medical analogy of warring with the diseases of emotions and

fortune which also highlight the temporal elements of *occupatio*, a process which has been

ongoing for agents before they were aware (*praeoccupatio*). Thus, positive active preoccupation

of the goods of others leads to increased activity and the continued positive activity of care,

while applying one's care to present pleasures and trifles makes oneself an object in the hands of

fortune and others, who limit their possibilities. Similar to Roman military practice, once

occupied by the opposing force of fortune, those misapplying their cura are turned into enslaved

persons, but specifically *manicipia* rather than *servi*, who remain the moral ambiguous actual

sociologically enslaved individuals. To discuss slavery, I turn to Seneca's discussion in *Ep.* 47.

Thus, Seneca's ethics of care plays on the institution of slavery as an image for elite

philosophizing and transfers concerns for enslaved persons into the realm of images and away

from the lived realities of a slaved holding society.

In the third chapter, I analyze Seneca's relation to imagery and metaphor. I begin with the

combination of the social elements of slavery and of gender relations through Seneca's

contention that true ethical freedom is enslavement to Philosophy, a feminine personification.

This paradox is also shared by the relationship of the Good accomplished by care to the feminine

figure of Cura, who shapes human beings. I argue that Seneca's use of the image of care

combines Stoic cosmology with the myth of Hyginus, Roman traditional religion, and Latin

literature in order to eliminate the possibility of male Roman subjects being subject to

femininity. First, I situate Seneca's relation to allegorical and etymological treatments of myth

and literature by turning briefly to his work *On Benefits*, arguing that he is keen to interpret

Roman religious terms and stories in Stoic terms because they are Roman, while denigrating

Greek sources, including Epicurus. Then, I provide a Stoicizing interpretation of the myth of

Cura and highlight the gendered and lexical characteristics of the traditional Roman deities (*indigites*) involved in the story. I apply this gendered relation to Seneca's discussion of enslavement to Philosophy to show how Philosophy becomes a nothing because, unlike the wicked occupiers of *Ep*. 47, Philosophy does not take away the moral subject's access to future activity but rather gives time like the masculine force of god in the Stoic universe. Likewise, I argue that Seneca's sanguine approval of suicide stems from his attempt to make Cura transcend feminine Natura, which is limited to the present.

Finally, the fourth chapter discusses the pedagogical elements of the letters themselves in terms of the progress of care. Seneca notes that it takes care applied over a long time to accomplish the Good, and the structure of the corpus as a whole as well as each individual letter exemplifies the temporal progression from start to finish. I argue that Seneca's pedagogy of care takes textuality itself as the best way of providing *exempla* for students of philosophy, because they work on a temporal level which is most conducive to the use of care. To illustrate this, I begin with a comparison of selections from *Epp*. 94 and 95, the longest letters in the collection and the ones that constitute Seneca's most direct discussion of pedagogical method. I show how Seneca sets up the use of "precepts" (*praecepta*) and "doctrines" (*decreta*) as the endpoints of a spectrum which maps the axis of increased futurity from the *aion* to the *chronos*, respectively. When combined, these elements form most efficacious method of teaching, *exempla*, just as the combination of the earth and the heavens create the domain and time of Cura in the myth of Hyginus. The efficacy of *exempla* relies on their appeal to the emotions (*adfectus*), and specifically in their ability to make (*ad + facere*), and I argue for Seneca's more positive evaluation of the capabilities of the emotions through a reading of *Ep*. 76 and *Ep*. 26. Seneca's concern for the emotions shows how the act of writing creates moral development, and I briefly

show how the metaphor of the bees at *Ep*. 84 shows how moral development is displayed and enacted through the use of care in writing.

These four chapters work first to clarify how Seneca imagines care as a hand which uses future time specifically and acts in a manner which emphasizes the future. Then, they present the two limits of the moral and temporal range which Seneca present, the one being complete occupation and misuse of time leading down to the plane of the understanding and the other being the proper use of reason in relation to Philosophy and Nature. Finally, the last chapter bridges the gap between these two poles by showing how care works on the part of the student of philosophy as well as their instructor to work toward achieving the good. As a brief conclusion, I also consider the example of Seneca's life and suicide as reflections of the use of care in the text as well as on it.

1

Curo, ergo sum: Time and Care in the *Scala Naturae* (*Epp*. 121 & 124)

In the final extant letter of Seneca's *Epistulae Morales*, Seneca discusses with Lucilius

the nature of the Good and happiness (*vita beata*), and how human beings can come to achieve

both of these. In order to do this, Seneca appeals to a natural continuum in the universe of living

creatures, a commonplace of Stoic thought.[1] As Seneca lays it out:

> Quattuor hae naturae sunt, arboris, animalis, hominis, dei; haec duo, quae rationalia
> sunt, eandem naturam habent, illo diversa sunt, quod alterum inmortale, alterum
> mortale est. Ex his ergo unius bonum natura perficit, dei scilicet, alterius cura,
> hominis. (*Ep*. 124.14)[2]

> There are these four natures: that of a tree, that of an animal, that of a human, and
> that of god: the latter two, to which reason pertains, have the same nature, they are
> separated by the fact that death does not pertain to the one, but death does pertain
> to the other. Out of these, therefore, Nature accomplishes the good of the one (that
> is, god), and care that of the other (that is, the human being).

Despite making four categories for the different levels of life, Seneca's presentation really

creates three categories, one of which has a further subdivision. It is not just that reason pertains

to both humans and god, but they also "have the same nature," which would suggest that they

are the same thing.[3] Indeed, compared to the natures of plants and animals, both god and humans

"belong to reason" or are "of reason" (*rationalia*), and thus they achieve the Good according to

Nature.[4] However, in this same sentence, these two natures have been "separated" split by

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[1] Armisen-Marchetti, 1989: 35 provides helpful hierarchical schemata of Stoic ontology as presented by Seneca. Wildberger, 2008: 48–58 breaks down the *scala naturae* of Stoics, including also inanimate matter, as the key is the amount of πνεῦμα in the individual object, culminating in the highest concentration – i.e., god. See also, Hankinson, 2008: 482–3; Wildberger, 2006b: 60–79. On the Stoic biological model of god and the cosmos, Furley, 2008: 434–40.

[2] Latin Text taken from the OCT editions.

[3] As an analytic tool, any reference to *natura* or *bonum* without some sort of determiner will be rendered "Nature" and "the Good" respectively; otherwise, they will be rendered in minuscules, e.g., "these natures", "the same nature." All translations from the *Epistulae Morales*, tortured as they may be, are my own, with guidance from those of Grummere (1917, 1920, 1925) and using his Loeb Latin texts, as well as with help from Inwood (2007).

[4] Assuming a parallel with adjectives, e.g., *australis, Cerialis, curialis*, etc., each derived from a particular noun (*auster, Ceres, curia*) to form an adjective to describe something characteristic of or pertaining to said noun. Breyer,

mortality: god does not belong to death (*inmortale*), while humans do. This razor of mortality also splits along the grain of completeness as well. For god, being immortal, (its) Nature itself is enough to accomplish its Good (*unius bonum natura perficit*); indeed, according to Stoic physics, the operation of god simply is the operation of nature.[5] For humans, however, Nature is not enough to achieve the Good: even as rational adults, humans are rational but incomplete (*inperfectum*), as it is quite possible that they may never attain the Good over the course of their lifetime.[6] Provided humans *do* attain the Good, then it is care or concern (*cura*) which accomplishes (*perficit*) this and which makes the human good through time up to the end (*per + facere*). If these two rational natures do indeed have the same nature, then what god and nature are together, care and the human are as well.[7]

In this chapter, we will analyze the language which Seneca uses in connection with care to show how Seneca figures what I will term the "hand of care," characterized by activities which a human being would perform with their hands, such as through manual labor, as well as in lifting, throwing, and gathering.[8] This chapter will engage in a close reading of the final extant letter of the collection, which has the most programmatic assertion about the value of care – after all, it is what accomplishes the Good. In this final letter, Seneca connects the power of the hand of care to accomplish the Good with the access to the future, a feature granted to humans and god thanks to their shared rational nature. This futural focus of care, aiming at the future and

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1993: 48 follows Leumann, 1917: 9 in suggesting that *-alis* adjectives show *"Bezeichnung und Zugehörigkeit*," so the 'of' makes sense as a quick translation here to me. Hansenn, 1889: 40–4 relates an interesting possibility relating to Kantian modality that the *-alis* relates to the future and to possibility compared to other "preterito-present' adjectives, which would be very fitting for the present circumstance.

[5] On the facets of God, see Wildberger, 2006b: 21–47 in connection with λόγος

[6] As Seneca mentions at *Ep*. 124.12, discussed below.

[7] For the mathematically inclined philosophical crowd, $\dfrac{deus}{natura} = \dfrac{homo}{cura}$

[8] This approach is informed by Lakoff & Johnson (2003, esp. 14–21) on the coherence of orientational and experiential metaphors, and shares sympathies with the importance on embodiment and motricity in shaping perception and cognition as theorized by Merleau-Ponty (2012: 100–49).

making use of future time, is the key to allowing human beings to accomplish the good. To begin

with, we will compare the temporality of god and the Good accomplished by (its) Nature with

that of human beings and the care which they use to accomplish the Good. The use of

temporality points back to the very first epistle, where Seneca commands Lucilius to "put his

hands on today" (*Ep*. 1.2, *hodierno manum inieceris*), showing how the hand of care is present

in the corpus from the beginning.

The discussion of care in *Ep*. 124 also draws on Seneca's most explicit discussion of care

from *Ep*. 121. Seneca explains offers this as part of his discussion of human and animal

knowledge of their "constitution" (*constitutio*), which he defines, following the Stoics, as "the

leading part of the soul holding itself in a certain manner toward the body" (*Ep*. 121.10,

principale animi quodam modo se habens erga corpus).[9] When it comes to what this relationship

means for the rational human animal, Seneca once again invokes *cura*:

> Voluptatem peto, cui? Mihi. Ergo mei curam ago. Dolorem refugio, pro quo? Pro
> me. Ergo mei curam ago. Si omnia propter curam mei facio, ante omnia est mei
> cura. Haec animalibus inest cunctis nec inseritur, sed innascitur. (*Ep*. 121.17)

> I seek pleasure – for what? For myself. So, I am doing care of myself. I flee from
> pain – on behalf of what? On my behalf. Therefore, I am doing care of myself. If I
> do all things on account of care of myself, care of myself is before all things. This
> exists in the rest of the animals and it is not planted, but rather born in them.

In this letter, Seneca now presents care as the mediating force of the soul in the world, because it

is what is nearest and dearest, that on account of which all is done and that which thus logically

precedes all one does. The use of *facit* here points ahead to the use of *perficere* in *Ep*. 124, where

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[9] Inwood (2007:337) notes that this is a particularly source-oriented translation from the Greek, as does Brennan (2009: 402) in his discussion of σύστασις/*constitutio* as the first οἰκέιον in Alexander of Aphrodisias (*De An. Mant. 150.25 = SVF* 3.183). Brennan also notes (ibid, n.15) that this definition aligns with the "fourth Stoic genus," πρὸς τί πως ἔχον, which according to Simplicius (*in Cat*. 166.15 – 29 = SVF 2.403 = LS 29C; tr. from LS 29C) describes properties "whose nature it is to become and cease to be a property of something without any internal change or qualitative alteration." Bréhier (1928:43) notes that such an attribute would fall among the incorporeals (ἀσώματα) of Stoic materialist physics; see also Sedley, (2008:395–409), with helpful *SVF* citations.

care reaches its completion when it "perfects" (*perficit*) the good for human beings; the gloss *agere curam* provides a quick definition for this *facere* in 121, and it points to the crafting ability that is part of *perficere* as well. The discussion of animal consciousness in *Ep*. 121, together with Seneca's portrayal of the Stoic *scala naturae* in *Ep*. 124, provide a means of developing the powers of care in relation to the future by analyzing the metaphors and discussions of plants and non-human "speechless" animals (*muta animalia*) to discuss human development. In particular, the combination of tenses and voices of the verbs, which Seneca uses to describe the respective activities of humans, plants, and animals, shows how humans – unique in the *scala naturae* – take an active role in cultivating their development through time in order to arrive at their good, the Good shared with god.

In his comparison with plants and animals, Seneca takes up concepts from Greek thinkers from the Old Stoa and, through etymology and imagistic translation into Latin, deploys them in a way to make them less technical and more concrete for the moral agent reading the *Epistulae Morales*. In particular, Seneca takes up the terms of Stoic cognitive psychology, such as "selection" (ἐκλογή), "anticipation" (πρόληψις) and "comprehension" (κατάληψις), breaks them down to their etymological components, and melds into the hand of care. Seneca's language of moral progress constructs an axis of movement through time: the hand of care, to accomplish the Good, must make its way upward from a plane of sensation, which the human being shares with animals, to a plane of the understanding, which the work of care with and through the future allows human beings to access and join with the divine in the Good. The combination of sensation and understanding in Seneca's discussions also show how the hand of care precedes linguistic thought, developing the picture of rational nature which the previous

Greek Stoics held.[10] The hand of care becomes the active agent in the Stoic process of "appropriation" (οἰκείωσις), by which human beings come to live in accordance with nature and as internally coherent individuals.[11] Since care leads to the same result as Nature does for god, and since Seneca shows how the hand of care is active in the human being from birth, Seneca portrays the hand of care as the force which mediates and makes the individual cohere in order to accomplish the Good.

The Divine in Humans—The Good of Nature

To try and reorient the *scala naturae* around the node of care and its temporal implications, it will help to show the goal toward which Seneca claims human nature aims: The Good. This is the explicit topic of *Ep*.124, where Seneca is glad that Lucilius has developed the choosiness and "precision" (*subtilitas*) to tease apart this dense question. Hints of the etymological linkage of the hand and care can be seen from the beginning of *Ep*. 124, where the importance of care for accomplishing the Good of humanity is prefigured by the epigram with which Seneca opens his correspondence to Lucilius. He praises his friend and student for his progress from his first steps as a student of Stoicism in *Ep*.1, as he has now developed a certain intellectual "choosiness" (*elegantia*) such that he "does not carelessly keep pursuing things so great" (*Ep*. 124.1, *non est elegantiae tuae tam magna sectari secure*). Seneca juxtaposes such

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[10] Goldschmidt (1953: 160) and Wildberger (2009: 48) note that the Stoics believed that "reason" was achieved in humans either at the age of seven or fourteen, depending on the particular author.

[11] The terminology of coherence is primarily taken from Gill's (2006 & 2009) appeal to holism, but it is a consistent them in modern scholarship discussing appropriation/οἰκείωσις. In his discussion, Dressler (2016: 98–100), in a linguistic analysis of the Greek term, emphasizes, "The suffixes of the term *oikeiosis* (-oô+sis) indicate its verbal character as a process making it more appropriate to speak of ownness in terms of **identification** [sic] than identity" (98). The position of Reydams-Schils (2005: 55–9) will be discussed more below. See also Engberg-Pedersen (1990); Goldschmidt (1953: 56; 127), Steiner (2008: 39–42); Bénatouïl (2006: 21–6; 116); Inwood & Donini (2008: 677–81); Schofield (2008: 760–68).

"choosiness" with the attitude of the hesitant reader of Vergil's *Georgics,* whom the poet there

tells:

> Possum multa tibi veterum praecepta referre,
> Ni refugis tenuisque piget cognoscere curas. (I.176–7)
>
> I can bring back to you many precepts of the old, if you do not flee back and it is
> not revolting to come to know such slender cares.[12]

Seneca uses this passage of Virgil's to couple 'slender cares' with the handling of *praecepta*, a

term which in Stoic pedagogy refers to adages and bits of moral advice helpful for finding one's

way.[13] These precepts themselves recall handiwork through their etymology, as they are things

"taken beforehand" (*prae + capere*),[14] and Seneca excerpts this from a discussion of the *arma*

that farmer's make and use to bring their fields to fruition.[15] Thus Lucilius' ability to face up to

the "slender cares" and gain bits of advice and thus grapple with questions "so great" is a mark

of his proper use of his own care.

      In addition to accomplishing the Good, Lucilius' care and choosiness is also required in

order to even approach a proper understanding of the Good. Part of being able to accomplish the

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[12] Mazzoli (1970:215–32) highlights Seneca's love for Virgil, noting that he is Seneca's most cited author, and that *Georgics* I is, along with *Aeneid* VI, the most cited of Virgil's work. The citations from Virgil increase over the corpus of the letters, a reflection of Setaioli's (2000: 117–20) distinction between the *disputatio/admonitio* for public paraenesis and *sermo/institutio* for more private pursuit of truth, and this follows the trajectory of the letters discussed by Schafer (2009: 73). Trinacty (2009) argues that Seneca uses such quotations as a critique of the elder Seneca's work on *imitatio*, both as a way of enlivening philosophical points with allusion as well as a rhetorical pedagogical exercise. Armisen-Marchetti: 1989: 24, 38–41 breaks down Seneca and other Stoics' attitude to rhetoric and the perceived tension with philosophizing. Setaioli (2000: 117) also notes that Seneca's attitude toward stylistic expression, as seen at *Ep*. 46.2 echoes that of Cleanthes, for whom the "great divine" concepts (θεῖα μεγέθη) need to be expressed in poetry (*SVF* I.486).

[13] Seneca provides a fuller treatment of these rules of thumbs and *decreta*, general theoretical doctrine, in *Epp*. 94 & 95, respectively. Schafer (2009) provides an in-depth analysis of the pedagogical and thematic elements of these two longest letters of the *EM*. Their function in Seneca's pedagogy of care is discussed more in Ch. 4

[14] This etymology recalls that of the Stoic term πρόληψις, discussed below, but given that *praecepta* are formed from the perfect participle, I argue that they function in different though related ways; cf. Ch. 4on Seneca's rhetoric and pedagogy.

[15] Mazzoli (1970:223) suggests that Seneca has an allegorizing reading of Virgil, but Setaioli (2000:194–7) pushes back against this interpretation, as he sees no consistent thorough-going allegory in play – rather, he says Seneca uses poetry in an "exemplary" manner. Regarding language more generally, Armisen-Marchetti (1989: 29) notes that Stoics saw language itself as holding intuitive truths which allegorical descriptions could uncover. This discussion will be picked up in Ch. 3, particularly regarding mythography and hermeneutics.

Good is coming to terms with what it is and how one arrives at it, and this leads to the guiding question for this particular letter. Seneca asks, "Is the Good grasped by sensation or by the understanding? To this is added that it is not there for speechless creatures and for infants" (*Ep.* 124.1, *utrum sensu conprendatur an intellectu bonum? Huic adiunctum est in mutis animalibus et infantibus non esse*). The extent to which this is a 'moral' letter in a clear sense is unclear from this ostensibly epistemological question, as the apparent question is not what the Good is, but rather by what means do we come to know it and "grasp" it with our minds. Based on the introduction to *Ep.* 121, Lucilius has much the same attitude to approaching questions which are indirectly moral, as Seneca suggests that they are going to have to go to court over it (*litigabis*). So, Seneca begins by offering an insight which expands the definition of 'moral': "It is not the case that whatever belongs to character makes good character… However, everything is relevant to humans, even if it is not the case that everything makes them better" (*Ep.* 121.2, *non quicquid morale est, mores bonos facit….omnia tamen ad hominem pertinent, etiam si non omnia meliorem eum faciunt*). This contention considerably widens the field of what is useful for the student of morality seeking to achieve happiness, but it also means that being able to sift through all the things that pertain to humans – i.e., everything – requires a kind of screen to pick out the best bits, like the 'choosiness' praised at *Ep.* 124.

As Seneca explains in the case of children and animals (*Ep.* 124.8–10), it is because god and (adult) humans are rational that they have access to the Good, the one being so by Nature and the others achieving this status over the course of a lifetime – but not as a matter of course. As he puts it,

> Quemadmodum omnis natura bonum suum nisi consummata non profert, ita hominis bonum non est in homine, nisi cum illi ratio perfecta est. Quod autem hoc bonum? Dicam: liber animus, erectus, alia subiciens sibi, se nulli. Hoc bonum adeo non recipit infantia, ut pueritia non speret, adulescentia inprobe speret; bene agitur

cum senectute, si ad illud longo studio intentoque pervenit. Si hoc est bonum, et intellegibile est. (*Ep*. 124.11–12)

In the manner that every nature does not bring forth its own good unless it has been accomplished, thus the good of a human is not in a human, except when they have completed reason. But what is this good? I will tell you: a free mind, raised up, throwing all beneath itself, itself beneath none. Infancy does not admit this good to such an extent that boyhood does not hope for it, that adolescence does not hope for it rightly; it is done well at old age, if it has come through to that with long and directed zeal. If this is *the* Good, it also pertains to the understanding.

Human maturation, from *initium* to *perfectum* follows the trajectory of the growth of animals and plants according to their natures, as both end up *consummatus/-a*. However, because of their reason, their good is not just *a* good, but *the* Good, not according to a specific nature but according to universal Nature.[16] This "good," moreover, pertains to the understanding both because of this rational character and because of the contradictions which sensation provides, as Seneca demonstrates at *Ep*. 124.2–7 when refuting the Epicurean position, which confuses the work of sensation and intellection so much that it "puts the height in place of the root" (*Ep*. 124.7, *cacumen radicis loco ponis*).[17]

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[16] On the question of human nature and universal Nature, Schafer, 2009: 86 remarks: "Nature, of course, has a dual significance, referring both to cosmic nature and to our own individual natures. The two come to the same thing: Nature or God has provided all we need to be good, and all we need to be good is within us."

[17] That Stoicism from its beginnings had a strong intellectualist streak is understood, cf. Armisen-Marchetti, 1989: 44; Wilson, 2014: 12 ; Schafer, 2009: 88; Setaioli, 2000: 141 (going so far as to call Chrysippus "intransigent" in this respect). Sensation, for the Stoics, is problematic because pleasure and pain – the Epicurean touchstones – are in fact among the four cardinal πάθη, the emotional sufferings which most detract from human perfection and attainment of οἰκείωσις, the process of living according to Nature, and the objects which occasion emotions are considered "indifferent," as they are of no consequence to achieving virtue, the one true good; on the πάθη and their corresponding εὐπαθείαι, see Inwood & Donini, 2008: 699ff; on the doctrine of indifferents, see Inwood & Donini, 2008: 692; Bénatouïl, 2007: 219–43 & 255–7; Reydams-Schils 2005:59–69.

However, as will be explored below, Stoics did not go so far as to completely discount the material world, as their theory of action and cognition was based on the sensible representations of the world (φαντασίαι) which led to impulses toward/away from it (ὁρμαί) which humans could confirm or deny with their faculty of assent (συγκατάθεσις); cf. Bénatouïl, 2007: 21, citing Origen, *De Princ*. III.1.2–3, but with respect to animals who lack assent. Also related in virtuous action is the "restraint" (ὑπεξαίρεσις/*exceptio*) towards objects and projects held by the wise; see Reydams-Schils 2005; Inwood & Donini, 2008: 703. Such is the result of Stoic 'materialism,' as the only things that truly existed for Stoics were bodies (Sedley, 2008: 384; Hankinson, 2008: 482–3). Wildberger: (2006:81ff) prefers to call it corporalism, and Bréhier differentiates the mathematical/physical materialism of moderns with Stoic biological materialism; Goldschmidt (1953: 59 n7) draws parallels with this biological corporalism and 20th century phenomenological descriptions of existence, as done by Heidegger, Jaspers, Sartre, and others.

This universality is reflected in the definition as well, as the good mind rises out from other things and throws them down before it, being below nothing else. The vertical movement of the *consummatus*, given the etymological connections of *summus* to topography, also traces the upward journey of the *proficiens* accomplished in the figure of the *homo consummatus*.[18] In order to be a free, the mind of the good human has to rise above all things in order to subject them to and "throw them down" (*sub* + *iacere*) beneath itself. Approaching the Good, the *cura* required to complete it means arriving at the heights, a move which parallels the ascent from the sublunary world to the fiery heavens with the highest divine concentration.[19] Human care then rises up and hurls down in order to reach its good, the Good, which exists with god in its own activity by Nature. Since the Good is in the heights,[20] available only to the entities who belong to *ratio*, this marks a clear separation from animals. As Seneca says: "Indeed, the Good cannot fall to a speechless animal by any means: it belongs to a more fortunate and better nature" (*Ep.*124.13, *bonum quidem cadere in mutum animal nullo modo potest; felicioris meliorisque naturae est*). The Good is no accident (*ad* + *cadere*), because it cannot fall from its lofty realm down to the level where animals could grasp it through sensation, let alone for humans with their particularly dull sensation. It is *cura* which allows the human to rise up out of the one plane of sensation into the higher levels thanks to the understanding.

Part of this rests on the additional abilities of which rationality avails humans and god, compared to irrational speechless animals and plants. Humans have access to the virtue, the Good, and completion (*perfectum*) because of their ability to ask certain questions:

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[18] See n. 3 above

[19] Wildberger (2006b: 73) provides a mathematical breakdown. Strictly speaking, for Stoics there is a complete mixture (κρᾶσις δι᾽ ὅλου) of god and matter throughout the universe (Furley, 2008: 441), but the mix is not evenly distributed, hence the individuation of the four elements and the properties of minerals, plants, and animals in the universe. For more interpretation in terms of mythography, see Ch. 3

[20] With Lin-Manuel Miranda

> Haec enim rationalibus solis contingunt, quibus datum est scire quare, quatenus, quemadmodum. Ita bonum in nullo est, nisi in quo ratio. (*Ep*. 124.20)

> For these take hold of the rational only, to whom it is given to know by what means, to what extent, in what manner. Thus, the Good is in no one, unless reason is in them.

The language used here recalls a similar point Seneca makes earlier in the letter, when he refutes the Epicureans on the implications of what is *manifestum* or "palpable" for humans, even from birth (*Ep*. 124.6). It is true, Seneca says, that:

> beata esse, quae secundum naturam sint, quid autem secundum naturam sit, palam et protinus apparet, sicut quid sit integrum. Quod secundum naturam est, quod contigit protinus nato, non dico bonum, sed initium boni *(Ep*. 124.7)

> What is happy is what follows Nature; but what follows Nature is at hand and straightaway apparent, just as what is uncompromised.[21] What is according to Nature, what straightaway has taken hold of one who is born, I do not say this is the Good, but it is the beginning of Good.

At *Ep*. 124.7, it is what is according to nature, the beginning of the Good, which "has taken hold" (*contigit*) of a child as soon as they are born. This same turn of phrase is used again at *Ep*. 124.20 to contend that the Good and virtue and completion also "take hold" of rational beings. The change in tense from perfect to present shows the development of the not yet rational infant into the actualized rational adult, while still marking the same individual: they have been taken hold of at birth, they are taken hold of now.

Part of this development is connected to the "givens" in their knowledge: means, extent, and manner. As Brad Inwood (2007: 374) points out, these questions are ones asked in evaluation of actions, going back to Aristotle. However, the adverbs Seneca lists also introduce questions very relevant to the crafting power of *cura* as the mind of the *proficiens* endeavors to

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[21] OLD 1a highlights the etymological components of *in + tangere*. DeVaan, 2008: 132 notes that there is a Classical opposition between *integer* and *contaminatus*, which attests to at least an implicit understanding of the etymological connection to *tangere*, which is backed by Indo-European linguistics (ibid., 606).

subject all things to itself.[22] To know means, extent, and manner allows the student of philosophy to select the proper tools and know how, when, and where to apply them. This process recalls the *elegantia* or "choosiness" (*e+legere*) which Seneca praised in Lucilius at the beginning of the letter, and which allows Lucilius to "renders everything for some progress" (*Ep*. 124.1, *omnia ad aliquem profectum redigis*). Through the proper selection of means, extent, and manner, that is through the proper implementation of that which has been given to him as a rational human being, Lucilius can exercise his *cura* to rise to the intelligible Good on the divine plane. In this, Seneca provides a close translation of the Greek term ἐκλογή, the "selection" that humans can make among indifferents given the demands of their circumstances.[23] These indifferents, by definition having no intrinsic value, are thus put in service of the only task that does have value, the virtuous achievement of the Good. Through care, the mind, having risen above all things, thus has every tool at its disposal with which it accomplishes the Good.

However, Lucilius' choosiness and selection has not reached the perfection of the Stoic sage, the *sapiens*, as Seneca seeks to dissipate his correspondent's impatience as Lucilius asks "to what that argument now pertains, and how it will benefit your mind (*Ep*. 124.21, *quo nunc pertineat ista disputatio… et quid animo tuo profutura sit*). If we recall *Ep*. 121.2, Seneca makes clear that *everything* pertains to humans, so the end of this particular argument leads ultimately back to the human as well, but how it will profit or how it "will be on behalf of" Lucilius' mind (*pro + sum*) may not be entirely clear. However, Lucilius is right in being concerned with how it

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[22] The crafting analogy in connection with Aristotle brings up *Ep*.65's discussion of the Four Causes, in which Seneca makes explicit reference to sculpting to explain the effect. This will be developed further in chapter 2.

[23] Inwood & Donini (2008: 698) & Schafer (2009, 27) both note the distinction between ἐκλογή and αἵρεσις, "choice" the latter being for the Good while the former is aimed at preferred indifferents and what is appropriate (καθῆκον); Bénatouïl (2007: 238–9) notes that this position is particularly clear for Diogenes of Babylon and Antipater of Tarsus. *De Fin*. III.20 gives different levels of selection amongst indifferents based on the level of moral progress.

will benefit him, showing his concern for his future activity and moral progress. So, Seneca

clarifies again the benefit for the mind, appealing to his place in the *scala natura* and again

proposing a definition of the good:

> et exercet illum [animum] et acuit et utique aliquid acturum occupatione honesta tenet. Prodest autem etiam quo moratur ad prava properantes. Sed et illud dico: nullo modo prodesse possum magis, quam si tibi bonum tuum ostendo, si te a mutis animalibus separo, si cum deo pono… Vis tu relictis, in quibus vinci te necesse est, dum in aliena niteris, ad bonum reverti tuum? Quod est hoc? Animus scilicet emendatus ac purus, aemulator dei, super humana se extollens, nihil extra se sui ponens. (*Ep.* 124.21–3)

> It both exercises the mind and sharpens it and holds it as something about to act from an honorable occupation. But it is also a profit where it hinders those approaching crooked things. But I say this too: in no way can I help more, than if I show your good to you, than if I separate you from the speechless animals and place you with god… Do you want to be turned back to your own good, away from the rest where it is necessary for you to be conquered/bound, while you struggle for the things of another? What is this? Clearly a mind freed from fault and pure, an imitator of god, lifting itself above human things, placing nothing of its own outside itself.

The argument itself sharpens the mind and exercises it, which recalls the *subilitas* that Lucilius is

praised for at the beginning of the letter. In this respect, the use of the argument as a tool to

approach the Good also helps to improve the mind as a tool to achieve the same thing: the

argument is a whetstone for honing the mind to "precision," such that it can pursue the "slender

cares" mentioned in the Virgilian epigraph. Such an argument also serves to hold the mind "as

something about to act in an honorable pursuit," which adds a future element to the image of the

mind being held.[24] The beginning of the Good did hold it; the Good does hold it, for fully

rational people; and now for the *proficiens*, such arguments do hold it so that it will act

virtuously. Thus, the honing of the mind through *cura* as a tool points it in future direction,

aiming at the completion of the Good. At the same time, it also works in the present to delay the

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[24] On the other sense of *occupatio*, see chp. 4.

approach to "crooked things" (*prava*). The *prava* in the present contrasts with the *erectus animus* which is the Good and the goal. The future aim seeks to lift up and straighten out the soul vertically toward the Good and god in the plane of understanding, while the present holds the crooked things limited to the lower plane of sensation. This is highlighted by Seneca's repetition of the profit, this time which he himself can provide. In order to show the human good, Seneca must set humans apart from the other, speechless animals and set them with god. When Seneca asks if Lucilius wants to be returned to his own good – the Good – the *reverti* recalls the ontological *diversa sunt* which he appeals to in discussing the "same nature" of rational humans and god.[25] In order to make this return, one has to recognize what is one's own and use it as such.

This use of what is one's own recalls another distinction separating humans from speechless animals and placing them with god. At *Ep*.124.16–8, Seneca discusses a side effect of the lack of reason in animals and plants: incomplete time, particular their lack of access to the future:

> Tertium vero tempus, id est futurum, ad muta non pertinet. Quomodo ergo potest eorum videri perfecta natura, quibus usus perfecti temporis non est? Tempus enim tribus partibus constat, praeterito, praesente, venturo… Non potest ergo perfectae naturae bonum in inperfecta esse natura, aut si natura talis hoc habet, habent et sata. (*Ep*. 124.15–8)

> The third time, i.e. the future, does not extend to the speechless. So, how can their nature be seen as perfect, for whom there is no use of complete time? For time consists of three parts, that which has gone by, that which is present, and that about to come…Therefore, the good of completed nature cannot be in incomplete nature, or if such a nature has this, also planted things have it.

The completion of human nature and of the good requires not just the ability to understand the different parts of time but particularly the use of this completed time. Previously, at *Ep*. 124.13,

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[25] Goldschmidt (1953: 55ff) describes the ethical journey to *sapientia* as a passage from self back to self akin to the tensional movement of the universe and each individual thing. On τόνος/*tenor*, see Graver, 1998: 618–23; Wildberger, 2006: 61–2 & 72

explains that the Good cannot fall from the plane of understanding to speechless animals and the plane of sensation because it is "of a more fortunate and better nature," namely the perfect Nature of god.[26] The imperfection of animals that bars them from the Good corresponds to the imperfection in temporal access, and so the dividing line between these planes and the (in)perfect nature is a temporal one. Animals only have the present,[27] and so they cannot cross from the plane of sensation to the plane of understanding. Humans, partaking of reason, can cross from the one plane to the next, and they can do this through their use of the future.

The midway position between god and speechless animals characterizes the unique work of temporality for humans. Though god and humans share the same nature, which is differentiated through mortality and perfectibility, temporality does not *per se* differentiate the two. Rather, it is their respective *relations* to temporality and futurity which determine their approach to and achievement of the Good. The future, as unique to rational beings, allows for the attainment of the Good. For god, this futurity is built right into Nature. God ordains the future good in the universe, *qua* providential *logos*, but this future is a necessity of the function of Nature, *qua* deterministic natural laws. Thus, god is always already good, constantly enacting its perfection throughout the entire universe. Humans, in as much as they have complete temporality, are perfectible, but their use of temporality is not the same as their natural process.[28] Care, then, most work by focusing on future time to approximate the always-already divine present brought about by Nature.[29]

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[26] For an overview of the Stoic positions on animal cognition in relation to *scala naturae*, Wildberger (2008: 47–63)
[27] Seneca also allows for a very limited past parasitic upon the present at *Ep*. 124.15; this will be discussed further below.
[28] The relation of the human and divine is revisited in Ch. 3 in relation to a Stoic reading of Hyginus.
[29] Deleuze, 1990 (61–4, & *passim*) makes a similar distinction appealing to Stoic theory of time, borrowing from Goldschmidt (1953), but the time of god is the *chronos* of the "always limited present" while the time of events and sense is the *aion*, the infinitely subdivided past/future. I follow this analysis in as much as *chronos* removes the personal quality from god, but, given the providence of god and the multifarity of Stoic λόγος—as actual speech, the laws of nature, the determined necessity of the universe, the divine foresight, and colloquial "logical" thinking

The use of time in this way further clarifies the ethical ideal that Seneca describes for Lucilius of a "mind freed from fault and pure" at *Ep*. 124.23.[30] In as much as this mind is "an imitator of god, lifting itself (*extollens*) above human things," this mind takes advantage of the time available to rational beings – the future – so that through its care it can approximate the work of Nature and accomplish the Good. Thus, the hand of care lifts it up from the plane of sensation throws down there all that is not its own (*sub + iacere*).[31] This description of the ideal mind "placing nothing of its own outside itself," points readers all the way back to the very beginning of the work, where Seneca advises the beginner Lucilius that "all things belong to another, only time is ours" (*Ep*. 1.3, *omnia, Lucili, aliena sunt, tempus tantum nostrum est*). What begins as a pithy precept is reintegrated into the full metaphysical landscape. If time alone is ours, then the good mind places none of its time outside of itself, particularly the future, the time of the perfect nature of god. Seneca makes the temporal progression to which he alluded in the work of reason clear here: the return to god is a return *gained through time*, and the good of reason is one made through the *proper use of time*.

Seneca has told Lucilius from the very beginning that he must "throw his hand onto the things of today" (*Ep*. 1.2, *hodierno manum inieceris*).[32] The appearance of the hand here also mirrors the activities of the mind as it works to perfect itself and imitate the divine. Many of these activities indicative of *cura* are specifically manual: it throws (*subicere, inicere*), it lifts

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(Wildberger, 2006b: 45–6)—god's time is just as much the futural *aion* of sense as that of the human actor and event.

[30] As both Maltby (1991: 204) and DeVaan (2008: 372), *emendare* derives from the *mendum*, a physical blemish and then fault or error. In this physical aspect, we may see *emendatus* as a synonym for *eruditus*, both educated but also polished and smoothed.

[31] On the root of Seneca's term for "rival," *aemulator*, OLD for *aemulus* (n.) 1 highlights the adversarial nature of this, while 3 & 4 focus on the imitative. The link is also made with *imitatio* and the *imago*, discussed further in Ch. 3.

[32] Strictly speaking, the only real things for Stoics were bodies (σώματα), and time was one of the quasi-real incorporeals (ασώματα) (Bréhier, 1928; Goldschmidt, 1953: 13–45; Sedley, 2008: 395–401). The use of time as material and metaphor will be discussed in chapter 3.

(*extollere*) it places (*ponere*), it makes (*facere, perficere*), it gathers and selects – even its ability to understand shares manual characteristics (*inter + legere*).[33] The hand of care works, via its selection of means and methods, to sharpen the mind into the subtlest and most precise of tools, namely a mind that has all the capability of god. Care works on honing the mind (*acuit*) so that once it has its faults smoothed out (*emendatus*) and it can approach and deal with any matter or argument which is presented to it and always render and make something good out of it. The image of the hand which these verbs reinforce allows us to also see Seneca's own care, as he "prepares" humans "apart" from animals (*se + parare*) and places them with god (*pono*). In the text as well as in philosophical activity, the hand of care works to align the human being with god.[34]

However, just as Seneca has shown the divine power of the hand of *cura* as it has completed its work, he rejoins what has been separated by reintroducing the animal and reminding Lucilius that he is not *consummatus*:

> Rationale animal es. Quod ergo in te bonum est? Perfecta ratio. An tu ad suum finem hanc evocas, in quantum potest plurimum crescere? Tunc beatum esse te iudica, cum tibi ex ea gaudium omne nascetur, cum visis, quae homines eripiunt, optant, custodiunt, nihil inveneris, non dico quod malis, sed quod velis. Brevem tibi formulam dabo, qua te metiaris, qua perfectum esse iam sentias: tunc habebis tuum, cum intelleges infelicissimos esse felices. Vale. (*Ep*. 124.23–4)

> You are a rational animal. So, what is the good in you? Completed reason. Are you yourself calling this out to its own end, to how very much it can grow? Judge that you are happy then, when every joy is born to you from this, when, having seen the things that humans snatch away, they hope for, they guard, you find nothing (I don't mean that you prefer, but that you want). I will give you a little rule to measure yourself and feel that you are now complete: you will have your own then, when you understand that the most unfortunate are fortunate. Be Well.

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[33] DeVaan (2008:332) notes concerning the evolution of the meaning of *legere* as "to read" that *intellegere* and *neglegere* arise in a similar move from the "original" meaning of to gather; the latter verb stands in opposition to both *sollicitudo* and *securitas* in Seneca's discussions of style, as Setaioli (2000:123) shows. Further, DeVaan attests to a similar developmental path for Greek λέγειν as for Latin *legere*.

[34] This relates to the pedagogical work of care in the *EM* and literature for Seneca, about which cf. Ch. 4

The Good in a human may be the achievement of perfect reason, but this is not in the same way as in god because humans are animals themselves, an intermediary between two rungs on the same ladder. Human reason is not already complete but is *to be* completed. It must grow, which again recalls the imagery of plants, but it is a growth which one must call it to complete – that is, in the future.[35] Lucilius still must summon his reason, and then it must stand trial as he judges for himself whether he is happy. The final verdict aligns with the Stoic distinction of "selection" (ἐκλογή) mentioned previously, since he will have not just 'preferred' things, but what he wants, that is what aims at the Good directly. To help him realize when he has achieved this, Seneca provides the closing maxim as a model for measuring. These elements each point back to the crafting work of care, particularly in how it would assess the *quatenus* of his virtuous activity. However, the careful measurement bridges the two planes of the moral *proficiens*: Lucilius will *feel* that he is perfect—i.e., that he "has his own"—when he *understands* that the most unfortunate are fortunate – literally, when he will be able to pick the unfortunate out from the fortunate.

In this brief sentence, Seneca highlights two important distinctions. On the one hand, the fact that Seneca has to provide this "little rule" (*formula*) shows that in order to achieve the Good, human beings have to work through time to make it happen.[36] The measure that Seneca provides emphasizes the future goal to focus on: "I will give," "you *will* have," "you *will* understand (*dabo, habebis, intelleges*). While sharing reason with god gives the ability to access future time, it does not ensure the Good for humans. On the other hand, the connection of

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[35] Cf p. 25–76 below, particularly n. 49 on the vocal etymology of the *conciliatio* involved in the relationship of person and subject. Bénatouïl (2006: 125–7) provides an account of virtuous and unvirtuous behavior and mental health in terms of beliefs consistent with Chrysippus.

[36] OLD 7a turns to *Epp*. 6 & 92 for a definition referring to a general standard, along with a guide, measure, or paradigm, the latter of which also refers to Seneca being about to give a future model (*Ep*. 92.3, *Denique ut breviter tibi formulam* **scribam**, *talis animus esse sapientis viri debet qualis deum deceat*).

sensation and understanding with this accomplishment points to the primacy of care in human cognition. To fully understand how these two elements affect Seneca's conception of the hand of care, we will now turn to the other two, irrational elements of the *scala naturae*.

The Hand of Care Over Time

    i.   *The Seeds of the Subject*

To reevaluate the relationship of understanding and sensation in humans, we must return to the argument Seneca pitches against his Epicurean interlocutor. The first argument against the Epicurean position, as Seneca describes it, is that human sensation leads us towards things that are both shameful and honorable, and given our sensation is much weaker than animals, it is the least reliable guide we have. (*Ep*. 124.2–5). The second is a developmental critique:

> Tu summum bonum, voluptatem, infantiae donas, ut inde incipiat nascens, quo consummatus homo pervenit. Cacumen radicis loco ponis. (*Ep*. 124.7)

> You are gifting the highest good, pleasure, to infancy, such that being born they begin from that place where the accomplished human arrives in the end. You are putting the height in place of the root.

Seneca does not agree that the highest good is pleasure, as we have seen, but the issue is that the infant has sensation just like the adult, and so this cannot be where the Good lies, because the Good is that of perfected reason and a free mind. To assume that this kind of model of the Good is correct is, by the analogy he provides, akin to planting a tree upside down and assuming that this is the proper growth pattern. This absurdity also points out the developmental similarity between plants and humans, as each must grow into their good. However, they do not share the same good: "But by what means is the Good not in a tree or in a speechless animal? Because there is no reason" (*Ep*. 124.8, *Quare autem bonum in arbore animalique muto non est? Quia nec ratio*). Seneca's language in the tree metaphor above shows, on the one hand, that plants do

have a diachronic development, but it is given to them from without by the hand of Nature and so they simply pass through their developmental stages. On the other hand, human development shares in this diachronic trajectory, but the development is one that must be initiated from within the human being, and so it must look to the future and act with the future in its aim.

Seneca's comparisons with plants shows care as the activity of the human aimed at the future as well as how the hand of care can be trained overtime to make the Good come to fruition. Although infants have the beginning of the Good, i.e., what is according to nature, they are as far from achieving it as "the completed is from the beginning" (*Ep*. 124.10, *ab initio perfectum*). To illustrate this, Seneca returns to a more explicit analogy with plants than the one he uses against the Epicureans:

> Ergo nec in tenero, modo coalescente corpusculo est.[37] Quidni non sit ? Non magis quam in semine. Hoc si dicas, aliquod arboris ac sati bonum novimus; hoc non est in prima fronde, quae emissa cum maxime solum rumpit. Est aliquod bonum tritici; hoc nondum est in herba lactente nec cum folliculo se exerit spica mollis, sed cum frumentum aestas et debita maturitas coxit. (*Ep*. 124.10–11)

> So, it is not in the tender little body, just now coming together. Why should it be? No more than in the seed. If you should say this, we have come to know that there is a certain good of the tree and plant; this is not in the first leaf, which sent out just breaks the soil. There is a certain good of wheat; this is not yet in the suckling grass nor when the soft bristle has gone out of its husk, but once the summer heat and the ripeness owed has cooked it.

The 'suckling grass' of a young wheat plant is "not yet" (*nondum*) in possession of its good, and this word recalls Seneca's discussion of human development shortly before, where Seneca describes infants as "not yet belonging to reason" (*Ep*. 124.9, *nondum rationale*). The language of breastfeeding blends the young grass into a child itself, emphasizing the developmental similarity of the two genera. Thus, just as the plant does not achieve its good until the "ripeness

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[37] OLD (2) notes that the term *corpusculum* is one of the terms Lucretius and other Latin authors use to speak of atoms.

owed" has cooked the grains, so too the human does not achieve the good until maturity.[38]

Seneca makes a similar analogy in *Ep*. 121, which more closely matches his assertion that it is

specifically "old age" when a human can hope to reach maturity. Here, Seneca seeks to address

the question of the constitution (*constitutio*) of human beings and how it can change over time:

> Nam et illa herba, quae in segetem frugemque ventura est, aliam constitutionem habet tenera et vix eminens sulco, aliam, cum convaluit et molli quidem culmo, sed quo ferat onus suum, constitit, aliam cum flavescit et ad aream spectat et spica eius induruit; in quamcumque constitutionem venit, eam tuetur, in eam componitur. (*Ep*. 121.15)

> For also that grass, which is about to come into harvest and fruition, tender and scarcely jutting out from the furrow it has one constitution, it stands by another, when it has grown strong and with a soft stalk indeed, but with which it bears its own burden, another, when it turns golden and looks at the threshing floor and its bristles have hardened; whatever constitution it has come into, it looks after this, it is put together into this.

We shall return to discuss constitution more fully in comparison with animals, but it is sufficient

here to point out the stages of plant life as they closely follow those of humans. The tender

sapling just emerging with its 'first frond', the self-supporting stalk, the first bristling wheat, and

the cooked and hardened fruit each match the tottering infant (described at *Ep*. 121.8), childhood,

adulthood, and finally old age which "looks at the threshing floor" at the end of its life.[39]

Plants cannot literally see the threshing floor nor "look after" the constitution of their

particular stage of life, but this visual language does highlight the closeness of developing plants

with developing humans, and it recalls the privileging of vision in comparison with touch at *Ep*.

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[38] The use of *frumentum* and the reference to the threshing floor in the following analogy from *Ep*. 121 both highlight the Stoic position that all life lower down the *scala natura* was ordained for use by humans; cf. Bénatouïl, 2007: 43–62; Wildberger (2009: 63) suggests that humans are made for god on the Stoic view.

[39] As part of her study of death in Roman literature (both Greek & Latin), Edwards (2007: 144–60) approaches "watching death" from the point of view of spectators and exemplarity (about which more, Ch. 4). Dressler (2020: 227–35) approaches the theme of looking to the end and foresight in *Ep*. 113 & *De Vita Beata* in terms of the post-human, though with separate foci than this dissertation. Inwood (2005: 241) and Ker (2009: 74) highlight the morbid preoccupation Seneca has with death in his work, and the latter shows clearly how the very epistolary structure of the corpus enacts the course of a life (147–76). This practice has its roots in the μελέτη θανάτου of Socrates at *Phd*. 81a, discussed more fully by Warren (2001: 102–5).

124.5.[40] The use of visual metaphor to describe this self-perception shows that the relationship of the human and plant to their respective constitutions is not a matter of ignorance on the part of the individual perceiving it. Further, the use of *tuetur* also prefigures Seneca's later assertion that "because the surest oversight is from closest by, each [of nature's offspring] has been entrusted to themselves (*Ep*. 121. 18, *quia tutela certissima ex proximo est, sibi quisque* [*fetus naturae*] *commissus est*).[41] Thus, this subject – whether child or anthropomorphic plant – "looks after" its constitutions in time, and these successive persons are what have been entrusted to or "sent along with" (*con + mittere*) the subject. As Seneca sums up the comparison:

> non enim puerum mihi aut iuvenem aut senem, sed me natura commendat. ergo infans ei constitutioni suae conciliatur, quae tunc infanti est, non quae futura iuveni est. (*Ep*. 121.16)

> Nature does not entrust a boy or a youth or an old man to me, but me to me. Therefore, the infant is brought together with its own constitution, which is for the infant then, not that which is about to be for the youth

To slightly alter the terminology employed by Alex Dressler (2016: 179), for humans and plants there is a "subject" which remains the same through the diachronic development into the "person" of the fully grown individual, or indeed the different persons at the various immature stages. As with the *personae* theory of Panaetius, as well as the popular image of actors in Stoic authors,[42] the person reflects the relationship of the subject with other subjects (its "role") at any given time and reflects the proper actions (καθήκοντα) to be undertaken given that role as

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[40] *Quid si quis vellet non oculis, sed tactu minuta discernere? Subtilior ad hoc acies nulla quam oculorum et intentior daret bonum malumque dinoscere. Vides in quanta ignorantia veritatis versetur et quam humi sublimia ac divina proiecerit, apud quem de summo, bono malo, iudicat tactus* (*Ep*. 124.5)

[41] Dressler, 2016: 120–1 highlights the familial and specifically maternal imagery employed in this description of *natura*. Nature's humanity will be discussed further in chp. 2

[42] In addition to the verbiage of the πρόσωπον/*persona* from *De Off*. I, Goldschmidt (1953:150ff) points out Cicero's appeal by the character of Cato at *De Fin*. III.7.24, as well as later uses by Epictetus (e.g. *Diss*. I.29.41). Gill (1988: 189) contrasts Cicero's more individualistic presentation of *personae* while Epictetus stresses that the general human role comes first.

viewed from an outside perspective.[43] Thus, just as one actor could play both Hamlet and Falstaff and still act well while modulating their activity to fit each role, so too the one subject can be an infant and act toward the Good as befits the person of an infant and later grow to maturity and then old age and act as befits their respective persons.[44] The same can be said for plants, with each individual plant at certain points going through the more generic stages of their development, i.e. this plant as a seed, this plant as fully ripe, etc.

Where the analogy breaks down is in the manner in which this development takes place. The plant shows no signs of enacting the stages to which it has been committed. In the passage from *Ep*. 124. 10–11, the good of the plant comes from without and is described in the past. In the first stages, the very first frond of the plant is passively "sent forth" (*emissa*), and the subsequent husk "has gone out" (*exerit*) from the plant. Its good finally arrives when it "has been cooked" by the summer heat and the "ripeness owed." The plant itself is only active in its stage as "suckling grass," an image which itself suggests dependency rather than activity. The plant's good comes from outside of itself, as a matter of course, which Seneca explicitly denies of the Good which is of a "more fortunate and better nature" such as to not simply fall to things. Thus,

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[43] Gill (1988:171) notes that Cicero's presentation of Panaetius' theory is a "markedly social" one, and he (1993: 343) also points out that Cicero's treatment of the virtue of *decorum* stresses the visibility to others more than to oneself; cf. Reydams-Schils, 2005: 93–7. On the theory of καθήκοντα, see Goldschmidt, 1953: 125, 155–7 & 204; Setaioli, 2000: 170 & 181–9; Bénatouïl, 2007: 121–3; and Inwood & Donini, 2008: 728ff.

[44] There is some debate about the extent to which particular individual characteristics are emphasized in the metaphor of the actor and in Panaetius' *personae* theory. Gill (1993:352) uses Friedrich Nietzsche to contrast Panaetius' stance on individuality: "Nietzsche seems to want to make the specific, individual self (which Panaetius thinks we should take account of in choosing our role) into the sole normative criterion, or rather into the "essential" self that Panaetius presents as the deeper ethical norm…. But it is clear that [Panaetius] does not want to collapse the second into the first and to make our particularity (in both its good and its bad aspects) the only basis for shaping our lives)." Setaioli: 2000 highlights particularly Panaetius' equation of aesthetics and ethics and thus appears to err more on the side of Nietzsche in emphasizing the need to focus on individual style rather than universal (particularly 188–90). In either case, Goldschmidt (1953: 185n6) notes that Panaetius' individualism is more marked than the position of the Old Stoa and that of Epictetus, and this is among his many 'unorthodox' positions, e.g., rejection of ἐκπύρωσις (Furley, 2008: 433), divination (Hankinson, 2008: 533ff; Cambiano, 2008: 598–9), and the void (Bréhier, 1928: 51). Despite many parallels with Panaetius, Seneca appears to strike a balance between individualism and naturalism (Grimal, 1953: 63), and we may see his assertion at *Ep*. 124.22 that animals will always out do humans with respect to *decus* as evidence of some distance from Panaetius (cf. n.31)

it is that plants have only "a certain good" based on their individual nature, not the Good based on Nature *simpliciter* which humans can achieve. The difference in goods is also seen in how the developmental stages are shown to not have the Good: as quoted above, compared to the plants, "Infancy does admit of (*recipit*) this good to such an extent that boyhood does not hope for it, that adolescence does not hope for it rightly; it is done well at old age, if it has come through to that with long and directed zeal" (*Ep*. 124.11–12). Despite their failure to achieve the Good, each immature stage for humans actively engages with the Good as the grammatical object. When it comes to old age, in which "the Good is done well," the means or agent of the passive *agitur* is left out, but we see this passive formulation as the reversal of the contention at *Ep*. 121. 17: *curam ago*. "If I make all things on account of care of myself" (*si omnia propter curam mei facio*), then this elliptical *agitur* reflects the proper fulfillment of a care which has accomplished the Good.

The plant's lack of care, thanks to its externally derived good, is on display also in the second passage from *Ep*. 121.15. The change in tenses, here with a full use of perfect, present, and future, reflects the focus on development and the constitutions fitting for each stage. In each case its self-relationship of subject to 'person' is consistent with the human trajectory, its looking-after of its constitution lacks the productive elements associated with *cura*. The plant-subject simply 'comes' into each constitution, and it looks after it because it is "put together" into it (*componitur*).[45] The passive composition (and not *constitutio)* of the plant runs counter to the description of the free mind and the Good in *Ep*.124, where the hand of *cura* "places nothing

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[45] Armisen-Marchetti, 1989: 42 and Ker, 2009: 171 highlight the valence of the textual project implied in *componere vitam*, one which the personification of Nature also brings to light. Wildberger (2006b:9) also points out how Seneca (*Ep*. 102) uses *componere* to describe the total mixture of the stoic universe, in which "composite" things are together but not unified.

of its own outside of itself (*Ep*.124.23, *nihil extra se sui ponens*).[46] The plant, being itself put together, reverses the activity of *cura*, experiencing rather the hand of Nature. The hand of *cura* is an *aemulator dei* in its positing power, and this distinguishes the self-relationship of humans from that of plants.

The difference between the passive *componitur* and active *ponens* recalls the active hand of care associated with the perfected mind, which selects things with an aim at future moral improvement and also grasps time itself. The association with hands and productive activity aimed at the future appears here as well, as Seneca differentiates the different genera based on their relation to active or passive attainment of their good . The plant offspring here are passively entrusted to themselves, and they have already been entrusted in the past. Their individual natures are a matter of course: as it has been, so it shall be. The ripeness owed is the repayment of this particular commission.[47] Conversely, Nature "entrusts" *(commendat)* the human subject to itself in its present person – infant, elder, or in between . The active *commendat* suggests that the human is the object, but the activity described is a reciprocal one, namely the giving of hands (*con + manus + dare*).[48] The hand of human *cura* and the hand of god and Nature, each one approximating the other, shake on it, as it were, entering into a kind of cosmological agreement.

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[46] Regarding the ambiguous use of the *sui*, Inwood (2007:103) translates this phrase as "regarding nothing that is beyond itself as its own," while Grummere (1925:449) renders it as, "counting nothing of its own to be outside of itself"

[47] The coordination of *committere/debita* brings to light legal proceedings, such as in the jurist Gaius, *Institutiones* 3.200.2–3 and frequent in Justinians' *Digest* (e.g. 21.2.35.pr.2–3; passim). With literary applications, there is an intertext with Vergil, *Georgics* I.223, the most quoted book in the *EM*:

> Et si triticeam in messem robustaque farra
> exercebis humum solisque instabis aristis,　　　　220
> ante tibi Eoae Atlantides abscondantur
> Cnosiaque ardentis decedat stella Coronae,
> **debita** quam sulcis **committas** semina quamque
> inuitae properes anni spem credere terrae.

[48] Thus Isidore (*Orig*. 5.24.20): *"mandatum* is said, because once upon a time one used to give their hand to the other in a transaction, once it was committed" (*mandatum dictum, quod olim in commisso negotio alter alteri manum dabat)*. The reappearance of *committere* in the definition heightens the gradations of the process described in Seneca while also making the hand the operator in this entrusting (Maltby, 1991: 363).

Nature gives to the hand of care the appropriate constitution for each stage, and then it is up to care to work toward the next stage.

This activity of the hand is shown even in the infancy, as it is unable to grasp the Good at this stage and take it (*recipit*) . The entrusting of the hand, the "commending" of constitution to the subject, also shares features with the description of infancy in *Ep*. 124 as well: "That which is according to Nature and has taken hold of a person as soon as they are born, I do not call the Good, but the beginning of Good" (*Ep*. 124.7, *Quod secundum naturam est, quod contigit protinus nato, non dico bonum, sed initium boni*). The beginning of the Good "takes hold of" (*con + tangere*) the person of the infant, but the subject as an infant cannot take the complete Good because of the handshake deal with Nature (*commendat*). The hand involved – touching and taking, albeit in the negative – shows the presence of care in the human from the beginning, albeit in need of practicing. Like Hyginus' Cura, care possesses the human being from the very beginning. Its hand is the one which makes the deal with Nature, since it is through these that the Good is accomplished for rational beings following the parallel from *Ep*. 124.14 (*bonum natura perficit, dei scilicet, alterius cura, hominis*). As noted above, virtue and the Good also "take hold of" rational beings alone, and the rational natures are those "to whom it is given" (*quibus datum*) to ask about means, extent, and manner. The emphasis on giving and touching with these rational beings recalls the hand of care and its own work, but now these marks of reason are part of the initial toolkit which has been entrusted to human care by Nature. The hand of care is the beginning of the Good, slowly sharpening the rational mind to use the givens of Nature to reach its own perfection.

As the object of "having been put together" (*con + positus*), plants are the object of the hand of Nature which puts them together. They are made to grow through time from without by

Nature, which takes care to ensure this trajectory. However, human persons are not the object of Nature's hand like plants are, but rather are called to a rapprochement by Nature. *Conciliatio* is derived from *concilio*, associated with formal weddings and frequently indicating a meeting or settlement between two individuals.[49] Seneca says at *Ep*. 121.15 (and then at 121.17, quoted above), that the parties brought together here are the person of the particular *constitutio* and the human subject with *cura*: "To each age is its own constitution, one for the infant, one for the boy, one for the old man: all are endeared to that constitution in which they are" (*Ep*. 121.15, *Unicuique aetati sua constitutio est, alia infanti, alia puero, alia seni; omnes ei constitutioni concilientur in qua sunt*). Unlike with plants, Nature does not take complete control of the human. It does not put it hand on humans to put them together as with plants, rather it can only set up a meeting between the subject and its various persons.[50] The proper reconciliation between the person and the subject is accomplished by care. The fitting together of subject and person in order to finally accomplish the Good according to the given constitution also raises the questions which are the mark of rationality as well as that of care. While Nature oversees how best to make the seeds grow into saplings and then into mature plants, care mediates as the active force to make the subject and the person harmonize together through out a human life to accomplish the Good.[51]

ii.   *The Grasp of Care & Stoic Cognitive Theory*

When it comes to the infant, they may not be rational yet, but the fact that they *will* be changes the way in which the child can interact with the world, compared to the animal. Infants

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[49] OLD 1–3. DeVaan (2008: 84–5) notes the connection to the archaic *calare*, "to call," which would highlight the aspect of the *logos* involved in the Stoic picture of the universe as well as in human development; cf. Maltby, 1991: 147.

[50] On the implications of transcending the feminine personification of Nature, cf. Ch. 3

[51] On how this process can go wrong, however, cf. Ch. 2. On the implications of this activity in the agricultural metaphor, Ch. 3.

do have the beginning of the Good, that which is according to Nature. Stoics believed that part of our cognitive construction consisted of προλήψεις, "anticipations," which provided the ability to derive further truths about the world *a priori*.[52] These anticipations, these "takings ahead of time," reflect the *conciliatio* of Nature as well. As an infant, the subject is brought together with the innate goal of the Good that can be accomplished. The hand of their care, though not as dexterous as that of the accomplished human, is still able to reach out with understanding in a manner which aims beyond the plane of sensation and toward the higher plane of understanding.

Seneca's description of the infant's grasp of their constitution points to a pre-linguistic grasp which the child has: "Nature is more easily understood than explained; so, that infant hasn't come to know what "constitution" is, but it has come to know its own constitution" (*Ep*. 121.11, *Facilius natura intellegitur quam enarratur; itaque infans ille quid sit constitutio non novit, constitutionem suam novit*). The process of coming to know their constitution is connected to the understanding (*intellegitur*), a verb which shares the *legere* root of the "selection" (*elegantia*) which Lucilius has cultivated in *Ep*. 124. The figuring of the hand of care for the infant is intensified by the use of *facilius*, "easier" but also more equipped to make (*facere*). The understanding is easier because it is more closely related to care than an explanatory definition is.[53] Care, as the beginning of the Good, allows the infant to grasp their constitution in the manner of an anticipation, and this grasp can then change over time to include reason as the hand of care reconciles the subject to its ensuing persons over time.

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[52] Frede (2008:319–20) paints a rather Kantian picture of the role of anticipations in Stoic cognition; see also Sandbach 1930, Todd 1973, Schofield 1980. Wildberger (2006b:27) notes that Seneca uses *praesumptio* as a translation when discussing the innate notion of God.

[53] This recalls the distinction between *logos endiathetos* and *logos prophorikos* – "inner language" and "spoken language" – first testified by Philo of Alexandria, who likely took it from his familiarity with Stoicism (so Kamesar, 2004, but challenged by Panaccio (2017: 29–34)), and taken up from the Stoics by Maurice Merleau-Ponty (for overview, Hamrick & van der Veken, 2011: 103–22)

The diachronic development of the infant's *prolepsis* highlights the fact that for Stoics, humans have two paths of οἰκείωσις, "appropriation," which the Stoics used to refer to the process of coming to live according to nature. The one path shared with animals consists in getting a feeling for one's own constitution, and the other uniquely human path is in the perfection of reason. As Gretchen Reydams-Schils (2005: 55–9) points out in her discussion of Cicero's account of appropriation at *De Finibus* III.62, these two levels of appropriation—the one for human *qua* animal and the other for human *qua* rational—neither cancel each other out nor coexist at the same time, but the former is subsumed by the latter.[54] This follows the rationalizing of sensation which increases overtime, as Long describes, but this also points to the way in which these two levels of appropriation are in fact one for humans, as shown through the connection of sensation and understanding in Seneca. These two processes intersect in human *cura* which precedes everything else: "If I make all things on account of care of myself, care of myself is before all things" (*Ep*. 121.17, *si omnia propter curam mei facio, ante omnia est mei cura*). For Seneca, as the human subject takes on successive persons, the hand of care has to expand its activity from the limited grasp of animals to the complete *katalêptic* grasp of perfect reason in order to mediate the diachronic changes from which the animal's appropriation is exempted.[55]

Though their intelligent sensation is still that of an animal, infants' anticipations provide the intellectual seed which allow the human to grow up and to develop (ideally) into the perfectly

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[54] Citing Cicero's *De Officiis* as well as *Ep*. 124. While Reydams-Schils sees Roman Stoics as generally promoting sociability and not denigrating more intimate personal relationships compared to the agapism of Stoic cosmopolitanism, Bartsch (2015) points out that Seneca's *EM* are markedly asocial, with little reference to family or political life compared to his other works, possibly because of his unique position among Roman Stoics in having to negotiate ruling and being ruled.

[55] Dressler (2016: 191) builds off Deleuze's (1990: 36–41) account of the serialization of signifiers and signifieds, which is mediated by the presence of meaning/sense and argues that appropriation is a reflexive operation in the grammatical sense.

rational *sapiens*. Thus it is that care is "planted in" humans (*inseritur*), while it is merely "born" in animals (*innascitur*): human care has time to grow and works through time to develop the beginning of the good, while animal care is what it is.[56] Care's development moves from anticipations to correspond with the end goal of Stoic epistemology, the most sure form of knowledge, "comprehension" (κατάληψις). Cicero renders this term at *Acad*. I.41 as *comprehensio*,[57] so called because "it is similar to those things which are grasped by the hand" (*similem is rebus quae manu prenderentur*).[58] This cognitive hand with the firmest grasp appears through the verb *conprendere* in *Ep*. 124 to address in which humans and animals interact with the Good and what is "palpable" (*manus + fendere*) in their environment (*Ep*. 124.1, *utrum sensu **conprendatur** an intellectu bonum*; *Ep*. 124.6, *omnis scientia atque ars aliquid debet habere manifestum sensuque **conprehensum***).[59] Before all things, care as anticipation begins the work of rising from animal intelligent sensation up to the completed sensible understanding. The future aim of care ends in the tight grasp of comprehension, but this ultimate grasp is not expressed explicitly in propositional terms. Ultimately, understanding is a matter of careful

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[56] On the agricultural roots, OLD 1d, as seen in another of Seneca's turns to Virgil, this time *Eclogues* i.74, "Plant your pairs, Meliboeus, put your vines in order" (*Ep*. 101.4, *insere nunc, Meliboee, piros, pone* [*in*] *ordine vites*); cf. also *Ep*. 112.2. This rational seed in a human reflects the Stoic cosmological conception of the σπερματικός λόγος which begins to recreate the universe in the cycle of ἐκπύρωσις. Cf. Armisen-Marchetti, 1989: 233–40; Sedley, 2008: 388–9; Furley, 2008: 434–9. Schönegg (1999: 53–6) and Ker (2009: 147–9) point to *Ep*. 38 on conversation and reason as embodying this principle. Pertinent to this interpretation, Seneca says that "reason does the same thing" (*ratio **facit** idem*) as plant growth, and the mind grows stronger by "having taken the best" of what is said (*bene excepit*).

[57] Frede (2008: 298–300) and Wildberger (2006: 82) discuss Cicero's synonyms for *comprehensio*. Wildberger (ibid, n. 18) also notes that Seneca appears not to observe strict adherence to this term, but she does note that his use of *certissima rerum comprehensio* at *Ben* 4.33.2 "concerns the future *results* [sic] of our action"; she also lists *Ep*. 85.32 in this regard, where Seneca explains *huic enim propositum est in vita agenda nouitque quod temptat **efficere**, sed omnia recte **facere*** [emphasis added]. Given the lack of at least two more books of *EM* attested by Gellius, it is entirely possible that what Wildberger views as "Seneca's *Organon*" could very well have had a more technical discussion of κατάλεψις

[58] Cicero also records at *Luc*. 145 how Zeno, founder of the Stoa, used the image of a clenched fist to express the exactitude of the knowledge and how "from this likeness he set the name κατάληψις upon this thing" (*qua ex similitudine etiam nomen ei rei, quod ante non fuerat, κατάληψιν imposuit*)

[59] On the etymology of *manifestum* from *manus + fendere*, OLD 1&2 (with the general entry turning to *infestus* as a *comparandum*); cf. Leumann, 1977: 390; DeVaan, 2008: 303, 363, citing the Twelve Tables (VII, fr. 14 &16), concerning punishments for thieves caught in the act or not, respectively.

rational selection, a "gathering from between," or sorting out (*inter + legere*), and the most precise *elegantia*, or picking (*elegantia*) out (*elegantia*), is required to accomplish the Good. In blending sensation and understanding, care's hand reaches into the heart of things, beyond the expressed (as expressed by *enarratur*).[60] as Emile Bréhier (1928: 14–36) points out, the definition is a kind of surface-effect, an incorporeal λέκτον or "sayable" according to Stoic metaphysics.[61] Seneca's interpretation of Zeno's hand, which grasps the surest impressions available to the mind, reintegrates reason and sensation in a different way, one which has transcended the plane of sensation and unites it with the plane of understanding in the firm grasp of the Good not in definition but in itself .

As we have seen, however, Seneca makes a certain concession to speechless animals in sharing the starting point of sensible understanding with infants, though they do not progress beyond this point. As a nod to animal abilities, he notes that human sensation is generally "a dulled and blunt thing, and even slower in a human than in some animals" (*Ep*. 124.4, *obtunsa res et hebes et in homine quam in aliis animalibus tardior*). Not only are animals better at sensation than humans, but Seneca comes close to even granting animals *cura* early in *Ep*. 121.

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[60] As Emile Bréhier (1928: 62–3) notes of κατάληψις, "This manner of knowing, related intimately with the soul and its object, has no kind of relation with the knowledge of dialectic: it does not reach sayables or events: it reaches the object itself, the being with its proper quality behind the result of events which appear at the exterior. It is an understanding of the real, which is intuitive and certain, but it is at the same time a knowledge which does not find its expression in language. For understanding to reach the real, the Stoics are thus obliged to radically separate dialectical thought and the representation of reality, and to place the latter in the single real world, the world of bodies. This is itself only an action of the vital force in its relation to the action of exterior objects. Understanding of the real, opposed to dialectic, relates much more to an activity than to contemplation. Further, it is a taking possession of the object and a kind of intimate penetration. The complete divide between this mode of understanding and rational/logical thought, a schism which derives from the theory of incorporeals, should have had later in Stoicism a huge influence" (translation my own).

Reydams-Schils (2005: 14) points out that Logic was not totally out of fashion with the 'later' Stoicism of the Roman stoics; cf. Barnes (1997).

[61] Bréhier, 1928: 14–36; Wildberger, 2006b: 133–200; Sedley, 2008: 395–401; Barnes, Bobzien & Mignucci 2008; Schenkveld & Barnes, 2008: 190–8. Deleuze (1990) interprets the Stoic theory of λέκτα into a theory of sense and meaning as "surface effects" or "events" arising from the causal chain of material objects. For more on incorporeals and surfaces, see Ch. 3

In his explanation of animal's understanding of their own *constitutio*, Seneca compares the

apparently "educated" (*erudita*) movements of animals and their "nimbleness" (*agilitas*) to

human craftspeople:

> Artifex instrumenta sua tractat ex facili, … pictor colores, quos ad reddendam similitudinem multos variosque ante se posuit, celerrime denotat et inter ceram opusque facili vultu ac manu commeat; sic animal in omnem usum sui mobilest. Mirari solemus saltandi peritos, quod in omnem significationem rerum et adfectuum parata illorum est manus, et verborum velocitatem gestus adsequitur. Quod illis ars praestat, his natura. Nemo aegre molitur artus suos, nemo in usu sui haesitat. Hoc edita protinus faciunt. Cum hac scientia prodeunt; instituta nascuntur. (*Ep*. 121.5–6)

> The craftsperson wields their tools out of ease, … the painter very quickly marks out colors, which many and varied they have placed before themselves to return a likeness, and they traverse with an easy face and hand between the wax and the work: thus an animal's loose in every use of itself. We are accustomed to marvel at people experienced in dancing, because their hand has been prepared for every signification of things and emotions, and their bearing achieves the speed of words. What art presents to those [dancers], Nature does for these [animals]. No one exerts their joints sickly,[62] no one hesitates in the use of themselves. As soon as they have been born, they do this straightaway. They come forth with this knowledge: they are born educated.

As with their *constitutio*, the knowledge that animals have of their limbs and the "use of

themselves" (*usus sui*) is not propositional, but it is rather a knowledge like skill.[63] Thus, their

limbs are like the tools of artisans and painters, who work with such an "easy hand" (*facili manu*)

that even the description of their nimble movement blends together in the contracted *mobilest*. [64]

The appeal to care-language of the hand is heightened by the application of *facilis* to describe it,

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[62] Because of Stoic materialism, improper functioning of the soul is often equated with disease; cf. Long, 2008: 583. On the motivated inconsistencies with medical science which Chrysippus embraced, Cambiano: 2008

[63] The most complete account of the theory of animal self-perception (συναίσθησις) is preserved by Hierocles (fl. 150s CE, per Ramelli (2009: xix) in his epitome of Stoic theory, *Elements of Ethics*. on infants vs animals vis-à-vis propositions and self-consciousness, Bastiani & Long, 1992: 441–2; Bees, 2004: 29; Dressler, 2016: 122–3. The relationship of propositions and the young may explain the contention of Schafer (2009: 89–91) that Seneca's pedagogical methods are like those used on children (despite the adult audience he advocates later, 2009: 112); on these, see Ch. 4.

[64] If this is not Senecan but a product of transmission, it is perhaps telling that this results from precisely the fluidity and facility of motion which is described.

which prefigures its cognate *faciunt* which describes the activity of *usus sui*. The image of the

dancer with the "prepared hand" appears alongside that of the actor as an important model of

Stoic morality and καθήκοντα, so Seneca's use of the dancer also serves to elevate animal

movement to a kind of quasi-*sapientia*.[65]

However, such artful activity is rather "presented" (*praestat*) by Nature for speechless

animals. They appear "educated" in one sense (*erudita*), but Seneca says that they are actually

"educated" in another (*instituta*). This "education" recalls their constitution, but the participle

reflects that this education is a past fact. They are already organized from birth, and so there is no

possibility for a further growth trajectory like humans. Like plants, Nature is the guiding force in

this education for animals, while it is the *ars* that presents the education to humans; this

dichotomy between Nature and art also recalls the same dichotomy of Nature and care which

separates the paths to the good for god and humans, respectively. Thus, while the plant-like seeds

of human care are planted in humans by nature and can grow and develop, the "care" of animals

which is born in them is already past and already achieved. Further, their activity "appears"

concernful and like *cura*, but it is only an approximation. The comparison with the dancer serves

also to highlight the distance between the human and the animal, as animals lack the speech

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[65] Goldschmidt (1953: 150ff). He refers specifically to Cicero, *De Finibus* III.7.23–4, about which he notes (translation my own), "The image of the 'realization of the art" (*artis effectio*) interior to the art itself (the techniques of the dancer or of the comedian carrying their end in themselves) ought to explain how the tendency and the '*ratio et perfecta ratio*' are to us 'given' initially with an inherent finality ('*ad quondam rationem vivendi data esse appareant*'). See n. 35 on Seneca's distance from Cicero/Panaetius and the ideal of the actor or dancer. The example of the dancer is taken up by Deleuze (1990: 161), who defines the activity of the "true" dancer and actor as "identification with a distance."

necessary for signification.[66] As Seneca says of the "good" of speechless animals as well as

plants, their "care" is said so "as a favor."[67]

The reason that animals only have *usus sui*, compared to the *cura mei* at the source of all

human activity, returns to their lack of rationality, which further determines the activity of their

sensible and intelligent hand by delimiting their access to temporality. As Seneca explains of

animals, Nature must "present" their activities to them because the present is all they have:

> In muto animali non est beata vita nec id, quo beata vita efficitur, in muto animali
> bonum non est. Mutum animal sensu conprendit praesentia. Praeteritorum
> reminiscitur, cum id incidit, quo sensus admoneretur; tamquam equus reminiscitur
> viae, cum ad initium eius admotus est. In stabulo quidem nulla illi viae est quamvis
> saepe calcatae memoria… Animalibus tantum quod gravissimum est intra cursum
> datum, praesens. Praeteriti rara memoria est nec umquam revocatur nisi
> praesentium occursu. (*Ep*. 124.15–8)

> In a speechless animal there is no happiness, nor is there this good in a speechless
> animal, from which happiness is made. A speechless animal grasps present things
> with sensation. It is reminded of things gone by, when it comes across that by which
> the sensation was brought to mind, just as a horse is reminded of the road when it
> has been moved to the beginning of it. Indeed, in the stable there is no memory for
> it of the road, though often trod… Animals are only given what is heaviest within
> their course, the present. The memory of what has gone by is loose and it is not
> ever recalled except in running up against present things.

Straight away, animals do not have the proper marks of *cura*, since they lack the matter from

which happiness and the Good is produced (*efficitur*). Their hand cannot make happiness,

because Nature does not present them with the productive questions of means, extent, and

manner, which mark the future-oriented work of *cura*. Instead, they are "given" by nature the

present, and they can grasp (*conprendit*) present things through sensation, because these are what

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[66] Wildberger (2008: 59) notes that Stoics theorized that animals had λέξις rather than λόγος. In his discussion of the divisions of philosophy at *Ep*. 89, Seneca divides the *pars rationalis* of philosophy into ῥητορική and διαλεκτική, the latter of which he further subdivides into *verba* and *significationes*, "that is, into the things which are said and the terms with which they are said" (*Ep*. 89.17, *id est in res quae dicuntur et vocabula quibus dicuntur*). Even granting λέξις, Stoic moral psychology would bar animals from having emotions (*adfectus*), as emotions are just misguided reasoning; cf. Bénatouïl, 2006: 104–6; Inwood & Donini, 2008: 699–705; Long, 2008: 571ff.;
[67] Cf. *Ep*. 124.13, *verum bonum nec in arboribus nec in mutis animalibus; hoc, quod in illis bonum est, precario bonum dicitur*.

are heaviest in their course. With the unified sensation/understanding of *Ep*. 121 in mind, the emphasis on sensation here specifically aligns interaction with the present with sense-perception. Animals themselves do not have the future, and their interaction with the past is completely tied to their present and only occurs haphazardly when they "fall onto" something or "run into" it (*incidere, occurrere*). Their 'hand' can only grasp givens in the present on the plane of sensation, while the hand of human care, being a rational hand, has the matter to create happiness.

The temporal limitations on animal cognition also explains the description of their limited intellectual grasp in *Ep*. 121. Seneca describes their self-understanding as "thick and superficial and dark" (*crasse…et summatim et obscure*). Animal 'understanding' is thus like a hand reaching into a dark box trying to identify what is inside. They gather what they can only in the present, the time of sensation, and since they are born already "set up" (*instituta*) with no further development, they can never move beyond this superficial grasp to get into the heart of the matter in the way that the hand of care can incomprehension. By grasping things in sensation, animals grasp the appearances in the present, but a momentary present which they can never expand to include the future. While the time of god is a present always-already, the time of speechless animals is a temporal quantum, with no room for future or past, and so the animals' grasp limited only to sensation is perpetually benighted.[68] The futural hand of human care, meanwhile, can work from the initial grasp of the world to get past the surface appearance and get a sure hold of the Good over time.

In the elevation of *cura*, as it functions through uniting sensation and understanding in *Ep*. 121 & 124, Seneca takes Zeno's tight fist and puts it in motion, making it into a hand of care which works to hone its skills and increase its range to be able to approach all things and reach

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[68] Cf. n. 27 – divine time on the whole is the complete *chronos*, while animal time is the differential *aion*. This distinction is returned to in Ch. 3.

them in the manner of god. Seneca adds to this picture the plantlike element of growth over time and the importance the futurity of this activity has for perfecting the Good in humans. In order to truly grasp the world, care recognizes its own futurity while working with other objects with future aim, by asking of the means, extent, and manner of accomplishing its own goal, making everything amenable to its work. The handiwork of *cura* takes the unclear anticipatory understanding of the child and grasps it fully thanks to its interaction with the world. Care may be for the human subject, but "everything reaches out to humans" (*Ep*. 121.2) *omnia tamen ad hominem pertinent*), and this provides the material for its craft. Its aim is along the axis of the future, for this time alone is what is ours (*Ep*. 1.3), but the work of care with everything else toward the future is what achieves the end goal of the Good. Seneca follows the Greek Stoics in asserting philosophy as the master craft and 'art of living,' but he develops the image of the hand of care to provide a concrete image of the practice of philosophy on the soul, crafting it into the most precise tool for creating the Good. The mark of the *elegantia* of Lucilius at the beginning of *Ep*. 124 is that he can lead back every question to some moral progress; likewise, the mark of elegant care is its ability to use all the world to reach the Good. In this way, making through care realigns with the activity of god, whose Nature accomplishes the Good through its activity in all things.

The metaphor of the hand of care, as brought out by *Epp*. 121 and 124, shapes the trajectory of philosophical progress, which Seneca maps from the plane of sensation up to the plane of the understanding. As we will explore in the next chapters, the ethical status of the student of philosophy at any time is shown by the relationship of the individuals' handiwork to the time in which they are acting. In the next chapter, we will examine hand of care at the negative limit of morality, the individual who fails to use their care and accomplish the Good in

the future. In the following chapter, we will turn to look to the end and the positive limit of morality, the perfectly wise person who has trained their care to perfect their soul for achieving the Good. Finally, we will see how Seneca's pedagogical program in the *EM* appeals to the hand of care and displays its efforts in making progress from the one limit to the other.

2

*Occupatio*nal Hazards: Diseased *Cura* and *Mancipium*

In order to achieve the Good of reason which god achieves by nature, human beings have to rise from the plane of sensation up to the level of the divine on the plane of the understanding. They have to use the hand of care to work toward the future even from infancy, training their hand to make the Good through each stage of life. The fact that accomplishing the Good is a matter of work required highlights the larger ethical problem: unlike the rest of the members of the *scala naturae* discussed in the previous chapter humans can fail to achieve their Good. As Seneca explains at *Ep.* 124.12, it requires the whole of a life to craft one's soul to be able to complete the Good, as it is a product of "long and directed zeal" (*longo studio intentoque*). So, it is imperative that the moral agent gets a head start to make sure that they can have a fighting chance at accomplishing the Good and rising up beyond the present in the plane of sensation, for otherwise they will fall into slavery.

In this chapter, we will examine how Seneca recasts the institution of Roman slavery in terms of the hand of care to create a new conception of moral freedom opposed to moral slavery which differs from the traditional sociological hierarchy. Seneca's renegotiation of slavery offers positive content to the conception of freedom through his focus on the use of time by care. Previous treatments of slavery in Seneca have focused on the dichotomy of *servus/liber*, where the latter term is defined only in the negative in relation to the former, as Matthew Roller suggests.[1] This negative definition is cited by Catharine Edwards (2009) as she claims, "[T]he master/slave dichotomy plays a key role in Seneca's definition of freedom [,] but this is hardly

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[1] 2001: 221, "Freedom is a default category, negatively defined, with no conceptual core."

surprising, if we see the term *libertas*, as it is used more generally, as essentially deriving its meaning from the institution of slavery."[2] As a definition of the sociological relationship, this definition may stand; however, when applied to the philosophical domain which Seneca portrays in the *EM*, this hierarchical dichotomy does not adequately map the moral dilemma which Seneca poses, because it underestimates the power of care in Seneca's Stoic project.[3] This "true" slavery is most adequately summed up in the status of *mancipium*—that which is held in hand (*manus* + *capere*).[4] We may certainly grant, along with Edwards and Susanne Bobzien (1998), that freedom (*libertas*) is conceived in opposition to slavery,[5] but this does not necessarily make freedom the negative concept in relation to slavery. Rather, through the use of *mancipium* in relation to the manipulation suggested in the vocabulary of care, we can understand freedom as the ability to use one's own hands to accomplish the Good, while moral enslavement is the misuse of the hand of care which turns the individual over to the hands of others.

The hand or care's work with time and its relationship to moral enslavement arises at the very beginning of the *EM*. From the first lines of the collection, Seneca commands Lucilius to make use of his care straight away and keep on the right temporal track: "Make it so, my Lucilius: lay claim to yourself for yourself, and the time, which up to now was either being carried away or snatched out from under you or was falling out, gather it together and preserve it" (*Ep*. 1.1, *ita fac, mi Lucili; vindica te tibi, et tempus, quod adhuc aut auferebatur aut subripiebatur aut excidebat, collige et serva*). Seneca's commands evoke the hand of care: first,

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[2] 2009: 154; Graver (2007: 81) notes of the Stoic paradox, following Bobzien (1998), "… the Stoics certainly did not mean by this that the actions of the wise are autonomous while those of ordinary persons are not! The point is rather that the person of perfect understanding does exactly what he or she wishes to do"

[3] Edwards also points out how in much of Seneca's writing, philosophical *libertas* operates like political *libertas* (154), but the apolitical focus of the *EM* suggests that this needs reevaluating at least in terms of the *EM*. Edwards also notes that the greatest freedom which Seneca consistently champions is the freedom to die (153–4), discussed in more detail in Ch. 3.

[4] OLD 1 refers to the process of claiming by laying on hands.

[5] Opp. cit.

he tells Lucilius to "make it so" (*ita fac*), and then gather up his time (*colligere*).[6] Interlocked with exhortations to use the hand of care to "make" and "gather" are two which evoke the institution of Roman slavery: that Lucilius "lay claim to himself for himself," (*vindica te tibi*) and to "look after" his time (*serva*).[7] Seneca is sending Lucilius a wake-up call: despite his victory in the political domain in the present, in the all-important moral domain Lucilius is losing the battle for his time, which other forces are stealing and carrying away from him. This synchysis of commands shows an important link between care and enslavement: failure to accomplish the Good and achieve a *katalêptic* grasp on the universe through the use of reason and future time results in moral enslavement to the present.

In order to show the divergence of the sociological *servus*/*liber* hierarchy and the philosophical *mancipium*/*liber* hierarchy, we shall begin by a close reading of *Ep.* 15 and the connection of *mancipium* to the process of *occupatio*, "occupation." In this letter, as in *Ep.* 124, Seneca links occupation to care, and in comparing the usage of care and occupation in these two letters, we can see how these are really one and the same faculty: care accomplishes the Good by focusing on the future and the plane of the understanding, while occupation derails this movement by mistakenly focusing on the present in the plane of sensation. The image of occupation which Seneca presents in *Ep.* 15 not only relates to the mismanagement of time and

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[6] Rather than relegating the commands to a subjunctive clause as one might expect from the imperative *fac*, Seneca elevates the commands in a collapsed manner which increases the urgency and personal stakes. For other such strategies, see Traina, 2011.

[7] Regarding *vindica*, Berger (1953:766–7) lists the many uses, including rights of vengeance and property claims; on the use in enslavement specifically, Edwards, 2009: 139; Ker, 2009: 157. As for *serva*, Maltby (1991: 564) reports the definition of Sextus Pomponius from the *Digest* (50.16.239.1), "The term *servi* has sprung from the fact that our generals were accustomed to sell captives and for this reason protect them and not kill them" (*servorum appellatio ex eo fluxit, quod imperatores nostri captivos vendere ac per hoc servare nec occidere*), and Donatus (*Ter.* Ad. 181) corroborates similarly, saying "*servi*, because they have been preserved, when it was fitting that they be killed according to the law of war" (*servi quod servati sunt, cum eos occidi oportet iure belli*).

objects of sensation, but it also casts this process as a disease, which an individual brings upon themselves, one which displaces the individual from the proper human rung on the *scala naturae*.

This pathological dimension, which develops from Stoic theories of cognition and the emotions, is also explored in connection with the military connotation of occupation, as seen through examples from *Epp*. 18, 50, & 75 (and a brief excerpt from Columella).[8] As noted above, military conquest was a large part of the slave trade in ancient Rome, and Seneca plays on the sense of occupation as a military siege to connect the self-inflicted elements of occupation to being conquered by outside forces. Asmis discusses, Seneca breaks from earlier Stoics in painting the figure of the moral sage as an active military victor over Fortune.[9] I argue that this is precisely because of Seneca's appeal to the activity of care to overcome the threat of occupation with its military associations.[10] The necessity for activity is all the more important in the *EM* because of Seneca's insistence that those who have not yet begun to improve their moral station are in fact "preoccupied" (*praeoccupatus*), already enslaved on the plane of sensation without their awareness. Thus, the struggle to overcome the pathological effects of occupation require intense focus on the tenses of the activities one engages in. Seneca's use of future tenses in his descriptions correlates to the progress of individuals toward the Good achieved by care, while the past tense and passive voice show fixity in occupation.

Tracing the descent through occupation into full pathological and ethical *mancipium* leads to a discussion of *Ep*. 47, where Seneca notoriously contends that even legally enslaved

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[8] Because of Stoic corporalism and their commitment to the rational soul, psychological conditions were described in terms of physical movements and biological disturbances. For example, Chrysippus referred to a person with aberrant moral judgments as νευρώδης, referring to the physical body (Sedley, 2008:583). See also n. 13 below.

[9] 2009:115 *et passim*

[10] Thus De Vaan (2008: 89–90) on the root, *occupare*, itself derived from *ob + capere*. This definition is attested as early as Livius Andronicus.

persons can be said to have more freedom than their legal owners.[11] Here, we will see the ways

in which those labeled as *servi* in the text, those individuals enslaved according to the social

Roman social hierarchy, exhibit facility with their hands which mark them as able to use their

care to possibly achieve the good, while the masters in the letter are rendered as completely

inactive *mancipia* through their misguided and immoral activities. By focusing on immediate

pleasures, these socially dominant individuals follow the trajectory of occupation to complete

disintegration and inactivity, while the socially dominated *servi* still have a chance to gain

freedom and health through the continued possibility of applying the hand of care on the future.

Occupation in the Body: Misapplied Care in *Ep*. 15

In *Ep*. 15, which juxtaposes both *cura* and *occupatio* in the same letter for the first time,

Seneca explains to Lucilius what the proper ratio of physical exercise to study should be and how

to balance physical health and spiritual health. The letter itself begins discussing the old way that

Roman letter writers used to greet each other. Seneca says that even up to his own lifetime,

people would add onto their initial salutation, *si vales bene est, ego valeo*,[12] and that "Rightly we

say, "If you philosophize, it is well" (15.1, *si philospharis, bene est*). As it turns out, it is rightly

said because this is in fact a tautology: "But this term just is "to be strong" (15.1, *valere autem*

hoc demum est). The valence of *valere* is tied to the body more specifically, as Seneca explains

how *philosophari* just is *valere*: "Without this [i.e., *philosophari*] the mind is sick (*aeger*). Even

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[11] This position is an extension of the familiar Stoic paradox that "no one but the wise is free," as voiced by Cato at *De Finibus* III.75; Armisen-Marchetti, 1989 (39) recounts how Cicero saw Stoic orators recounting such paradoxes as Cassandra, telling the truth with no one listening, and sums up their stylistic reputation thus: "the Stoics passed as the adversaries *par excellence* of *movere*." Seneca's take on rhetoric will be addressed in Ch. 4

[12] And thus, Seneca himself perpetuates the format with Lucilius by tacking on these words to the beginning of his own letter. This aligns with Henderson's (2002: 153–7) reading of *Ep*. 84 as an appeal to old Roman practice which actually attempts to reconfigure Roman tradition.

if it has great strength, the body is also strong in no other way than those who are mad (*furiosi*) or delirious (*phrenetici*) are."[13] Based on this distinction, the philosophy necessary for proper human function is a means of attuning the body properly, rather than eschewing it completely, while those who are traditionally or superficially *validus* are unable to act and control their bodies akin to those with certain psychical afflictions.

With this in mind, Seneca thus advises Lucilius how to properly direct his care between the psychic and the anatomical aspects of his well-being:

> Ergo hanc praecipue valitudinem cura, deinde et illam secundam, quae non magno tibi constabit, si volueris bene valere. Stulta est enim, mi Lucili, et minime conveniens litterato viro occupatio exercendi lacertos et dilatandi cervicem ac latera firmandi; cum tibi feliciter sagina cesserit et tori creverint, nec vires umquam opimi bovis nec pondus aequabis. Adice nunc, quod maiore corporis sarcina animus eliditur et minus agilis est. Itaque quantum potes, circumscribe corpus tuum et animo locum laxa. (*Ep.* 15.2)[14]

> Therefore, concern yourself with this state of health, taking it before all (*praecipue*), then also that second state, which will not cost you much, if you want to really be strong (*bene valere*). For the occupation with exercising the arms and broadening the neck and tightening up the sides is stupid, my dear Lucilius, and hardly fitting for a man of letters;[15] although the plumping up might come to you with success and your brawn might grow, you will never match the strength nor the mass of a plump ox. Now, consider that the mind is bumped out by the greater load of the body and is less nimble (*agilis*). So, as much as you can, limit your body and open up a place for the mind.[16]

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[13] Regarding *furiosi,* Laes, 2018: 47ff notes that this refers to a temporary condition while *dementia* designated a permanent condition of *non compos mentis* according to Roman law, giving them the same legal protections and privileges as children and minors. On the causes of φρενῖτις, see *De morbis acutis* I.1. As Cambiano, 2008 notes, Chrysippus follows Praxagoras of Cos' cardiocentric picture of the body, and so I am more inclined to regard his definition of the condition as the Stoic one; regardless, all reflect physical causes of mental phenomena consonant with Stoic materialism/corporalism.

[14] A point echoing *Ep.* 10.4, *roga bonam mentem, bonam valetudinem animi, deinde tunc corporis*

[15] With reference to the discussion of slavery below, it is interesting to note that a *letteratus* may also refer to branded enslaved persons; cf. Plautus *Cas*.2.6.49 and Apuleius *M*. 9.12.3–4.

[16] The appeal to *circumscribe* shows highlights the literary element of the *EM*'s "epistoliterarity" (Henderson, 2004: 29). For more on the power of writing in terms of Seneca's ethics of care, see Ch. 4

The combination of the hand-related *praecipue*, an adjective formed from *praecipere*,[17] with care highlights the manipulative activity that the concern for watching total health requires. Seneca's command for Lucilius concern gets orientation from the manual adverb, giving him a general rule about how best to "be well."[18] Meanwhile, the occupation of the bodybuilder is called *stultus*, suggesting that the immobility and inactivity of those engaged in such pursuits is explicitly attributed to their cramped or erased *animi*.[19] The appearance of "nimble" (*agilis*) to describe these *animi* points forward to its appearance in *Ep*. 121, where the *agilitas* of the naturally adept animal world is compared to the nimble motions of artisans and craftspeople. The sentiment of not trying to outdo animals in physical traits is also echoed at the end of *Ep*. 124 when Seneca tries to set Lucilius apart from animals with the divine. As such, this occupation is "hardly fitting" for an individual like Lucilius as a human, but it is also not *conveniens* in the sense that it goes against the proper ethical actions that befit his station, referring to the Stoic proper actions (καθήκοντα).[20] Through occupation, humans fail to engage in a properly 'active' way, and instead their activities lead to their own immobilization and stultification. In transforming the bodybuilders into an animal like the plump ox, occupation takes these humans away from the Good that is couched in their own rational nature and aims them at another good, toward which they are ill equipped to work.

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[17] OLD tracks *praecipua* → *praecipuus* → *praecipere*.

[18] This direction may also signal the pedagogical move that Seneca is engaging her as well, offering a *praeceptum* here in this early letter of the collection, an area still aimed more at the protreptic advice characterized by *praecepta* than the *decreta* of the later letters. Cf. Schafer, 2009, esp. 67–83; on the importance of the order of the letters, see Cancik, 1967; Maurach, 1970; Hachmann, 1995; Wilson, 2001; Schafer, 2011

[19] Maltby, 1991: 588 cites Isidore's etymology of *stultus* as *qui per stuporem non movetur iniuria*; this emphasis on inactivity is corroborated by De Vaan, 2008: 590, tracing the word back to the Indo-European **stel-* root, suggesting that the *stultus* was "placed" in its location by some force.

[20] See Ch. 1,

Despite the separation of negative occupation here and positive care at *Ep*. 124.14, the

two concepts come closer together as Seneca uses *cura* with a distinct negative connotation.[21]

Seneca uses this term to describe the detrimental effects of the occupation he has just described:

> Multa secuntur incommoda huic deditos curae; primum exercitationes, quarum labor spiritum exhaurit et inhabilem intentioni ac studiis acrioribus reddit. Deinde copia ciborum subtilitas inpeditur. Accedunt pessimae notae mancipia in magisterium recepta, homines inter oleum et vinum occupati, quibus ad votum dies actus est, si bene desudaverunt, si in locum eius, quod effluxit, multum potionis altius ieiuno iturae regesserunt. Bibere et sudare vita cardiaci est. (*Ep*. 15.3–4)

> Many inconveniences follow those given to this concern; first, the exercises, the work of which draws out the spirit and renders it unwieldy for attention and for more penetrating (*acrioribus*) studies. Next, their keenness (*subtilitas*) is tripped up by the supply of food. They approach the enslaved (*mancipia*) taken into the office of the worst stamp, people occupied between oil and wine; for such people, a day has gone as hoped for if they have sweated well, if they have put back, in place of what has flown out, more drink, which will go deeper from their fasting. Drinking and sweating is life for a dyspeptic (*cardiaci*).

"This care" has many issues, as evidenced by Seneca's use of the marked Stoic phrase

incommoda, which recalls the theory of moral indifferents.[22] The first major problem pertains to

the "spirit" (*spiritus*) of the subject in question, a term which renders the Greek *pneuma*

(πνεῦμα), a particularly potent substance in Stoic metaphysics. Not only is the human soul made

of particularly rarified *pneuma* suffused and mixed throughout the body, but this *pneuma* is also

the stuff which gives any differentiated thing in the cosmos its particular qualities.[23] In drawing

away the *pneuma* of the bodybuilder, this work focused on the body not only dampens or

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[21] However, not the negative connotation which many Latin authors associate with *cura*, as noted by Perelli, 1994:45. For example, Horace *Satires* II.7.113f:
> ...*teque ipsum vitas fugitivus et erro—*
> *iam vino quaerens, iam somno fallere curam—*
> *Frustra: nam comes atra permit sequiturque fugacem*
Traina (2011: 15) suggests this as a precursor to Seneca's *De Tranquilitate* 2.14 (*sed quid prodest, si non effugit? sequitur se ipse et urget gravissimus comes*), following a quote Seneca claims from Lucretius.

[22] Cicero *Fin*. III.69 classes the (*in*)*commoda*—εὐχρηστήματα/δυσχρηστήματα in Greek—in the category those things *quae praeposita et reiecta diximus*; cf. SVF III.22.1ff., Reydams-Schils (2005:59–69), Inwood & Donini (2008: 691–3), Schafer (2009:27, 49–52)

[23] On the layout of the soul, see Long (2008); on the theory of ποιότης, see Sedley, 2008, 401ff.

removes thoughtful activity but also threatens to remove what makes them a human in the first place

That this is not properly care, however, is made clear from the fact that the *pneuma* of this person is rendered "unwieldy" (*inhabilis*) by this activity.[24] Not only does this distract from the "attention" (*intentio*) necessary to perfect the Good, but this activity, rather than making the soul nimble or mobile, renders it unable to be handled and utilized for the proper work of accomplishing the Good. This recalls Seneca's previous analogy with the mad and delirious those whose *pneuma* and its intimate connection with their body is distorted in some way, thus making them dyspeptic (*cardiaci*) in the double sense of having indigestion from their copious diet and of having some mental infirmity owing to the disturbance of the seat of their *spiritus*.[25] The focus of the activity, which leads to these outcomes, pairs with the work of occupation rather than of care, as seen in *Epp*. 121 & 124, for it continues to diminish the domain of activity for these people. When occupation first appears, it is not marked as belonging to anyone in particular, but rather a simple operation of working arms or necks or the sides, creating an image of the disintegration of the body.[26] At *Ep*. 15.2, Lucilius is not actively bulking up, but this body mass merely comes to him *(tibi sagina feliciter cesserit)*, the adverb itself indicative of the work of fortune and not of individual activity.[27] In the next section, those individuals becoming less nimble and unwieldy are also less active in the processes described. They themselves are "given" to this kind of activity, which means they have upended the *scala naturae* of *Ep*. 124, if we recall the "given" good of plants in their relation to diachronic development. In attempting to compete

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[24] For a more concrete application of this adjective indicative of the work of the hand, cf. Livy (24.34.5): "the light-armed soldiers also, whose spear is unwieldy to throw back for those inexperienced with it" (…*velites etiam, quorum telum ad rimittendum inhabile imperitis est*)

[25] Cf. n. 13 on the Stoic belief that the ruling part of the soul (ἡγεμονικόν) was in the heart

[26] Cf. n. 77 below

[27] Cf. *Ep* 101.5: *omnia…etiam felicibus dubia sunt*.

with animals and focusing on the present, these individuals expect their good from without as if they were plants.

This misguided competition reduces their agency, as shown in the grammar itself. When Seneca describes the effects on the body, the dulling of the soul's ability to act aligns with the removal of these individuals from the syntax itself. The reader assumes that Seneca is talking about the *spiritus* of the bodybuilders, but there are no pronouns to connect back to these individuals. Rather, the labor itself, removed from personal attachment, is what gives the *pneuma* back in its dulled and unwieldy state (*labor spiritum exhaurit et inhabilem intentioni ac studiis acrioribus reddit*). The "sharpness" (*acrioribus*) of the studies involved represents the soul as a blunted tool, unfit for the craft necessary to delicately pursue such studies and to manage the *subtilitas* of these subjects.[28] These people are labeled *occupati*, itself a passive participle, and then they approach enslaved people—whether literally or in likeness—those "held in hand," who are also passively *recepta*, "taken back".[29] For them, the day "is done" (*actus est*); they are only active when they are personally sweating (*desudaverunt*), approaching *mancipia* (*accedunt*), and replacing their bodily fluids (*regesserunt*). *Cardiaci* takes on yet another meaning, for in their activities their agency is so limited that they function only as anatomical systems: the activity of *spiritus* only appears in as much as it takes in and expels fluids.

So, "this care," which Seneca describes here is in fact occupation, since the process described does not facilitate activity to reach the Good on the plane of the understanding. Instead, this fallen form focuses on the body in the present and transfixes the individual in the plane of sensation. Understood as the misapplication of care, occupation leads such individuals,

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[28] On the physics of sharpness: Atkins, 2009: 221–44.

[29] Viparelli (2000:25) notes that Seneca claims that someone *occupatus* is also "directed at the present time" (*intentus ad praesens tempus*) at *De Brevitate Vitae* 10.6. Viparelli's analysis focuses on the inability of such individuals to adequately accept their past based on shame

elevating their musculature above their psychical well-being, to reduce their actual psychical health and indeed their humanity. Care in its proper use appears again further into the letter, when Seneca discusses the proper parameters of exercise:

> Sunt exercitationes et faciles et breves, quae corpus et sine mora lassent et tempori pareant, cuius praecipua ratio habenda est… Quicquid facies, cito redi a corpore ad animum. Illum noctibus ac diebus exerce; labore modico alitur ille. Hanc exercitationem non frigus, non aestus inpediet, ne senectus quidem. Id bonum cura, quod vetustate fit melius. (*Ep*. 15.4–5)

> There are exercises, both easy to do and short, to tire out the body without delay as well as to complies with time, a reckoning of which must be had straightaway… Whatever you do, return quickly from body to mind. Exercise it night and day; it is nourished with moderate effort. Neither cold nor heat will trip up this exercise, not even senility will. Concern yourself with this good, which is made better in old age.

The proper exercises are productive capacity and temporally related through the pairing of "easy to do" (*faciles*) and "short" (*breves*).[30] Being healthy movements, these exercises happen without delay, like the healthy animal movements which do not hesitate in *Ep*. 121.[31] The *ratio praecipua* of one's workout schedule recalls Seneca's admonition previously, *praecipue valitudinem cura* (*Ep*. 15.2), showing the work of care in looking to the future to reckon for exercise regimens ahead of time; the grasp of the hand of care "ahead of time" is an important element in overcoming occupation, as we shall return to below.

The interchange of grammatical tenses and persons which Seneca uses in discussing the activity of care, highlights the differences from care's fallen and diverted form, occupation. Seneca's direct commands—*elige*, *redi*, and *exerce*—single out Lucilius/the reader as responsible for these respective activities.[32] Further, the future appears here with a personal attachment—

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[30] This recalls Seneca's claim about the value of *exempla* at *Ep*. 6.5: *iter est…breve et efficax per exempla*; for a discussion of *exempla* and care, see Ch. 4

[31] See p.9

[32] This personal touch reflects the parenetic function of Seneca's style, particularly in this earlier portion of the letters which are still seeking to form Lucilius into a proper Stoic and provide more *praecepta*, particularly like the

"whatever you will do" (*quidquid facie<u>s</u>*)—in Seneca's discussion of the proper course, the cultivation of the *animus*, which also recalls definition of time as what is truly belongs to an individual at *Ep*. 1.3 (*omnia, Lucili, aliena sunt, tempus tantum nostrum est*). The efficacy of this personalized care is shown by the future tense *inpediet* to illustrate what will not trip up this progress, compared to the present passive *inpeditur* describing the shortcomings of occupation. This futurity is then highlighted further through its twofold reference to human temporality: senility will not interrupt this progress, and old age is what assures the goodness of "this good", i.e. The Good, the object of proper care.[33] The coming of age of "this good" recalls the plantlike qualities of human care as well, particularly in the metaphor of the ripened wheat which looks toward the threshing floor in *Ep*. 121.[34] However, the closest that the occupied get to futurity in their own person is their "approaching" the status of *mancipia*; even the drink they consume has more access to the future, since it is this which "will go" (*iturae*) into them more effectively. The personal nature reflects their active walk into the hands of slavery, while the futural element is transferred to inanimate matter which acts upon their now purely anatomical selves.

Seneca directs us back to the future at the end of the letter as well. He displays a maxim of Epicurus to sum up his point: "Look at this outstanding precept: "A fool's life is unpleasant and confused: it is carried whole into the future"" (*Ep*. 15.9, *ecce insigne praeceptum: "Stulta vita ingrata est et trepida; tota in futurum fertur."*).[35] Once again, occupation does not act in relation to the future, but it is passively carried in the hands of another (*fertur*). Seneca uses the

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one from Lucretius discussed below. In particular, see Mazzoli, 1970; Setaioli, 2000: 141–2 *et passim*; Schafer, 2009: 56; Traina, 2011: 39–40.

[33] OLD's definitions for *vetustas*, particularly 4b, highlight the age component as well as its valence as future oriented, i.e., "when *x* becomes old," compared to *senectus*, which reflects the present state or person of the subject.

[34] Cf. Ch. 1, p. 47

[35] For more on the contentious relationship with Epicurus, see Graver, 1998: 624–7; Setaioli, 2000: 192; Henderson, 2002: 6–18, 29–31; Traina, 2011: 36–7;

deictic *ecce* to close out the epistle with a rather grim look to the future: "Behold, this is the last day; should it not be, it is close by the last. *Vale*" (*Ep*. 15.11: *ecce hic dies ultimus est. ut non sit; prope ab ultimo est. vale*). The connection with the 'goodbye' and the future is telling. James Ker (2009: 173) suggests that Seneca "exploits the closure of the literary form (the *vale*) to lend greater weight to the death-rehearsing utterance… the letter's ending should be infused with the same urgency and solemnity as life's ending."[36] The look forward to the last day or its close neighbors brings back the old age mentioned earlier in the letter. Seneca seeks to bring Lucilius/the reader to this point in time to make them examine their engagements according to the calculus of *vetustas*. The *'vale'* not only figures the temporal end of the old age imagined, but it connects back to the introduction of the letter; we could just as easily read *philosophare* as the close instead, given the definition of proper bodily care as doing philosophy.

Despite the superficial equivocation between care and occupation and care in the letter, *Ep*. 15 actually serves to highlight the pitfalls of human activity which reason enables. As rational animals, humans have the beginning of the Good, their care, given to them by Nature from the beginning of their life. This care accomplishes the Good according to the proper means, extent, and manner of the moment with an eye toward its future perfection.[37] However, it is possible to act improperly, like the bodybuilders singled out in this letter who are attempting to become animals. Compared with the artful animals of *Ep*. 121, among whom "none exert their joints as if diseased, none hesitate in the use of themselves" (*Ep*. 121.6, *nemo aegre molitur artus suos, nemo in usu sui haesitat*), these individuals do indeed get sick, and in dulling and slowing their souls by their own activity, they do "hesitate" in the most literal way of repeatedly and

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[36] Ker also cites Barbara Herrnstein-Smith (1968: 128) and her concept of 'temporal punctuation' in his discussion of the intersection of epistolary form and *meditatio mortis*. For more on care and death, Ch. 3
[37] See Ch. 1, p. 37

continually getting themselves stuck (*haesitare* being the frequentative of *haereo*). Thus, by not aiming into the future when seeking to create their Good, these individuals transfix themselves in the present on the plane of sensation, such that they are fit to be occupied and carried off by others. Care and occupation are two different ways of answering the questions of reason by choosing a particular direction of activity, the former aiming up toward the future and the plane of understanding and the latter toward the present. The images of a hand's activity are shared between the two, but the results of these factors lead in opposite directions, with care maintaining active crafting ability while occupation leads to the abnegation of this.

Thus, occupation can be described as "*this* concern," as seen above, and care can likewise be described in terms of occupation, as appears in *Ep*. 124. The context is similar to that in *Ep*. 15, discussing proper exercises, this time from the beneficial *disputatio* concerning the greatest good: "It both exercises and sharpens [your mind] and it holds it as something about to act with honorable occupation" (*Ep*.124.21, *et exercet illum et acuit et utique aliquid acturum occupatione honesta tenet*). Not only does the adjective *honesta* separate this occupation from the negative form discussed in *Ep*. 15, which leads to such dispreferred effects, but it also differs in leading to activity and particularly future oriented activity. This spiritual exercise does not promote sluggishness and fixity, but rather agility and lightness. Further, the "sharpening" of the mind of this occupation reverses the effect of "*this* care" for physique, which dulled the *subtilitas* of the soul.

Having progressed through one hundred and nine subsequent *Epistulae Morales*, Lucilius is now properly equipped to tackle the *acrioribus studiis* above: "You don't flee back, nor does any exactness (*subtilitas*) drive you away… I approve of that, because you bring back everything to some advancement and then you are only offended, when nothing is done with the

greatest exactness." (*Ep*.124.1, *non refugis autem nec ulla te subtilitas abigit… illud probo, quod omnia ad aliquem profectum redigis et tunc tantum offenderis, ubi summa subtilitate nihil agitur*.) Having progressed beyond the previous trap of occupation, Lucilius is now properly equipped with exactness, compared to his previous dull state. With his soul honed, Lucilius can work with the katalêptic grasp on the world through his understanding to achieve the Good. Meanwhile, those who have become occupied dull their souls to the point of the animal grasp, superficial and merely sensory, but they also go further than animals in threatening their bodily-cum-psychical unity, distending their *pneuma* to the point of even ruining their anatomy. However, it is not just the bodybuilders who are at risk of occupation through their activities. As Seneca explains, everyone is *already* engaged in a veritable psychomachia against psychical disease: "We have all been taken ahead of time" (*Ep*. 50.7, *omnes praeoccupati sumus*). The hand of care's work becomes all the more urgent since it must counteract a disease in the midst of a battle.

Preoccupying or Preoccupied: Disease and Conquest of Time

Through the work of *honesta occupatio*—i.e., care proper—the soul becomes a powerful tool, compared to the blunt and useless soul produced through dangerous, wayward occupation. It is not just that the subject hones their soul to create the Good aiming into the future, but the subject is active in wielding this psychic tool with the hand of their care. This activity is a closed circuit, and this loop is reflected in the very opening line of the *EM*: *vindica te tibi*. This pronominal coupling follows a formula which Alfonso Traina (2011: 11–24) discusses in the case of reflexive pronouns, indicative of self-possession, but also with the particular use of both the dative and accusative together to reflect the setting off point and the destination of the moral

journey.[38] This centripetal motion in the grammar follows Victor Goldschmidt's description of

the ethical work of the Stoic sage, a passage from self to self, but one which for the Stoics is also

a matter of conquest. [39] If the moral journey is a matter of conquest, the subject may either

succeed and keep themselves out of another's grasp or fall into this grasp. When the latter happens,

those who have fallen and remain on the plane of sensation "approach enslaved people," as seen

above (*Ep*. 15.3, *accedunt pessimae notae mancipia*).

However, with great care the subject can produce a mind that is "unconquered." After

Seneca praises Lucilius for the progress he has begun to see, he explains,

> Ille prudens atque artifex pro tempore quaeque repellet aut eliget; sed nec quae
> repellit timet nec miratur quae eligit, si modo magnus illi et invictus animus est.
> (*Ep*. 31.6)

> That person, practically wise and a craftsperson, will push back or select each thing
> in light of the time; but they do not fear what they push back nor marvel at what
> they choose, if there is now for that person a great and unconquered mind.

The metaphor of military conquest and victory is mixed with the image of the craftsperson, who

uses their care in selecting whatever for their work. While the description of the subject with the

unconquered mind uses the present, the activity of the *artifex* takes place in the future tense

(*repellet, eliget*). This futural activity reflects the fact it is done *pro tempore*, both in relation to

the specific time of making but also in relation to time as such, and also that it is done by a

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[38] Esp. ibid 18–19, where Traina says (my translation), "The two reflexives, the point of departure and the point of arrival, delimit the horizon of Senecan interiority with a circular motion that returns to oneself." Though this is in reference specifically to *Ep*. 27.3, where Seneca says *nullum* [*bonum*] *est, nisi quod animus ex se sibi invenit*, given the serial structure of the letters discussed above at n. 12, the parenetic *admonitio* of an early *praeceptum* like *te tibi vindica* reflects the dialectic *sermo* of later *decretum* of Stoic moral theorizing. See Ch. 4 for the work of the hand of *cura* in the course of pedagogy.

[39] Goldschmidt, (1953:55): "But, if everything were really given, philosophy and life would have to limited to a letting-be and a letting-go, to this precise attitude which justifies the "lazy argument" and which the Stoics always refused. Quite the contrary, the extreme tension of the will which they claim for the wise seems to indicate that everything is always to be conquered. In fact, philosophy, i.e., 'the art of living,' is really a conquest, but it is necessary to add that nothing can be conquered in the eyes of the Stoics which, in a sense, was not given to us in advance. The conquest, so envisioned, is a passage from self to self. In the structural movement of the system, the point of departure coincides with the point of arrival." The image of conquest is at the heart of the titular image of Hadot (1998).

"practically wise" person, someone with foresight (*pro* + *videns*).[40] Here, the foresight of the *prudens* is not just looking into the future but doing so with time as the criterion of doing so. The only criterion that the wise have in exercising the "choosiness," which Lucilius is cultivating by the end of the *EM*,[41] is a futural question of time itself.[42] With the end goal being victory in aiming toward the future, the command for Lucilius to "gather together and preserve" time (*collige et serva*) prefigures the combination of the *artifex* with military service again. In order to come out on top on the moral battlefield, one must actively look after one's time or be looked after by someone else.

The opening insistence on temporal control is made more explicit later, as Seneca reveals a source of trouble for the Stoic student. It is not just that one must fight and control one's time, but one must fight back from a disadvantage. In *Ep*. 50, he compares the blindness of his wife's clown Harpastê with the lack of awareness that everyone has for their own faults in terms of the struggle against moral occupation: "We have all been taken ahead of time" (*Ep*. 50.7, *omnes praeoccupati sumus*). The moral dilemma is not just taking care to avoid falling into occupation but also recognizing that one is *already* occupied, and then rising above it. As at *Ep*. 15, this process is figured in terms of possession and being held in the present: "badness now holds us…it is in possession of us for a long time" (*Ep*. 50.7, *malitia nos iam tenet*, […] *diu in possessione nostri est*). The nature of this badness is pathological, just like the occupation in *Ep*. 15. While the bodybuilders are *cardiaci*, the general public are unaware of the source of their ailment:

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[40] OLD, in the heading for the adjective (rather than substantive nominal use). SVF IV p. 173 notes the use of the cognate term *prudentia* as a gloss for φρόνησις as well as for the etymologically linked πρόνοια for *providentia*.
[41] Cf Ch. 1, p. 32
[42] The work of the *artifex* in *Ep*. 31 is discussed further in Ch. 3

> quid nos decipimus? Non est extrinsecus malum nostrum: intra nos est, in
> visceribus ipsis sedet, et ideo difficulter ad sanitatem pervenimus quia nos aegrotare
> nescimus. (*Ep*. 50.4)

> Why do we deceive ourselves? Our bad is not from the outside: it is within us, it
> sits in our very guts, and thus it is with difficulty we arrive at health, since we do
> not know that we are sick.

The occupation is a result of literal self-deception: the subject takes themselves down (*de* +

capere), trapping themselves in the belief that they should be looking for a disease coming from

without rather than recognizing the disease they cultivate within.[43] Thus, the illness settles into

the gut, and in so settling it forces the diseased self-deceived to settle as well, as the way toward

health is now more troublesome for the making power of care to handle (*difficulter* $\Rightarrow$ *dis-* +

facilis). In the moral conquest of Stoicism, the enemy is not a foreign one, but rather the subject

themself sabotaging their efforts to perfect the Good

The preoccupation of disease returns again at *Ep*. 75, where once again Seneca notes that

the tides have already been turned against those who seek happiness: "We have been taken ahead

of time, we stretch out for virtue detained between vices" (*Ep*. 75.16, *praeoccupati sumus, ad*

virtutem contendimus inter vitia districti). The occupied are figured as prisoners bound by their

vices while attempting to stretch the hand of their care toward their virtue, prisoners approaching

those prisoners-of-war who will be taken and enslaved as *servi*.[44] This imprisonment and

immobilization is a product of the failure to grasp their future. Earlier in this same letter, Seneca

admonishes Lucilius for his concern about the style of Seneca's recent letters:

> Curare debes morbum veterem, gravem, publicum. Tantum negotii habes, quantum
> in pestilentia medicus. Circa verba occupatus es? Iamdudum gaude, si sufficis
> rebus… Quando illa experieris? Non enim ut cetera, memoriae tradidisse satis est;
> in opere temptanda sunt. Non est beatus, qui scit illa, sed qui facit (*Ep*. 75.7)

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[43] OLD 1d on a very literal meaning of *decipere* attested in relation to hunting traps (cf. Livy 22.4.4).
[44] Cf. n. 3.

> You ought to concern yourself with a longstanding, serious, endemic disease. You have as much business as a doctor in a plague. Have you been occupied with words? Rejoice already, if you are supplied enough with things… When will you try out that [which you have learned]? For it is not enough to have handed them over to memory, as it is with the rest: they will have to be tested in practice. The one who knows them is not blessed, but the one who does them.

Here, the opposition of care vs. occupation is made explicit, and this recalls the pathological metaphors from *Epp.* 15 & 50. There is an actual moral plague which requires Lucilius' attention;[45] instead, he has been taken in the area of words, ignoring the "things" which are the necessary prerequisite for such an occupation.[46] The bits of knowledge and skill which Seneca calls upon Lucilius to employ in his "cure" of the disease are proven not in their possession, but in their use.[47] Additionally, these uses are also projected into the future: "when *will* you test them out;" "they *will have to be* tested in the work." The past—represented here in memory—may be enough for certain matters, like Lucilius' questions about epistolary quality, but for care, it requires an additional temporal dimension beyond the past for its application; it cannot simply hand off things, but rather must continue to wield them. The presence of the *opus* as the object of

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[45] Or rather Lucilius owes his *cura* to something/someone, ; the etymological link to *habeo* (*de* + *habeo*) suggests that the *curare* is possessed thanks to Nature, as discussed in Ch. 1. The obverse of Nature's entrusting of subject to person is the owed *cura*.

[46] *occupo* and *circa* appear in contexts of conquest as well, e.g., Livy 36.16.8 and 44.7.1, but with the active form rather than the passive form; Seneca uses it only in the passive with *circa*, e.g., *Epp.* 33.1 (Seneca denies that previous Stoics were *circa flosculos occupati*), 89.10, (Some argue for a 'civil philosophy' *circa aliam materiam occupata sit*), 95.8 (all *those* arts differ from philosophy as follows: *circa instrumenta vitae occupatae sunt, non circa totam vitam*); *De Beneficiis* 7.28.2. Other comparable contemporary examples: Valerius Maximus 6.8.7, 9.3.4; Frontinus *Strategemata* 1.6.3.5; Suetonius *Nero* 23.1. Armisen-Marchetti, 1989: 75–7 lists several images related to conquest, but *occupatio* is not numbered among them.

[47] An old ethical position, one shared by Aristotle (*NE* II.1 1103b) who compares the acquisition of the ἕξεις of virtue to learning any skill (τέχνη). Preceding Seneca more closely, Cicero (*De Re Publica* I.2) claims, "But, it is not enough to have virtue unless you use it, like any skill: even if a skill can indeed be held, when you don't use it, by just knowing it, virtue has been set wholly in its use: but its use is greatest in the governing of a city and the perfection of those very things in fact, not in speech, which those [philosophers] send echoing in their corners" (*nec vero habere virtutem satis est quasi artem aliquam nisi utare; etsi ars quidem cum ea non utare scientia tamen ipsa teneri potest, virtus in usu sui tota posita est; usus autem eius est maximus civitatis gubernatio, et earum ipsarum rerum quas isti in angulis personant, reapse non oratione perfectio*). In this, Cicero follows Aristotle in the elevation of the lawgiver in his virtue ethics, whereas Seneca aims at the individual, especially in the *EM* as Bartsch (2015: 191) points out. In relation to the preceding Stoa and Hellenistic world,

this care points us back to the craft necessary to achieve the Good, with the icing on the cake of the verbs of making (*facio, sufficio*) attending it. [48]

This distinction comes out again as Seneca discusses those "who have set aside both the greatest evils of the mind and the emotions, but in such a way that they do not have a sure possession of their own lack of concern" (*Ep.* 75.13, *qui et maxima animi mala et adfectus deposuerunt, sed ita, ut non sit illis securitatis suae certa possessio*). The surety or lack thereof of such people's "possession" of this state hearkens back to Seneca's insistence that such knowledge must be actively put to the test and not simply "handed over to memory."[49] Here, these individuals "have set aside" the disease of occupation as well as the emotions—in the past—but not in such a way that they can operate *sine cura* with respect to these.[50] Seneca reflects this precarity in the text through the grammatical relations of the individuals to their status. The *possessio* is the grammatical subject, but the possessors are not actively holding the state and are instead pushed into the oblique case. One may compare the relation each subject has to their constitution from birth thanks to Nature at *Ep.* 121.11, where Seneca uses the possessive *sua*; the use of the dative separates the subject from the sure possession of virtue, noting the distance still to be traveled to reach the Good on the plane of understanding and demoting them from the surest possession that the sage would possess.[51]

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[48] Foucault (1986:53) discusses the connection of the *opus* to self-fashioning, though is perhaps too sanguine about the social dimension of this practice (cf. Nussbaum, 1994; Harris, 2001; Roller, 2001: 77–88; Bartsch, 2014: 117–51, all mentioned in the Introduction). Stylistically, one can compare the focus on the *opus* to the Senecan equation of style and character, particularly at *Ep.* 114, discussed in depth by Setaioli, 2000.

[49] Traina (2011:11ff) discusses the metaphor self-as-possession alongside that of self-as-refuge, noting that the metaphor of possession is taken from Greek philosophical texts but cast in the light of Roman jurisprudence, just as in the opening line of the *EM*'s use of *vindicare*.

[50] The 'security' does not refer to a total lack of care, but it rather reflects that these are still very much issues which merit the continued work of care to manage them with an aim to the proper end. On the valence of *security* in Latin literature more broadly, Hamilton (2013: 51–82;114–33), and in connection with Seneca's style, Setaioli (2000: 123–6), for which more see Ch. 4. On the emotions, Graver (2007), as well as further discussion in Ch. 4.

[51] Dressler (2016:89, 109, 228–32) follows Pinkster (1992: 160ff) and Suárez-Martinez (2005:744) in discussing Latin impersonal constructions and expands to discuss both "subject promotion" and "subject demotion" in terms of

Once Seneca has outlined the third category—those who are not even free from vice but vacillate back and forth between them—he explains to Lucilius and the reader that this third category is a worthy stop on the way to sagacity, but "the second step [i.e., uncertain possession] is occupied with great luck from nature and with great and constantly pressing attention to study" (*Ep*. 75.15, *magna felicitate naturae magnaque et adsidua intentione studii secundus occupatur gradus*). Here, the operation of occupation appears more positive, as achieving this state requires good luck and surpasses the even more precarious step below, but this is because the thing being occupied is not a human subject, but rather a topographical location.[52] The location "is occupied" for further moral progress, and so it is taken in order to be used.

This tactical valence of *occupare* comes to the fore when Seneca uses *praeoccupare* in the active voice as well. Whereas the passive voice *praeoccupatus* denotes capture and succumbing to psychic disease, to take the initiative in this struggle is a great boon, as we see at *Ep*.18. Here, Seneca tells Lucilius how Epicurus managed to live on less than one *as*, while Metrodorus needed a full one for his food—perhaps prefiguring the distinctions on the ranks of the wise at *Ep*. 75. Each, however, are examples of living beyond the ability of Fortune to "snatch away" their pleasure (*Ep*. 18.10). Seneca exhorts,

> Liberaliora alimenta sunt carceris, sepositos ad capitale supplicium non tam anguste qui occisurus est pascit: quanta est animi magnitudo ad id sua sponte descendere quod ne ad extrema quidem decretis timendum sit! Hoc est praeoccupare tela fortunae (*Ep*. 18.11)

> The prison offers more generous nourishment, the executioner does not feed those put away for capital punishment so meagerly: how great is the size of a mind, that

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the figuration of metaphor, such as in the relation of human agents to the demoted agent of Nature herself in the discussion of οἰκείωσις at *De Finibus* 3.16ff. For more on personified figures, see Ch. 3

[52] Cf n. 28. For the military context of *gradus*, e.g., Livy 34.39.3, *in suo quisque gradu obnixi urgentes scutis, sine respiratione ac respectu pugnabant*

it descends of its own accord to that which even those decreed to death need not fear—namely, to take the spears of Fortune ahead of time.[53]

The connection of *occupare* to food also brings us back to the *occupati* from *Ep.* 15, whose "supply of food" (*copia ciborum*) has dulled the keenness and subtlety of their minds. The latter focus on the present, and the misguided attempt to perfect the body through nourishment thus contrasts with the enlightened. These individuals eschew the pleasure of food—or rather draw pleasure from the least food—to such an extent that not even an executioner would condemn them to eat less or more meagerly. While the bodybuilders approach enslaved persons of the worst sort, the magnanimity of the wise is likewise connected with comparatively *liberaliora* foods, the kind more fitting of a free person. So too, in outdoing the food of those about to be killed (*occisuri*, *mutatis mutandis*), these individuals take on the role of those who would die in battle compared to those who would be taken and enslaved.[54]

The medical side of preoccupation intersects with the military aspect of preoccupying at the beginning of this letter. Right after the salutation, Seneca notes: "It is the month of December: the citizenry sweats now especially" (*Ep.* 18.1, *December est mensis: cum maxime civitas sudat*). In *Ep.* 15, sweating is specifically linked to the baseline function of the occupied dyspeptic, reduced to simple excretion (*Ep.* 15.4, *bibere et sudare vita cardiaci est*). The fact that the whole of the citizen body is suffering in this way points forward to Seneca's rebuke of Lucilius at *Ep.* 75.7, where the student has forgotten the plague of emotional mismanagement that is all around and which is the root of the preoccupation of everyone Where the later letter

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[53] As discussed further in Ch. 4, the other active use of *praeoccupare* comes in the explicit discussion of Stoic pedagogy outlined in *Ep.* 94 (and mapped out thoroughly by Schafer, 2009). It is interesting that it comes into close proximity with *decreta* used in a different context as well as with a recommendation to "*really* concern oneself" with the mind of a student (*percurare*). On the figure of Fortune as a military enemy, Asmis (2009).

[54] See n. 5 for the etymological references in relation to *servi*. Regarding *liberalis*, Maltby (1991: 338) uses *Ep.* 88's discussion of the liberal arts as an ancient etymological reference. On the presentation of the Stoic body as a point of torture and pain, Bartsch (2006: 174–80)

goes on to discuss more fully the gradations of psychical and moral disease, this earlier letter

makes the connection with slavery more explicit. In *Ep*. 15, the bodybuilders approach enslaved

persons (*mancipia*), both in their everyday associations and in the distension of their *spiritus*. In

Ep. 50, the blindness of moral fault from which the preoccupied suffer is symbolized by the

blindness of the clown Harpastê, an enslaved person of his wife. Here, Seneca describes the

Saturnalia as a crowd of freedmen:

> Si te bene novi, arbitri partibus functus nec per omnia nos similes esse pilleatae turbae voluisses nec per omnia dissimiles; nisi forte his maxime diebus animo imperandum est, ut tunc voluptatibus solus abstineat cum in illas omnis turba procubuit; certissimum enim argumentum firmitatis suae capit, si ad blanda et in luxuriam trahentia nec it nec abducitur. Hoc multo fortius est, ebrio ac vomitante populo siccum ac sobrium esse, illud temperantius,[55] non excerpere se nec insignire nec misceri omnibus et eadem sed non eodem modo facere… (*Ep*. 18.3–4)

> If I know you well, after performing the role of a judge, you would not have wanted to be either similar to the capped crowd in all things nor dissimilar in all things; unless, perhaps, especially in these days, the mind must command, that it alone abstain from pleasures then, when all the crowd has sunk into them; for one takes the surest proof of one's steadfastness, if one neither goes nor is led away to charming things and things dragging them to luxury. Being dry and sober in a drunk and vomiting crow, this is much stronger; not picking oneself out, standing out, or mixing with everyone, and doing the same things but not in the same way, that is more measured (*temperantius*)…

The crowd is capped like freedmen, who by definition are no longer a state of slavery.[56]

However, the crowd carry markers of the *cardiaci* from *Ep*. 15 in their penchant for drinking and

expelling. Further, Lucilius is told that his mind should "command" and exercise *imperium*, the

military power of a Roman general in the field.[57] Thus, Seneca configures the festival as yet

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[55] On the etymological connection with time, see Ch. 3

[56] On the dress of freedmen, Edmondson, 2008. Asmis (2009: 127) points *Ep*. 44.5–6 where Seneca tells Lucilius to imagine himself as a *libertinus* as a positive marker of freeing oneself (*se vindicare*). However, Seneca also tells Lucilius that the end goal is to become "free alone among the freeborn" (*liber inter ingenuos*), and Seneca's denigration of freedmen elsewhere (cf. n. 49 below) suggests a more nuanced picture. For a different take on the image of freeing oneself, see discussion in Ch. 3.

[57] Drogula, 2007 provides an overview of scholarship while advancing a view that *imperium* only refers to military command.

another battlefield. Lucilius could be captured at the Saturnalia by giving himself to present

concerns rather than strategically positioning himself to continue his trajectory toward his future

goal of the intelligible Good. The Saturnalia is "charming" and "dragging into luxury," showing

the force of the hand pulling Lucilius away from the upward trajectory.[58]

The crowd, who have let themselves be conquered already, "have sunk" (*procubuit*) into

their pleasures, which lead to drunkenness and vomiting. The position at the root of the verb,

lying down, invokes both the fall from the path toward the Good, as they are no longer upright

and they are no longer active, as well as surrender in a campaign.[59] This formulation of

procumbere + in appears in relation to disease in Seneca's contemporary Columella,[60] where he

describes a disease of pigs and recommends abstention from food and drink as the cure:

> solet etiam universum pecus aegrotare ita, ut emacietur, nec cibos capiat,
> productumque in pascua medio campo procumbat, et quodam veterno pressum
> somnos aestivo sub sole captet. (VII.10.4)

> Also, the whole herd usually gets sick, such that it wastes away and does not take
> food, and when led forth into pasture they fall down in the middle of the field, and,
> pressed by a certain slowness, it takes dreams under the summer sun.

The "entire crowd" (*omnis turba*) of the Saturnalia falls ill just like the whole herd, using the

same verb (*aegrotare*) as Seneca does at *Ep*. 50.4 to describe people's ignorance of their

preoccupation. Just like the *cardiaci* of *Ep*. 15, their moral illness equates to their failure to

pursue the human good by wrongly acting like speechless animals through their occupation in

the present. Columella recommends giving the pigs an emetic to cure them (VII.10.5), which

once again shows the misguided efforts of the occupied: while the vomiting of pigs is a step

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[58] On the "charming" aspects of external things/impressions, Graver, 2007: 149–72

[59] For lying down, OLD 2; for surrender, OLD 1, and thus e.g., *De Bello Gallico* 7.15, *procumbunt Gallis omnibus ad pedes Bituriges, ne pulcherrimam urbem succendere cogerentur*

[60] Ash, 1941: xiii–xiv.

toward healing the herd, the vomiting of the crowd displays their occupation and submission to disease.

Thus, it is imperative—*imperandum est*—that in order to win the day, the moral agent must "do the same things but not in the same way" (*Ep.*18.4, *eadem sed non eodem modo facere*). In order to act and preoccupy this territory and avoid succumbing to occupation, the hand of care must hold the mind away from the pleasures which lead to their diseased state. When it comes to the *quemadmodum*, the manner in which the hand of care acts to accomplish the Good, Seneca provides a negative example in this early letter: not like the crowd of freedpersons. However, when it comes to the means which care will use, this separation of the diseased, slavish crowd (or ex-enslaved) from the proper use of care is not so complete. When he is speaking of the kind of effort that Metrodorus and Epicurus exerted to transcend those condemned to death, Seneca tells Lucilius that he will in fact be acting like an enslaved person:

> Non est tamen quare tu multum tibi facere videaris (facies enim quod multa milia servorum, multa milia pauperum faciunt): illo nomine te suspice, quod facies non coactus, quod tam facile erit tibi illud pati semper quam aliquando experiri (*Ep.* 18.8)

> However, there is no means by which you would seem to do much for yourself (for you will be doing what many thousands of enslaved people, many thousands of the poor do): look up at yourself in that name, that you will not do it compelled, that you will have suffering that always as easy as trying it out sometimes.

The repetition of *facere* and cognate *facilis*, especially in the personalized future tense *facies*, emphasize that the Lucilius will be properly employing the hand of his care. The use of *experiri* to describe this activity looks forward to *Ep.* 75.7, where Seneca tells Lucilius that he will have to practice his moral education in addition to reading about philosophy. However, Seneca explicitly says that Lucilius should not overvalue the means that he will be employing to do this, because it is what enslaved people and the poor already do. In this, the dictionary distinction

breaks down. Lucilius simultaneously is striving to be one of the glorious war-dead by preoccupying the tools that would be used against him, but at the same time he is performing activities that many who have been captured in war, the *servi*, do actually perform. How does Lucilius make his way to the Good if that activity is also the way of the enslaved?

Social Slavery vs Pathological Slavery

As the section title suggests, the issue is not the status of enslavement as such. Rather, Seneca's discourse on slavery reinterprets the Roman institution to accommodate the social reality while also creating space for a new hierarchy of moral slavery. This new hierarchy is not that of *liber*/*servus*, but rather *liber*/*mancipium*.[61] The best way to exhibit the invention of this new spectrum is to analyze the ways that the hand of care and its (mis)applications are seen in Seneca's most famous discussion of slavery, *Ep*. 47, in contexts suggesting the abject nature of *mancipium* in relation to the social status of the enslaved person (*servus*), who could still attain greater virtue than their masters. The first of these references appears as Seneca gives the example of Callistus, who gained great wealth and prominence under Caligula, and how he relates to his former master.[62] Seneca recounts,

> Stare ante limen Callisti dominum suum vidi et eum, qui illi inpegerat titulum, qui inter reicula mancipia produxerat, aliis intrantibus excludi.[63] Rettulit illi gratiam servus ille in primam decuriam coniectus, in qua vocem praeco experitur; et ipse illum invicem apologavit, et ipse non iudicavit domo sua dignum. Dominus Callistum vendidit; sed domino quam multa Callistus! (*Ep*. 47.9)

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[61] In what follows, I strictly use *mancipium*/*-a* in the Latin to differentiate from the sociologically enslaved, *servi*, whom I refer to as "an enslaved person/enslaved people" so as to focus on the humanity of the individuals sociological enslaved, consonant with the trends highlighted by Waldman (2015), which also maps the dehumanizing trend of the psychic distension resulting in *mancipium*.

[62] Balsdon & Griffin (2012) in their entry highlight some of the tangled web of court intrigue, in which Callistus was involved, and given Seneca's largely apolitical stance or even anti-political posturing in the letters (pace Bartsch, 2015; Henderson, 2002), his example may not be entirely positive. This may relate to his status as a freedman, for which see n. 65 below.

[63] The manuscripts preserve *ridicula*, but Muretus conjectures *reicula*; in either case, whether the enslaved are rejected or laughable, it is certainly a pejorative image.

> I saw standing before the threshold of Callistus his own master, and that he, who had thrust the label onto that one, who had led him forth among the little useless enslaved people, was being shut out while others were entering. That enslaved person has returned the favor to him, having been thrown together with the first bloc, in which the crier tests his voice. And he himself has spurned him in turn himself judged him unworthy of his own home. The master has sold Callistus; but how much Callistus has sold at his master's price!

Strictly speaking, neither of the two individuals, Callistus or his former master, are the *mancipia* here in view, but the language of the hands and care appears to show the reversal of fortune in more damning terms. First, it is the master acting to thrust the label on Callistus to put him up for sale in the market among the *reicula mancipia*, and this seems to be the case when we reach the next finite verb, *rettulit*. However, the one who is acting with their hands this time is in fact "that enslaved man" Callistus, not the master, as the freedman returns the favor to his former master.[64] Seneca goes even further to ascribe *logos* to Callistus in judging his former master seen through the hapax *apologavit*, derived from ἀπολέγειν, showing how he both selects and refuses the man on account of his lack of worth in Callistus' eyes.[65]

The role reversal in the economic transaction summed up in the end of the section thus colors the reading of Callistus and the master's relationship to the *mancipia* before it: where once the master believed Callistus worthy of the lowest status of useless tools, now it is the master who is kept outside and up for sale. This does not necessarily paint Callistus as the pinnacle of virtue, but rather as an agent who is capable of exercising his care in such a way that he *could* achieve proper living. There are hints here that Callistus has fallen short of the good, however, as his position in the top economic bracket is a result of his having been thrown there (*coniectus*), not through any manual faculty of his own. That Callistus is in such a position to be able to

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[64] Mouritsen (2011: 182) describes the *operae*, rather than *gratiae*, which *liberti* were expected perform and to some extent legally required to do so (though to what extent, see p.225–6).
[65] This is not only economic worth, but likely connected to the *dignitas* accorded to Roman elites; Balsdon, (1960) offers a survey of this value in practice.

choose either care or occupation is thus up to chance and not a result of his own directed activity, and so it is also in question. However, whether or not this evaluation is justified,[66] Callistus' example shows that the label of *servus* is not enough to render one 'truly' enslaved. The *mancipia* are the useless ones in this example, for sale as incapable tools, while Callistus is later labeled as a *servus* when he gains his manipulative power over his former master; the social status does not map onto the ethical status, because the enslaved person has the power to exercise his *manus* while the *dominus* loses this ability.

The ability of the enslaved people to use their *manus* appears earlier than our first mention of *mancipium* in the letter. Seneca discusses several roles of enslaved people, who suffer abysmal abuse from their masters: "we abuse them as if they were not even humans, but as if they were beasts of burden" (*Ep*. 47.5, *ne tamquam hominibus quidem, sed tamquam iumentis abutimur*). The enslaved people here are treated as if they were animals, showing a cognitive fault in the masters.[67] The bodybuilders from *Ep*. 15 share in this fault, but there it is directed at themselves, as they insist on working out and competing with oxen in strength and size. Thus, the legally enslaved people are hemmed in by the pathologically enslaved. While the legally

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[66] As may be gleaned from Seneca's continued use of *servus* for rhetorical effect to describe the now *libertus* Callistus, Seneca's relationship to freedmen is complicated. Where different freedmen appear in the *Epistulae Morales* and other works, they are generally looked down upon; as we have seen, the diseased crowd of the Saturanalia is *pilleatus* like freedmen. Elsewhere, the freedman Licinus is placed alongside Crassus as the examples of financially wealthy but morally bankrupt individuals (*Epp*. 119.9, 120.19); the freedman Timagenes is described as *felicitati urbis inimicus* (*Ep*. 91.13) and as a scandalous writer of histories in juxtaposition to the composed Augustus at *De Ira* 3.23.4–8. Pliny the Elder records Seneca's reaction to the unbelievable harvests of Palaemon: …*novissime Annaeo Seneca, principe tum eruditorum ac potentia, quae postremo nimia ruit super ipsum, minime utique miratore inanium, tanto praedii huius amore capto, ut non puderet inviso alias et ostentaturo tradere palmam eam, emptis quadriplicato vineis illis intra decimum fere curae annum…* (*NH* 14.5.51). It may be no coincidence, given the current project, that Seneca's prejudices are overridden in recognition of Palaemon's ten years of *cura*. On Seneca's relation to the son of a freedman Aegialus in *Ep*. 86, Henderson (2002: 158–62)

[67] One of many which leads to their profligate emotional responses; on the cognitivist picture of Stoic emotional psychology, Graver, 2007: 35–60.

enslaved are tools for the pathologically enslaved, in their occupation they abuse them and restrain them from accomplishing the Good.[68]

Seneca describes several ways in which the diseased *mancipia* abuse their legal *servi*. First, there are the enslaved people at the dinner parties themselves, including the one who cleans up food that has been spit out, the one who "having been given to the underside of the cushions gathers together the remnants of the drunk people" (*Ep.* 47.5, *reliquias temulentorum toro subditus colligit*). What the diseased 'masters' lose through their mouths, the legally enslaved persons gather this up with their hands; the subjugation of the second class is highlighted in the fact that they are given (*sub + datus*) to their particularly distasteful task. Next are the poultry carvers, who

> per pectus et clunes certis ductibus circumferens eruditam manum frusta excutit, infelix, qui huic uni rei vivit, ut altilia decenter secet, nisi quod miserior est, qui hoc voluptatis causa docet quam qui necessitatis discit (*Ep.* 47.6)

> Shake out the morsels, carrying their educated hand around through the chest and haunches with sure conduct; they are unfortunate, who live for this one thing alone, to cut up fattened birds in seemly manner, except that they, who teach this because of pleasure, are more wretched than they, who learn it because of compulsion.

These enslaved people take a step up in their use of their hands, not just collected but wielding their *eruditam manum* to craft a beautiful meal—an object of opprobrium, as Seneca sees it, but one which nonetheless involves skill. The use of *eruditam*— "instructed," but also "polished" or "honed" in their separation from a *rudis* craft into becoming *subtilis* in their task—hearkens back to the imagery of *Ep.* 15, where the souls of the *occupati* are dulled, but it is here that the *servi* are the ones who are the truly sharp compared to the drunk men who have control over them. Their craft also recalls the "easy hand" (*facili manu*) of the craftspeople at *Ep.* 121.5, whose

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[68] Bénatouïl (2006:113ff) discusses the right and wrong reason of reason in Stoicism, which properly conceived exhibits a 'univocity' of thought and action, which the *servi* are restrained from achieving here.

movements are as fluid as the natural movements.[69] The misfortune of enslaved person's

position is not just the social position, but that their *manus* has the markings of one that could

bring them the Good through their care, as they wield it and guide it with sure *ductibus*, leading

according to a plan they possess and in defined ways;[70] yet, they are reduced to the tools of those

who have occupied themselves concerning pleasures.

Next is the *vini minister*, whose abilities are taken not through the explicit control of their

hands but through the confinement of their temporality through the sexual violence imposed by

the drunken hands of the *dominus*:

> in muliebrem modum ornatus cum aetate luctatur. non potest effugere pueritiam,
> retrahitur, iamque militari habitu glaber retritis pilis aut penitus evulsis tota nocte
> pervigilat, quam inter ebrietatem domini ac libidinem dividit et in cubiculo vir, in
> convivio puer est. (*Ep*. 47.7)

> They struggle with their age, adorned in a womanly manner. They cannot flee from
> their childhood, they are dragged back, and already in military comportment they
> stay up through the whole night, smooth from their hairs being cut back or plucked
> out altogether, that night which they divide between the drunkenness of their master
> and hist lust and in which they are a man in the bedroom, at the party a boy.

When such a person struggles against their age, this is not merely performing unseemly tasks,

but also acting against their proper form as a being. As we saw form *Ep*. 121, every stage of life

has its own constitution; thus, to act contrary to a particular time in one's life is to break free

from nature, both own's own and *simpliciter*.[71] They are "dragged back" into the past, contrary to

nature and contrary to their own will, by the *dominus*' drunkenness and desire, the former being

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[69] Cf. Ch. 1, p. 58

[70] As OLD points out under the first and second definitions of *ductus*, the 'leadings' may evoke the precision of engineering, specifically of aqueducts (2), as well as military command (1), further sharpening the contrast between the *servi* better equipped to enact *cura* and the *domini* who have made themselves *occupati*.

[71] Viparelli, 2000: 35–36 recreates the temporal discussion of *Ep*. 12 as a cone of interconnected rings of one's whole life and particular smaller units of it, converging at the peak which is the end; she notes that each of these stages is what nature has ordained for us; to descend on this pyramid is unnatural and—strictly speaking—not feasible.

one of the four cardinal "passions" (πάθη) of the Stoics.[72] The master's diseased condition now has infected and unbalanced the nature of the enslaved person, who is drawn into the occupation which the master has crafted for himself. The sexual inversion which supervenes on the temporal inversion seals the extent to which this enslaved person is reduced from the ability they have to practice their care. They possess a *habitus militaris*, a way of "holding" themselves in a way which signals they should be able to fight back, but they are so currently possessed that they are unable to break out of this possession and are thus used alternately as man and boy, reliving their past instead of crafting their future. The military garb makes explicit the moral conquest that the enslaved person is waging with their care, and it contrasts with the *pathological* master who has lost this particular battle already.

Time also plays a factor in the abuse of the next *servus* mentioned, who has received the "censorship" of the party's guests (*censura*) and thus "keeps standing, unfortunate person, and watches out for those whom fawning and intemperance of either their throat or their tongue will call back for tomorrow" (*Ep.* 47.8, *perstat infelix et exspectat, quos adulatio et intemperantia aut gulae aut linguae revocet in crastinum*). Like the carver above, this "censor" of the guests controls their access to their future project, i.e., continuing their gluttonous or intemperate lifestyles, and in this way the enslaved person is closer to properly practicing care than the guests, occupied individuals who have been reduced to disembodied body parts. However, the enslaved person is prohibited from being able to actually direct their own activity into the future, as they are kept in a thoroughly static position (*perstat*), from which they can only watch the other guests. Like those who have been occupied and given to their mental diseases, the enslaved person is reduced in their mobility and their creative activity, but they are not morally lost like

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[72] Cf. n. 28

the occupied masters, but rather physically restrained and socially disadvantaged. [73] The *servus* remains the most human again in this situation, but they are kept from their potential due to their position in a power structure dominated by people who are themselves occupied.

Finally, Seneca rounds out his survey of the roles of *servi* involved in the lavish dinner party of the *domini*:

> Adice obsonatores, quibus dominici palati notitia subtilis est, qui sciunt, cuius illum rei sapor excitet, cuius delectet aspectus, cuius novitate nauseabundus erigi possit, quid iam ipsa satietate fastidiat, quid illo die esuriat. (*Ep.* 47.8)

> Throw in the caterers, to whom there is a subtle acquaintance with a master's pallet, who know which thing's flavor stirs them up, which thing's look entices, at which thing's novelty the vomit-inclined master can be lifted up, what nauseates them now from their own fullness, what they hunger for on that day.

At this point, it is worth recognizing that Seneca does not use the word *servus* in this section to refer to any of these individuals. Every other role is introduced with an anaphoric *alius*, and now once Seneca "throws in the caterers," the lack of explicit reference to *servi* clouds the social distinction between master and enslaved person, which fits Seneca's aim of showing how those called *domini* are the least so in terms of their conduct rather than social standing. So it is that these *obsonatores*—who derive their name from the Greek ὀψωνεῖν, "to cater," further highlighting their connection to the luxury of the party—end up with the most cognitive capacity of any of the dining *domini* who have come in the preceding sections. They have *subtilis notitia*, combining the *subtilitas* which we have seen is the mark of mental acuity achieved through care with the result of their own work of *noscere*. Through their experience and their craft, they have gotten to know what makes the palate of the luxuriating class tick (*sciunt*). However, as with

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[73] The *occupati* may also be falling away from humanity, like the diseased mind of *Epp.* 15 & 75 above, if we accept the definition of Nonius Marcellus (17.2): *adulatio est blandimentum proprie canum*, discussing a line of Accius' *Prometheus* (LCL 314, 532–3); this is also connected to a line from Cicero *De Natura Deorum* II.158 which discusses *adulatio dominorum* as one of the natural tendencies of dogs.

many of the enslaved, the marks of their care, which make them positive moral agents, are perverted by the occupied master. In this instance, the *obsonator* who possesses knowledge and experience, is denied their ability to achieve *sapientia* through their action, and instead they must focus their craft on the *sapores* of the master. The *sapiens* at the party is not the enslaved person equipped to curate their *sapientia*, but the *dominus* literally excited to try new flavors.[74]

The inversion is further highlighted by the status of the *dominus* being served by the knowledgeable *obsonator*. On the one hand, the master is rendered the object of the actions described. These are not even the acts of the *servus*—for they have been rendered a tool of luxury by the *dominus*—but of the particular sensuous effects which result from the craft involved. The flavor stirs them up. The look entices them. The novelty can arouse them. When they become the ostensible grammatical subject in the last propositions which the *obsonator* knows, the verbs themselves point out their reactive position, as they feel disgust at or hunger for certain particular objects when they present themselves. These last reactions bring up the second element of the hierarchical inversion, namely that the knowledge of the *obsonator* is used upon a person reduced to their body, and an ill one at that.[75] The object of the misused knowledge is not the *dominus* themself, but "a master's palate;" like the fawning guests above, they are merely

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[74] The wordplay between *sapientia* and *sapere* is and old one in Latin literature; in his discussion of the term in Ennius, Habinek, 2006: 479 highlights e.g., Plautus *Casina* 780 as an example contemporaneous with Ennius of how "[s]*apientia* before, after, and during the career of Ennius retains its etymological association with "taste" or "discrimination" (487). Maltby, 1991: 543 collects ancient definitions of both words which are all mutually interlinked.

[75] One may be reminded of Plato's *Gorgias* (463b2–465c5), where Socrates juxtaposes the flattering art (ἡ κολακευτικὴ) of pastry-baking (ἡ ὀψοποιικὴ), which "does not know but aims" (οὐ γνοῦσα λέγω ἀλλὰ στοχασαμένη) with the helpful art of medicine (ἡ ἰατρική), which do for the body what rhetoric and justice do for politics, respectively. Whether Seneca agrees with Socrates when he says "I deny that this is a craft, but it is a knack" (τέχνην δὲ αὐτὴν οὔ φημι εἶναι ἀλλ᾽ ἐμπειρίαν) because pastry baking "aims at the pleasant without the best" (τοῦ ἡδέος στοχάζεται ἄνευ τοῦ βελτίστου) and "I do not call anything a skill which is a thing without *logos*" (ἐγὼ δὲ τέχνην οὐ καλῶ ὃ ἂν ᾖ ἄλογον πρᾶγμα) or whether he may be more amenable to a Ciceronian position (e.g. that put in the mouth of Antonius at *De Oratore* I.219–226) is debatable. Armisen-Marchetti (1989) explores the question of Stoic rhetoric in her introduction and concludes that there is a place for it, but it must be properly curtailed and aimed.

organs and not complete persons. Further, the *dominus* (or their palate) is not healthy, but

nauseabundus; unlike Cura, who is "wrapped in thought" (*cogitabunda*), they are now wrapped

in vomiting, like the diseased and preoccupied crowd of *Ep.* 18.[76] The rousing of the *dominus* by

taste places them at a nexus of passions, both pain and desire, which distend the *pneuma* to

physically and spiritually sicken the individual. Thus, our *dominus* becomes a more wretched

version of the *cardiacus* from *Ep.* 15, reduced to bodily functions but ones even more

unhealthy.[77]

Though the masters are reduced to their body parts and to diseased reaction, their efforts

are nevertheless the product of their self-employed occupation. As we have seen above, their

moral failings rest on their use of tools in ways which further lessen their ability to act in ways

which are suited for their future good—or rather, on their abuse of people who *are* suited for

future good in order to derail both of their chances of creating their path toward the Good

through care. They slowly render themselves inactive, stolid and stultus, but this is only the end

result of the misguided activity of occupation aimed at the present in sensation and not toward

the future intelligible Good. Thus, it is that Seneca begins his discussion of the abused *servi* at

the dinner parties with an adage that more fittingly sums up the status of all involved: "Hence, an

old saying is tossed about characteristic of this presumption, that there are the same number of

enemies as enslaved people. We don't have those enemies, we make them" (*Ep.* 47. 5, *deinde*

eiusdem arrogantiae proverbium iactatur, totidem hostes esse quot servos. Non habemus illos

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[76] Etymologically, OLD's first definition links *nausea* to *navis* and Greek ναῦς; given Seneca's critique of travel and experience with boats, such as in *Epp.* 28 & 53, such a link may highlight the diseases which these *domini* ignore, having occupied themselves with their luxury; the introduction of *Ep.* 77, contrasting Seneca's calm with the hubbub brought about with the arrival of the ships of Alexandria, may provide another such contrast.

[77] The disintegration of the body of the *mancipia* at the party shares some resonance of the schizophrenic body discussed by Deleuze (1990: 86–89), who appeals to Stoicism in a non-moral sense to explore a theory of meaning and sense. However, given Stoic corporalism and the medical model discussed above, the connection of vice with mental illness is à *propos*.

hostes, sed facimus). Without distinguishing the *dominus*/*servus* social dichotomy from the

cura/*occupatio* moral/pathological dichotomy, such an adage only suggests that an individual's

bad behavior makes other people spiteful toward them. Returning to the precept after witnessing

the moral mix up, we see how the misused craft of the masters turns their dependents and tools

against them, both as people and as instruments. As human beings, the enslaved people resent the

stunting of their own moral growth by their social wielders, but as instruments they are employed

in the master's active efforts to poison and worsen themselves.

Thus, the *domini* use them for their own occupation, until they reduce themselves to

mancipia. Seneca returns to an early refrain of labeling people *servi* and questioning the moral

claim behind it in order to show the truly important moral domain being overlooked:

> "Servus est." Sed fortasse liber animo. "Servus est." Hoc illi nocebit? Ostende, quis
> non sit; alius libidini servit, alius avaritiae, alius ambitioni, omnes timori. Dabo
> consularem aniculae servientem, dabo ancillulae divitem, ostendam nobilissimos
> iuvenes mancipia pantomimorum! Nulla servitus turpior est quam voluntaria. (*Ep*.
> 47.17)

> "They are enslaved" But, perhaps free in their mind. "They are enslaved". Will this
> harm them? Show us who is not; one is in service of lust, another of greed, another
> ambition, all are in service of greed. I will give you a consular in service to a little
> old woman, I will give you a rich man in service to a little enslaved girl, I will show
> you youths of the most noble families as the enslaved (*mancipia*) of pantomimes!
> No service is more shameful than when it is voluntary.

The tricolon of individuals culminates in the youths of the highest social position reduced to the

lowest moral position, that of *mancipia*. The enslaved person, as we have seen above, still has

opportunity to change, as they are "free in spirit," and this slavery need not necessarily harm

them in their moral proficiency. Though the abused enslaved people from above certainly may

call this into doubt, we may also think of Seneca's example of the Spartan youth at *Ep*. 77.14,

who after he was taken (*captus*) shouted "I will not serve!" (*non serviam*) and then dashed his

brains out against the wall when ordered "to function in a task characteristic of enslavement, full

of insult" (*servili fungi et contumelioso ministerio*).[78] Enslaved people, though they all may be taken, nevertheless have a chance to break out of their moral quandary, namely through properly conducted suicide: "Freedom is so close, and someone serves? So, would you not prefer your child die than be made an old person through lack of craft? (*Ep.* 77.15, *tam prope libertas est; et servit aliquis? ita non sic perire filium tuum malles quam per inertiam senem fieri*?) The continued *servitus*-slavery arises from a literal lack of *ars*, a lack of the exercise of care to craft an aim to find the good even in the basest situation.

The complete *inertia* of the agent leads to their complete inertness, such that the child will end up amongst the aristocratic youths who are the *mancipia* of pantomimes, utterly unable to act and totally taken in the hands of another. The change in verbs signals this change in mobile and moral status. Seneca "gives" those who are *serviens*—such people can break out of this state, they still have activity and a potential to redirect their life onto the path upward toward the intelligible Good, and so the example is changed with Lucilius. However, he "shows" the *mancipia*, either stretching them out opposite Lucilius or holding them to his face,[79] because such individuals are completely objectified through their self-occupation; they are not going anywhere, so there is no need for an exchange to take place, and simply sitting in view is enough to prove the example's worth. The *servientes* are active in their service even with the present participle, and they still have masculine/feminine quality in that they are *servientes*. On the other hand, the totally occupied *mancipium* is reduced to the neuter.

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[78] Graver (2007: 130) points out that in discussing the diseases of the mind discussed at *De Ira* 2.5, Seneca describes them with the cognate *contumax*, and she says "*Contumax*, meaning contumacious or obstinate, is applicable in Latin usage to anything which moves forcibly and unthinkingly against the restrictions imposed by reason." For more on the care-ful use of suicide, Ch. 3

[79] Maltby, 1991: 437 records Cassiodorus' recommendation *os, oris ex quo ostendo, ostentum*; however, other definitions only highlight synonyms with "display/show" just as consistent with *os + tendere/tenere* as with *obs + tendere*.

For socially confined *servi*, death may be the only path out in order to prove their moral worth that transcends the warped social structure,[80] but for the *consularis* or *dives*, who put themselves in service, who occupy themselves in the present in place of curating their future, there are other paths out, namely the gradual acquisition of the *ars sapientiae* which would free them from fear and from the other harmful desires above.[81] As Seneca points out to Lucilius in *Ep.* 75, everyone has been occupied ahead of time, which gives us the reason why it is difficult to find someone who is not *serviens*. However, that they are not all *mancipia*—whether "approaching" them like the *cardiaci* body builders of *Ep.* 15 or slowly losing activity like the disintegrating bodies of *Ep.* 47—points out there is potential to make one's way out of base enslavement (*servitus*), whether compelled or voluntary, and onto the upward trajectory of Stoic moral progress. Thus, it is not just a statement of common humanity, but of common moral exhortation to highlight the way in which people generally have let their care fall away from the proper cycle into occupation, when Seneca defines enslaved people at the beginning of the letter:

> "Servi sunt." Immo homines. "Servi sunt." Immo contubernales "Servi sunt." Immo humiles amici. "Servi sunt." Immo conservi, si cogitaveris tantundem in utrosque licere fortunae.

> "They are enslaved." No, humans. "They are enslaved." No, messmates. "They are enslaved." No, lowly friends. "They are enslaved." No, enslaved together with us, if you have thought about how the same such amount is permitted to fortune against each of us.

That they are "messmates" recalls the martial imagery displayed as Seneca recounts our moral progress in "occupying" the second step on the way to *sapientia* at *Ep.* 75.15; that they and the

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[80] Despite the resonances of the kind of struggle for recognition, it is very likely that Seneca had no intention of undoing the Roman slave state; Edwards (2009:141) asserts that "[i]n redeploying the master/slave distinction at the metaphorical level Seneca's writing ultimately serves… to reinforce [the distinction's] power in the realm of actual human relations," and despite the qualifications of some her positions presented here, I think it likely that this is closer to the truth of what could be ostensibly abolitionist material.

[81] Or, as discussed in Ch. 3, the sociologically free individuals also have more ability to curate the proper means, manner, and extent of their life and death.

audience of the letters are *conservi* shows our distance from the final attainment of *sapientia*. In this way, his contention that legally enslaved persons are "enslaved together with us" recalls his formulation that the public have all been preoccupied at *Epp*. 50 and 75. That the *servi* and *conservi* are together "lowly" reflects their position on the path upward toward the intelligible good. For now, the preoccupied are still closer to the plane of sensation and the pull of the present, but they still have the power to go forward. Not yet fully taken by occupation, these individuals can still "stretch out for virtue detained between vices" (*Ep*. 75.16, *ad virtutem contendimus inter vitia districti*). Having recognized their preoccupation and worked to remove it, these individuals now must turn to make themselves free and healthy through philosophy.

3

From Metaphor to Metaphysics

Early in the collection, at *Ep*. 8, Seneca explains, is to "be enslaved to philosophy" for, "this very enslavement to philosophy is freedom" (*Ep*. 8.7, *hoc enim ipsum philosophiae servire libertas est*). The service to philosophy, *philosophari*, is the practice of health, as Seneca establishes at *Ep*. 15. However, compared to the formulations from *Ep*. 47 above, the dative objects of *servire* figure as persons, and so philosophizing is also service to the personified Philosophy, feminine thanks to her grammatical gender. Thus, while Seneca has reconfigured institutional slavery in terms of being in the hands of fortune or holding oneself apart from them, the goal of enslavement to philosophy puts the moral subject back in the power of another, and a feminine other in particular which disrupts the subject's position in the Roman gender hierarchy.

In previous chapters, we have used 'they/them' to refer to the singular subject, as a way of indicating the applicability to all humans in line with the myth of Cura (*homines* → humus). However, in this chapter, we will switch to focusing on the historical audience for the letters, people like Lucilius, who were elite freeborn Roman males, and show the interaction of "him" with "her," be this Cura, Philosophy, or Nature. The implications of service to the feminine run against the drive for self-presentation in Foucault, but through the language of care we can see how Seneca subverts the power of the feminine, particularly in the philosophical personifications of Philosophy and Nature. As Dressler (2016:57–95 *et passim*) discusses, feminine personifications play on gender tensions in the male subject of activity, passivity, the former being associated with masculinity and the latter with femininity.[1] Seneca's shows how the male subject escapes the grasp of feminine force with two connected methods. First, he relegates the

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[1] For a different view, see n. 77 below

domain of Philosophy and Nature to the "incorporeals" (ἀσώματα) in Stoic metaphysics, which are surface effects caused by the activity of corporeal bodies: time, void, space, and sayables.[2] After moving the feminine force away from material reality, Seneca then imbues the feminine power of *cura* with masculine force as well.

In order to examine how care gains this power, we will first see how Seneca engages with the myth of Hyginus in a close reading situated in Seneca's approach to mythology and allegory. While Aldo Setaioli points out instances where Seneca appears to disavow allegoresis altogether,[3] the image of Cura shares enough in common with a Stoic picture of the cosmos as to be less problematic than other examples of the more scholastic variety. Seneca builds on the Stoic practice of etymology and provides an "exemplary" reading of the myth of Cura, which presents the story as a straightforward example of a philosophical truth couched in traditional Roman religious practice and civic theology. In several letters, such as *Epp.* 31 & 110 discussed below, Seneca etymologizes certain traditional religious names and practice but reconfigures them in ways which conform with the philosophical theology of Stoicism. As we shall see, Hyginus' Cura constructs a range between the poles of Jupiter, Tellus, Cura, and Saturn which serve as the neutral parameters for possible human lives. Within this framework, Seneca applies Stoic ethical and metaphysical doctrines which require the female Cura to take on the masculine power of Saturn to reach the Good.

This masculinized care thus has the ability to transcend the feminine forces of Philosophy and Nature. First, as seen through the depiction of Philosophy and matter in *Epp.* 53 & 65,

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[2] For a more detailed definition, particularly in relation to time, cf. pp. 132–3 below, including notes.
[3] Setaioli (2000: 192–7), specifically with reference to Seneca's similarities with the strictly anti-allegorical stance of the somewhat 'rogue' scholarch Panaetius. Setaioli (2007: 348–9) notes that Seneca does some allegorical work with the epithet of Jupiter Stator among at *De Beneficiis* 4.7.1–4.8, but he appeals to the beginning of the work (1.3.2–4.6) when declaring that "as a rule, however, Seneca does not accept the allegorical interpretation of mythical gods"

enslavement to Philosophy becomes enslavement to nothing, for her control is over incorporeal time and her power as *domina* is described passively, so that the moral subject is still the grammatical subject and remains untouched. This relationship to philosophy and freedom which differs somewhat from the picture of the male self in Foucault (1986), because it allows for freedom and philosophical practice both in the material world as well as in the inner domain of subjective thought.[4] Philosophy remains on the incorporeal realm, where care can use both it and matter to achieve the Good. Second, care transcends Nature because of its ability to work in things *contra naturam*. This arises precisely in proper care's embrace of the limited future for a human being. In analyzing *Ep.* 66 and 77, we can see how Seneca reshapes the Stoic goal of imitating nature by taking on the agricultural associations of Saturn in Roman cult, recalling Seneca's analogy of plant development to human development (discussed in Chapter 1). By taking on the characteristic of Saturn, who controls growth in religion but who for Hyginus decrees death, Seneca's *imitatio* focuses on the ability of the subject to reap themselves through suicide. Part of Seneca's much noted morbid fascination with death arises from care taking on masculine force to engineer the growth of a human life so that the subject makes sure that he dies when he should.[5] Seneca's reconfiguration of mythic and religious imagery allows the male subject to masculinize their care to gain access to the incorporeal and divine and to rise above the material present and the power of the feminine.

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[4] See the Introduction for the critiques of Foucault's interpretation of Seneca.

[5] E.g., Leeman (1971), Viparelli (2000:121, passim), Evenepoel (2004), Inwood & Donini (2008:735). Seneca's proposals of suicide are discussed by Edwards (2007:107–9 and passim), and Ker (2007) focuses on the consonance of Seneca's work with his suicide. In comparison with the Greek Stoa, Seneca makes an active possibility of what Goldschmidt (1953: 186n3) takes to be an extraordinary "act of obedience" [my translation]. Busch (2009: 263–5) situates Seneca's discussion of suicide alongside his positions on the afterlife and questions how they are liberating; however, the parallel between Seneca and Martin Heidegger's concept of "being-toward-death" (*SZ* 235–66) as highlighted by Perelli (1994: 54–8) offers an alternate take, one which is shared by Pliny the Elder (*NH* 2.5.27, cited by Edwards (2007)

Hyginus' *Fabulae* and Roman 'mythology'

Despite the work being a rare example of a mythography in Latin, specifically Roman features occupy very little of Hyginus' *Fabulae*.[6] The myth of Cura is only one of two which makes use of particular Latin etymologies, and besides using Latin names for the Greek gods (such as Saturnus for Kronos), Roman (quasi-)historical figures are limited to the section of lists (e.g., Romulus, Remus, and Camilla are all under the heading "those who were raised on the milk of wild animals" at *Fab*. 252). This curious lack for modern readers can be explained on two grounds. On the one hand, mythographical texts from antiquity, while the product of great learning, were intended to provide a kind of encyclopedia for others to use.[7] The presence of the extensive lists immediately following the myth of Cura in the collection, as well as the rather skeletal appearance of the preceding fables, illustrates how Hyginus and other mythographers worked for orators and poets to put new flesh back onto their bones. Additionally, Hyginus' Latin presupposes an audience removed from the Greek culture that created the myths, preserving figures and tales for their literary use rather than as an active, formative force for their society.[8] This explains the discrete presentation of individual myths, compared to the genealogical structure of Hesiod's *Theogony* or Apollodorus' *Biblotheke*, while still meriting the title of *Genealogia*. Being written for a Latin and Roman audience, this text thus seeks to import Greek myth as literature into a Roman society with a living background tradition that it does not need to explain in the same way.

On the other hand, the structure of Hyginus' Latin text in particular comes from the different explanatory relationship of Roman divinities as compared to Greek divinities. The

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[6] Despite the number of Latin authors with possible intertexts catalogued by Werth (1901: 22–5). Concerning 220, Werth remarks "*tota fabula latina est*" (1901: 27), but he does not place this tale among his *Fabulae Italicae*.
[7] Smith & Trzaskoma, 2007: xii–xvi; Guidorizzi (2000: xxii–xxiii)
[8] Guidorizzi, 2000:xxxiii–xxxiv; see also Gentili (1994: 785), Kirk (1974), Edmunds (1990).

Hellenic pantheon are tied together specifically by the genealogy which then structures the works

of Greek mythography which seek to condense their stories. In order to understand the

relationship of one divinity to another, one needs a work like Hesiod's *Theogony* to trace the

connections between them, and this is part of their highly anthropomorphic character. Whereas

the Greeks had divinities akin to named characters which necessitated genealogical and narrative

connection, Roman divinities had names and relationships which were "conceptually

transparent."[9] The divine appellations among the Romans more or less exactly restated their

function and/or domain of oversight, as Augustine highlights in his discussion of the traditional

divinities, or *indigites*, invoked in a traditional Roman marriage rite:

> **dom**um est **duc**enda quae nubit; adhibetur et deus **Domiducus**; ut in **dom**o **sit**, adhibetur deus **Domitius**; ut **man**eat cum viro, additur dea **Manturna**…(*civ*. 6.9)

> The bride must be **led home**, and for this the god **Home-leader** (*Domiducus*) is used; so that she **be** at **home**, there's the god **Homeb**ody (*Domitius*); so that she **stays** with her husband, there's also the goddess **Stay-where-you-are** (*Manturna*)…[10]

The names of the gods simply reflect their function in the process of the marriage, and the same

holds for other *indigites* in the agricultural and civic spheres as well. This conceptual

transparency lent itself to an absence of anthropomorphizing, so much so that Varro remarks that

"the ancient Romans worshipped gods without an image for more than 170 years."[11] These

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[9] Corbeill (2016: 108), translating the term of Usener (1896)

[10] Translation and emphases from Corbeill (2016: 107)

[11] So relates Augustine (*civ*. 4.31 = Cardauns, frg. 18): "*dicit etiam antiquos Romanos plus annos centum et septuaginta deos sine simulacro coluisse*." This statement has led to much debate (for which, see Cardauns, 1976: 146–8), but here I agree with Corbeill (2016: 106): "… the claim's historicity is not so important there as the fact that Varro could conceive of a time when the gods were not in possession of physical bodies." Van Nuffelen (2011) uses the timeline Varro presents to connect the introduction of *simulacra* in worship to the rule of Tarquinius Priscus, who, in addition to being of Greek descent, was also an initiate into the mysteries at Samothrace (Serv. 2.296 = Macrob. *Sat*. 3.4.7 = Cardauns, frg. 205).

numinous forces, lacking iconic forms, did not necessitate the same kind of mythology which tied together the universe of the Greek pantheon.[12]

Despite the initial lack of physical representation, the *indigites* did often come in gendered pairs.[13] However, these pairs did not signify marital couplings as they did for the Greeks (e.g., Kronos and Rhea), but rather the aspects of the particular force or domain. Thus, the Romans had the pair of Liber/Libera to denote the "freeing" of male and female seed in procreation, respectively,[14] while Varro attests to the gendered pair of Tellumo/Tellus which represent the aspect of the earth which actively produces seeds and that which passively accepts the seed, respectively.[15] Thus, the Roman *indigites* could generally be mapped to their function in the physical or social universe by their name alone; to return to Augustine's example above, the male Domiducus is invoked both because the god actively leads and because it maps on to the new husband who takes the bride into his home, while Manturna reflects the bride's passive position as waiting in the home. This is not always strictly followed, as can be seen by the rather evocatively named Pertunda invoked in marriage ritual, being a feminine deity overseeing the active sexual position,[16] and this linguistic-cum-religious ambiguity helps to situate the position of Cura in both Hyginus' myth and Seneca's appropriation of it.

A Senecan Interpretation of the Myth of Care

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[12] So much so that Rose (1928: 305–28) attributes to Rome a "pseudo-mythology;" Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Antiq. Rom*. 2.18–20) notes this phenomenon as well, owing it to Rome's moral superiority

[13] Corbeill (2016, 136–42) provides a catalog of these.

[14] Perfigli, 2004: 72–8; on the assimilation of Liber to Dionysus, Corbeill, 2016: 128–33

[15] Corbeill (2016: 111), citing Augustine (*civ*. 7.23 = Cardauns frg. 265); see also Weinstock, 1934: 800–2

[16] Called out by Augustine (*civ*. 6.9); Corbeill (2016: 104–118) notes other grammatical/personal gender mismatches, such as the masculine/neuter form Venus.

As a distinctly Latin myth, Hyginus' *Fab.* 220 appears as a much stronger candidate for exemplary exegesis, rather than allegorical exegesis, as it presents the philosophical concept in action and in a more straightforward way compared to the esoteric reading required by allegory.[17] The collection on the whole is in Latin for a Roman audience, and this myth in particular appeals to specifically Roman deities and specifically Latin etymologies. However, despite the conceptual transparency of the Roman *indigites,* the myth bears some interpretation, particularly given the apparent mismatch of an active force which is explicitly female gendered. Here again is the myth of Cura:

> Cura cum quendam fluvium transieret, vidit cretosum lutum, sustulit cogitabunda et coepit fingere hominem. Dum deliberat secum quidnam fecisset, intervenit Iovis; rogat eum Cura ut ei daret spiritum quod facile ab Iove impetravit. Cui cum vellet Cura nomen suum imponere, Iovis prohibuit suumque nomen ei dandum esse dixit. Dum de nomine Cura et Iovis disceptarent, surrexit et Tellus suumque nomen ei imponi debere dicebat, quandoquidem corpus suum praebuisset. Sumpserunt Saturnum iudicem; quibus Saturnus aequus videtur iudicasse: "Tu Iovis quoniam spiritum dedisti <animam post mortem accipe; Tellus, quoniam corpus praebuit> corpus recipito. Cura quoniam prima eum finxit, quamdiu vixerit Cura eum possideat; sed quoniam de nomine eius controversia est, homo vocetur quoniam ex humo videtur esse factus.[18]

> When Cura was going across a certain river, she saw some clay-filled mud, wrapped in thought she lifted it up and began to fashion a person. While she is deliberating with herself just what she had made, Jove interrupts; Cura asks him to give to this spirit, which she easily obtained from Jove. When Cura wanted to put her own name on it, Jove held her back and said that his name was to be given to it. While Cura and Jove were debating about the name, Tellus also rose up and was saying that *her* name ought to be put on it, seeing as she had offered up her own body. They got hold of Saturn as a judge: Saturn seems to them to have judged fair: "You, Jove, since you gave the spirit, take the soul after death; Tellus, since you offered up the body, take back the body. Cura, since she first fashioned this, for as long as it has lived let Cura possess it; but since there is dispute concerning its name, let it be called *homo* since it seems to have been made from the dirt.

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[17] This is how Setaioli (2000:194-6) interprets Seneca's use of literature, particularly poetry, compared to Mazzoli (1970: 215-32), who takes Seneca to be more open to allegory, though not as originally intended by the (Latin) poet themselves. This mode also fits Seneca's contemporary, Cornutus, as Boys-Stones (2018: demonstrates. The old Stoics were not above allegoresis themselves, as Setaioli (2004: 345-9) discusses in relation to their reading of the *Odyssey*. For more on the use of *exempla*, see Ch. 4.

[18] See introduction for the references to the critical apparatus of Marshall (1993).

The story on the whole has a Stoic flavor to it, as Guidorizzi (2000: 488 n. 955) points out with a direct line to the climactic—for this dissertation, at any rate—passage at *Ep*. 124.14.[19] As noted above, Cura's work is making and handicraft: she "lifts up" (*sustulit*) the clay, she fashions (*fingere, finxit*) the clay into a human like a potter would;[20] and the narrator as well as Saturn refer to the activity as one of "making" (*fecisset, factus esse*). Additionally, her activities, as well as the activities of the other divinities involved in the process have etymological roots to manual activities. She wishes to "place upon" (*imponere*) her creation her own name, but Jove "holds her back" (*prohibuit*).[21] Then, while they are judging about the name, "holding themselves apart" (*disceptarent* → *dis-* + *capere*), Earth makes her claim for the imposition of the name on the grounds that she "held forth" (*prae-* + *habere*) her body. All parties then take up (*sumpserunt*) Saturn as the judge,[22] and he then tells them to take what is theirs (*recipito*). The only passive version of these verbs refers to the humans who are the product of the divine Care.

The activity of the gods also shows a temporal axis within the story, which Seneca's conception of care also exhibits, as argued in the preceding chapters. Before the decree of Saturn, the verbs are all either present or past tense (with the one exception of the gerundive used Jove's indirect speech). Within the direct speech, each of the divinities addressed gets their own temporal progression. For Jove, he "did give" (*dedisti*) in the past, and so he then is commanded to "accept" (*accipe*) with a present imperative, but only after the future limit introduced after

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[19] Given Guidorizzi's citation of the reception in Herder, Wieland, and Goethe, in addition to the direct reference to Heidegger (*SZ* 197–99), one wonders about the status of such a claim, but given Dressler's (2016: 29–56) discussion of the "eclecticism" of Roman philosophy as a sharing of certain concepts, e.g., οἰκείωσις, amongst the various rival schools, one's doubts may be assuaged as to the causal relation.

[20] De Vaan (2008: 221) highlights Varro and Plautus as sources for cognates *figulus, fig(i)linae, figularis* among others, which refer specifically to potters.

[21] The meaning seems to reverse the constituent parts, but the "holding forth" of something also implies separation from it; thus Maltby (1991: 496) records Sextus Pompeius Festus 228's definition of *probus*, "the *probi*, as if *prohibi*, those who hold themselves from failing" (*probi, velut prohibi, qui se delinquendo prohibent*).

[22] Using the root verb for Seneca's translation of *prolepsis*.

death.[23] This use of the present corresponds to the futural present of the divine *logos* in Stoicism,[24] the more personal aspects of which are attributed to Jupiter/Jove (and Zeus).[25] Thus, at the end of the lifetime of this newly created *homo*, the divine part—the *spiritum* = πνεῦμα— returns to the futural always-already present of god.[26] A similar trajectory presents itself in Saturn's decision for Tellus: she "did offer" up the/her body, so she is to "take back" the body back into herself. Unlike the present imperative addressed to Jove, Saturn presents to her a future imperative (*recipito*), showing the continued force of the command into the future. Borrowing the terminology that Goldschmidt (1953:39–40) uses to discuss Stoic theory in general, the implicitly Stoic (and hence eventually Senecan) character of Hyginus' myth comes to the fore: the soul, returning to the active divine *pneuma*, joins the temporal *chronos*, the full present available to god, while the body returns to the earth in the *aion*, the time infinitely past and future in which the present becomes a mere point.[27]

The combination of these two forces leads to life and lived time, the time which Cura possess so long as humans live. Already, Saturn's judgment has assumed an endpoint, and so from the beginning the Cura's domain already looks to the end. Thus, the divine present obtained from Jove gains boundaries from Tellus, while the moment of Tellus is expanded thanks to the divine power. Cura manages the temporal possibility opened up by this combination, so long as

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[23] The rule-bound transaction which Saturn mediates also differs from the dynamics of the Greek myth of Prometheus and the creation of Pandora in Hesiod. As Vernant (1981) discusses, the characters in both *Works and Days* and the *Theogony* give as a matter of deceit, rather than the balanced give and take presented in Hyginus. Hyginus' story with Cura as creatrix thus envisions a providential, lawful divine order more akin to Stoicism, as compared to the violent Greek story of Hesiod characterized by "divine 'concealment' in a world of good and evil mixed, of ambiguity, of doubleness" (Vernant, 1981: 53). This myth also embodies the spirit of traditional Roman sacrificial practice as well as contract law, embodied in the slogan *do ut des* (cf. Berger, 1953:414; Rüpke, 2007:149)

[24] Cf. Ch. 1, n. 25

[25] Wildberger (2006:24–48)

[26] Cf. Ch. 1, p. 41 n. 29

[27] Taken from Aurelius (*M*. IV.3) (…τὸ χάος τοῦ ἐφ᾽ ἑκάτερα ἀπείρου αἰῶνος…), and compared with Bréhier (1928: 55) on the distinction between void and place regarding Stoic spatiality (void:place::aion:chronos), this distinction is later taken up by Deleuze (1990) (cf. n. 26)

the human being lives. In addition to this temporal conjunction, Cura also manages the spatial

one between the two planes, the divine and the earthly, the psychical and the physical, which

mirrors the upward movement toward the Good in understanding and away from the plane of

sensation.[28] That she "possesses" humans as long as they live reflects the language Seneca uses

to talk about the "beginning of the good" which straight away "takes hold" of even infants.[29] As

John T. Hamilton (2013: 4) describes in his reading of Hyginus' myth, Cura's power is thus

"[t]he conglomeration of Tellurian gravity and Jovian levity […] indebted to the artistic and

persuasive endeavors of divine maternal solicitude."

For Seneca, then, the question is how *cura* crafts and completes that conglomeration

which leads to happiness. At *Ep*. 65.20, Seneca provides an indication of this which juxtaposes

the spiritual with the material, in the course of addressing the objections of someone arguing

against the value of natural philosophy:

> Quae sedes exspectet animam solutam legibus servitutis humanae? Vetas me caelo
> interesse, id est iubes me vivere capite demisso?

> What home should await the soul being released from the laws of human servitude?
> Do you forbid me to be among the skies, i.e., do you order me to live with my head
> downcast?

The home awaiting or "looking out for" (*ex* + *specto*) for the soul clearly corresponds to the

aethereal realm of Jove, who accepts souls after a person has died.[30] The human servitude recalls

the etymology of *homo* present in the myth as well, such that it is a slavery determined by the

humus, the matter of which humans are made. As a response to the rhetorical questions, the goal

is, on the one hand, to have some share of the heavens and the plane of the understanding while

alive and, on the other, to avoid the moving downward to the strictly material on the plane of

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[28] See Ch. 1, pp. 22–3
[29] *Ep*. 124.7, *contigit protinus nato, non dico bonum, sed initium boni*; see chapter 1.
[30] On the visual connections to the divine present, Ch. 4 p. 155

sensation. While the mythic Cura crafts a human with these capacities and possibilities, it is then up to the individual human *cura* to create a life that leads to happiness.

This life is a limited one, a fact which is assumed in the myth of Cura and which is described as a "law of mortality" in the *EM* as well as in other works of Seneca's, through different images than the legal servitude just mentioned.[31] In Hyginus' account, the assumed finality of death is declared by Saturn, who is "fair" (*aequus*) in the opinion of the narrator in contrast with that of any of the three litigants who turn to him to settle their dispute. This judgment of "fairness" is shared by Seneca, when he closes out his letter insisting on the inseparability of true pleasure and virtue at *Ep*. 123.15–6. He first criticizes those "given to Greek custom" (*Graecae consuetudine data*) who suggest "under the pretext of the Stoic sect" (*sub specie Stoicae sectae*) that only the wise person is truly skilled in drinking and partying "equally" (*aeque*), and then he offers a better (Roman) position to counter such misguided appearances:

> Mors malum non est: quid <sit> quaeris? Sola ius aequum generis humani. Superstitio error insanus est: amandos timet, quos colit violat (*Ep*. 123.16)

> Death is no evil: do you seek what it is? It alone is the fair law for human kind. Superstition is a mad mistake: it fears whom it should love, it violates those whom it worships.

In the proper paradigm, death is the only law that is truly equal for all humans, and this recalls Hyginus' Saturn, who declares the law of death for the singular *homo* metonymically for all. On the other hand, superstition is both unhealthful—or unwise, given Seneca's conflation of health and philosophy seen at *Ep*. 15.[32] Additionally, this superstition is a mistake, a "wandering" (*error* → *errare*) off the upward path toward the Good of the understanding, for its force "stands

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[31] Inwood (2005: 224–48) discusses this in terms of Seneca's larger elaboration of the concept of natural law in Stoicism.
[32] Cf. Ch. 2 pp. 68ff

above" (*super + stare*) those who embrace it.[33] Such mental sickness thus leads to confused

priorities, fearing what ought not to be and not loving those who should be loved, i.e. the gods,

but it also leads one to commit crimes against them as well by bringing *vis* rather than devotion.[34]

In Stoicism, as we have seen, god is a singular force, but Seneca's appeal to Roman

tradition shows a respect for the role of traditional religious practice on the path toward virtue.

As Setaioli (2007: 333–68) shows in his survey of Seneca's position on traditional religion,

Seneca has a certain distance from traditional "civic theology" owed to his insistence on the

importance of the matter (*res*) of theology rather than the customs (*mos*) or religions.[35] However,

Seneca is still engaged in traditional religious discourse to a certain extent. In his dialogue *De

Beneficiis*, Seneca goes some way toward reconciling Stoic philosophical theology with the

religious customs of the Roman state, with an explicit usage of etymological reasoning. Contrary

to the beliefs of certain historians (*historici*), Seneca explains that the epithet *stator* applied to

Jupiter Optimus Maximus comes from the fact that "all things stand by his gift, he is the one who

supports and stabilizes" (*De Beneficiis* IV.7.1, *stant beneficio eius omnia, stator stabilitorque

est*).[36] *Stator*, as an epithet, shares the same conceptual transparency as the names for the

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[33] So Servius (*Aen*. 8.187 & 12.817), citing the formulation of Lucretius (*DRN* I.66); Maltby (1991: 594) also records Servius (*Aen*. 8.187) and Isidore (*Orig*. 8.3.6) claiming that it comes from the way those who have survived (*superstites*) into old age tend to be crazy for this reason, while Cicero claims that it arrives from the practices of people who want their children to survive them (*ND*. 2.72).

[34] While DeVaan (2008: 680) finds the back formation of the verb to the noun *vis* problematic given that the **uiH*-root is otherwise only nominal in other Indo-European languages, he asserts that "the Romans must have associated *violō* with *vīs*, since derivatives in -(*u*)*lentus* are characteristically made from nouns (cf. *opulentus*)." Maltby (1991: 647) records Isidore's definition for *violentus* (*Orig*. 10.279) as that which "bring violence against" (*vim infert*).

[35] Made in reference to the now lost *De Superstitione*

[36] While it is not entirely within the purview of this dissertation to speak to the position of the hand of *cura* outside of the *EM*, given that Seneca adverts Lucilius to the *De Beneficiis* at *Ep*. 81.3, I would like to say that some of what we have encountered in the previous chapters will hold true for this work which was completed just before the *EM*. For a brief timeline of Seneca's works, see Wilson (2014: xi–xiii).

indigites, and in this case it provides a Stoic philosophical justification by way of Roman religion and culture on the whole.[37]

Seneca assimilates ancient Romans to Stoics explicitly at the beginning of *Ep*. 110. Immediately after his greeting, Seneca orders Lucilius

> Habere mentem bonam, hoc est propitios deos omnis, quos habet placatos et faventes quisquis sibi se propitiavit… memineris maiores nostros qui crediderunt Stoicos fuisse; singulis enim et Genium et Iunonem dederunt.

> To have a good mind, i.e., all the gods favorable, those whom anyone, who has won over himself, has as placated and approving… You should remember that our ancestors were Stoics, who believed [in guardian deities]; for they gave both a Genius and a Juno to each individual.[38]

The equation of all the gods, namely those of traditional Roman religion, with the "good mind" of the individual parallels connection of the divine *pneuma* of god with the portion in humans that makes up the soul. Seneca's use of the verb *propitiare*, common in talk of sacrifice to the traditional gods, also recalls Seneca's assertion about how near (*prope*) god is to human beings at *Ep*. 41.1: "god is nearby you, it is with you, it is inside" (*prope est a te deus, tecum est, intus est*).[39] Seneca reconfigures traditional religious language through Stoic metaphysics by drawing the gods in as near as possible to the agent—within their own person.[40]

Seneca does not uncritically judge these practices, however, for there are certain elements of the civic theology and religious practice which have fallen from the proper Stoic conception for which he advocates. Traditionally, people misuse their care on religious rituals as is shown

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[37] Henderson (2002: 149) on Seneca's Latin pedagogy: "In the less sublimated, pragmatic, terms of moral reformation, the challenge is to prove that the world through Roman eyes *is* indeed always already philosophized – in conformation with, and in confirmation of *Stoic Hellenism* beyond the imperative to Transliterate-or-Neologize" [sic]

[38] Seneca's language about the innate god (such as the comparison of the soul to sunbeams from the divine sun at *Ep*. 41.5) were picked up by later Platonist authors like Macrobius (*In Somn. Scip*. I.21.34) and have raised the question of whether Seneca Platonized Stoicism, like his predecessor Posidonius, a charge which Setaioli (2007) and Armisen-Marchetti (1989:46–51) clear from him.

[39] Traina (2011: 23) singles out this unique adverbial/prepositional combination as nearly Pauline.

[40] This also recalls the journey from self to self, as outlined by Goldschmidt (see Chp.2, p.79 n.39)

by Seneca's appeal that "hands are not to be elevated to the sky" (*Ep*. 41.1, *non sunt ad caelum elevandae manus*). By raising the physical hands up to the sky, the agent's hand of care is misdirected from the metaphysical journey upwards to join the divine within the human with the whole of god. This language of care also returns in Seneca's critique of the specifics of the beliefs in *genii* and *iunones* at *Ep*. 110. He tells Lucilius, "Set aside in the present what pleases certain people, that each a god is given to each one of us as a babysitter…" (*Ep*. 110.1, *sepone in praesentia quae quibusdam placent, unicuique nostrum paedagogum dari deum*), and after a brief quotation from Ovid (*Met*. I.595) characterizing such a deity, he restates the command to lead into his discussion of the ancients: *hoc seponas volo ut memineris*… Seneca redirects Lucilius' care from the traditional superstitious characterization of guardian deities to the proper Stoic picture by telling him to put such beliefs aside "in the present," marking these quibbles as stultifying forces, which can lead to occupation if left unchecked.[41] The threat of enslavement in the present also comes through the figure of the *paedagogus*, a role served by enslaved persons, compared to the traditional figures of *genii* and *iunones* which were the mark of freeborn citizens.[42] Thus, Seneca's critique or religious belief and practice reconfigures the language in line with his reconfiguration of slavery, as discussed in Chapter 2, and which he will deploy again in terms of the paradox of enslavement to philosophy, discussed below.

Seneca's reconfiguration of religious beliefs and language also arises in *Ep*. 31 in ways which most directly parallel the myth of Cura. We may compare his contention that unphilosophical superstition does violence to the gods with the way in which he compares philosophical practice to cult worship at *Ep*. 31.11. Like the reference at *Ep*. 110, it blends Stoic

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[41] LSJ I.B also notes that the combination *seponere in* can be used in the sense of banishing X to place Y, citing Tacitus, *Annales* 3.12

[42] On the figure of the *paedagogus*, Garland (2012); on the *genii* and *iunones*, Scheid (2012); on the questionable antiquity of the gendered attribution of *genii*/*iunones*, Corbeill (2015: 124–7)

doctrine with traditional Roman religiosity in order to explain to Lucilius the proper objects of his attention:

> Animus, sed hic rectus, bonus, magnus. Quid aliud voces hunc quam deum in corpore humano hospitantem?[43][...] Exsurge modo "Et te quoque dignum/finge deo." Finges autem non auro vel argento: non potest ex hac materia imago deo exprimi similis; cogita illos, cum propitii essent, fictiles fuisse. (*Ep*. 31.11)

> The mind, but one that is upright, good, and great. What else would you call this than the god dwelling in a human body? [...] Get up now "and also craft yourself worthy of god."[44] But you will not fashion from gold or silver: a likeness similar to god cannot be expressed from this material; consider that when they were well-disposed, they used to be made of clay.

The appeal begins with focusing on the mind as "upright, good, and great," and as Seneca moves to compare the mind to a deity, the positive degree adjectives evoke the head of the Capitoline pantheon, the superlative Jupiter Optimus Maximus. The *rectus animus*, set upright and reaching upward toward the intelligible good, acts as the lesser Jupiter, both connected to the masculine sky force. The connection with Jupiter is more explicit through the appeal to the images of the gods, which were "made of clay" (*fictiles*) when the gods were most well-disposed to the Roman state. With the advice from *Epp*. 41 and 110, the use of the adjective *propitii* connects the clay statues of the gods too the body made by Cura from dirt. The statues themselves point back in time to the era of the Republic, for Seneca makes specific mention of the funeral rites for Scipio Aemilianus, which his nephew Quintus Tubero celebrated in front of the Capitoline temple and which used clay vessels (*fictilia*) among the humble offerings on display (*Epp*. 95.72–3, 98.13).[45]

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[43] The elided text runs a bit away from the point, but it does highlight Seneca's take on social versus moral enslavement (discussed in Ch. 2): "This mind can fall into a Roman knight just as into a freedmen, just as into an enslaved person. For what is "Roman knight," or "freedman," or "enslaved person?" Names born from ambition or from injury. It is allowed for one to leap upwards" (*Hic animus tam in equitem Romanum quam in libertinum, quam in servum potest cadere. Quid est enim eques romanus aut libertinus aut servus? Nomina ex ambitione aut iniuria nata. Subsilire in caelum ex angulo licet*).

[44] Virgil, *Aen*. 8.364–5

[45] Corroborated by Cicero, *Pro Murena* 75, who calls Tubero "very educated and a Stoic" and says concerning the arrangements that they were "as if Diogenes the Cynic had died, and [Tubero] were not honoring the death of the divine man, Africanus." Cicero also sets him as a student of the Stoic Panaetius (*Lucullus* 135), whose more literary

This would be fitting fare in front of the cult image of Jupiter, which itself was made of clay in Tubero's day before the fire in 83 BC.[46] The older religion—which for an etymologically keen Stoic like Seneca would represent the truer religion—created a clay figure for the divine to briefly enter for festivals and rites, just as the soul itself is a guest (*hospitantem*) in the human form.

The divine clay of Jupiter Optimus Maximus acts as a model for the divine clay of the human body: if humans start out with the beginning of the good thanks to Cura, then it is the work of the individual *cura* to go from good to the best, i.e., the Good. This also returns in Seneca's quotation from Virgil to "fashion yourself worthy of god." On its own, the snippet recalls both creation of humans out of clay as well as the Capitoline terra cotta image of Jupiter, but this itself is pulled from Evander's tour of pre-Roman Rome. He points out to Aeneas:

> haec duo praeterea disiectis oppida muris,
> reliquias veterumque vides monimenta virorum.
> hanc Ianus pater, hanc Saturnus condidit arcem;
> Ianiculum huic, illi fuerat Saturnia nomen.'
> […]
> ut ventum ad sedes, 'haec' inquit 'limina victor
> Alcides subiit, haec illum regia cepit.
> aude, hospes, contemnere opes et te quoque dignum
> finge deo, rebusque veni non asper egenis.' (*Aen*. 8.355–65)

> Moreover, you see these two towns with their walls torn apart, the remains and memorials of old men. Father Janus founded this citadel, Saturn this other one: the name for the former had been Janiculum, for the latter Saturnia." […] As they came to the place, "these lintels," he said, "Alcides went under as a victor, this palace took him in. Dare, guest, to scorn wealth, and fashion yourself also worthy of god, and come not bitter to our lacking resources."

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aspirations – *pace* Setaioli 2000 – Tubero did not appear to pick up, per the brief biography at *Brutus* 117–8. The literal and figurative humility of the elder Scipio Africanus is discussed in depth by Henderson (2002), who notes that Scipio would get down and dirty in his garden and basically have a mud bath (*lutulentus*), perhaps a moral likeness to Cura's *cretosum lutum*.

[46] Thus Pliny (reporting from Varro), *NH* 35.157, attributing the work to Vulca of Veii, who was tasked with this by Tarquinius Priscus. Pliny also records that the same sculptor created an image of Hercules known as the *Hercules fictilis*, an interesting resonance with the Virgilian passage discussed below.

In the context of this portion of the epic, the god whom Evander challenges Aeneas to imitate is

Hercules, the mythic exemplar of virtue taken up by the Old Stoa.[47] Thus, with the Virgilian

intertext, Seneca's command to make oneself worthy of god takes on an even more strongly

Stoic character: the aim of this fashioning is both to become like Jupiter, the active æthereal

mind of the universe, as well as Hercules, the all-conquering hero of virtue. However, this

passage also points us back to Hyginus and the myth of Cura as well with the mention of Saturn.

Much like the myth of Hyginus,[48] the Virgilian passage plays up the etymology based on

creation: Saturn made the citadel, and so it is called *Saturnia*—apparently, there was no

controversy about this act of naming. The position of Saturn in Virgil also reflects his role as the

"fair" judge in Hyginus, and both of these tie together in Seneca's presentation of the work of

care. Though brief here, the mention of Saturnia points to the *arx* of the Capitol.[49] This citadel

also links with the Tarpeian Rock,[50] the site where capital crimes were punished.[51] Thus,

judgment and death are blended together in the site named for the deity who decreed fairly for all

the *lex mortalitatis*.

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[47] Setaioli (2004: 349–56) notes that by the Imperial Stoa, Odysseus was also elevated to this status, which he had not shared in earlier periods for the school. Deleuze (1990: 127–33) contrasts the image of Heracles for Stoics with the position of gods in Platonism.

[48] Hamilton (2013: 3) goes so far as to suggest that the myth is less about the nature of the human being and more about the etymology of the name itself.

[49] Varro, *De Lingua Latina* V.42: *antiquum oppidum in hoc fuisse Saturnia scribitur*). Nearby is also where the Romans had a temple to Saturn in the forum, built in the monarchy around an allegedly pre-Roman altar to the god (Coarelli, 2014: 73–6)

[50] Virgil distinguishes between the "Tarpeian building and the now golden Capitol" (*Aen*. 8.347–8, …*tarpeiam sedem et capitolia ducit aurea nunc*…) and refers to it as the "Tarpeian citadel" later on (*Aen*. 8.652, *Tarpeiae…arcis*). This latter formulation is also used by Propertius (IV.4.29–30). For other citations, see Maltby, 1991: 546.

[51] Richardson (1992: 377–8) notes the questionable location of the actual spot of execution based on our sources. Dionysius of Halicarnassus (7.35.4 & 8.78.5) comes closest to setting it on the north part of the hill, closer to the temple of Saturn, but Richardson finds this unsatisfying. Even with geographic confusion, it remains that Virgil does separate the Tarpeia from the Capitol and does use *arx* alternately with Saturnia, providing lexical, if not topographical connections. One may also compare the anecdotal Latin proverb *arx Tarpeia Capitoli proxima*.

The figure of Saturn, beyond what he does in the myth or in his connection to legal judgment, also informs Seneca's presentation of care in his Stoicism. In addition to the temporal domains which Cura manages for human beings, Saturn himself was, by Seneca's time, associated with the Greek Kronos and by extension time (through the homophony with *chronos*).[52] Balbus, Cicero's spokesperson for Stoicism, provides a similar Latin etymology in Cicero's *De Natura Deorum*:

> Saturnum autem eum esse voluerunt qui cursum et conversionem spatiorum ac temporum contineret; qui deus Graece id ipsum nomen habet: Κρόνος enim dicitur, qui est idem χρόνος id est spatium temporis. Saturnus autem est appellatus quod saturaretur annis; ex se enim natos comesse fingitur solitus, quia consumit aetas temporum spatia annisque praeteritis insaturabiliter expletur; vinctus autem a Iove ne inmoderatos cursus haberet atque ut eum siderum vinclis alligaret. (*ND* 2.64)

> But Saturn, they [the ancients] wanted him to be the one who would hold together the course and change of spaces and times; in Greek this god has this very name: for it is said "Kronos", which is the same as "chronos," i.e., a space of time. Saturn, however, is so called because he is saturated with years; for he is usually depicted as having devoured those born from him, since a lifetime consumes spaces of times and is filled insatiably with years gone by, but as conquered by Jove in order that he not have unbounded courses and that he [Jove] bind him with the chains of the stars

Saturn, so understood, acts as the force of time, and so this explains Saturn's judgment between Jove, Tellus, and Cura, as it is all about setting the proper temporal limits on the possession of humans or their constituent parts. However, the comparative theology in the story betrays an appeal to traditional everyday practice, since it relies on religious iconography, and it is also beholden to Greek mythology, rather than Latin etymology. Barring this association, however, we may still see Saturn's temporal focus in his traditional Roman role. Given the conceptual transparency of the Roman *indigites*, Saturn's role is as an active force in agriculture, as the

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[52] Cf. Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* 2.64. Hamilton (2013:71) points to the early connection of Κρόνος and χρόνος in the mythographer Pherecydes as well as in Pindar (*Olympian* 2), and the association continued into Plutarch's day, according to *De Iside et Osiride* 32; cf. Kirk, Raven, & Schofield, 1983: 56–7; Panofsky, 1939: 69–94.

sower (*sator*) of the crops—hence his association with the prehistoric golden age.[53] Augustine (*civ*. 7.2) also places Saturn in charge of providing the "generative seed" for pregnancy,[54] which also calls to mind the *spermatikoi logoi* of Stoicism which constitute the generative principles of human beings.[55] In moderating the work of Cura and decreeing a lifespan for humans, Saturn's decree ensures that lived time for humans is not like that of other animals, but that lived time grows overtime like seeds. Such is the image of the *sata* discussed at *Epp*. 121 & 124, where the growth of virtue and the acquisition of the Good are left to ripeness of the human being in old age. Thus, not only does Saturn's decree mimic the capital *lex mortalitatis*, but it also casts this law as the outcome of humanity's natural growing process.

Just as Jove and Tellus illustrate the combination of the active divine cause and the passive material cause in the human being, Saturn and Cura also form an axis of their own, an axis of life and death which Seneca marks as the splitting point between human and divine rational beings (*Ep*. 124.14). Saturn decrees that there must be death, for as a planting god he represents the diachronic cycle of growth and decay for the human being.[56] Cura possesses these humans throughout their lifetime, which is thus a lifetime with various stages thanks to these vegetal characteristics. Cura manages the temporal domains of both Jove and Tellus as well, providing the bounded space of a lifetime while also subdividing it into the differential growth throughout the various stages. Translated into the soul, *cura* works as the beginning of the good,

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[53] Maltby, 1991: 546; Turcan (2000:81) highlights the "error" in etymologizing Saturn to *satur*, which Cicero commits. On the Golden Age (with strong Greek influence), e.g., Ovid, *Met*. I.89–112, also discussion in Briquel (1981)

[54] Turcan (2000:18) lists him among the many marital and procreative *indigites*; On Stoic theories of reproductive biology, Reydams-Schils (2005: 123–34)

[55] These are also of the universe write large; cf. Ch. 1, n.55

[56] Briquel (1981) also notes that Etruscan and Roman versions of Saturn are unique compared to his counterpart in other Indo-European religions in allowing him access to the thunderbolt, which makes him agricultural in the more primordial sense of being a figure of destruction and growth, building off of Dumézil's (1966) typology

but it also must "see the end," to borrow the phrase of Solon.[57] Because the object of *cura* is a

growing thing, it must work as proper to each stage of development with this end in sight. We

may revisit the distinction of subjects and persons through *Ep.* 121:[58]

> non enim puerum mihi aut iuvenem aut senem, sed me natura commendat. ergo infans ei constitutioni suae conciliatur, quae tunc infanti est, non quae futura iuveni est. (*Ep.* 121.16)

> Nature does not entrust a boy or a youth or an old man to me, but me to me. Therefore, the infant is brought together with its own constitution, which is for the infant then, not that which is about to be for the youth.

In light of the myth of Cura, nature does not entrust the individual stages to the individual,

because Cura's charge is the subject, the *homo* over their whole life. Thus it is that care "is

sown" in humans, this care which is "before everything" (*Ep.* 121.17, *inseritur*; *ante omnia est*

cura mei). In order to best manage this life, each person must work as befits himself but with the

ultimate end of the subject in view, i.e., death. But, as our discussion of moral occupation has

shown, there is no necessary guarantee that this activity will be carried through properly. The

examples from *Ep.* 121.17 immediately preceding these quotations—seeking pleasure, fleeing

pain—are among those typically indicative of misguided reactions to indifferents. Cura may

possess humans throughout their life, but it is true virtuous *cura* which makes like Hyginus'

goddess, working while "wrapped in thought" (*cogitabunda*), and so proper virtuous care

tempers and blends the sensible/physical and the understanding/psychical to create the Good,

which is truly human. Misapplied *cura*, activity which leads not to greater facility but to stolidity

and occupation, results in the disjointed bodies of the *nauseabunda mancipia* in *Ep.* 47, those

masters whose activity mismanages the balance and thus renders them inhuman. The proper *cura*

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[57] Cf. Aristotle, *NE* 1100a10
[58] Drawing on the modified formulation of Dressler (2016: 179) introduced in Chapter 1.

which accomplishes the Good must work with the materials at hand for the end of humans, both virtue and death, which the inherent access to the future facilitates.

The material and the immaterial: possession and enslavement to the feminine

Having discussed the cultural and mythic background for Cura and a legitimate (for Seneca) Roman exemplary reading of the myth of Hyginus, one further problem needs to be addressed. The problem is Cura herself, a female divinity who actively makes and takes possession of human beings throughout their lives, and one who is also credited as being thoughtful in her making. This same feminine power dynamic which Cura has over all humans is that which Seneca attributes to Philosophy over those proceeding toward virtue. However, in as much as Seneca personifies either *cura* or *philosophia* in his text, he places himself in a position of power over these figures. Such a relationship is characterized by Dressler (2016: 76) as "dynamic personification," by which "the Roman philosopher introduces a personification who in turn personifies him." In pointing to the myth of Cura, Seneca engenders a figure who herself is the one who makes humans and manages their embodied existence. The use of this personification both calls to the fore but also seeks to elide the contingency of embodiment, particularly embodied in the Roman social equation of the male with reason and the understanding and women with the body and affectivity.[59]

Thus, in the myth of Hyginus, the aethereal male force of Jove offers spirit, while the feminine earth herself Tellus offers up the body and matter. In seeking the intelligible Good, Seneca's discussion of *cura* aims for the self-sufficiency of the male in the spirit, but as the

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[59] Dressler, 2016: 96–115, with reference to the socialization important to οἰκείωσις as demonstrated by both Algra (1997) and Reydams-Schils (2006). Cf. DL 7.30.3–5, where Zeno's focus on self-sufficiency (αὐταρκεία) is called a "male *logos*"

feminine figuration highlights, the contingency of the material is never too far away.[60] As we

discussed in the first chapter, humans and animals both start out with an understanding grounded

in sensation, but even as the understanding is built up to reach the Good through care, it still has

its ground in the material world. Part of this section will trace the way that Seneca's other

feminine personifications control the male subject of Seneca's moral discourse in certain ways.

However, the ways which Seneca wields metaphysics and the imagery of the hand reveal that

they do not *actually* control the subject, thanks to their status as either beyond the material world

of Stoic reality or limited to it specifically with no recourse to the incorporeal world which

supervenes upon it. In his interpretation of Stoic materialist metaphysics, Seneca deploys the

concept of the "incorporeals" to discuss how the male subject's *cura* can transcend nature in

relation to the *materia* of its handiwork, as seen in the discussions in *Ep*. 65 & 66, which shall be

examined below.[61]

i. *Servire Philosophiae*: Enslavement to Nothing

    Seneca provides a paradox that is problematic in light of the journey toward freedom on

the plane of the understanding: "this very enslavement to philosophy is freedom" (*Ep*. 8.7, *hoc*

enim ipsum philosophiae servire libertas est). This dynamic personification is all the more

marked for the way it places Seneca in control of a figure who herself takes on the role of the

social master. Though Seneca's stance on slavery distinguishes between the *servi*, the socially

enslaved who can still reach virtue, and the *mancipia* completely lost to their occupation in the

present, as we have argued above, subjugation to philosophy still ostensibly runs afoul of the

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[60] As discussed by Hamilton (2013, passim), such a denial of the material is a wish for literal security, i.e., the
separation from care that mediates the bodily and mental, and thus constitutes a death drive.
[61] Seneca's familiarity with Stoic corporalism is seen in his discussion of bodies as causes at *Ep*. 106. On the activity
of incorporeals, Bréhier (1928: 3–13), Bronowski (2019: 127–69), focusing on the λέκτον

ideal of perfected care, the mind which rises above all and subjects all things to itself. In order to make these positions cohere, Philosophy must in some sense be a nothing.

To better understand this, let us start with the full section from which this quotation derives. Seneca begins to wrap up this letter about the value of philosophical seclusion thus:

> Sed iam finis faciendus est et aliquid, ut institui, pro hac epistula dependendum. Id non de meo fiet: adhuc Epicurum compilamus, cuius hanc vocem hodierno die legi: "philosophiae servias oportet, ut tibi contingat vera libertas." Non differtur in diem qui se illi subiecit et tradidit: statim circumagitur; hoc enim ipsum philosophiae servire libertas est (*Ep.* 8.7)

> But now an end must be made, and, as I have set up something must be weighed out in return for this letter. But this will not be made from what's mine: we are still fleecing Epicurus, I have read this saying of his today's day: "It is fitting that you be enslaved to philosophy, so that true freedom takes hold of you." He is not delayed for the day, who has subjected himself to her and handed himself over to her: at once he is turned about; for this very enslavement to philosophy is freedom.

Both the aphorism and the frame introducing it exhibit Seneca's language of care. First, Seneca tells Lucilius that an end "must be made," using the gerundive to express both the future aim of the activity as well as the necessary obligation to do so.[62] The combination of necessity and futurity recalls the terminus at which Cura ceases to possess human beings, namely death. As Ker (2009: 147–76) discusses, the epistolary form itself enacts the activity of a lifetime, and so the addition of the "end" (*finis*) to describe the project to be made hammers home the fact that Seneca is himself employing his own future-oriented care while introducing language which reflects the proper activity of care generally.[63] Further, he demonstrates the element of mastery in the ethical valence of *cura* by selecting (*legi*) something not from his own stock—his own time, according to *Ep.* 1 (*tempus tantum nostrum est*)—but rather something stolen from Epicurus.[64] In

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[62] Allen & Greenough §500

[63] With the aside *ut institui,* Seneca also aligns himself with the (feminine) force of nature that makes animals "educated" *instituta* (cf. *Ep.* 121.5–6). For more on the pedagogical effect of this, see Ch. 4

[64] Seneca's practice here reflects the *elegantia* which Lucilius has developed by *Ep.* 124.1 (see Ch. 1, p. 32); on the modeling of selection in pedagogy, see Ch. 4.

a philosophical power play, Seneca overpowers the Greek thinker as he continues to grab rival

philosopher by the hair (*adhuc compilamus*).[65]

  This image of physical and social mastery of Epicurus stands in stark contrast to the

content of the adage itself. Seneca, having manhandled Epicurus and selected one of his

sayings,[66] now advocates for self-enslavement to a feminine personification, albeit a very

positive figure in the pursuit of Stoic virtue. Fortunately, this enslavement is only temporary, for

thanks to the Epicurean-turned-Stoic paradox, this one form of enslavement is true freedom. This

paradox appears less paradoxical once we track the way that Philosophy acts in relation to

placing the student of philosophy in her hands. Philosophy is personified thanks to the verb

servire, applying properly to the social relation of master/enslaved person, but this

personification is never the subject of any active verbs in the discussion.[67] Philosophy does not

do the subjugating, but it is the referent of the Stoic student's action upon himself: he "subjects

himself" to it/her and "hands himself over to it/her," but the self as both subject and object

remains together in this relation to philosophy. If we compare the definition of the "free mind"

(*liber animus*) at *Ep*. 124.12, where such a mind "subjects others to itself, itself to none", the

subjection of the self to philosophy is the subjection of the self to nothing—in true freedom,

philosophy is a null entity.

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[65] Maltby (1991: 145) supplies two competing definitions for *compilare*, each related to the hair of the victim. Nonius Marcellus (*De Compendiosa Doctrina* (p.12, 22) suggests "*suppilare* is to rush upon or to snatch: from the snatching of the hair; whence also those who have suffered theft are said to be fleeced" (*suppilare est involare vel rapere: a pilorum raptu; unde et furtum passi conpilari dicuntur*), while Pseudo-Asconius (*Verr*. P.233, 20) says "*compilavit*: he has plucked the hair hard, thus he has cheated through theft, such that he has not even left the hair on the body of the despoiled" (*compilavit, pilos pervellerit, sic fraudavit furto, ut ne pilos quidem in corpore spoliatis reliquerit*." If Nonius' definition is more correct, Seneca may also be playing off of the implications of Epicurus being a non-citizen (or perhaps even a figured slave) in his image, which would run afoul of the protections against delicts in Table VIII of the XII Tables, and perhaps also the *Lex Porcia de tergo civium*.

[66] Playing on the title of Graver: 1998

[67] Dressler (2016: 82–6) discusses the function of predication such as this in forming personifications, including Philosophy at *Ep*. 53 (discussed below, p. 127–9).

We can see the effect of this "nothingness" to the extent that philosophy takes her hand to the philosophical students. Unlike Seneca, who fashions himself as having conquered or beaten Epicurus, Philosophy does not use its/her hands on the initiate.[68] In addition to the self-handling of the initiate—throwing himself down, handing himself over—the activity that philosophy could be performing is couched in the passive, and it is negated in the most direct reference to her hands (*non differtur*). Seneca explicitly denies that the person who serves philosophy is "delayed" or literally" carried away (*dis-* + *fero*); through this formulation, the hand of philosophy is obscured, and its efficacy is denied. Any holding power that philosophy does have over the subject would be negligible, for not only is there not a delay for a day, but the subject is "turned about at once" (*statim circumagitur*), immediately freed from servitude in an instantaneous ceremony of manumission.[69] Indeed, the only figure that gets their hands on the person of the student is "true freedom" itself, which/who takes hold of Lucilius. This formulation with *contingere* recalls the status of the "beginning of the good" and the three questions of rational beings—the by-what-means, to-what-extent, and in-what-manner—which respectively take hold of the newborn at *Ep*. 124.6 and only rational beings at *Ep*. 124.20, which we have identified as markers of care itself. Thus, the enslavement to philosophy is in fact an enslavement to nothing, in as much as it is only the commitment to exercise one's *cura* in a way such that it reaches the Good.

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[68] Seneca's opinion on Epicurus is ambiguous depending on context, as noted by Graver (1998) and Schiesaro (2015, with further bibliography on Seneca's relation to Lucretian Epicureanism); at *Ep*. 33, Seneca notes that Epicurus is not without value, but that unlike Stoic authors his nicely phrased *sententiae* are more remarkable for how bad the rest of his work is. Setaioli (2000: 190–2) argues that Seneca's take down of Maecenas and his style in *Ep*. 114 is modeled on the Stoic Cleomedes' discussion of the lifestyle and works of Epicurus. If Seneca is harsher on Maecenas than Epicurus in the *EM*, this likely owes to the shared patriarchal Roman and Latin culture of Seneca and Maecenas compared to the lesser Greeks, akin to his dismissal of Greek allegoresis at *De Ben*. I.4.1.

[69] Gummere (1917) points to Persius (V.75–6) for a similar formulation: "Alas, those truly barren ones, for whom one twirl makes one of the Quirites" (*heu steriles ueri, quibus una Quiritem/ uertigo facit*).

This image of philosophy as master is taken up again at *Ep*. 53, where Seneca explicitly refers to philosophy as *domina*, the proper mistress compared to the diseased ones at *Ep*. 47. The medical analogy of moral slavery is succinctly reintroduced to lead into the discussion of philosophy's domain:

> Si aeger esses, curam intermisses rei familiaris et forensia tibi negotia excidissent nec quemquam tanti putares cui advocatus in remissione descenderes; toto animo id ageres ut quam primum morbo liberareris. Quid ergo? non et nunc idem facies? Omnia impedimenta dimitte et vaca bonae menti: nemo ad illam pervenit occupatus. Exercet philosophia regnum suum; dat tempus, non accipit; non est res subsiciva; ordinaria est, domina est, adest et iubet (*Ep*. 53.9)

> If you were sick, you would interrupt your care for household wealth, and market business would fall away from you, and you would not think anyone worth so much that you would go down for him as an advocate in remission; you would do this with your whole mind so that you would be freed from disease as soon as possible. So what? Will you not now do the same thing? Send away all impediments and be open to a good mind: no one who is occupied arrives at that. Philosophy keeps up with her own kingdom; she gives time, she does not accept it; she is not spare property; she is a regular, she is a mistress, she is here and she commands.

The move from physical illness to psychical *occupatio* is marked by the shift from the conditionals (each in a past, counterfactual tense) to the future tense, and the activity of the *cura* necessary for each shifts from *agere* to *facere*. The shift in domains corresponds to a shift in the political and social landscape as well: in the "physical" case, it is personal wealth (*rei familiaris*), alongside daily legal and financial work in the forum, which is set aside, while in the "psychical," the object of care moves from the household to one's time, and the backdrop shifts from the Roman courtroom to Philosophy's "kingdom," whereas *domina* she has control over the finances, to which the student is beholden. However, in both cases the "freedom" invoked is again passive. The hypothetically sick Lucilius "would be freed" by turning away from money and focusing on health, and so too the "actually" pre-occupied Lucilius would be freed by turning away from money to time. Philosophy's hand is not laid upon Lucilius to free him, but it

is active in dispensing time, time which is necessary for Lucilius to use in order to free himself from his occupation(s).

The domain of Philosophy's mastery is considerably larger than that of the occupied *domini* of *Ep*. 47. She has her own kingdom, one which rivals the greatness of Alexander's, as Seneca compares immediately following his description of her as *domina*:

> Alexander cuidam civitati partem agrorum et dimidium rerum omnium promittenti "eo" inquit "proposito in Asiam veni, ut non id acciperem quod dedissetis, sed ut id haberetis quod reliquissem." Idem philosophia rebus omnibus: "non sum hoc tempus acceptura quod vobis superfuerit, sed id vos habebitis quod ipsa reiecero" (*Ep*. 53.10)

> Alexander said to a certain city, promising part of its lands and half of all its property, "I came to Asia with this aim, that I would not accept that which you had given, but that you would have what I had left." Philosophy says the same to all things: "I am not going to accept this time which will have been left over for you, but you will have this which I myself will have tossed back."

The same temporal shift between the physical and psychical levels appears here. When speaking about the material wealth of the city, Alexander speaks in past tenses (*veni*, *acciperem*, *dedissetis*, *haberetis*, *reliquissem*). Philosophy then addresses all things on the psychical level, and she speaks in future (and future perfect) tenses (*sum… acceptura*, *superfuit*, *habebitis*, *reicero*).[70] Both Alexander and philosophy use forms of the same verbs outside of the relative clauses—*accipere* and *habere*, respectively—but the object of each verb switches in relation to what is left and what is given. While Alexander rejects the property that is actively given and leaves behind the property that the citizens will have, Philosophy rejects what time is left behind and then literally "rejects" the time that all things will have, actively giving it back to them. The reversal shows that over which Philosophy is *domina* and which she seeks to use. Indeed, reading through the line, Seneca has philosophy self-identify by saying, "I am not (at) this

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[70] Helpfully elucidated by Dressler (2016:82–4)

time…," i.e., not (in) the present. As a result, in the full clause Philosophy will not accept this time, i.e., the present that is left over.[71]

Thus, Philosophy's dominion, her kingdom, is that in charge of time, and she gives out time to humans; she does not take it back. This, however, marks the end of her domain, for as much as she is integral in freedom—service to philosophy being freedom—Seneca does not figure her as active in this process, as shown in *Ep*. 8. Part of this derives from the status of time in Stoic metaphysics. Despite Stoic materialism or "corporalism," which holds that bodies are the only things that can act or be acted upon, their theory does allow for "incorporeals" (ἀσώματα), among which are time, void, place, and propositional *lekta* or "sayables."[72] These incorporeals supervene upon the actual activities of bodies, and they differ in that they do not cause or undergo actions, unlike material bodies.[73] Time as an incorporeal arises from the movement of the universe, supervening on the its material activity.

In as much as god as active *pneuma* causes all action in the universe, god also addresses all things, just as Philosophy does when, Seneca explains, she "gives them time." Philosophy's apostrophic command to all things at *Ep*. 53 appears in a more prosaic form at the end of *Ep*. 65, where Seneca discusses the Stoic metaphysics of causality in relation to freedom. Beyond the human/*humus* enslavement of matter in the sensible plane, Seneca seeks a "sure freedom" which is "contempt for one's body" (*Ep*. 65, *contemptus corporis sui certa libertas est*), which a discussion of physics can help to elucidate. With this in view, Seneca explains:

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[71] Joffre (2016) builds on the typology of exophoric (with extra-textual reference) and endophoric (with intra-textual reference) uses of demonstratives from Diessel (1999) and cites *Ep*. 44.5 (*primo mundi ortu usque in **hoc tempus** [sic] perduxit nos ex splendidis sorcidisque alternata series*) among the use of *hic* which call to mind an "extralinguistic" present to the reader

[72] So Sextus, *Ad*. *M*. X.2.18

[73] Seneca discusses Stoic ontology more specifically at *Ep*. 58. 13, which Armisen-Marchetti (1989:35) discusses and diagrams. On the ἀσώματα in general, see Bréhier (1928), Goldschmidt (1953), Wildberger (2006: 81–200), Sedley (2008: 395–401), Bronowski (2019: *passim*). Deleuze (1990: 130ff, *passim*) interprets the incorporeals as evental in nature, in that they are surface effects of the true causal chain of matter and subsequently "quasi-causes."

> Deus ista temperat quae circumfusa rectorem sequuntur et ducem. Potentius autem est ac pretiosius quod facit, quod est deus, quam materia patiens dei. Quem in hoc mundo locum deus obtinet, hunc in homine animus; quod est illic materia, id in nobis corpus est (*Ep*. 65.23–4)

> God moderates those things which, poured all around, follow him as guide and leader. But that which makes—i.e., god—is more powerful and more valuable than the matter which undergoes from god.[74] What place god maintains in this world, the mind maintains this place in humans; what is matter there, that is the body for us.

The correlation of god:active::matter:passive follows the binary established in the myth of Hyginus between Jove and Tellus, and the additional correlation with male and female which the two divine figures respectively represent are also present here in Seneca. Though god is ungendered for the Stoics, the grammatically male noun is linked with the further grammatical male nouns *rector* and *dux*, each of which also have masculine political valences for Roman society.[75] Meanwhile, ancient authors etymologized *materia* back to "mother" (*mater*), an explanation consonant with the Hyginus myth, where the material which Cura fashions comes from the feminine Tellus.[76] *Mutatis mutandis*, the masculinized god of the universe becomes grammatically male *animus* or the human, while the feminine *materia* is linked to the grammatically neuter *corpus*. In advocating avoidance of enslavement to the body, the "real" of Stoic metaphysics, Seneca also advocates a "real" enslavement to the feminine, compared to the "incorporeal" enslavement to feminine Philosophy.[77] In the metaphysical enslavement to

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[74] Per Setaioli (2007:345), "suffering from god" may be an accurate reading, if we assume that Seneca plays on imagery of Plato's *Timaeus* by making the Stoic "perversion" (διαστρόφη) of character a part of his rhetorical universe, anticipating some Christian theodicy arguments and apologetics. Dressler (2016: 6) notes the sexualization of metaphysics here, as *patiens* refers to the passive sexual partner for Romans, who would stereotypically be feminine or feminized.

[75] Regarding the former, one may look to the *rector rei publicae* of Cicero's *De Re Publica* (as well as *De Oratore*), while one may see the use of *dux* in Caesar for the latter – though one may also recall the gender-bending line of Seneca's favorite poet, Vergil, who makes Dido *dux femina facti* at *Aen*. I.364.

[76] Maltby, 1991: 371.

[77] In review of Dressler (2016), Reydams-Schils (2019: 569) questions how metaphorical the work of god and Nature is in relation to Cicero, suggesting, "Whatever "remainder" of the feminine would be at work in Natura would thus in its turn be reabsorbed by masculinity at the divine level." Philosophically speaking, I agree, but in

philosophy, Philosophy gives time *back*, while the metaphysical/ethical enslavement to the body takes away all time, for it is an enslavement to the stultifying forces of the body which aim toward stolid stillness and thus diminished temporality.

In giving time, Philosophy also acts like the male *deus* here, who "moderates" or "tempers" the universe (*temperat*).[78] On the one hand, this verb hearkens to the cardinal virtue of *temperantia*, which is the restraint of desires,[79] but the word itself also derives from *tempus*.[80] In managing the universe, god thus "times" it through its movement, the active body of god being the ground which time then supervenes upon. Thus, Philosophy's address to all things to give them time is as the voice of god, a speech embodying the divine *ratio*, itself a feminine noun. In as much as moral subjects heed this speech, they also align themselves with the prime directive of Stoic *oikeiôsis*, to live according to nature *qua* physical manifestation of divine activity. Philosophy thus takes on the incorporeal elements of god's physical activity, a positive feminine counterpoint to the denigrated feminine *materia* of the plane of sensation. As we saw in Ch. 1, the plane of sensation is the plane of the animal present, while the plane of the understanding is that of the divine futural present. Aligning with god as *rector*, the one who sets upright akin to the *rectus animus* which rises above all to the plane of understanding, Philosophy rises above the plane of sensation. In submitting to philosophy, the subject gains access to the time which philosophy as the highest form of *ratio* alone can give, the future.

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terms of the system of images built around care discussed here, the gendered relations figure into different metaphysical domains. For more on Nature specifically, see below, pp. 135–41

[78] In its connection with *misceo*, we can also see highlights of the Stoic theory of the physical "mixture of all things" (κρᾶσις τῶν ὅλων).

[79] *Ep.* 120.11 juxtaposes in parallel how good, exemplary individual were able to check their desires (*cupiditates refrenari*) and thus how we come to "grasp" temperance (*comprehendimus*) – for the epistemological-cum-pedagogical implications, see Ch. 4. For more discussion on *temperantia* in Seneca, Budzanowska-Weglenda: 2017

[80] Maltby (1991:603) records definitions connecting *tempus* and *tempero* through the effect of the seasons on the earth, and the connection for the *tempus* as facial feature is connected to the movement of the face, not unlike the διάστημα of Stoic theory. For a modern linguistic take on the connection between the two, DeVaan, 2008: 611.

As mentioned above, time in general results from the motion of the universe, while individual units of time arise from the movements of the differentiated world which we perceive: the present month is determined by the particular motion of the moon, the present day that of the sun, and a human life likewise is determined by the motions of particular individuals.[81] According to the Old Stoa, the present thus "exists" (ὑπάρχειν), in as much the actual action or motion is what is "timed," while the past and the future "subsist" (ὑφιστάναι).[82] Thus god, as pure active *pneuma*, is eternally present, as the temporal interpretation of the Hyginus myth shows, and the matter of the universe, being totally inert, would lack a present entirely. Like Cura herself, who manages the Jovian and Tellurian aspects to contain humans until their pneumatic motion comes to an end by Saturnian decree, the universe on the whole is a complete mixture of god and matter, and the differences humans perceive arise from the fact that the universe is a colloid rather than a solution.[83]

While the future may not "exist" in the same way as the present, it is also the case that Stoics like Chrysippus maintained that "no time is wholly present" (οὐδεὶς ὅλως ἐνίσταται χρόνος).[84] "This year" may be present in as much as the physical motions of the universe which make up a year are currently ongoing, but "this month" as part of "this year" also allows for "this year" to hold past or future elements as well, i.e. "last month" or "next month." Thus, even for

[81] Wildberger (2006: 104–32) surveys extant views regarding time from the Old Stoa, comparing the evolution from Zeno to Chrysippus to Archidemus and then to Posidonius. With respect to Seneca, she notes that there is no specific explanation of the physics of time, but the evidence within the text suggests Seneca more or less shared the viewpoint of these previous thinkers of his school, and where he appears to diverge it may be the result of language put in service of moral pedagogy rather than a true break.

[82] Bréhier's (1928: 32–4) discussion of the relation of wounds and scars in Stoic logic is illustrative of this point. In the present, one is wounded, while later, when they are scarred, they also "are having been wounded," such that the past action still maintains some elements of the present; cf. SVF II.22. This image is also taken up in Deleuze's (1990: 8 & 149) interpretation of Stoicism in the relationship of the Event to objects.

[83] Wildberger, 2006:7–13; Furley, 2008:440–1. This one sentence is the culmination of my near achievement of an undergraduate chemistry major.

[84] *SVF* II.509; cf. Schofield, 1988; Wildberger, 2006: 104–32. This results from the "retrenchability" of the present, to borrow a term from G.E.L. Owen, namely that it can be expanded based on the frame of reference (cited by Schofield).

the divine present, there is part of the motion which is future and part which is past as well. Philosophy can thus give the time when she is not—the future—as a function of the motions of the individual entities which are all sympathetically linked through the complete mixture of god and matter.[85] All things may thus participate in futurity, but it is only up to those who can access the future, namely the rational beings, humans and god, to recognize the future of these objects as well.

When it comes to humans, this also includes their own future, an issue raised by their physical embodiment created and managed by Cura. As futural beings with diachronic development thanks to their plantlike qualities as decreed by Saturn, human beings have to reckon with this future—their death—while they can also reckon with the future of all other objects around them. Compared to the animal present, human time has the added layer of the future, but it is only by submitting oneself to philosophy that one fully recognizes this. Whether they are literally enslaved or free, the *mancipia* stuck in the present lose the sense of the future of all objects, including themselves, because they lose sight of the end and abuse their environment. This results in their own physical disintegration—such is the enslavement to feminine *materia*, enslavement to actual bodies and to actual women.[86] However, through enslavement to the incorporeal of philosophy, individuals maintain their integrity thanks to the mediation of care, while also gaining access to a new domain of use to achieve the true Good, rather than just pleasure. In knowing their own future as well as the future of all around them, those given to philosophy (and immediately freed by it) also gain the true "art of use," which Thomas Bénatouïl (2007) explores, the ability to properly use all things, or rather grasping all things *katalêptically*

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[85] On the doctrine of συμπάθεια, cf. SVF II.170, 172, 302, 347; on the κρᾶσις τῶν ὅλων, SVF I.28, II. 153–4, 157–9. See also Wildberger, 2006: 7–13 Furley, 2008: 433–40.
[86] See Ch. 2, pp. 89–101 on the physical and temporal abuses of *mancipia*

in what they are and for what they can be.[87] In this, enslavement to philosophy is no enslavement, for it is domination which renders one capable of mastering all things and grasping them such that they are instruments for one's own end. For Foucault, the power of self-mastery results from an ontological separation between the embodied human actor and their first-person subjective self. By engaging in private ascetic practice, the disempowered social subject creates an inner space where they can reassert dominance over a separate self.[88] Seneca's imagery does empower the agent, but even if the self is separate from the individual in society, it is still dominated as it is enslaved to the feminine force of Philosophy. In Seneca's philosophical imaginary, freedom does not arise from a split into a spiritual world, but rather from the unified subject-person's deepened grasp of both the corporeal and incorporeal through the hand of care. Seneca's freedom is in the material world, but it is gained through the rational recognition and use of incorporeal time.

Enslavement to Philosophy may be a necessity for accessing future time and consequently the Good, but because Philosophy never actively puts hands on the moral subject, her domination does not suffer from the same occupying force as sociological domination.[89] Further, the upending of the Roman gender hierarchy which enslavement to Philosophy represents is rebalanced since the only powers she has relate to incorporeal time. Her force does not stupefy the subject as the self-imposed force of occupation does, but rather empowers the hand of care with the ability to grasp things *katalêptically* and rise to create the good. The embrace of Philosophy, which grants the *oikeiotic* elements of the incorporeal effects of divine activity, also allows for human care to apply its hand not just to the material world, but also to

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[87] Bénatouïl, 2007: 181 (translation my own), "Stoic wisdom is not only 'architectonic,' it is also, so to speak, maniacal and omniscient: it requires circumstantial care for all actions"

[88] See introduction, pp. 4–6

[89] i.e., literal enslavement which produces *servi*

time itself. Thus, the Roman male subject maintains his position in the gender hierarchy through the application of his embodied (feminine) care on both matter and the immaterial future.

ii. *Materia boni aliquando contra naturam est*: Cura beyond Nature in *Ep*. 66

Obviating the social issues of enslavement to the feminine, the temporal facility which Philosophy grants allows care to transcend another feminine personification, Nature itself. According to the correlation set up at *Ep*. 124.14, care does for a human what Nature does for god, and so care must share features of the activity of Nature in order to achieve the goal of appropriation and the Good.[90] As part of the process of appropriation, Nature like Philosophy also calls out to human beings through the "reconciliation" (*conciliatio*) of the subject to their constitution(s), seen in the diachronic stages of persons which the subject traverses throughout a life. To live according to nature, then, is to live and practice one's care in light of the successive stages that there is in life, which for Seneca amount to childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age, as seen in his analogy with plant life.[91] The key for accomplishing the Good is how to properly respond to the call of Nature. Seneca provides a rehashing of the Stoic doctrine of *oikeiôsis* at *Ep*. 66.39,[92] with the curious addition of matter which is against nature:

> Materia boni aliquando contra naturam est, bonum numquam, quoniam bonum sine ratione nullum est, sequitur autem ratio naturam. "quid est ergo ratio?" Naturae imitatio. "quod est summum hominis bonum?" Ex naturae voluntate se gerere.

> Sometimes, the *matter* of the Good is against Nature, but the Good never is, since there is no Good without reason; moreover, Reason follows Nature. "So, what is reason?" Imitation of Nature. "What is the highest good for a human?" To conduct oneself through[93] the will of nature.

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[90] Cf. Ch. 1, pp. 55 on appropriation (οἰϰείωσις) and reconciliation.

[91] Cf. Ch. 1, pp. 45–53

[92] On the various senses of "living in accord with Nature" of the Stoics, Inwood & Donini, 2008: 689; Goldschmidt, 1953: 128–30; Bénatouïl, 2007: 89–90.

[93] OLD 18 a–c for "*ex*" offers "as result of, in consequence of," "by the agency of, owing to the conduct of (a person)," and "(indicating remoter cause, situation, etc.) deriving from," which seems fitting given nature together

The *imitatio* described is not just to follow nature, for Seneca advocates that "imitating" nature is also to use material which is against nature (*contra naturam*), such as terrible torture like roasting alive in the bull of Phalaris (*Ep*. 66.18).[94] To achieve the highest Good, one has to be able to "conduct oneself through the will of nature" by working on matter which is contrary to nature. Thus, care is able to do that which nature itself cannot, since it has material which is against Nature as well as by Nature.

Care's extra facility over and above nature arises again from the futurity of its activity, assuming it is properly healthy, philosophical, and not occupied. While it is by Nature that care and human beings are futural, Nature itself, as the divine activity, is just present. Hearkening back to the plant analogy, as they develop humans must reconcile successive persons to the subject, all while actively anticipating the end of one's lifetime and planning how to properly approach it. Plants, meanwhile, develop diachronically from without. Nature acts, and the plant is "timed" differently until it dies, but the natural motion in humans adds the faculty of assent (συγκατάθεσις) that allows humans to change their own psychic motion. As a result of this active mediation, they can either use their care to achieve the Good or misues it to attenuate their psychic tension, which resulting in *mancipium*.[95]

Thus, nature operates on the plane of sensation since it is active in the present. Here, Seneca describes the temporal connection between sensation and the present in a manner which echoes his description of animal time at *Ep*. 124 (discussed in Chapter 1). As he says,

> De bonis ac malis sensus non iudicat; quid utile sit, quid inutile, ignorat. Non potest ferre sententiam, nisi in rem praesentem perductus est. Nec futuri providus est nec praeteriti memor; quid sit consequens, nescit. (*Ep*. 66.35)

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with god are equated with guiding the world through foresight. The most literal spatial meaning (OLD 1a) of "out of, from within" also separates the actor from Nature, even if they act on account of its will.

[94] This example is borrowed from Epicurus but endorsed and modified by Seneca.

[95] On the tensional movements of the healthy vs occupied soul, Ch. 2, pp. 71–2

> Sensation does not judge about goods and evils: what is useful, what is useless, it is inexperienced. It cannot bring a vote, unless it has been led into a present thing.[96] It is not prescient of what is going to be nor mindful of what has passed; what a consequence is, it doesn't know.

In sensation, there is no good or bad, nor useless or useful, for it is in the present; the notion of use presupposes an end to be achieved beyond the time of sensation. In this present time, sensation cannot "carry" an opinion outside of the present,[97] because it lacks the dexterity of intellectual care. Inasmuch as nature acts only in the present, it does not know consequences,[98] and it cannot grapple with the incorporeal in the same way as human care. The matter which is "against nature" is that in which human cognition recognizes the incorporeal layer of future utility on the material objects. Philosophy grants the recognition of the future use of the material world and time, and this allows care to match the present activity of Nature to accomplish the Good. If the individual only uses what is according to Nature, then they remain only in the present and work toward their own occupation.

Seneca says that good actions which are "against nature," such as showing steadfastness under torture, are "modeled in an unfortunate material" (*Ep.* 66. 5, *in materia infelici expressa*). However, the "misfortune" of material is obviated by snatching the event away from fortune, by "pre-occupying" and looking to the future use of such an event rather than remaining only in the present sensation of it. As Seneca goes on to say, "The material does not change virtue; when it is hard and laborious, it does not make it worse, nor when it is cheerful and glad does it make it

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[96] *Sententiam ferre* has an idiomatic relationship to the public sphere in terms of the votes of the *comitia*; OLD 4 sights the elder Seneca (*Suasoriae* I.16). However, per Ch.4, the inability of sensation to bear *sententiae* offers a path to Seneca's mode of education through *exempla*.

[97] A word which highlights the interconnection of sensation and understanding discussed in Ch.1 (*sententia* → *sentire*)

[98] However, to the keen philosophical diviner one can read the signs of future events from the present; cf. Goldschmidt, 1953: 80–1; Wildberger, 2006: 17–9; Hankinson, 2008: 534ff.

better" (*Ep*. 66.15, *virtutem materia non mutat; nec peiorem facit dura ac difficilis, nec meliorem hilaris et laeta*). The material does not *matter*, because it does not make virtue better or worse, since the Good is just the Good: Seneca's definition refer to the condition of the mind, not a mind in a particular situation.[99] Matter does not make virtue at all, but rather the human care applied to it. Only the future-oriented human subject, "prescient of what is going to be" (66.35, above), can take what Nature does without knowledge or experience and turn it into the Good.[100] How is this truly an "imitation" of Nature and an instance of acting according to its will? The description of the material as "expressed" here leads us back to *Ep*. 31 and the humble *fictiles* of the Capitol: *ex hac materia imago deo exprimi similis*. Ancient grammarians connected *imitatio* to *imago*, whether in the sense of rhetorical figures or in the sense of artistic representations, and this synonymy connects the philosophical and conceptual to the concrete images of Roman life and religious practice.[101] To imitate Nature, then, is to apply the hand of care to matter and the immaterial, to create a new nature. What universal Nature does on the whole, care does for the individual human. To judge how best to make this imitation of Nature's activity in the present requires looking to the future, to evaluate whatever material one has present at hand to properly address the questions of *quare, quatenus,* and *quomodo* which characterize rational activity.

The appeal to making an *imago* of god or of nature also evokes the specific *imagines* which would adorn the interior of elite Roman houses, the death masks of ancestors displayed during funerary processions and public events.[102] To make a proper *imitatio,* one must see the

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[99] Given Stoic corporalism and the resulting tenet of the materiality of the soul (Ch. 2, nn. 13 and 23), it is not true that matter is completely irrelevant, but the matter of the soul can have the proper tension regardless of the material situation which the embodied agent may find themselves in, and this is the matter that does not matter.

[100] *Pace* Ch. 1, n. 49, given the providential quality of god and the divine logos, I take Nature here to embody the sympathetic network of physical causation while god is the active providential principle underlying this network. To push the system much further risks running aground of general arguments against theodicy.

[101] So says Seneca at *Ep*. 84.8 (artfully), "*imago*: a thing has died" (*imago res mortua est*) Cf. Maltby, 1991: 295, also OLD 1 &3b

[102] Badian, 2012.

end, both the goal to be achieved as well as the finality of the subject itself. This means not just recognizing and adapting to the persons to which the diachronic human subject is entrusted by nature, but also taking on the role of nature in determining when and how these persons appear and end. If humans are like plants, then care's crafting of this *imitatio* is to make oneself into a bonsai or a redwood and to accelerate or stunt growth as necessary with fertilizers and tools made out of whatever is around. Just as human care manages the forces of Jupiter and Tellus, it also transcends nature by taking on the character of Saturn as well as that of Cura herself, by managing life and also allotting death.

Much like the Sower, who judges fairly for all about human mortality (*Fab.* 220, *aequus videtur iudicasse*), it is up to future-oriented human care to judge about goods and evils, to "speak the law" (*iudico* → *ius* + *dicere*) of mortality fair to all. The judgment of the *lex mortalitatis* is echoed immediately following Seneca's assertion that the material does not matter as far as virtue is concerned, for any matter is "equally" good (*aeque*):

> Necessest ergo par sit. In utraque enim quod fit aeque recte fit, aeque prudenter, aeque honeste; ergo aequalia sunt bona, ultra quae nec hic potest se melius in hoc gaudio gerere nec ille melius in illis cruciatibus; duo autem quibus nihil fieri melius potest paria sunt. (*Ep.* 66.15)

> So, it's necessary that [virtue] is equal. In either [material], what is made is made equally rightly, equally wisely, equally honorably: so, all goods are equally so, beyond which neither can this guy in this joy conduct himself better, nor that guy in that torture; but the two are equal, than which nothing better can be made.

The anaphora of *aeque*, along with the inclusion of synonyms like *par* and *aequalia* hammer home the sentiment that the material of the good does not matter, and the activity of *se gerere* points forward to the definition of the highest Good which Seneca later provides in the letter, to live according to nature (*Ep.* 66.39, *ex naturae voluntate se gerere*). Thus again, living according to Nature means making a likeness of it, and this includes using materials which go against

Nature, such as the tortures brought up here. Virtue is specifically made (*fit* as passive *facere*), and made with the three adverbial qualifiers: *honeste*, i.e., virtuously and rightly; *recte*, recalling the *rectus animus* and the *rector* of the universe, each achieving their good on the higher plane of the understanding; and *prudenter*, recalling etymological link to *providus futuri* which the sensible present lacks. Each of these descriptions pertain to the manner of the making (the *quemadmodum*) which care undertakes with whatever means (the *quare*).[103]

The addition of the repeated *aeque* then specifies the extent (*quatenus*) of the action, which explains the extent of the action. All goods are "equal" (*aequalis*) in that they take part or belong to what is *aequus*.[104] The link with the *aequum ius* of death and the mortal judgment of *aequus* Saturn appears as these goods are the *ne plus ultra*: they are the end of action as *telos* and as *terminus*. Nothing better can be made from either joyful circumstances or tortuous ones because they both reach to the same end, the fair death assigned to all humans. Thus, the extent of the craft of *cura* is up to death, death which is thus *recte, prudenter*, and *honeste*. The mention of *cruciatus* specifically recalls the status of social enslaved persons mentioned in the letters, who make of their limited and difficult circumstances a quick escape to freedom.[105] As mentioned in Ch. 2, there is the suicide of Spartan youth taken as a prisoner of war who chooses death over enslavement (*Ep*. 77.14–5), and he adds still more examples of gladiators and slaves who killed themselves in to escape.[106] While the appearance and the immediate sensation of all of

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[103] As Dressler (2016: 243) discusses in relation to Cicero's *De Oratore* 51 an *De Officiis* I.94 the *modus* of the question *quemadmodum* is a qualitative matter of style (in Cicero's case, rhetorical). The question of "in which manner" amounts to "the difference between the thing and something that cannot be reduced to it, but that appears to depend on it, and that finally amounts to a distinction between the thing and the meaning of signification;" in this way, the manner takes on the qualities of the incorporeal, as consonant with Stoic descriptions as (πρὸς τί) πως ἔχοντα; cf. Bréhier (1928: 43).

[104] As with *rationalis* and *ratio*; cf. Ch. 1, n.3

[105] On the social roles of those whom the Roman state condemned to crucifixion in the 1st C. CE, Robison, 2002.

[106] E.g., *Ep*. 70.20–1, the gladiator, who choked himself to death on a latrine sponge, or *EP*. 70.23, the gladiator, who leaned down to break his neck in the wagon wheel.

these deaths is disgusting or unsettling, this ignores the upward, futural trajectory along which they were made, according to Seneca's view of the dictates of reason.

Properly trained human care moves beyond feminine Nature by going beyond the present and taking on the role of the male Saturn as well. The good for humans may be near the end of life, as Seneca explains in *Ep*. 124.12. However, with the proper grasp of how to use any materials present to care, thanks to the donation of incorporeal time by Philosophy, care can make a whole life out of whatever is to hand. The image of this life need not be silver and gold, like the grand new Capitoline statues, but it can be as humble as the dirt which Cura made for humans, or even as abject as choking on a toilet sponge (*Ep*. 70.20–1). While the divine Cura looks after the human germ sown by Saturn over the course of its development, human care takes on the activity of both male and female divinities (along with both Jupiter and Tellus) to hasten and ripen the seed as necessary. Human care's achievement of the Good is to construct a threshing floor out of whatever it has available and achieve true ethical and metaphysical freedom in death.

4
Hand-Writing: The Pedagogy of Care

For Seneca, knowing how to die requires education. In the terms of this dissertation, education requires the work of an educator using their own care to strengthen the hand of the student's care and increase its dexterity to be able to grasp the Good through understanding as well as the material world with a view to usage, as allowed by Philosophy. Seneca's method of education through care is the use of rhetoric and appeal to the emotions. The use of the emotions as a tool for moral progress is a fraught option, given that Stoic teachings held that emotions were the rational soul reacting to the world based on misguided moral judgements.[1] Seneca's use of sentential style, based on a rhetorical training in declamation no doubt inherited from his father, was also one of the biggest complaints leveled against Seneca's philosophizing shortly after his lifetime.[2] The rhetoric of *sententiae*, pithy axiomatic phrases, was also a mark of his philosophical rival Epicurus' style, and so also seems further distant from the Stoic position.[3]

This stylistic choice is one that recent scholarship has shown to be allowable within the purview of Stoic doctrine. In her presentation of Seneca's rhetorical style in the prose works, Mireille Armisen-Marchetti (1989: 52) sees Seneca advocating for "une sorte d'émotivité vertueuse," which lies beneath the level of explicitly logical thought. Similarly, in her study on the emotions, Margaret Graver (2007: 76–81; 98–9) discusses how Seneca's position on the emotions shows their necessity for human beings as rational animals and offers a "reformulation" of Stoic doctrine, albeit one she sees as somewhat hyperbolized. John Cooper

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[1] Inwood & Donini, 2008: 700; for a fuller discussion of Stoic theory on the emotions, Graver (2007:35–60 *et passim*).

[2] Armisen-Marchetti (1989: 9–10) notes Quintilian's disapproval of Seneca's heavy use of metaphor; Traina (2011: 25–7) cites Quintilian (*IO* VIII.5.31) and his neo-Ciceronian aversion to sentential style; see also Traina (2011:34–5), Setaioli (2000: 160–2). For more on Seneca's relation to his father, Seneca the Elder, Trinacty (2009). Fronto (*On Speeches*) criticizes both Seneca and the "other" Annaeus, Lucan.

[3] Schiesaro (2015: 239–51); however, Seneca leaves off of explicit *sententiae* within the letters after *Ep.* 33, noted by Schafer, 2009: 68 in his interpretation of *Epp.* 94& 95 discussed below.

(2006: 47–8) notes Seneca's deep familiarity with Stoic epistemology, but he asserts that Seneca's reliance on "emotion-evoking" figures of speech leads at least to "a very different thing in practice and application from the Stoicism of the founders."[4]

However, Seneca remains generally in line with older Stoic doctrines, as the Stoics were the first school to elevate rhetoric to the status of knowledge rather than a knack.[5] Seneca's Stoic forebears also offer a precursor to the hand of care which Seneca illustrates in the *EM*. Sextus Empiricus records that Zeno showed the power of rhetoric with the same hand which he used to show the tight grasp of *katalêpsis*:

> Zeno of Citium, when asked in what way dialectic differs from rhetoric, once he curled his hand up and stretched it out again, he said "In this manner": through the curling up, on the one hand, he was setting the rounded and brief character of dialectic, and on the other, through the stretching out and extension of the fingers he was intimating the breadth of the power of rhetoric.[6]

Through the single hand, Zeno unites comprehension and rhetoric, and Seneca takes this unity and applies it to the hand of care. The connection of emotional rhetoric and intellectual comprehension aligns with the *formula* from *Ep*. 124.24, which connects sensation and the understanding.[7] Seneca's rhetoric aims to cultivate the emotions (πάθη/*adfectus*) of the moral

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[4] This, as we have seen elsewhere, is based on Seneca's choice to write in Latin and as a Roman, using the imagery of the Latin language to recast Stoicism for a Roman audience. Thus, as Alfonso Traina (2011: 40) schematizes it, Seneca straddles the line of pure philosophical teaching (*docere*) and pure rhetorical manipulation (*delectare*) through a style which warns and advises (*admonere*).

[5] Armisen-Marchetti (1989: 37–40); the distinction is famously brought up at *Gorgias* 463b2–465c5. Despite their study of rhetoric, the Stoics were notorious for austerity in speech: one may recall the criticisms of Stoic rhetoric leveled by Cicero against Tubero, mentioned in Ch. 3

[6] *Ad Mathematicos* II.7: ἔνθεν γοῦν καὶ Ζήνων ὁ Κιτιεὺς ἐρωτηθεὶς ὅτῳ διαφέρει διαλεκτικὴ ῥητορικῆς, συστρέψας τὴν χεῖρα καὶ πάλιν ἐξαπλώσας ἔφη "τούτῳ," κατὰ μὲν τὴν συστροφὴν τὸ στρογγύλον καὶ βραχὺ τῆς διαλεκτικῆς τάττων ἰδίωμα, διὰ δὲ τῆς ἐξαπλώσεως καὶ ἐκτάσεως τῶν δακτύλων τὸ πλατὺ τῆς ῥητορικῆς δυνάμεως αἰνιττόμενος.

[7] *Brevem tibi formulam dabo, qua te metiaris, qua perfectum esse iam sentias: tunc habebis tuum, cum intelleges infelicissimos esse felices*. For discussion, see ch.1

student as one of the most powerful forces which "make for" (*ad +facere*) accomplishing the Good, albeit in a qualified way which aligns emotion with positive feeling amongst friends.[8]

In this chapter, I begin with a brief discussion of *Ep*. 26.10, which provides a linkage between the moral endpoint of death and freedom with the process of rising up from the plane of sensation. Seneca evokes an image of the chain of "love for life" (*amor vitae*) which is managed through education, and I take this image to be exemplary of Seneca's attitudes toward the connection of death, education, and the emotions. Then, we will discuss Seneca's treatment of moral pedagogy in *Epp*. 94 & 95, concerning the place of precepts (*praecepta*) and doctrines (*decreta*) in a proper Stoic education. As Schafer (2009) has shown in detail, these letters provide a framework not for Stoic epistemology, in which Seneca was well versed, but rather for his own pedagogical method. The opposition between precepts and doctrines as Seneca portrays in these letters also aligns with the temporal axis from Hyginus' myth as well, relating precepts to the infinitesimal *aion* and doctrines to the *chronos* of the divine present. The former are addressed to only specific situations for specific social roles, while the latter offer a timeless truth outside of context, which also follows the distinction of the persons and the subject of the human individual.[9] In order to provide proper education, the method of instruction must appeal human temporally between the poles of the *aion* and the *chronos*, and it must also appeal to the hand of care which manages the relationship between the human subject and its persons through time.

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[8] At *Ep*. 11.7, Seneca combines the emotions with the craft of care by referring to actors as *artifices scaenici*. Schiesaro (2003: 221–51) analyzes Seneca's own dramatic works and their relation to his theorizing on style, arguing that he was aware of the emotional effect of tragedy on the audience philosophically and that the tragedies serve as an exploration of emotion rather than a didactic exercise as such.

[9] Cf. Ch. 1, pp. 48–9

In between these terms—"as closely linked to *decreta* as they are to *praecepta*"[10]—are Seneca's preferred method of teaching: *exempla*. As Matthew Roller (2001) and Shadi Bartsch (2006) discuss, Seneca uses education by *exempla* as a mechanism which draws from Roman cultural of public spectacle to determine morality.[11] Through the *exemplum*, Seneca synthesizes the tools of Greek philosophical instruction into a powerful and very Roman device. Seneca offers a methodological defense for *exempla* much earlier in the collection than his discussion of precepts and doctrines, when he tells Lucilius at *Ep.* 6.5 that "the journey is long through precepts, but brief and efficient through exempla" (*longum iter est per praecepta, breve et efficax per exempla*). Dressler (2012) describes how the "*efficax*-effect" of *exempla* in connection with the "*praesto*-effect" virtually brings the moral student in contact with the person themselves, or as Seneca says in *Ep.* 6.5, *in rem praesentem*, drawing on the discussion of the term *repraesentatio* in Ker (2007). As Dressler notes, Seneca's emphasis on physical and material presence for material efficacy is contradictory, since he likewise argues that just thinking about *exempla* is enough.[12] In what follows, I aim to show how the "present-ing" effect of *exempla* contributes to their efficaciousness in terms of the temporal limits presented by Hyginus' Stoicizing myth of Cura by providing a futural present of activity that models the ideal activity of care. I take precepts and doctrines to provide the limits of the possible range of present times, while *exempla* provide a way for the moral subject to grasp the philosophical content in a way best suited to their care.

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[10] Schafer, 2009: 23

[11] See also Roller, 2018: 265–89

[12] Dressler, 2012:161; similarly, Bartsch (2006: 199–204) traces the interiorization of Roman visual culture in the appeal to exempla, following a practice of Epicurus, while also translating the Socratic dialogue from the interpersonal to the intrapersonal

This power of *exempla* rests in the way that they present a wider present to the mind's eye of the moral student and through this appeal to the emotions, but this visual element also risks the dangers of resting in sensation and failing to rise up to the plane of the understanding. So, we will turn next to the emotions proper and how Seneca qualifies his discussion of *adfectus* in the *EM*, returning to *Ep.* 75's discussion of psychical disease relating to the progression toward pathological occupation in order to show how Seneca opens a space for emotional creation separate from the force of present occupation to root an agent in the plane of sensation. When applied to *Ep.* 26, Seneca's interpretation of previous Stoic theorizing on the emotions offers a path to cultivate the rational elements of emotions through the feelings (προπάθειαι) which the wise still feel.[13] Seneca shows that the proper object of love is not life or particular individuals, but rather the philosophical works that one writes. Taking a lead from Dressler's (2012) emphasis on the textuality of Seneca's philosophical program, I offer an analysis of the way that all texts provide *exempla* for the student of philosophy.[14] For Seneca, textuality models the pedagogy of *exempla*, transmitting the emotional content of the author and teacher for the student to rehearse and then apply in their own lives. However, not all of these texts are *good* for teaching the proper philosophical attitude to the emotions. I close by briefly showing how Seneca's attitude toward *exempla* and learning to die sheds a new light on the much-studied aspects of Seneca's equation of human beings with their writing, as seen at *Ep.* 114 through the exemplary appeals at *Ep.* 84 to the work of Bees and nature.[15] The act of writing is a part of the imitation of Nature: good writing looks toward death, and the proper text is the bearer of the writer's philosophical *imago* which is the accomplishment of the Good.

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[13] For προπάθειαι, see Striker, 1996: 248–61, 281–97; Graver, 2007: 35–7, 85–108.
[14] On textuality in Seneca in a different vein, see Dressler (2016: 167–204)
[15] For bibliography, see n. 60–2 below

Love for Life: *Ep.* **26.10**

Having looked all the way to the end of the moral trajectory and of human life in the

previous chapter, the discussion of education and learning how to get to the end fitting leads us

back earlier in the collection of letters. At *Ep*. 26.10, Seneca once again connects the embrace of

death with freedom, but he also adds in the additional component of not just killing oneself, but

also learning how to do so:

> qui mori didicit servire dedidicit… una est catena quae nos alligatos tenet, amor vitae, qui ut non est abiciendus, ita minuendus est, ut si quando res exiget, nihil nos detineat nec inpediat quominus parati simus quod quandoque faciendum est statim facere. *vale*. (*Ep*. 26.10)

> Whoever has learned how to die has unlearned how to be enslaved… There is one chain which holds us bound, love of life, which is not so much to be thrown away as diminished, so that, if at some point a circumstance pushes us, nothing would hold us back nor hinder us from being prepared to do right away what must be done when it must be done. *Good-bye* [=Be well/Philosophize].

The ability to die and the ability to be enslaved are inversely correlated, as one would expect

given the power of Philosophy at *Ep*. 8.7 to free a subject from their moral *mancipium* through

occupation in the present.[16] Without the practical education in how to die, the moral agent is at

the mercy of the outside hands of occupation, held and bound in the chains of enslavement.[17]

However, after a proper course in Stoic morality, the outside hand loses grip (*nihil detineat*), and

the agent can rise upward toward god since they are prepared to exercise their care whenever and

however it is necessary to do so. In order to model the example of the gladiator with the toilet-

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[16] Cf Ch. 3, p.102

[17] Based on the sources collected by Maltby (1991: 336) on *lex*, which appeal to both *ligo* and *lego* as roots, I hazard to say that the "binding" (*alligare*) here represents the active gathering (*legere*) of the outside hand from the perspective of the occupied, similar to the holding power (*tenere*) described.

sponge or the Spartan child, as discussed in the previous chapter, the agent has to live long enough to be instructed in how to wield their care to make what must be made: death.[18]

The emphasis on living long enough to learn how to die takes on a more complicated character when we look at the character of the particular chain involved: "love of life" (*amor vitae*). Based on the end goal of rivaling god and Nature in determining the outcome of one's own life with care, it is striking that this love is something not to be thrown away (*non est abiciendus*), particularly when we recall Seneca's definition of the Good as a mind which throws out other things beneath itself (*Ep.* 124.12, *subiciens alia*). If this chain of love for life is not to be thrown away, then it is not other than the subject,[19] and if it is what belongs to the subject, then it is involved with their time, since Seneca has foregrounded at the beginning of the collection that "time alone is ours" (*Ep.* 1.3, *tempus tantum nostrum est*). The future oriented assertion that it is not to be thrown off highlights that this chain is in some sense apart from care, compared to everything else. How this chain is to be dealt with is a matter of learning over the course of time, so that by unlearning occupation and enslavement the agent learns how to die and create the proper imitation of Nature, and so we must examine Seneca's theory of pedagogy to show how the hand of care of the teacher guides the hand of care of the student to achieve the Good.

The Curricular Timeline

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[18] Seneca here returns to a theme from his *de Brevitate Vitae* (7.3): vivere tota vita discendum est et, quod magis fortasse miraberis, tota vita discendum est mori. For the suicides mentioned above, cf. pp. 98–9 and 141

[19] Following the Stoic theory of appropriation (οἰκείωσις), which states that the first step is the attachment of a living animal to itself (rational or otherwise); for interpretation, Engberg-Pedersen (1990: 66–77), Bénatouïl (2006: 19–42)

In *Epp.* 94 & 95, Seneca deflects criticisms from those who believe that only doctrinal or preceptive instruction are sufficient, respectively. [20] Despite his heavy use of actual exempla in the *EM*, going all the way back to the first book of the collection, in these letters which dictate his stance on proper Stoic moral pedagogy, the word "*exemplum*" only appears twice in *Ep.* 94, and in *Ep.* 95 the presence of *exempla* comes closest to being made explicit in the use of the related *exemplar* and *eximere*.[21] Building off of Schafer's analysis, I aim to show how the use of *exempla* is the middle ground between the *praecepta* and the *decreta* and show how Seneca's use of the hand of care in an educational context guides the use of *exempla* in these two letters and elsewhere. Following the spatial/temporal axis from Hyginus' myth of Cura, precepts and doctrines reflect the temporality of Tellus on the plane of sensation and of Jove on the plane of the understanding, respectively.[22] These two methods address component parts of human beings, the particular persons of individuals and the human subject, but their failures are their inability to address the unity of person and subject mediated by care. In order to properly succeed, Seneca uses *exempla* as a synthesis of the precepts and doctrines and of the temporal qualities of these methods as a method which appeals to the time and activity of care. Between the instantaneous present of the precept and the eternal present of doctrine is the exemplary present, that which "makes" (*efficax*) since it is the lived time of the individual possessed by Cura. *Exempla* allow for Seneca to "re-present" the subject by showing them an individual acting through time, so that they can truly grasp the means, manner, and extent of right action and apply it to their own lives.

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[20] Schafer pushes back against other readings which see *praecepta* and *decreta* as low-level and higher-level rules of conduct, such as Kidd (1978) puts forth. The main foil of *Ep.* 94 is Ariston of Chios, for whose dates and position in the Stoa, Dorandi, 2008: 31–54; Schafer, 2009:25–32. Meanwhile, Letter 95 is directed, as Schafer (2009: 97–104) argues, at the general unphilosophical public, advocating against a simple return to the *mos maiorum* of the Republic as the standard of life; rather, philosophical doctrines are necessary to assure right conduct.
[21] OLD, as well as DeVaan, 2008: 188.
[22] Cf. Ch. 3, pp. 108–22

i. *Praecepta: Instruction in the* Aion

The limited temporality of the precept is connected to its etymology, "that which has been taken up before (*prae* + *capere*). In a certain sense, precepts are like the anticipations (*prolêpseis*), which all human beings qua (incipient) rational beings have. However, unlike these first graspings of the hand of care, which allow for the continual reconciliation of subject to person over time, these precepts—as passive participles—denote the activity of another person.[23] Seneca recognizes their limitations in this respect at the beginning of *Ep.* 94, when he introduces this branch of philosophy:

> Eam partem philosophiae quae dat propria cuique personae praecepta nec in universum componit hominem sed marito suadet quomodo se gerat adversus uxorem, patri quomodo educet liberos, domino quomodo servos regat, quidam solam receperunt, ceteras quasi extra utilitatem nostrum vagantis reliquerunt, tamquam quis posset de parte suadere nisi qui summam prius totius vitae conplexus esset (*Ep.* 94.1)

> Some people have only retained this part of philosophy, the one that gives to each person their own precepts and does not put together a human being on the whole, but advises a husband how to carry himself toward his wife, a father how to bring up his children, a master how to rule enslaved persons, [and] they have left the others as if they were wanderers beyond our usefulness—as if there were someone who could persuade about a part, apart from the one who had earlier embraced the height of a whole life!

Part of what shows that precepts alone are insufficient, or that they are not coextensive with care, is that they are only part of philosophy, and thus only partially liberatory.[24] Part and parcel of this is their inability to "put together" a human being (*componit*), vocabulary which recalls the

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[23] OLD, for the suffix *-tio*, notes that it is used for nouns denoting action of the verb, e.g., *cantio, missio*, despite being formed from past forms (in the case of *mission*).

[24] Given the discussion of *membra philosophiae Ep.* 89.1 (as well as *Ep.* 95.13–4, discussed below), part of the problem is that precepts alone are the dismemberment of Philosophy as liberator, not unlike the sexualized imaginary dismemberment of Διαλλαγή (Reconciliation) in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* (ll.1114ff).

activity of care mediating the human subject and its various persons at *Ep*. 121.15.[25] While care matches its activity to the particular person as the active mediator, the precepts themselves only "advise" (*suadere*) individual persons in individual circumstances, such that there is no further diachronic linkage. They are isolated to the moment of particular activity, and so they are closest to the unadulterated *mancipium* in the plane of sensation.[26] Those who rely on precepts alone thus rely on disconnected personae, while they should have a grasp on a whole life through their care.

However, these temporally limited educational tools are not entirely useless, particularly for students earlier on in their development. As he counters the attacks on precepts made by Ariston, Seneca uses the verbal form *curare* to expound and discuss Ariston's critiques, using medical imagery similar to his discussions at *Epp*. 15, 50, & 75.[27] To begin with, Seneca likens moral instruction to the treatment of a cataract, recalling the linkage of physical and moral blindness from *Ep*. 50. Seneca agrees with Ariston that precepts do not cure moral blindness, but that is not their purpose:

> Fateor huic non esse opus praeceptis ad videndum, sed remedio, quo purgetur acies et officientem sibi moram effugiat. Natura enim videmus, cui usum sui reddit qui removet obstantia. Quid autem cuique debeatur officio, natura non docet (*Ep*. 94.18)

> I confess that this [afflicted person] has no need of precepts to see, but a remedy, with which their sight would be cleansed and they would flee from the delay obstructing them. For we see by Nature, [and] the one who removes obstacles returns her own use to her. But what is owed to each duty, Nature does not teach.

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[25] One may recall the plant analogy Seneca makes at *Ep*. 121.15, where the same verb is used in the passive (*componitur*) to describe the activity of Nature on plants through their stages; for which, cf. Ch. 1, p. 50. The phrase *in universum* also recalls the aethereal level associated with the plane of the understanding, and so the failure to work in the manner most associated with the area of the divine further shows the limitations of precepts.

[26] DeVaan (2008: 594) notes the connection to *suavis*, linking the activity to pleasures specifically. However, as seen below, it is not merely the pleasurable that serves as a metaphor for the efficacy of *praecepta*, but sensation more generally.

[27] Cf. ch. 2 for more treatment.

The cure for blindness is a negative, as it removes the impurity but does not add any further method of preventing the condition again. The "obstructing delay" (*officientem moram*) casts the misplaced activity in terms of moral occupation as well, for it is the agent's work being turned against themself (*ob* + *facere*). The delay makes the agent linger misguidedly in the present instead of working toward the accomplishment of the Good in the future. Fleeing this state is fleeing occupation, but while this is a good start, it does not provide positive content for positive future activity. Removing the blindness returns a gift of Nature to its proper starting point, but these givens of Nature are the baseline, from which the hand of care begins to craft the Good. Indeed, the eye's "grasp" of perception is something that "needs no work": "There is no need for encouragement, not even counsel, for the eye to discern (*intellegat*) the particular colors" (*Ep.* 94.19, *non opus est exhortatione, ne consilio quidem, ut colorum proprietates oculus intellegat*). Nature's *usus sui* points forward to the strictly present *usus sui* of animals at *Ep.* 121.6 as well as the "understanding" which animals have which is limited to the present without the possibility of accessing the future. Nature thus cannot teach how to overcome future obstacles or the proper duty (*officium*) assigned to each person, linking *officiens* to *officium* by a homophony-cum-etymology.[28]

Vision itself is not sufficient for achieving the Good, because its focus on the present does not account for the diachronic development of the human subject through its various persons, as mediated by the hand of care. Vision is good at encountering the world, as Seneca notes, but it needs to be trained by care in order to continue, and this is where precepts enter:

> Multis contra praeceptis eget animus, ut videat, quid agendum sit in vita; quamquam oculis quoque aegros medicus non tantum curat sed etiam monet. (*Ep.* 94.19)

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[28] Maltby (1991: 426) shows most sources opting to derive *officium* from *efficere*, but Isidore (*Orig.* 6.19.1), citing a work of Ambrose, also adds the alternate definition, "or certainly that you should do those things which obstruct no one, but profit all" (*vel certe ut ea agas quae nulli officiant, prosint omnibus*)

> However, the mind lacks many precepts to see what must be done in life; nevertheless, with respect to the eyes also, the doctor not only takes care of the sick but also advises them.

Though they are not characteristic of the grasp of life on the whole, precepts to provide a way to focus on the accomplishment of the Good by instructing the mind to see futurally.[29] The mind by Nature understands the present through sense perception, but precepts instruct the mind to see "what is to be done" in addition. Precepts provide the dose of curative philosophy which allows the moral student to see incorporeal future time in addition to the corporeal present. The moral teacher as doctor practices not only their own care upon the student, now figured as a patient (*curat aegros*), but through giving precepts they also encourage the student to practice their own care (*monet aegros*). The doctrine explaining the functioning of Nature on the whole provides no specific means of application to the person in its eternal generality. It explains the human Good in viewpoint of the human subject irrespective of its various persons, just as it describes the health of the eye irrespective to the various ways ocular health may be harmed. Through a variety of precepts, however, the student can understand what is to be done in the various stages of their life based on the person of the subject at a given time.

Precepts, in this way, are like second-hand care. They have already been taken up (*praeceptum*) by the teacher, and so when they are taken up again by the student they represent a sliver of the other's care to activate their own. Seneca brings this up in a recapitulation of his position above, declaring, "even once the vices have been removed, one must learn what and in what manner we ought to act" (*Ep*. 94.23, *etiam remotis vitiis, quid et quemadmodum debeamus*

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[29] While, as Bartsch (2006: 64–5) discusses, the Stoic theory of vision was based on an extramission of the *pneuma* in a conical emission which physically interacted with bodies, resulting in the visual field, I will treat vision as separate from sensation, for clarity's sake. One may also compare Seneca's denigration of touch (*tactus*) compared to sight at *Ep*. 124.4–5: the hand of care is not for touching, but for working.

facere discendum est). The work of care in moral progress is highlighted by the qualifying

quemadmodum with *facere*: precepts offer some information to guide the hand of care, but the

how is only limited to the specific times of the persons they are addressed (e.g., masters to the

enslaved persons they own at particular times, spouses to each other at specific times). However,

as these examples show, the precept only addresses the manner of personal action at certain

moments, and so more is needed to address the means and extent of activity.

The accumulation of many precepts many times is thus necessary to offer a more

diachronically unified moral picture, like that which is offered by *exempla*: "If they are often

with you, good precepts will profit you equally as good examples," (*Ep*. 94.42, *aeque praecepta*

bona, si saepe tecum sint, profutura quam bona exempla). The qualifier of *aeque*, connected with

the *aequum ius* of Saturn, connects with the future active participle *profutura* to illustrate the

pedagogical focus on death; we might equally translate this as, "In the end, frequent good

precepts will benefit you like good exempla will." The frequency of the precepts in the present

leads to their future benefit in the accomplishment of the Good, for each precept provides advice

for a different person in a different situation. The accumulation of precepts allows for the

accumulation of knowledge about different persons, which the hand of care can apply to

determine the means, manner, and extent of its activity. The expanded situation which multiple

precepts offer equates to the extended present provided by *exempla*, which offers a window to

view an integrated individual's activity through time. For example, in the suicide of Cato, Seneca

presents a man of senatorial class and severe character from a line of famously moralizing

Roman elites, all of which inform and shape his suicide at Utica.[30] While the precept offers only

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[30] Both Cato Uticensis and his ancestor Cato the Elder appears often in the collection, with approximately 58 instances of the singular cognomen or the plural "Catos". The first instance of Cato the Younger appears at *Ep*. 7.6 where Seneca places him alongside Socrates and Laelius as apart from the crowd (literally *exemptus*), and he

a little opportunity for the student to grow, it is still couched in the power of the hand, and this is also true of the *exemplum* (*ex* + *emo*).[31] The formation from the past participle (*exemplum* →

exemptus) also shows the way that the *exemplum* counteracts the negative aspects of doctrine.

ii. *Decreta: The Viewpoint of the* Chronos

The main metaphor for proper moral knowledge, put in the mouth of Ariston but also

used by Seneca, focuses on sight, and this is not without its own etymological reasoning. The

"doctrines" (*decreta*) in Latin derive from a visual root, (*decreta* → *de* + *cernere*).[32] The

visuality corresponds to the viewpoint of Nature, as shown in *Ep.* 94.18 above. Just as it is

enough for Nature to see, so too is the doctrinal content of philosophy enough to explain the

whole of the universe, since the collected doctrines would amount to the whole of philosophy.

Seneca differentiates between the two endpoints of pedagogical instruction: "This is the

difference between the doctrines of philosophy and the precepts, that between principles and

limbs; the latter depend on the former, the former are the cause of the latter and of all things"

(*Ep.* 95.12, *Hoc interest inter decreta philosophiae et praecepta, quod inter elementa et membra;*

haec ex illis dependent, illa et horum causae sunt et omnium). Similar to the ophthalmological

analogy presented at *Ep.* 94.18, Seneca here anatomizes the methods of philosophical instruction,

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receives greater treatment, e.g., *Epp.* 24.6–7 and 24.11. Regarding the different *personae* present at any moment, Cicero's *De Officiis* I provides the most in-depth treatment, which Gill (1988) links to the Middle Stoic Panaetius.

[31] de Vaan (2008:188) as well as OLD (by way of *eximo*) connect back to *emo*, the same root as *praesumere* which constitutes Seneca's "technical" definition of πρόλεψις (Wildberger, 2006b:27)

[32] OLD 5, extended from 1 & 2, "to sift" and "to separate," given the privileged position of visual perception as a means of accessing the world; cf. Merleau-Ponty (2012:115–22), albeit with some philosophical interpretation. However, based on a similarly homophony to *officiens* & *officium*, one may also see that *decreta* are things that are derived from what exists (*de* + *cretum*), as the past participle of both *cresco* and the (historically linked) *cerno* are the same, but as I am deferring to the sources based on Maltby (1991), who is silent on this, I can only hazard conjecture.

where doctrines are the physical components that make up the body of philosophy while the precepts are the individual, particular limbs which "hang from" (*dependent*) this body.[33]

The particular limbs of the precepts are akin to the specific roles of the person, as each limb performs separate specific actions. Meanwhile, the physical principles of the doctrines, which provide the material basis for the activity of the particular limbs, relate to the human subject that underlies each person. However, doctrines address the subject without reference to personal roles, one of which a human being has at any point thanks to their natural constitution.[34] This separation of persona and subject also explains the failure of doctrines to avoid the specific pitfalls associated with what must be done in each person, as they are from the viewpoint of Nature in the eternal present. The doctrines of philosophy explain the whole of philosophical truth, just as the doctrines of ophthalmology explain the health of the eye, but by themselves they do not account for the circumstances of the individual person.

The full perspective of Nature provided by doctrines has an illuminating quality, compared to the person-directed efficacy of precepts, because it is able to see the future that is hidden from precepts. For Seneca, precepts are the things which require advising and warning (*admonitio*) in order to stave off vicious influence, but some things also require proving and testing (*probatio*), and these are those which "have been wound up and are scarcely revealed even by the greatest diligence and subtlety" (*Ep.* 95.61, *involuta sunt vixque summa diligentia ac summa subtilitate aperiuntur*). The *subtilitas* recalls the virtue of Lucilius' choosiness (*elegantia*) hailed at *Ep.* 124.1, and this compounds with the diligence (*di +legere*) to highlight the efficacy of the hand of care. That these topics are scarcely available for the hand of care to grasp

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[33] See n. 22 above. OLD 1 connects *elementum* to the Greek στοιχεῖον in relation to the quartet of the physical elements of the universe, OLD 4 notes the use in terms of principles of education, and suggestively for what follows, OLD 3 notes the textual use of *elementa* as the letters of the alphabet.
[34] Cf. Ch. 1, pp. 53–4

highlights their connection to the endpoint of the philosophical trajectory from the plane of sensation to the plane of the understanding. Thus, they mark the activity of Nature for the divine, which it is care's task to emulate for a human being in order to achieve the Good. Seneca shows how precepts are insufficient to properly unknot these difficult topics in his dismissal of those who think that doctrines are superfluous dogma (*Ep*. 95.60, *supervacua dogmata*),[35] where he explains their position as thinking that "precepts are sufficient for unravelling a life" (*Ep*. 95.60, *praeceptis vitam satis explicari*).[36] In *Ep*. 94 we have learned the limited ability of precepts to arouse the futural concern necessary for achieving the Good, and so in this next letter offers a larger, doctrinal view of their inability to unknot the full truth of the Good as embodied by doctrines, albeit with an appeal to the concrete metaphor of the hand.

Seneca also couches the doctrines of philosophy's illuminating function in terms which prefigure the temporal and rational division of humans from animals at *Ep*. 124.15–7. With respect to philosophical instruction, he explains,

> Quaedam aperta sunt, quaedam obscura: aperta, quae sensu conprehenduntur, quae memoria; obscura, quae extra haec sunt. Ratio autem non impletur manifestis; maior eius pars pulchriorque in occultis est. (*Ep*. 95.61)

> Some things are revealed, some are hidden: revealed things are those which are grasped through sensation, or memory; hidden things are those which are outside of these. But reason is not filled up with easily accessible things; the greater and more beautiful part of it is in the hidden things.

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[35] In the pointed dismissal of the Greek loan word, one may see the attitudes of the Latin audience to philosophy as well as Seneca's attempt to recast philosophy as a valuable and Latin thing through the replacing of δόγματα with *decreta*.

[36] Following the medical analogies of health, Seneca applies a cognate of *explicare* to discuss the disease of the mind (about which more below). At *Ep*. 95.29, he describes the decadence of elite dinner parties and says, "In the way that those [delicacies] are all bound up, thus from them are born not individual diseases but inextricable, varied, and multiform ones, against which medicine has also begun to arm itself with many types and many observations (*quomodo ista perplexa sunt, sic ex istis non singulares morbi nascuntur sed inexplicabiles, diversi, multiformes, adversus quos et medicina armare se coepit multis generibus, multis observationibus*). The diseases of dinner parties here recalls the diseased masters of *Ep*. 47 and their "caterers," about which cf. Ch. 2, pp. 95–6.

The split between the revealed and the hidden lies precisely on the temporal dimensions which are available to speechless animals as opposed to humans. Animals have grasp things through sensation in the present, and they have some access to memory, but no access to the future. Thus, what is hidden is "outside of these," namely in the future. This obscurity is echoed at *Ep.* 121.12, where Seneca says that animals understand their own constitution "in thick and superficial and dark manner" (*crasse…et summatim et obscure*). The animal present is that of the infinitesimal *aion*, but the power of reason allows access to the hidden dimension of the future. The use of *manifestis* recalls the work of the hand of care at *Ep.* 124.6–7 as the beginning of the Good. Reason is not satisfied or fulfilled by what is at hand, because what is at hand is only the beginning—it must be worked upon in light of the future, which reveals the hidden layer of utility.

While precepts give the hand of the care the tools to act, doctrines provide a map of the universe from which it can take. The former provide specific conduct for individual persons, and the latter provide the viewpoint of the divine present and life according to Nature, which encompasses the future as well, but in such a manner that it is not immediately actionable. The combination of both supplements the shortcomings of each, for each method embodies the asymptote of temporality, from the infinitely small present to the infinitely large. Neither on their own are sufficient for the lived time of human care, but put together, they can show a present period of activity aimed toward a future goal to match the work of human care: the *exemplum*.

iii. Exempla: The "Re-Presented" Time of Care

Compared to the doctrines of philosophy, *exempla* provide a middle ground of present activity, addressed to a subject whose persons are being mediated by care with more or less

success. When he discusses the value of precepts, Seneca explains that the arguments and proofs made about them have to come from the privileged vantage point of a person who has achieved wisdom and the Good, or they are addressed to such a person, and so different methods need to reach out to beginners on the path (*Ep*. 94.49–50).[37] In his defense of precepts, Seneca also provides us with a critique which paves the way for a pedagogical *exemplum*, unheralded by the name itself, but which also appeals to the physical hand itself. Seneca's language highlights the characteristics of *exempla* as well as their greater efficacy compared to precepts.

To begin with, Seneca critiques the position of Ariston anew in light of the pressing moral dilemma facing imperfect beings. In the face of occupation and preoccupation, doctrinal instruction is a slow remedy:

> Ad haec autem tarde pervenitur; interim etiam inperfecto sed proficienti demonstranda est in rebus agendis via. (*Ep*. 94.50)

> One arrives at this [i.e., the Good/wisdom] slowly; meanwhile, the way must be demonstrated for someone imperfect but making progress on things to be done.

The emphasis of the long time it takes to reach the Good echoes that at *Ep*. 124.12, which specifies that "it is done well at old age, if one has arrived there with long and directed zeal" (*bene agitur cum senectute, si ad illud longo studio intentoque pervenit*). However, while the use of *pervenit* is active in *Ep*. 124, emphasizing the moral agent's achievement of the Good for themselves, the use of *pervenitur* in relation to doctrines demonstrates grammatically the charge which Seneca has leveled at them previously: they are impersonal. When it comes to teaching, the educator must have the viewpoint of the subject but also the recognition of the particular persons. Seneca displays the perspective of the integrated human being through the temporal progression of the moral student: The tenses move from perfect (*inperfecto*) to present

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[37] *Sed quamvis ista ex optimo habitu animi veniant, optimus animi habitus ex his est; et facit illa et ex illis ipse fit. Deinde istud, quod dicis, iam perfecti viri est ac summam consecuti felicitatis humanae.*

(*proficienti*) to future (*agendis*) to mark the status of the subject's care at a given time connected to their larger life story. The future oriented task of the teacher, meanwhile, is a matter of presenting the path (*demonstranda…via*) on which the student will act themselves.

In this unity of tenses, we have moved past the isolated persons of precepts and are dealing with a more expansive unit. However, Seneca offers his take on those individuals, for whom precepts alone are most effective:

> Inbecillioribus quidem ingeniis necessarium est aliquem praeire: hoc vitabis, hoc facies. Praeterea si expectat tempus, quo per se sciat quid optimum factu sit, interim errabit et errando inpedietur, quo minus ad illud perveniat, quo possit se esse contentus. (*Ep*. 94.50–1)

> Indeed, for weaker characters it is necessary for someone to go ahead: "you will avoid this," "you will do this." Moreover, if someone is waiting for the time, when they would know what the best thing to do is, in and of itself, they will be wandering in the meantime, and through wandering they will be impeded from arriving at that time, when they would be able to be content with themselves.

Seneca describes the generic precepts here as being for the physically weak or even fragile (*inbecillioribus*),[38] depicting such individuals as barely able to keep their person together with their subject. The individuals benefited by precepts are those who are one step above the diseased and occupied masters of *Ep*. 47, who are reduced to their body parts rather than whole human beings.[39] With such limited mobility, being nearly planted in occupation on the plane of sensation, they even need someone else to move for them to bring a part of the future back (*prae + ire*). Otherwise, morally healthier people, who have only doctrines, are waiting for a time rather than using their time; as with the visual present of *decreta*, the visual root of *expectat* (*ex +spectare*) also points to the present, but to a limited one which is still lacking the proper time of

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[38] OLD 1 & 2. Maltby (1991) reports the definition of Isidore that the term arises to describe someone "as if fragile and unsure without their walking stick" (*Orig*. 10.128 *inbecillus, quasi sine baculo fragilis et inconstans*), though DeVaan (2008: 298–9) rejects this etymology as being counter intuitive.
[39] *Ep*. 47.8; cf. ch. 2

activity, the future. Waiting for time leads to wandering on the plane of sensation rather than to creating a way upward toward the plane of the understanding: since they are not acting toward their future end, they make a delay for themselves (*Ep.* 94. 18, *officientem moram*) and allow themselves to be occupied in the present. The arrival at the plane of the understanding is at a location as well as a time, the future accomplishment of the Good, but those who wait for their time are barred from this spatiotemporal goal, because they have wandered off and become trapped on the plane of sensation.

In between these two poles of emergency medicine and unreachable abstraction, Seneca discusses *exempla* with an *exemplum*, likening moral instruction to childhood education:

> Pueri ad praescriptum discunt. Digiti illorum tenentur et aliena manu per litterarum simulacra ducuntur, deinde imitari iubentur proposita et ad illa reformare chirographum. Sic animus noster dum eruditur ad praescriptum, iuvatur (*Ep.* 94.51)

> Children learn through what is written before them. Their fingers are held, and they are led through the likenesses of the letters, then they are ordered to imitate what was put before them and to form their handwriting according to that. Thus is our mind aided while it is educated through pre-writing.

Like the exemplary method more generally, this *exemplum* explains by doing. As Dressler explains, Seneca draws from Stoic materialism in such a way that he "connect[s] the two major functions of *exemplum* (representation and transformation) by assimilating *similitudo* (representation) to *exemplum* (transformation).[40] The representation here is the metaphor of children learning, but this is also a "re-presenting," bringing to mind a situation not currently present, which is part of the "*praesto*-effect" of Senecan *exempla*. The transformation is the effect on the educator-to-be, in this case the sufficiently developed Lucilius. This transformation is effected, however, not by *exemplum* itself, but by the application of the *exemplum* in the

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[40] Dressler, 2012: 160

activity of the student, which through the selection (*exemplum* → *eximo*) of the situation or the figure of speech guides the student.[41]

Within the *exemplum* itself, the role of example is played by the *praescriptum*, the "prescription," here very literally a text written previously and selected for this purpose. The writing teacher does not offer a precept and advise the child, "Draw this line!" Likewise, they do not explain the doctrines and provide the whole body of orthographical knowledge.[42] In order to learn to write, the child's hand is held by the hand of the instructor and guided through the strokes of the activity. At a more general level of moral pedagogy, the developing hand of the student's care is guided through the care of the instructor. Then, the student imitates what has been set before them, that which the instructors' future-oriented care has presented to them, and through this imitation, they reshape their own handiwork to match the selection. If precepts provide tools but not the theory to use them, and doctrines supply reams of theory but no way to implement it, then *exempla* provide a studio course, a way of acting which itself is not acting.[43] Thus, *exempla* are *efficacia*, "capable of bringing about," in ways which the limit cases of precepts and doctrines are not.[44]

This characterization of *exempla* is shared in *Ep.* 95 as well, as Seneca characterizes the Middle Stoic Posidonius' practice of "ethology," a study of the appearances of individual virtues

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[41] Schafer (2009:90) argues that Seneca's use of exempla is geared toward childhood psychology, which we can interpret as an appeal to the pre-rational hand of care.

[42] Boys-Stones (2018:2) testifies to Stoic interest in the subject through Cornutus' no longer extant *Orthography*, written before the Claudian orthographical reforms in 48 CE.

[43] In a modern take on the medical analogy, the use of *exempla* is like a CPR certification course, which teaches individuals proper technique in a guided manner and curated environment that is to be applied in a variety of situations in the outside world.

[44] OLD on the *-ax*, *-acis* suffix notes that it is usually added to verbal stems to denote "wont or ability"

and vices.[45] Seneca uses the related *exemplar* to juxtapose precepts with what he calls

descriptions:

> quibus inter se similia discriminentur. Haec res eandem vim habet quam praecipere.
> Nam qui praecipit, dicit: "illa facies, si voles temperans esse." Qui describit, ait:
> "temperans est, qui illa facit, qui illis abstinet." Quaeris, quid intersit? Alter
> praecepta virtutis dat, alter exemplar… proponamus laudanda, invenietur imitator.
> (*Ep*. 95.65–6)

> Through these, similar things are separated among themselves. These things have
> the same force as giving precepts. For the one who gives precepts says: "You will
> do those things, if you want to be temperate." The one who describes says: "He is
> temperate, who does those things, who abstains from those." Do you seek what the
> difference is? The one gives precepts of virtue, the other a model.… let us put
> forward things to be praised, an imitator will be found.

Here, the appeal to *similitudo* is more explicit in this discussion exemplary instruction via the

introduction of "similar things," though as befits a letter defending the role of doctrines, the

discussion of the exemplary description is more theoretical. Seneca also says this descriptive

process has the same force as precept giving, or literally "taking ahead of time," because these

descriptions as *exempla* are likewise the marker of previous selection (*exemplum* → *exemptus*).

The formula for the precept here follows a hypothetical syllogism, while the description does just

that, describing the activities of the virtuous in their actions and avoidances. The difference

between the precept and the exemplar/*exemplum* is the method of presentation.[46] As the format of

the precept shows, it is linguistic only, but the description provides a visual component as well.

That this description is an *exemplum* is seen from the language taken from the *exemplum* of the

writing instructor (*proposita/proponat, imitari/imitator*), as well as the future oriented content of

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[45] Despite of the tenet of the unity of virtue, Stoics did categorize the individual vices and virtues quite extensively,
particularly regarding the related *pathê* and *eupatheiai*, helpfully epitomized by Graver (2007: 54–8)

[46] As another, more recondite way of reading the difference, Maltby (1991:186) records Varro (*Ling*. 6.61) saying
"'dico' has a Greek origin, since the Greeks [have] δεικνύω" (*dico originem habet graecam, quod Graeci*
δεικνύω), while both Varro (*apud* Gellius 16.17.2) and Cicero (*De Divinatione* 2.69) link *ait* to the Roman god
Aius who "speaks." This flip is ironic given Seneca is explaining a Greek Stoic's practice, but it is also part and
parcel of his renegotiation of philosophy as a truly Latin pursuit.

the instruction. While the precept is only a present command, the description puts forth "things to be praised," much as the schoolteacher puts forward a text to be written. The connection of the future tense *invenietur* with the imitator—the maker of the *imago*—also positions the use of *exempla* upon the proper path toward the Good by looking toward the end of a human life.

Seneca goes on to pose a rhetorical question to Lucilius about the value of these strictly linguistic precepts which appeal to his use of care to understand:

> Putas utile dari tibi argumenta, per quae intellegas nobilem equum, ne fallaris empturus, ne operam perdas in ignavo? (*Ep.* 95.67)

> Do you think that it is useful for arguments to be given to you, through which you would grasp that a horse is noble, so that you when you are going to buy you are not deceived, so that you do not waste your effort on a lazy one?

The hand of the preceptor is present in the exchange of arguments (*dari*), as is Lucilius' own hand as he grasps the nature of a particular horse, and it is both cast in the future proper to care through the participle *empturus* while also referencing the work of the hand (*operam*).[47] The failure implicit in this exchange is the connection between the arguments and the activity of the understanding. The imagistic quality of the *exemplum* actually does lead to understanding, as Seneca's subsequent use of an edited (or curated) passage from Virgil attests.[48] This also recalls the problem with doctrines brought up at *Ep.* 94.51, since they produce people who are waiting to know "what the best thing to do is." While the precept and the doctrine approach the human from opposite ends of the spectrum of *aion* to *chronos*, both are simply linguistic: the former is a command, while the latter is propositional. This dilemma echoes Seneca's evaluation of self-

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[47] Given the linguistic derivation of *exemplar* and *exemplum* ultimately from *emo*, per DeVaan (2008: 188), it is tempting to see an etymological play on the misguided care in buying a sluggish horse compared to the care taken in selecting productive exempla, but because Maltby (1991) is silent, I leave it only as speculation.

[48] *Georgics* III.75–81 and 83–5. One might argue that Seneca's use of *exempla* from poetry is a particular extension of the Stoic Cleanthes' contention that the biggest divine concepts of philosophy, θεῖα μεγεθή, needed to be put in poetry (cf. SVF I.486, also Pohlenz 1967: I.97–491); Setaioli (2000: 117) sees a possible endorsement of this position at *Ep.* 46.2

consciousness of one's constitution, "Nature is more easily understood than explained" (*Ep.* 121.11, *Facilius natura intellegitur quam enarratur*).[49] While precepts and doctrines may be beneficial, their linguistic formulations limit them to the realm of the explanation, while the goal of the *katalêptic* grasp is understanding.[50] Their explanatory quality also maps onto place on the extremities of the spectrum of the expansion of the present, compared to the power of the *exemplum*. They cannot but resort to language, since their duration is either too short or too long to model the activity through the *exemplum*, such as the guided hand of the child practicing a writing assignment.

As a consequence of this, the recognition of the effect of *exempla* also bypasses linguistic formulation, as Seneca describes before his assertion that frequent precepts will be as profitable as *exempla* (*Ep.* 94.42). Seneca quotes one Phaedon,[51] who compares the effect of surrounding oneself with living *exempla*—the wise—to being bitten by gnats, but he uses this comparison in a positive manner to describe the subtlety of the effect:

> Nec tibi facile dixerim quemadmodum prosit, sicut illud intellegam profuisse… Idem tibi in conversatione virorum sapientium eveniet: non deprehendes quemadmodum aut quando tibi prosit, profuisse deprendes (*Ep.* 94.41)

> I could not easily have said to you in what manner [hanging out with the wise] profits you,[52] inasmuch as I understand that that has been profitable… The same thing will happen to you in association with wise men: you will not catch in what manner it profits you or when it does, but you will catch that it has profited you.

Seneca presents the effect of association with the wise through a chiasmus of tenses and a synchysis of first-person subjunctives to show the counterintuitive effect of *exempla*. The

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[49] Cf ch. 1

[50] This corresponds to the Stoic distinction between the λόγος προφορικός and the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος, schematized by Bénatouïl (2006: 70–4); cf. Wildberger, 2006a: 84.

[51] Gummere (*LCL* 77: 39n.a) takes this to be the Phaedo of the *Phaedo*, a philosopher in his own right whose works are no longer extant. Given this, it may be hard to ignore the Socratic intertext of the μύοψ of Athens; Wheelock-Johnson (CAMWS 2020 accepted) can provide more intertext on the presence of the gadfly in the Senecan corpus.

[52] Following Allen & Greenough §446, which notes of the potential subjunctive tense usage that "the Imperfect (occasionally the Perfect) [refer] to past time"

chiasmus first shows the diachronic progression of the effect: Seneca does understand, but he could not have explained it to Lucilius earlier, and while this explanatory failure concerns how he is now profiting, he nevertheless understands that he has profited. Meanwhile, the synchysis of terms follows the opposition of explanation vs. understanding as an operation of the hand of care: Seneca grasps the act of being profited, though he cannot explain the manner in which it has happened.

The inability to explain the *quemadmodum* raises a red flag when it comes to the care of the student, who is associating with the wise or learning through *exempla*, for this is precisely one of the questions for which reason should be able to determine an answer. Acting with care means acting in accord with the rational answer to the questions of with what means, to what extent, and in what manner.[53] Through the association with the wise and exemplary education more generally, the question of manner is overridden, and the moral edification bypasses rational explanation. Seneca repeats the benefit of this inexplicable manner of teaching on the student's care by insisting on Lucilius' future grasp of what happens in this process (*deprendes*). The interlocked combination of present and past verbs from before the quotation culminates in the future certainty that "it will happen," and that regardless of Lucilius' recognition of the mechanism, he will grasp the benefit of it.

This emphasis on the grasp compared to the explanation, while it appeals to the hand of care and its increased efficacity to accomplish the Good, it also highlights the dangers of exemplary teaching compared with the strict dichotomy of precepts and doctrines. The efficacy of the *exemplum*, despite being oriented toward coaching the moral student's future progress, is couched in terms of the past and present, the domains of preoccupation and occupation. In

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[53] Cf. Ch. 1, pp. 37–8

combining these two pedagogical tools to create one which addresses the lived time of the human being as a being possessed by Cura, Seneca also opens up the possibility for *exempla* which are carelessly curated and thus lead toward occupation, because they appeal to the emotions.

Ep. 75 Revisited: Emotions vs. Disease

The means by which *exempla* work relies on the nature of the emotions (*adfectus*), which Seneca discusses earlier at *Ep.* 75. Seneca connects the emotions to the diseases of the mind, which amount to occupation and result in moral *mancipium*, as discussed in chapter 2. However, that Seneca distinguishes the emotions from the diseases shows that they do not lead to the same results. In terms of temporality and expanding toward the future, the disease of occupation results in the instantaneous present and disintegration, but the etymology of the emotions as "things made in response" (*ad* + *facere*) suggests that the emotions have a better role to play. This etymology also aligns with Seneca's description of exemplary education, for just as the child forms their hand in relation to the teacher's prescript, the emotions also act in response to their environment.

Further, at *Ep.* 75.12, Seneca defines emotions as *motus animi inprobabiles*. On the one hand, these are "motions of the mind not to be approved," which fits more closely with the traditional Stoic goal of being free from emotion (ἀπάθεια) because of their misleading qualities.[54] However, in light of Seneca's pedagogical positions in *Ep.* 94 & 95 and his discussion of the power of exempla that bypasses language, we may just as equally read

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[54] Graver (2007:5–7), noting that both Cicero and Seneca are very familiar with the positions of the Greek Stoa. However, Graver (2007:228) and Brennan (1998:50) note that πάθος is generally but not always used as the Greek word for an emotion, for Chrysippus exploited its use to refer to an affliction in the diseased sense, discussed in relation to occupation in Ch. 2.

emotions as "untested motions of the mind."[55] Testing and proving (*probatio*) is the domain of doctrines, which provide the illuminating power to reveal the future previously hidden in a limited present. However, the proving of doctrine is a linguistic matter, and because they are limited to explanations, they are not sufficient to accomplish the Good with the *katalêptic* grasp of the understanding.[56] The emotions, however, are movements of the soul itself, and since the Stoic soul is a single, thoroughly rational entity, these emotions grasp with the understanding even if they do not explain their understanding through language.[57] Being activated by *exempla* most effectively, which represent the temporality of Cura in lived time, Seneca's presentation of the emotions in this letter also shows how one can never truly be rid or the feelings, recalling the love of life from *Ep.* 26.

However, the emotional activity which guides the hand of care to craft in relation to *exempla* can just as easily lead to the Good as it can to occupation. To understand the proper use of emotions, one must compare how Seneca differentiates them from the diseases of the mind. As discussed in chapter 2, Seneca relates the process of occupation to disease, when he decries the illness of the masses which the philosopher, who truly knows how to be well, must cure. To best treat the preoccupied, Seneca deploys a tripartite schema to classify the status of different levels of philosophical progress.[58] To start, however, Seneca notes that the "longstanding grave public illness" (*Ep.* 75.7, *morbum veterem gravem, publicum*) is a separate category from

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[55] OLD 2, referring to Pliny *NH* 4.93 and an "implausible argument" (*improbabili argumento*)

[56] See pp. 56ff. above.

[57] Graver (2007: 37) notes how the "pathetic syllogism" made by the emotional soul, according to Stoic psychology going back to Chrysippus, is hardly ever articulated in linguistic form. Armisen-Marchetti (1989: 47–51), following Fillion-Lahille (1984), shows how Seneca and Posidonius' discussion of rational and irrational "parts" of the soul is completely reconcilable with the unitary thesis of Chrysippus. On the structure of the soul more generally, Long (2008: 560–84).

[58] The second of which is discussed in ch. 2 as well, but with different emphasis than at present.

another potentially problematic force, the emotions (*adfectus*). Seneca defines the diseases in a

few different ways:

> morbi sunt inveterata vitia et dura… nimio artius haec animum inplicuerunt et
> perpetua eius mala esse coeperunt. Ut breviter finiam, morbus est iudicium in pravo
> pertinax, tamquam valde expetenda sint, quae leviter expetenda sunt. (*Ep.* 75.11)

> The diseases are hard and long-standing vices… these have entangled the mind too
> narrowly and have begun to be continuous evils for it. To briefly define it, a disease
> is a judgment that persists in crookedness as though certain things are to be sought
> vigorously, which should be sought lightly.

The oldness of the disease (*veterem*) is transferred to the vices which constitute it, but now

Seneca qualifies it through the perfect participle as a link to the force of (pre)occupation to drag

the soul down into an instantaneous present on the plane of sensation. This pastness is

emphasized through the work of the diseases in the perfect tense, and particularly in the defective

coepi: the verb itself lacks a present tense.[59] When Seneca reframes the disease as a judgment,

following Stoic psychology/nosology,[60] his description of its thorough grasp on crookedness

(*pertinax in parvo*) points to the diseased hand of care, which through occupation has gone for

something crooked rather than what is upright.[61] Thus, having fallen into disease and hemmed in

on the plane of sensation, the diseased care of the occupied person cannot properly judge the

future means of achieving the Good.

Emotions are not immediately cast in terms of this fixation in and distortion of the

present. Rather, these motions of the mind, which lack approval or are untested, are,

> …subiti et concitati, qui frequentes neglectique fecere morbum, sicut destillatio una
> nec adhuc in morem adducta tussim facit, adsidua et vetus phthisin. (*Ep.*75.12)

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[59] OLD notes that there were present forms available in earlier Latin, attested through Plautus, Cato, and even
Lucretius; one could argue that Seneca would see this as a sign of the diseased state of his times, not unlike the
linguistic laments which open *Ep.* 58.
[60] Graver (2007: 35–60)
[61] Per the definition of the Good from *Ep.* 124.11

> … sudden and stirred up, which have made for disease when frequent and ignored, just as one cold, when not yet induced to habit, makes for a cough, but a constantly pressing and long standing one makes for consumption.[62]

The negative aspects of the emotions arise from their neglect, not being gathered by *a* hand of care, and this results either in the failure of the individual's care to use their constructive power properly or the failure of the teacher to properly guide the individual in their craft.[63] Thus, left to their own devices, their activity moves toward the *aion* as shown through the past tense *fecere*. The neglected emotions lead the individual to succumb to occupation, where they are so immobilized that any activity of theirs must be described in the past. However, this past tense also shows that the progression from emotion to disease is not necessary, for there is a way out. The "not yet," applied to the habitualizing of a cold, points to the future possibility available to properly directed emotion. The pressing nature of misapplied emotion reflects the description of the diseases, which envelope and set the subject in place in *mancipium*. Seneca's distinction between a mere cough and consumption rests in the proper recognition of the extent of the use of emotions, which should properly guide the hand of the teacher's care as well as that of the student.

Because the time of care is an exemplary time, the emotional aspect of exemplary understanding remains with human beings throughout their whole life. Part of this is the grounding of the grasp of the understanding in sensation, though developed through

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[62] Maltby, 1991 59: under the listing for *assiduus*, highlights this entry from Charisius' *Ars Grammatica*: "*Some people write it with a "d", as if modeled off of asedendo, but they are wrong. For when the people had been divided into five classes by Servius Tullius… the richer people, who gave asses, were called assidui. And, because they alone were often present in public business, those who are often there they have called assidui from the asses*" (*assiduus quidam per 'd' scribunt, quasi sit asedendo figuratum, sed errant. nam cum a Servio Tullio populus in quinque classes esset divisus…, ditiores, qui asses dabant, assidui dicti sunt. et quoniam soli in negotiis publicis frequentes aderant, eos qui frequentes adsunt assiduos ab assibus dixerunt*). DeVaan (2008: 551) provides evidence vindicating those, like Seneca, who spell it with a 'd'.

[63] On the ancient etymology of *neglegere*, which fits the Indo-European evidence of DeVaan, 2008: 332–3, Maltby 1991: 407. On Stoic discussions of diseases of the mind, see Graver, 2007: 109–32.

philosophical care to grasp the future use of things as well, which Seneca echoes again after his cautions about the management of the emotions: "So, those who have made the most progress are outside of the diseases, yet very close to completion, they feel the emotions" (*Ep.* 75.12, *itaque qui plurimum profecere, extra morbos sunt, adfectus adhuc sentiunt perfecto proximi*) Their continued utility is shown by their presence so near to the end of the moral trajectory. Humans, who have left the plane of sensation and are thus "outside" of the fixity of diseased occupation, nevertheless still feel the emotions, despite their nearness to the Good.

The appeal to feeling (*sentiunt*) within the text highlights the presence of the physiological response of the "feelings" (προπάθειαι), but the presence of *adfectus* shows that the most advanced students have emotional investment in the world in addition to affective response. This also prefigures the closing formula which Seneca leaves Lucilius with at the end of *Ep.* 124.24:

> Brevem tibi formulam dabo, qua te metiaris, qua perfectum esse iam sentias: tunc habebis tuum, cum intelleges infelicissimos esse felices. Vale.

> I will give you a little rule to measure yourself and feel that you are now complete: you will have your own then, when you understand that the most unfortunate are fortunate. Be Well

The formula which Seneca provides is *brevem* just as the exemplary path toward the Good is *breve*. This formula acts in an exemplary manner by combining sensation and the understanding so close to the end of completion: the precept abuts the valediction that ends the letter just as the continued efficacy of the emotions continues up to the end of life. Having left behind the instantaneous present of the disease and of the weakness which precepts address and being so close to the always-already present of the divine of doctrines, the most advanced moral agents

still feel emotions because there is still more progress to make.[64] The cultivation of emotions as a function of intelligent sensation helps to reevaluate Seneca's discussion of the chain of love for life at *Ep.* 26.10.[65] The strength of the chain is directly correlated to the amount of progress that care has made upward toward the plane of the understanding. Too much love and neglected emotion means risking or in fact reducing oneself to *mancipium* through occupation by focusing on life as the present time. By filing away at the chain, the agent controls the emotions in such a way that they are manageable, prepared to do what must be done right when it needs to be done, i.e., to die. In the end, the proper way to love life is to reduce the emotional attachment to it to a simple feeling; thus, the hand of care lets go of its emotional grip on life and can apply its power and dexterity on the materials revealed by Philosophy in order to achieve the goal of imitating Nature.

You Are What You Write, and You Write What You Are

The reduction of the love for life over one's philosophical development is not entirely the reduction of emotion altogether, but it is instead a redirection of the efficacy of the emotions to make according to the proper means, manner, and extent necessary for achieving the Good. Seneca provides a positive example of emotional response at the beginning of the letter, where he outright endorses feeling and emotional response in the context of love:

> Hoc unum plane tibi adprobare vellem: omnia me illa sentire, quae dicerem, nec tantum sentire, sed amare. Aliter homines amicam, aliter liberos osculantur; tamen in hoc quoque amplexu tam sancto et moderato satis apparet adfectus. (*Ep.* 75.3)

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[64] Graver (2007:100–1) notes cases such as at *Epp.* 11, 57, and 71 where Seneca suggests that προπάθειαι as physiological responses—blushing or crying—are open to the sage's proper living; one might also compare the "shiver" caused by natural beauty at *Ep.* 41.5, discussed by Setaioli (2007: 334–5) in relation to Seneca's relationship to traditional religion. Additionally, the perfectly wise also have proper emotions, the εὐπάθειαι; cf. Graver, 2007:53–9, Inwood 1985:173–5.

[65] Cf p. 147 above

> I would like to flat-out endorse this one thing for you: I feel all those things, that I said, and I not only feel them, but I love them. People kiss their girlfriend in one way, their children in another; nevertheless, enough emotion appears even in this embrace, so pure and measured.

Seneca's endorsement of feeling what he says seeks to perform an impossible task: to prove the *inprobabile*. Stating his feeling and his love for what he says is not enough—this is the explanatory method of precepts and doctrines. Thus, he goes on to provide an *exemplum* of emotional responses to convey to Lucilius both the emotions he feels toward his writing and how to properly use emotions in a philosophical context. The first version of love, the elegiac love for a girlfriend, is set aside in favor of the parents' embrace of children.[66] This separation shows both the neglected emotion, which leads to occupation, as well as the emotion properly guided by care, as is seen through the description of the means, manner, and extent of the action displaying the love: by means of a hug, in a measured manner, and enough so as to be apparent.[67]

The use of the parental metaphor ties together the exemplary image from *Ep.* 95 of learning to write. The age difference between teacher and student, parent and child, matches the difference in progress on the upward trajectory toward the Good, as achieved through a death that is managed by care. Conflating the role of the teacher in these two metaphors, we see that the emotional attachment is not to the student but to the philosophical material that is taught, including both the *praescriptum* for writing practice and the contents of Seneca's letters. The task of the *exemplum* is to transmit the properly curated emotion toward philosophical education

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[66] The literature on Latin love elegy is extensive and far beyond the scope of this dissertation; however, Thorsen (2013) provides a suitable epitome of the topic and extensive bibliography.

[67] Given the theme of *servitium amoris*, prevalent in elegy as surveyed by Fulkerson (2013:180–93) and the feminine gender of the *amica*, this move also follows the transcendence of feminine (metaphorical) control, as discussed in relation to Philosophy and Nature in ch. 3. Bartsch (2006: 165–7) recalls the accusation of sexually promiscuity levelled at philosophers by Martial (7.58 & 9.47) and at Seneca specifically by Cassius Dio (61.10.14), likely borrowed from the pederastic practice of earlier Greek thinkers, including Zeno and Chrysippus (Bartsch, 2006: 99–100). The appeal to the chastity of parental love compared to elegiac love as the proper path may be a self-conscious defense of Seneca's sexual morality.

via the text which transmits this education to the reader, so that the student has the same emotional response which will empower the hand of their care to accomplish the Good. It is not about loving the writing itself, for Seneca chastises Lucilius for being "occupied with words" (*Ep*. 75.7, *circa verba occupatus es*) when critiquing Seneca's unembellished style in recent letters. To care about the words is to be caught up with explanation, rather than the actual thing which the *katalêptic* hand of the understanding grasps. Rather, it is about loving the content (*res*) of the writing,[68] for the emotional hand then crafts in relation to the matter of philosophy and not the surface effect of the sayable.[69]

In terms of Seneca's immediate audience of patriarchal males, the parental image also refers to the responsibility and power of the *paterfamilias* over the life and death of their children.[70] The familial relationship of the author to their work calls to mind the patrilineage of the Roman household, in which the *imagines* of the previous generations of venerable male relatives would be kept. Where the familial descendants would receive the death mask to parade in funerals, the philosophical descendants—the written works—receive the philosophical *imago*, the death made by care as an imitation of Nature. This appears also in the educational metaphor as well in the form of the *praescriptum*, the "written ahead of time," which brings the future end into the present practice as well.

The textuality of the *exemplum* and its futurity is foregrounded at the beginning of *Ep*. 95. As the midpoint of Seneca's paired treatises on the temporalized endpoints of precepts and

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[68] Cf. *Ep*. 89.17, where Seneca discusses the divisions of Stoic logic: "Rhetoric" takes care of words and feelings and structure; "dialectic" is divided into two parts, between words and signs, i.e., between the things which are said and the terms by which they are said (Ῥητορικὴ *verba curat et sensus et ordinem*; διαλεκτικὴ *in duas partes dividitur, in verba et significationes, id est in res quae dicuntur et vocabula quibus dicuntur*).

[69] On the metaphysical status of incorporeal sayables (λέκτα), Bréhier (1928: 14–36), Wildberger (2006b: 133–200), Barnes, Bobzien & Minnuci (2008: 92–176).

[70] Cf Barry & Treggiari (2012) on the *patria potestas*.

doctrines, this marks a perfect spot for Seneca to make a marked appeal to *exempla*. Seneca reports, "You ask of me that I represent and write for you, what I had said should be deferred for its own time" (*Ep*. 95.1, *petis a me, ut id, quod in diem suum dixeram debere differri, repraesentem et scribam tibi*). Seneca outlines his task in terms of the mechanisms of the *exemplum*, the *praesto-* and *efficax*-effects; thus, where *repraesentem* makes a clear link to the presenting power of the former, the efficacy is couched in terms of the writing. The object of this writing, the letter itself, is anthropomorphized through the use of the reflexive possessive adjective, and this anthropomorphosis coupled with the idiom *in diem differri* points us back to the image of the personified Philosophy, who has the power to free the occupied as soon as they submit at *Ep*. 8.7 and who addresses and gives time to all things at *Ep*. 53.10.[71] The connection of philosophy to death arises in the phrase *in diem suum*, where "one one's own day" means the fated day of death.[72]

Through the very act of writing, Seneca thus presents an image of properly managed care, aiming at the end of life. Using *exempla*, which the written word transmits to the hand of the student's care, Seneca encourages the reader to follow the prescription which he provides. In light of the work of care and the moral progress involved in writing and presented through writing, all texts share in the epistolary ability to enact a lifetime of various length and quality. Through the practice of *exempla* in the text, Seneca shows that learning how to write well means learning how to die well.[73] This textual basis for evaluating human lives helps to explain an

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[71] Discussed in ch. 3

[72] Cf. Virgil, *Aen*. 10.467, "For each, their own day stands, all have a brief and irrecoverable time of life; but to extend fame through deeds, this is the work of virtue" (*stat sua cuique dies, breve et inreparabile tempus/omnibus est vitae; sed famam extendere factis,/hoc virtutis opus*). Mann (2006: 103–22) analyzes this them with respect to the intertext of Dido at *Ep*.12

[73] Thus, we may extend the observation made by Ker (2009b: 173) regarding the epistolary form: "To say goodbye at the end of life should be no different from casually saying goodbye at the end of the day or the end of the letter"

overarching theme in Seneca's approach to actual individuals in the *EM*, a work which advocates

for a retreat from the social and which only rarely makes specific references to the outside

world,[74] and this is Seneca's strict insistence on equating literary style (*ingenium*) with the moral

condition of the person's mind.[75] To display this, I will briefly touch on rightly taken to be

Seneca's most complete explanation of literary style, *Ep*. 84, where Seneca compares the act of

reading and writing to bees' ability to make honey,[76] and *Ep*. 114, where Seneca "man handles"

Maecenas, to borrow from the title of Graver's (1998) case study of Seneca's conflation of a

character and a man.[77] I here show how Seneca's philosophy of care shapes the position which

previous scholars have noted, particularly in connection with Seneca's maxim, "What sort of life

people have had, such is the speech which they have had" (*Ep*. 114.1, *talis hominibus fuit oratio*

qualis vita).

Seneca describes the process of literary production at *Ep*. 84.5 and makes an explicit

appeal to care after describing the activity of bees:

> Sed ne ad aliud quam de quo agitur abducar, nos quoque has apes debemus imitari
> et quaecumque ex diversa lectione congessimus separare, (melius enim distincta

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[74] Bartsch (2009: 207) focuses on the deemphasis of the social, despite the Stoic account of *oikeiôsis* as a justification for human sociability and the term itself having a social etymology (Dressler: 2016: 98); cf. Reydams-Schils (2006: *passim*) for sociability in the wider Senecan corpus and the Roman stoics more generally. On the topic of friendship specifically, Evenepoel (2006) provides an overview of previous views and some interpretation. Henderson (2004: 6–18 & 2006: 127) focuses on the anonymity; to extrapolate somewhat, to describe the *EM* one might use the Derridean precept, "There is nothing outside the text."

[75] Cf. Setaioli, 2000:162 & 178 (in connection with the influence of Seneca the Elder's judgments on style, on which more see Trinacty (2009)); Graver (1998:612) traces this to the Stoic practice of physiognomy, connecting the physical appearance to the underlying psychical/moral condition. Mazzoli (1970:227) takes the moral use of *ingenium* to be Seneca's guiding stylistic principle.

[76] Setaioli (2000: 206–15) focuses on *Ep*. 84 to close out his lengthy study on Senecan style, and I defer to it in large part except for his contention that this letter describes a means of giving back to culture, for reasons discussed in n.58 above. Henderson (2004: 46–52) takes *Ep*. 84 to be a "proem" for a series of letters devoted to literary production, reaching its peak in the discussion of Scipio's villa at *EP*. 86. Wildberger (2006a: 75) follows Graver (1996: 176) on highlighting the importance of "therapeutic" reading, i.e., reading leading to writing, and how the bee-metaphor appeals to the earlier Stoa's more prosaic treatments of their coherentism (2006a: 98).

[77] Cf. Mazzoli (1970: 158), Traina (2011: 9). Dressler (2016: 139) compares the psychical image of the Good at *Ep*. 115 with that of the actual person in *Ep*. 114. Schiesaro (2015: 245) connects the critique of Maecenas to his Epicureanism, and Setaioli (2000: 190–2) notes the structural similarities of the earlier Stoic Cleomedes' attack on Epicurus' style. Graver (1998: 626–7) notes the paradoxical presence of Epicurus in relation to his appearance at *Ep*. 33

servantur), deinde adhibita ingenii nostri cura et facultate in unum saporem varia illa libamenta confundere, ut etiam si apparuerit unde sumptum sit, aliud tamen esse quam unde sumptum est appareat. Quod in corpore nostro videmus sine ulla opera nostra facere naturam… (*Ep*. 84.5)

But may I not be led away to something other than that concerning which the letter is being done: We should also imitate these bees and separate whatever we have gathered from our various reading, separate it, for distinct things are better cared for; then, with care for our character applied as well as ability, to pour together those various offerings into one flavor, so that even if it has become clear where it was taken from, it would appear nevertheless as something other than what was taken. This is what we see in our body, that nature does without any of our work…

The application of care within the perfect passive ablative absolute necessitates the pleonastic

facultate—"ability to make"—since the care is not the active subject of the clause like it is in the

human being. The imitation of the bees is an imitation of Nature in the sense of the appeal to the

present functioning of these animals as well as to the model which care seeks to match to rival

the divine. The imitation of Nature reappears at the end of the selection, where "we see" the

activity of Nature within the body, the link to the Tellurian present of the *aion*, but also a link to

the visual and thus re-presenting effect of *exempla*. Human care looks after the correlate to what

the bees separate and look after on the plane of sensation, as Seneca says at the very beginning of

his own textual imitation of nature: "Preserve your time" (*E*. 1.1, *tempus… serva*). The presence

of "reading" in the analogy serves a double function, as it also points to the ability to gather from

the text.[78] The appeal to "whatever" one reads points towards the honed ability of care to render

all things useful to the soul, as Seneca praises Lucilius at *Ep*. 124.1, and thus forms the whole

clause as a description of the hand of care's activity, as it selects, puts together, and then takes

apart again. The end result of the production is a "flavor" based on what the hand has gathered

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[78] Maltby (1991:332)

and mixed together, which points toward the end goal of wisdom—at least where proper literary production is concerned.

Seneca alludes to how his apian metaphor appeals to the power of the emotions through his transition to explain the metaphor, which he suggests nearly escapes his grasp. This negligence risks getting him led away from the point of the letter. On the one hand, it shows the danger of occupying himself through the application of his care to the talk of bees.[79] That he could be led away from the proper topic of the letter, leaving for another day what should be discussed on its own day, echoes his exemplary statement at the beginning of *Ep.* 95. On the other, this looming threat of occupation also shows the ambiguity of the flavor involved, evoking the voluptuary and nauseated master at *Ep.* 47.8, whose occupation is such that they are reduced to mouths which "the flavor of a thing excites" (*rei sapor excitet*).[80] The proper use of care leads to a truly delicious work, one which as an *exemplum* excites the emotions in the present so that they are more capable of achieving the Good in the future, but an occupied author misuses this faculty to create a text whose flavor leads to further occupation if the reader's care is not adept enough to sift through the bad and derive profit from it. Because proper textual production is the hand of care imitating the process of Nature, the written work reveals the status of the mind whose care wrote the text. Through the exemplary nature of texts, the "character" of the individual and their style, their *ingenium*, can be read right back out of the text, and thus transmits their mental status into the individual reader. Texts written by occupied individuals provide bad *exempla*, and following the model of handwriting from *Ep.* 94.51, it provides a

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[79] An example of becoming *circa flosculos occupati*, a distinctly un-Stoic failing mentioned at *Ep.* 33.1 to chastise Lucilius for seeking more *sententiae*; cf. Mazzoli, 1989:1862–3; Schiesaro, 2015: 244–5

[80] Discussed in relation to the sociologically enslaved people under their control in ch. 2.

cribbed and faulty script which the reader then reproduces and perpetuates, misleading the hand of care in the means, manner, and/or extent of its production.

The correlative maxim presented at *Ep.* 114—*talis hominibus fuit oratio qualis vita*—provides an evaluative formula to go from the *exemplum* of the text to the status of the author's hand and back again, one which also follows the emotional correlation displayed through chain of love for life. The neglect of the emotions as tools of care leads to enslavement through occupation, strengthening the chain of love and hardening it into a vicious disease, and this leads to the subject's fixity on the plane of sensation. Their writing exemplifies their failure to philosophize, through which they gain health and the future, and they transmit their temporal mismanagement to affect others. On the other hand, the proper management of the emotions through care facilitates the grasp of the understanding, rising toward the Good, and thus the *exemplum* made by such a hand transmits the liberatory power of philosophically managed emotions through the proper imitation of Nature.

The past tense used in this maxim points both toward the "already" quality of the prescription used as the *exemplum* to cultivate the student's hand of care; it recalls the perfect *fecerunt* Seneca uses to describe the production of neglected emotions at *Ep.* 75, and it also highlights the moral condition of preoccupation, out of which the student of philosophy must work their way upward. However, as long as the chain of love for life still holds them, the student still has progress to make—even those close to death still feel the emotions. The time of life, being the time of Cura, lacks the "always" of the eternal *chronos* of Jovian time, and no matter how much time has been lost, there is still a chance for freedom if one can begin to learn, for Philosophy does not delay the moral student at all. Seneca's pedagogical project thus seizes on the exemplary nature of textuality to appeal directly to the hand of care, mixing the

explanatory elements associated with the endpoints of precepts and doctrines. Through reading, Seneca guides the student to write for themselves, and to use their care to unlearn their emotional chains to the present and thus write philosophically, loving their texts as the imitation of nature achieved through their death.

Vale

As a brief conclusion, I want to look beyond the final letter of our *Epistulae Morales*. As we know from a testimonium from Aulus Gellius (*NA* 12.2.2-13), there was more to the collection than what we have.[1] Despite the progress that earns Lucilius praise in *Ep.* 124 for gaining the dexterity to apply his care most subtly and derive profit from all things and topics, there is more left to go. For us as readers, however, the rest of the upward trajectory on which Seneca leads Lucilius remains obscure. In order to shed light on the full trajectory of moral education which Seneca unveils through the *EM*, we must view the text from the perspective of Seneca's future. This viewpoint encompasses Seneca's own suicide in the tumult of the Pisonian Conspiracy of 65 CE.[2] From our vantage in time, we have seen Seneca's life and his end. We have his *imago*, the product of his philosophical life as carried by those who survived him, the written work which he has left behind. However, because of the vicissitudes of history and historical transmission, the *Epistulae Morales*, which go to great lengths to highlight the exemplary life of all texts, lack their own end, perhaps a fitting end to the contradictory impulses of Seneca's life as Stoic philosopher and wealthy slaveholder. The undoing of the end of the *Epistulae Morales* unclenches the hand of care which had its firm grasp on the completed product, and the work remains within the lived time of Cura, always working toward the future.

As the preceding chapters have shown, Seneca's philosophy as it is presented in the *EM* is thoroughly immersed in Latin language and linguistics and the Roman culture surrounding it. Seneca's pedagogical techniques appeal to the longstanding tradition of public *exempla* in

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[1] On the textual transmission of the letters, Reynolds & Marshall (1983: 359 & 369–75)

[2] Tacitus, *Annales* 15.60–5. Evenepoel (2004: 218) situates Seneca's suicide in the tradition of philosophical suicides, from Socrates through Cato to Cremutius Cordus and then after Seneca to Thrasea Paetus. Evenepoel suggests that this death is not fully consonant with Seneca's positions on suicide, since it was the alternative to execution, but I would suggest that the philosopher had so filed down the chain of love for life by this point that he did what he felt he had to do. Whether or not his *imago* is worth parading for his deeds is a matter of debate.

Roman society, and his ethical system renegotiates the terms of Roman slavery and of Roman funerary practice. All of this culminates in the importance of care in the work and the way that Seneca interprets the Latin myth of Cura, preserved by the unique Latin mythographer Hyginus, and applies it to his philosophical program to create an image of the moral life which requires an urgent concern for the future and a properly curated death. The importance of the future which Seneca draws from this myth and deploys throughout the letters is not a departure from the Greek Stoics. Well-versed in his Greek predecessors, Seneca builds upon the doctrines and insights of the Greeks with his own unique Roman perspective in order to teach a Latin-speaking audience a Stoicism which was developed out of the everyday images and metaphors of Roman life and society. The *EM* represent an exemplary exercise in philosophizing through images and metaphors, and their overarching concern is the cultivation of care in the audience so that they can accomplish the Good of Stoicism as Seneca has developed it, using Greek philosophy and Latin literature to create a unique and evocative philosophical program.

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