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### A Study of Erasmus's Editions of the Works of Lucius Annaeus Seneca

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**A Study of Erasmus's Editions  
of the Works of  
Lucius Annaeus Seneca**

by

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History Honors  
Professor Colish  
Spring 1986**



## Table of Contents

	page
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1. The Place of the Seneca Editions in the Thought of Erasmus.....	4
Chapter 2. The Place of Erasmus's Textual Criticism in the Traditions of Renaissance Textual Criticism to His Day.....	26
Chapter 3. A Discussion of Erasmus's Corrections in the Text of Seneca's <u>De beneficiis</u> .....	48
Chapter 4. Erasmus's Heirs: Textual Criticism and Seneca in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century.....	63
Conclusion.....	70
Appendix A. Translation of Erasmus's Preface to the 1529 Edition of Seneca.....	72
Appendix B. Text and Translation of Erasmus's Preface to the <u>Declamations</u> of the Elder Seneca.....	107
Appendix C. A Sample Collation Showing Changes Made in Selected Annotated Passages of Book IV of the <u>De beneficiis</u> .....	110
Notes.....	114
Bibliography.....	124

### Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Karen Mulberry of the Interlibrary Loan Department of the Oberlin College Library for obtaining microfilms of the two editions of Seneca: the 1515 edition from the University of Illinois and the 1529 edition from Princeton University.

## Introduction

This thesis had its origins in my reading of an article by Anthony Grafton entitled, appropriately, "The Origins of Scholarship."<sup>1</sup> This article, in the form of a review of Rudolf Pfeiffer's History of Classical Scholarship from 1300 to 1850,<sup>2</sup> attempts to set forth the major tasks faced by historians working on the history of classical scholarship. Grafton states the primary task quite simply as follows: "We want to know not only what the early scholars thought about the studia humanitatis, but how they practiced them."<sup>3</sup> This involves undertaking detailed studies of the scholarly works--editions, commentaries, philological treatises--of early classical scholars, both to determine their approach to their material and to place their work in its larger historical and biographical context. Grafton himself has taken on this task for the sixteenth-century scholar Joseph Scaliger. My purpose in this thesis is to provide a study of Erasmus's two editions of Seneca that will address the issues raised by Grafton about that Renaissance scholar's approach to his material and the historical context in which he worked.

Erasmus's work on the text of Seneca provides particularly fertile ground for such a study. Erasmus edited Seneca twice, once in 1515 and again in 1529. This enables us to examine the ways in which Erasmus's treatment of Seneca changed in response to the changing historical situation. The first edition appeared at a time when Erasmus's concerns were primarily educational--he

had been occupied for several years as a tutor, and was to write his Education of a Christian Prince in the following year. When the second edition appeared in 1529, his concerns had shifted to the debates with Luther and the Ciceronians. In Chapter 1 I will examine the ways in which these external factors are reflected in Erasmus's work on Seneca.

Chapters 2 and 3 will be devoted to the more strictly philological aspects of Erasmus's editions. In Chapter 2 I will set the stage by discussing first Erasmus's Renaissance predecessors in the field of textual criticism and their methods, and then turn to a general discussion of Erasmus's own philological aims and methods as he discusses them in his prefaces to his editions of classical authors. In Chapter 3 I will attempt to fill out this outline with concrete examples from Erasmus's edition of the De beneficiis. I have chosen to discuss this work because it contains a larger number of annotations than the other Senecan works in Erasmus's editions, and hence provides more of a base on which to draw my conclusions. From this discussion I hope a clearer picture of the character of Erasmus's editorial work on Seneca will emerge.

In my final chapter I will look briefly at the developments in textual criticism up to the end of the sixteenth century to see how Erasmus stands in relation to those who followed him.

Although several good studies of Erasmus's editorial work on the New Testament have appeared in recent years, I can point to no single work which extends this investigation to his editions of classical authors. Winfried Trillitzsch's article "Erasmus und Seneca"<sup>4</sup> does examine Erasmus's interest in Seneca as

revealed in his letters and prefaces, but it does not attempt to integrate into this discussion an examination of Erasmus's actual philological approach to the text of Seneca. Nor, for that matter, is there any study similar to that of Trillitzech available in English.

I believe that the study which I have undertaken here is important because it attempts to shed light upon a major aspect of Erasmus's life--the editing of classical, as well as Christian, texts--by examining the ways in which that activity was carried out as well as how it complemented his other activities. As Anthony Grafton has said of Renaissance classical scholars, and of the need to study their scholarly work, "editing, translating and commenting on texts were the activities on which such men spent by far the greatest part of their time and energies; to shirk studying their practical work is to abandon all hope of understanding what their lives were like."<sup>5</sup>

HUMANITAS on the title page of Erasmus' edition of Seneca. Observe Froben's mark of the serpents and the dove.



from Roland H. Bainton, Erasmus of Christendom, (New York, Scribner's, 1969), p. 42.

## Chapter 1. The Place of the Seneca Editions in the Thought of Erasmus

The first indication of Erasmus's intention to prepare an edition of Seneca comes in a letter written at London in the fall of 1512, from Erasmus to his friend Pieter Gillis; Erasmus writes, simply, "...if I have time, I will also emend the text of Seneca."<sup>1</sup> At the time this letter was written, Erasmus was already engaged in preparing editions of the letters of Saint Jerome and of the Greek New Testament, his monumental Novum Instrumentum. He was also engaged in several smaller projects, including translations from Plutarch and Lucian, and various educational writings. In the midst of all this activity, what prompted Erasmus to undertake an edition of Seneca, his first full-length edition of a classical author? Why did it seem fitting to Erasmus that the writings of the Stoic Seneca should appear alongside the sacred writings of Jerome and the New Testament? In this chapter I will attempt to answer these questions by looking at the place of the writings of Seneca in Erasmus's overall program of religious and educational reform. I will also attempt, where possible, to follow the chronology of Erasmus's life in an effort to narrate the development of his thought and the progress of his work on Seneca.

Erasmus began his work on the text of Seneca in 1513, during his third stay in England since his initial visit in 1499. On that first visit he had accompanied his pupil, Lord Mountjoy, to whom he dedicated the first edition of his Adages.<sup>2</sup> This visit to England was followed by a stay of about four years in his

native Netherlands, during which he took up the study of Greek, discovered and published Lorenzo Valla's Annotations on the New Testament, wrote his own Enchiridion militis Christiani (1503), and brought out his first annotated edition of a classical author--Cicero's De officiis.

Erasmus's choice of the De officiis is by no means surprising--Cicero's work had remained enormously popular since antiquity--but his dedicatory preface<sup>3</sup> provides both interesting evidence of his early development as a textual critic and an opportunity for speculation about the place of his classical editions among his other works. In this preface we find the complaint that careless scribes have thrown confusion into the text, a complaint voiced often by Erasmus in the prefaces to his editions. Erasmus also informs us that he has emended the text partly through "a collation of editions" and partly through "informed guesswork based on Cicero's style."<sup>4</sup> Here again are themes which we find repeated in the prefaces to other classical editions, including those of Seneca. But I will return to these themes in chapter 2 in which I will deal with Erasmus as a textual critic.

In commending Cicero's work to his reader, Erasmus describes the De officiis as an enchiridion, playing on the double meaning of the Greek word as both "handbook" and "dagger." Erasmus cites Pliny the Elder, who says that Cicero's book "should never be out of one's hands,"<sup>5</sup> and the Greek poet Menander, who says that "virtue is mortal man's mightiest weapon."<sup>6</sup> This same double entendre on the word enchiridion is employed by Erasmus in his own Enchiridion militis Christiani. Without suggesting that

Erasmus's Enchiridion is directly modeled after Cicero's De officiis, I would comment on the fact that both works served a similar purpose: to arm the reader with practical precepts for living a virtuous life. Cicero was further recommended by his ability to express these moral precepts in eloquent language. In this formula of virtue combined with eloquence we have the essentials of the Erasmian educational philosophy. Of the De officiis, Erasmus writes, "here too is that divine fountain of honor which is divided into four channels; to drink of it makes a man not only eloquent, like the famed Aonian spring, but also immortal."<sup>7</sup> The significance of this remark can best be seen in light of a discussion of Erasmus's educational philosophy.

In formulating his educational philosophy, Erasmus was greatly influenced by the thought of the great Dutch humanist, Rudolf Agricola. For Agricola, as for Erasmus, the two-fold aim of education was the development of both eloquence and wisdom. Like Quintilian (of whom Erasmus was very fond, as we shall see), both men realized that "the task was not merely good speaking, but the comprehensive development of those intellectual and ethical qualities which make a man sapiens et eloquens at one and the same time."<sup>8</sup> For both men, virtue was "the major ingredient of wisdom."<sup>9</sup> Agricola, in a letter to his brother Johann which accompanied a translation of Isocrates' Parentis, wrote, "there is nothing...that I could more fittingly offer you...than the furthering of your erudition and a better moral life...I will surely not be doing something unworthy, if I gather ethical precepts for you related to the proper orientation of life...May



it then become not only an aid to your speech but truly also improve your soul."<sup>10</sup> Here Agricola was following Isocrates himself, who wrote, "I think that a multitude of precepts is preferable to many riches, for [the latter] sink swiftly away, [the former] remain in all time. For wisdom alone of all things is immortal."<sup>11</sup> We find language such as that of Agricola and Isocrates echoed again and again in the writings of Erasmus.

In 1505 Erasmus had returned to England a second time, most likely with the hope of securing patronage. His hopes were realized in his meeting with William Warham, the Archbishop of Canterbury, to whom Erasmus dedicated his Latin translation of Euripides' Hecuba in 1506. In his preface to this translation, Erasmus states that his long-range goal is "to translate Greek authorities in order to promote...the science of theology, which had fallen into a most shameful condition through scholastic trifling..."<sup>12</sup> He has undertaken a translation of Euripides, he says, to test his skills on something difficult, but secular in nature, so that "any mistakes I made would be at the cost of my intellectual reputation alone, causing no harm to Holy Writ."<sup>13</sup> Here, the mention of "scholastic trifling" is an expression of a constant theme in the writings of Erasmus. Erasmus saw his task as a theologian to remove the corruptions which he thought had been introduced into Christianity by the medieval scholastics, and to arrive at a pristine Biblical understanding of the Christian faith. Erasmus extended this criticism of scholasticism into his editions of classical authors. Just as the abstractions of the scholastics obscured the simple message of the Scriptures, he held, so they introduced various

corruptions into the texts of classical authors, obscuring their true reading. The task of emending texts, then, was part and parcel of his attempt to remove medieval corruptions and to restore the writings of both Christian and classical antiquity to their original condition.

The two strains of Erasmus's thought discussed above--the educational strain which emphasized training in eloquence and virtue, and the anti-scholastic strain which emphasized a return to original, uncorrupted sources--come together in another of Erasmus's prefaces to a work produced when he was working on his first edition of Seneca, the Opuscula aliquot of 1514. This work comprises an edition of various small pieces including the so-called distichs of Cato and the mimes of Publilius Syrus, and is dedicated to Jean de Neve, regent of the College du Lys of Louvain. In this preface, Erasmus poses the question, "why does Erasmus, a theologian, waste his time on such trifles?" The answer is a classic statement of his educational philosophy: "I think nothing beneath our notice, however elementary, that contributes to a good education, not least lines such as these which combine a neat Latin style with the implanting of high moral standards."<sup>14</sup> In publishing these little works, Erasmus offers "a scholarly edition of the maxims of some standard author that might shape the minds of the young for a life of virtue and their lips for correct and fluent speech."<sup>15</sup> Throughout Erasmus's prefaces to his editions of classical authors "we see the enthusiasm for the work of restoration linked continually with hopes for the young, with the vision of a new age."<sup>16</sup>

In this preface, Erasmus also manages to attack the scholastics, saying "[how] discreditable that they [these works] should have been corrupted and that (as is clear from their commentaries) these childish works were not understood by men who thought they knew everything!"<sup>17</sup> This same criticism was to be repeated by Erasmus in his discussion of Seneca.

Between 1508 and 1511, after a visit to Italy during which he stayed with the Venetian printer and scholar Aldus Manutius and undoubtedly honed his skills as a textual critic, Erasmus returned again to England, drawn once more by the prospect of patronage. This prospect was undoubtedly made brighter by the accession of Henry VIII to the throne in 1509. Henry was rumored, quite correctly, to be an educated man and a lavish patron. So Erasmus came to England, only to have these hopes temporarily deferred. As he wrote to his Italian patron, Cardinal Riario, "I had visions of Midas all over again and gold such as Pactolus and Tagus never knew. I dreamt of an age truly golden and fortunate isles--and then, to quote Aristophanes, 'up I woke.'"<sup>18</sup> What caused Erasmus to wake from his dreams of gold was the outbreak of war. In 1512, Pope Julius II negotiated an alliance with Venice against France, an alliance soon joined by England's king Henry VIII. To Riario, Erasmus continues, "my other friends, even the king himself, the parent of the golden age, were soon overtaken by the storms of war and torn from commerce with the Muses; with such a blast had Julius' famous trumpet roused the whole world to a passion for Mars."<sup>19</sup>

Julius's war not only delayed Erasmus's hopes for patronage from the English monarch, it also violated one of his most firmly

held ideals, the ideal of peace. This ideal was drawn not only from Christianity, but also from the ancient philosophical school of Stoicism, to which Seneca belonged. Stoicism taught that the universe is governed by a harmony which would ideally be reflected in the organization of society. This harmony is an "immanent rationalism which holds in harmony dissident elements;"<sup>20</sup> it was this principle which would ideally unite men, allowing them to submit their disputes to the arbitration of reason. To this principle of harmony, or concordia, was allied the Stoic principle of humanitas, which encouraged sympathy for one's fellow man as expressed in such qualities as magnanimity and clemency.

All of these qualities could be found in the writings of Seneca. Seneca was full of the kind of moral precepts and eloquence which, Erasmus held, were indispensable to a good education. Seneca also carried the recommendation of Saint Jerome, another of Erasmus's favorite authors, whom he was editing at the time. On the basis of Seneca's spurious correspondence with Saint Paul, Jerome includes Seneca in his catalogue of "illustrious men," the De viris illustribus. Seneca's writings were also presented in an unsystematic collection of occasional pieces--dialogues, essays, letters--which provided Erasmus, and other humanists, with an attractive "alternative to scholastic habits of thought."<sup>21</sup> Above all, Seneca's writings embodied the all-important concept of humanitas--a belief in man's ability to perfect his reason, to turn inward to improve himself and to turn outward to live in

harmony with his fellow man. It is significant that humanitas personified sits enthroned on the title page of Erasmus's 1515 edition of Seneca. In the preface to this edition of Seneca, addressed to Thomas Ruthall, the Bishop of Durham, Erasmus summarizes his feelings about Seneca in these words:

Nothing sets a higher tone than his pronouncements, and he preaches the path of honor with such fervor that it is quite clear that he practiced what he preached. Seneca alone calls the mind away to heavenly things, exalts it until it despises the world of every day, implants a loathing of all that is mean, and kindles with a love of honor; in a word, he sends the reader away a better man, if he opened the book with the purpose of becoming better.<sup>22</sup>

These are the qualities that recommended Seneca to the Christian reader. Erasmus's language in this preface recalls his language in his earlier Enchiridion: Seneca is a practical aid for the Christian who must turn away from "the world of everyday" toward "heavenly things."<sup>23</sup>

Finally, it seemed to Erasmus that a complete edition of the works of a wise and virtuous Stoic would be appropriate for an age in which even the Pope seemed remarkable for his lack of wisdom and virtue. Seneca called for the ruler to be a sage and, in such works as the De clementia, exhorted him to gentleness, fairness, and reason. Such exhortations had great appeal for Erasmus, and he kept them in mind when, in 1516, he wrote his book on The Education of a Christian Prince for the future Holy Roman Emperor, Charles I of Spain. In this work, Erasmus draws up a course of approved reading for the Christian prince, headed by the Biblical Book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Book of Wisdom, and the Gospels. Among the classical authors he advises the prince to read, Seneca comes second only to Plutarch.

Erasmus writes, "after Plutarch, I would readily assign the next place to Seneca, whose writings are wonderfully stimulating and excite one to an enthusiasm for [a life of] moral integrity, raise the mind of the reader from sordid cares, and especially decry tyranny everywhere."<sup>24</sup> It is significant that, with the exception of Plato and Aristotle, Erasmus produced editions of all the major authors recommended to the Christian prince in the years preceding the publication of this educational treatise: Cicero's De officiis in 1501, Plutarch's Opuscula in 1514, and Seneca in 1515. The Gospels, in the form of the Novum Instrumentum, appeared in 1516. Thus, Erasmus not only formulated an educational theory, he also made the texts available which were necessary to put that theory into practice.

The 1515 edition of Seneca's Lucubrationes omnes was brought to completion in the first half of that year by the Basle publishing house of Froben, in Erasmus's absence. The final revisions were entrusted to several of Erasmus's friends, including Beatus Rhenanus and William Nesen. An indication of the haphazard manner in which the work went forward is given by Rhenanus, who writes that he emended a sizeable passage from the De beneficiis "on the spur of the moment, when the sheet had already begun to be printed."<sup>25</sup> In April of 1515, Rhenanus writes that Seneca "is printing on two presses."<sup>26</sup> By mid-February of 1516 the edition was on sale in London. Thomas More sent word to Erasmus that "the Bishop of Durham [Ruthall] appreciated the dedication;"<sup>27</sup> Erasmus discovered soon after that Ruthall's copy of Seneca had never reached the bishop.<sup>28</sup>

One of the more interesting mentions of the edition comes from the great French humanist Guillaume Budé. Budé writes to Erasmus, "I began to read Seneca, to please you; for I supposed that was what you intended--if not, how could I testify to the skill of your printer?"<sup>29</sup> Budé continues, saying that the arrival of the Novum Instrumentum made him drop Seneca immediately. Unfortunately, the letter from Erasmus to which Budé is replying is lost, but it would appear from what Budé says that Erasmus recognized the Seneca to be better as an example of Froben's skill as a printer than of his own as an editor.

In any event, we know of Erasmus's dissatisfaction with the 1515 Seneca from his decision, sometime in 1525, to edit Seneca a second time. At Christmas 1525, Erasmus wrote to Robert Aldridge who had assisted him while working on Seneca and Jerome at Cambridge in 1513, asking him to recollate the manuscripts at Cambridge.<sup>30</sup> A large portion of Erasmus's original collation had disappeared, apparently carried off by William Nesen.

The renewed work on Seneca proceeded slowly for the next four years, with Erasmus actively searching for manuscripts of Seneca while at the same time supervising the collaborative work of several scholars on an edition of the writings of Saint Augustine. Seneca had reached the presses by the beginning of October 1528, at which time we still find Erasmus gathering material for the edition, most notably from Rudolf Agricola's annotated copy of the 1478 edition of Seneca printed in Treviso, which Erasmus had not used in his first edition of the works of Seneca.<sup>31</sup> The new edition was completed sometime before 25

February 1529, when Erasmus sent two copies to Herman Phrysius.<sup>32</sup>

Erasmus's 1529 edition is prefaced by an "admirably balanced and sensible essay on Seneca."<sup>33</sup> This preface, which appears below in translation as an appendix following the text, will serve as the focus for my analysis of Erasmus's reappraisal of Seneca in his 1529 edition.

While Erasmus does voice criticisms of Seneca in his 1515 edition--finding "a certain elderly verbosity, tasteless jokes, an abrupt style" and a touch of arrogance in his works<sup>34</sup>--this criticism becomes much more prominent and elaborate in the 1529 preface. Combined with Erasmus's own admission that he would prefer to disown his previous edition, this criticism has led scholars to conclude that his decision to edit Seneca a second time was motivated less by love of Seneca than by shame over the poor quality of the 1515 edition.<sup>35</sup> Indeed this motivation cannot be denied, for Erasmus himself writes, "the stimulus of disgrace always urges the spirit on; just as soldiers, after defeat has been accepted, are accustomed to compensate for the disgrace they have received by excellence in the next conflict, so I shall make good, by means of a more favorable examination, the errors committed in the previous edition."<sup>36</sup> The importance of the edition does not end there, however, for Erasmus goes on to take advantage of this preface as a forum to air his own views as a religious reformer.

In the years between the edition of 1515 and that of 1529, the Protestant Reformation had broken out, and Erasmus had reached high prominence as a Catholic humanist reformer. The second edition of Seneca, in 1529, came at a time when Martin



Luther was threatening the doctrine, and more importantly the peace, of the Church. Under these circumstances, Erasmus's interests in the classics had become much more oriented toward religious concerns. Some of these concerns are, as I have said, aired in the preface to the 1529 edition of Seneca.

In this preface, after the preliminary amenities in which he pays brief homage to some of the people and circumstances responsible for the production of the new Seneca, Erasmus launches into an insightful discussion of the causes of corruption in manuscripts. As we have seen from our discussion of Erasmus's work on editions of other classical authors, these corruptions became the starting point for Erasmus to launch into a criticism of the medieval schoolmen. Such corruptions entered the text, in part, through the carelessness and ignorance of these schoolmen and scribes who lacked the proper knowledge of antiquity to understand the classical texts. But these errors were also a matter of philological and editorial concern to Erasmus, for it was through an examination of these errors that he attempted to find the genuine reading of the text. I will return to these philological matters in chapter two. More important from the standpoint of this chapter are Erasmus's discussions of Seneca's relationship to Christianity and of his virtues, and vices, as a prose stylist. These two issues are important in the present context because the former relates to Erasmus's general concerns as a religious reformer, and in particular to his debate with Luther over free will, while the latter relates to the concerns raised in his Ciceronianus. I

will treat these topics in the order given here.

Erasmus acknowledges that Seneca's survival throughout the Middle Ages was due in large part to his adoption by the early Christians. One might say that the papers for this adoption included the alleged correspondence between Seneca and Saint Paul. It is on the strength of this correspondence that Saint Jerome includes Seneca in his De viris illustribus.<sup>37</sup> Erasmus, however, rejects this correspondence as spurious, on grounds of both style and content. Nor, apparently, was Erasmus the first to do so; rather he seems to have followed Lorenzo Valla, who, in a treatise which is no longer extant, "seems to have been the first to say that [the Seneca-Paul correspondence] could not be genuine."<sup>38</sup> In his 1529 edition Erasmus devotes a separate preface to this correspondence, whereas in 1515 he merely prefaced it with Jerome's biography of Seneca.

The spurious Seneca-Paul correspondence was not, however, the only source of Seneca's popularity in the Middle Ages, nor was it the only target of Erasmus's criticism. Indeed, Erasmus cites as the leading source of Seneca's popularity "the sanctity of his precepts," which led medieval Christians to embrace his writings as "nearly orthodox."<sup>39</sup> An example of this medieval attitude is provided by the twelfth-century Cistercian, William of Saint-Thierry, who "really used [Seneca], absorbing large amounts of material from the Letters and rethinking it in Christian terms; by a subtle change of emphasis and context, passages from Seneca are given a new connotation and skillfully combined with material from patristic writers into a homogeneous whole."<sup>40</sup> The medieval popularity of Seneca also led many

spurious works other than the Seneca-Paul correspondence to be attributed to Seneca.

Among these other spurious works attributed to Seneca during the Middle Ages were the so-called Senecae proverbialia, actually a collection of moral sententiae culled from the pages of various other classical authors. Many of these proverbialia were correctly attributed by Erasmus in his 1529 edition. Erasmus uses his separate preface to these proverbialia in the 1529 edition to ridicule the scholastic commentaries often found appended to them:

...Almighty God how absurd!...at that time such absurdities were skimmed through by men, and by such ineptitude the natural capacities of schoolboys were racked to pieces.<sup>41</sup>

What Erasmus found most reprehensible in these commentaries was the medieval commentators' lack of knowledge of antiquity and their application of the hair-splitting distinctions of logic to simple statements of morality. To return to the first point, Erasmus believed that the true purport of a text could only be understood and expounded by a scholar equipped with an accurate knowledge of the language in which the text was originally written. Ignorance of the classical languages, said Erasmus, had led medieval commentators to misinterpret the texts, and had caused medieval scribes to introduce egregious errors into the text. These were the errors which Erasmus set out to correct in his editions of both classical and Christian authors: errors which confused and misrepresented the text.

These medieval uses, or abuses, of Seneca clearly violated the Renaissance, and typically Erasmian, conception of historical

scholarship, which sought to develop an accurate picture of classical antiquity as a culture distinct from Christianity. For Erasmus it was important to draw the distinction between pagan antiquity and Christianity because, while Christians could selectively draw examples from virtuous pagans, a danger arose when orthodoxy was imputed to pagan writings. Erasmus warns that Seneca "never departs so far from Christianity as when he treats things which are principal tenets of our faith."<sup>42</sup>

This point deserves a little closer attention, for it reveals a significant tension in the thought of Erasmus and in the Renaissance in general, accentuated by William J. Bouwsma.<sup>43</sup> Bouwsma argues that there was a fundamental tension in Renaissance humanism between the strains of Stoicism and Augustinianism. He defines Stoicism as "the particular form in which the pervasive and common assumptions of hellenistic paganism presented themselves most attractively and forcefully to the Renaissance."<sup>44</sup> Augustinianism he in turn defines as "a slow, steady, though incomplete advance from a hellenistic understanding of Christianity, which sought to reconcile the Gospel with the commonplaces of later antique culture, toward an increasingly biblical understanding of Christianity."<sup>45</sup> Bouwsma notes that there were many points of contact between the two schools of thought, all of which would have appealed to Erasmus. Both, for example, placed an emphasis on providence, on "moral seriousness," the principle of inwardness, the "brotherhood of man" and the "universal fatherhood of God." There was, however, a fundamental difference between Augustinianism and Stoicism, namely, "the difference between the biblical understanding of

creation, which makes both man and the physical universe separate from and utterly dependent upon God, and the hellenistic principle of immanence which makes the universe eternal, by one means or another deifies the natural order, and by seeing a spark of divinity in man tends to make him something more than a creature of God."<sup>46</sup>

Erasmus seems to have been keenly aware of this difference. It may be recalled that while Erasmus was preparing the second edition of Seneca, he was also engaged in producing an edition of the works of Saint Augustine, which was published by Froben in 1529. The experience of working on both authors at the same time can only have heightened Erasmus's awareness of the tension between the way each viewed the relationship between God and man. In his preface to Seneca he goes to the heart of the matter by criticizing the Stoic "principle of immanence" as it is found in Seneca. He criticizes Seneca's assertion that "God is all that is seen and unseen"<sup>47</sup>--as if," says Erasmus, "the whole world were a huge animal, whose body is apparent to the eyes, but whose spirit is concealed--as if this were God"<sup>48</sup> Erasmus clearly sees the dangerous implications of adherence to this "principle of immanence": if God is immanent within man, then man in a sense becomes equated with God, and therefore self-sufficient. Having tapped his own inner divinity, man need not rely on the grace of God to reach salvation. Salvation becomes entirely self-willed.

Saint Augustine's own major objection to Stoicism is on exactly this point: "salvation is not to be self-willed."<sup>49</sup> Erasmus, in his preface to Seneca, raises the same objection:

Finally, how many times does he [Seneca] exalt the Stoic sage so that he often makes him the equal of the gods, and sometimes even raises him above the gods. He says that the sage owes his complete felicity to himself alone, that nothing is the work of the gods: nay, the gods owe something to the sage. But piety persuades us that...man has no good of his own power, but owes the height of his felicity to the grace of God.<sup>50</sup>

Here we find Erasmus in an interesting position: siding with Saint Augustine over the issue of free will. We know from his De libero arbitrio (1524) that Erasmus was a staunch advocate of man's free will against the harsh doctrines of Martin Luther. We also know, from a revealing letter to Thomas More written in 1527, that he despaired of finding support for his own views in the writings of Augustine. He writes:

...if I am to follow St. Paul and Augustine, there is very little left of free will. The latter, in two books which, as an old man, he wrote to Valentinus, indeed grants that free will exists, but he stresses grace to such an extent that I do not see what he leaves to free will. He states that works without grace are dead deeds, he attributes to grace the fact that we come to our senses (resipiscimus), that we wish to do good deeds, that we actually do perform good deeds, and that we persevere.<sup>51</sup>

We should not be surprised, however, to find Erasmus siding with the Christian Augustine against the pagan Seneca. Although Erasmus was an advocate of free will, he never denied the role of God's grace in man's salvation; for Erasmus the grace of God is, in a sense, the necessary enzyme which activates man's free will and enables him to do good. Erasmus's argument with Augustine, and Luther, is with one who denies the freedom of the will; his argument with Seneca is with one who denies the grace of God. Erasmus wished to defend free will, but he clearly saw the danger of stressing free will to the point of denying grace; in his letter to More he continues:

I see Scylla, but Charybdis is even more terrible: that we might claim to achieve by our own power all that we owe to the largesse of God.<sup>52</sup>

Hence Erasmus tried, as was his custom, to steer a middle course between Scylla and Charybdis. By accepting free will he preserved the dignity of man, by accepting grace he preserved the dignity of God.

In this criticism of Seneca, a writer who was otherwise in Erasmus's estimation a fine moralist, Erasmus tacitly draws the important distinction between the practical moral teachings of a philosophical or religious sect and its fundamental doctrines. Similar codes of morality can be extracted from Stoicism, Epicureanism, Christianity and many other sources, but the underlying doctrines of each sect are very different. The danger in reading Seneca is that one may be lured by fine precepts into accepting doctrines that clearly diverge from Christianity. For example, it was consonant with Christianity to accept Stoic virtues such as clemency, but the espousal of such virtues should not lead the Christian to accept the fundamental Stoic doctrine of the self-sufficiency of the sage, which would make the sage independent of God's grace. Hence, Erasmus cautions that "for what he tells of morality, Seneca will be read with greater profit if he is read as the pagan that he was, for then his words will impress us in a Christian manner."<sup>53</sup> Erasmus urges a selective and discriminating reading of Seneca.

This leads me to my final topic: Erasmus's discussion of Seneca's style. The majority of Erasmus's preface is devoted to this issue. It is not surprising that Erasmus devotes so much attention here to matters of style, for only a year before, in

1528, he had published his Ciceronianus, a satiric dialogue directed against those who insisted that Cicero represented an absolute standard in style to be religiously imitated by those wishing to write correct Latin. What may be surprising is that the edition of Seneca, a most un-Ciceronian writer, did not incorporate "a further attack on Ciceronianism."<sup>54</sup> Indeed, Erasmus's preface has "but faint praise" for Seneca's style, which is, in fact, compared unfavorably with Cicero; Erasmus writes that Seneca's style "does not display the simplicity of Cicero."<sup>55</sup> This stance in the preface, and the aspects of Seneca's style that he singles out for praise and blame, can best be understood by taking a closer look at Erasmus's arguments in the Ciceronianus.

Erasmus's chief complaint against the Ciceronians was that they subordinated content to style. For Erasmus this meant that their classical purism hampered the discussion of religion; the Ciceronians were more interested in constructing a properly turned Ciceronian period than in speaking truly about Christianity. Erasmus urges, "let us care first for thoughts, then for words; let us adapt the words to the subjects, not subjects to the words."<sup>56</sup> This sentiment is clearly echoed in the preface to Seneca, where Erasmus writes that Seneca's sententiae "frequently give more weight to the words than to the matter at hand."<sup>57</sup> What Erasmus finds most fault with, both in Seneca and the Ciceronians, is mere rhetorical display without real thought or feeling behind it.<sup>58</sup> In the Ciceronianus he states that "any diction is cold and dead which does not come



from the heart."<sup>59</sup> This judgment is consistent with a criticism he makes of Seneca, at times, as well; he finds many of Seneca's sententiae "frigid" and "stiff." Erasmus's statement, above, from the Ciceronianus, resonates clearly with his general notion, stated most fully in the Enchiridion, that all outward actions, especially those in the service of religion, must be reflections of an inner piety.

For these reasons, Erasmus advises against taking Seneca as a stylistic model. In an earlier manual on the writing of letters, the Conficiendarum epistolarum formula (1520), Erasmus warns that "Seneca is a model appropriate for advanced students and not for adolescents because of his stilus sterilis et circumcisis [sterile and choppy style]."<sup>60</sup> Only the more advanced student can make the stylistic judgments which will enable him to avoid these defects of Seneca's style in his own writing.

In his Ciceronianus, Erasmus does describe what is for him the "true Ciceronian," and oddly enough the preface to Seneca gives an example of this rare individual--but it is Quintilian, not Seneca, who provides that example. For Erasmus, the true Ciceronian follows the spirit of Cicero rather than the letter. This means being a man of wide reading, good judgment and discrimination in choosing what to "sanction or censure" in an author. Quintilian emerges as such a man in Erasmus's preface to Seneca, where Erasmus writes:

...Quintilian once warned that Seneca ought to be read with discrimination and judgment, tempering his censure of Seneca with such fairness that he does not zealously praise what ought to be rejected or reject in disgust what ought to be

praised.<sup>61</sup>

It is significant that Quintilian emerges as Erasmus's example of a "true Ciceronian," since elsewhere he implies that Quintilian, like Seneca and other writers of "silver" Latin, "has a style which seems to aim at being unlike Cicero."<sup>62</sup> Seneca, on the other hand, emerges as being truly un-Ciceronian because of his lack of fairness in dealing with other writers.

Erasmus's criteria for a "true Ciceronian" are selectivity and discretion in reading. He says that the true Ciceronian will select and digest his reading and make it his own, as bees who selectively gather nectar from various flowers digest that nectar and make it their own before giving it forth as honey. Ironically, the locus classicus for this metaphor of the bees is Seneca's eighty-fourth Epistle to Lucilius.<sup>63</sup> In addition, Erasmus singles out the Declamations of (the Elder) Seneca as particularly useful in developing this faculty of critical judgment.<sup>64</sup> This principle of selection and discretion applies not only to classical authors, but to the Christian Fathers as well. In his preface to the works of Saint Hilary, he warns that the Fathers were themselves prone to error, especially in their dealings with heretics. He writes:

But let us beware, lest though the hate of one error we turn back upon another error; and let us preserve that moderation of spirit, lest animosity persuade us that what is proper is improper, that what is bitter is sweet, and vice versa.<sup>65</sup>

In this connection, Erasmus mentions Saint Augustine, who, in his anti-Pelagian writings, "attributes much less to the workings of free will than they who now control the theological schools think is right."<sup>66</sup> This is an important feature of Erasmus's attitude

as a scholar: he questioned authority. Erasmus did not accept anything merely because it carried the weight of an authoritative ipse dixit. Erasmus was aware that writers, however great, were only human, not the authoritative embodiments of reason.<sup>67</sup> This realization prompted Erasmus to study authors not as "nothing more than a quarry for moral precept,"<sup>68</sup> but as admirable yet fallible historical personalities. In general, Erasmus believed that "in order to comprehend a writer [one must]...have some preliminary knowledge of his biography and the general scope of his work."<sup>69</sup> This attitude led him to read the classics, both pagan and Christian, "with a more consistent historical and critical sense, judgment and erudition" than they had been read before the Renaissance.<sup>70</sup> It also persuaded him of the value of producing scholarly editions of important authors, such as Seneca, to dispel the misconceptions that surround those who have been accepted as authorities. In the next chapter, I will begin to examine the ways in which Erasmus applied this critical attitude to his examination of textual authority.

## Chapter 2. The Place of Erasmus's Textual Criticism in the Traditions of Renaissance Textual Criticism to His Time

In the last chapter I examined some of the reasons why Erasmus may have decided to edit the text of Seneca; in this chapter I will begin to look at the actual principles of textual criticism that he applied to his examination of the text. The primary aim of this chapter will be to situate Erasmus in relation to his predecessors in the field of textual criticism. For, in order to understand Erasmus's own efforts as a textual critic, we must first broach the rather larger subject of Renaissance textual criticism in general, thereby creating a context for analyzing Erasmus's work on the text of Seneca.

The most important figure in the history of Renaissance textual criticism up to the time of Erasmus was the Italian Angelo Poliziano (1454-1494). It was Poliziano's work that set the standard for subsequent work in this endeavor. But before turning my attention to Poliziano, I would like to look briefly at the state of textual criticism in the early fifteenth century.

Between 1400 and 1460, humanist textual criticism was in its infancy. In the milieu of the Italian city-state, in which civic pride or princely patrons were served by humanist rhetoric, philology played a mere supporting role as rhetoric's "handmaiden."<sup>1</sup> In this role, philology was valued most highly as a pedagogical tool. During this period, the explication of particularly challenging classical texts formed a regular

part of the humanistic school curriculum.<sup>2</sup> Part of this technique of the "explication de texte" was the discussion of difficult textual problems. Accurate textual scholarship, however, was made impossible by a number of factors. First, obtaining the use of a good manuscript was most often purely a matter of chance. Early humanist textual critics had not yet developed a systematic method of identifying particularly valuable manuscripts, nor did readily accessible libraries, available for use by the humanist-at-large, or catalogues of manuscripts exist to make these manuscripts easily obtainable. If, in this "academic wheel of fortune,"<sup>3</sup> they happened to stumble across a particularly valuable manuscript, the early humanist scholars used it arbitrarily, often introducing fresh errors into the text through the process of conjectural emendation.<sup>4</sup> The second factor hindering the development of accurate textual scholarship before the advent of the printing press was the lack of a "uniform base text against which collations could be made."<sup>5</sup> Without such a uniform text, humanist scholars had no common point of reference in their academic disputes, and it was easy for dishonest men to resort to forgery and falsification to advance their side in a dispute.

Between 1460 and 1480 the character of humanist textual criticism changed as the barriers discussed above were gradually removed. First, manuscripts became more readily available, at least in Italy, as humanistically educated princes established libraries for the use of humanist scholars. Secondly, the invention of printing made possible the production of a uniform base text. This uniform text, even if inaccurate, made possible

a collective debate among scholars on textual problems.<sup>6</sup> With this common text available, humanists turned their attention to producing exhaustive commentaries on that text. In the process of explaining and illustrating a particular text, these commentaries digressed on many subjects as diverse as geography, law, and agriculture. For this reason, the humanist commentaries became popular for use in the schools; they not only made the text readily accessible to the average student, they also provided an introduction to many different aspects of the ancient world. But for the very reason that they were so exhaustive, they afforded little opportunity for the individual scholar to display his expertise in a particular area of specialization. Forced to cover so much ground in the limited format of the commentary, the specialist in Roman law, for example, could not expand upon that topic at any length. The scholar's own unique drawing card was inevitably lost in the shuffle. All commentaries look very much alike, and "in a period of intense literary competition [they] made it impossible for [their] author[s] to shine."<sup>7</sup>

The next step, the step which was taken by Poliziano, was to produce short treatises, written expressly for a scholarly audience, on selected passages from a text. Poliziano's major work in this genre is his Miscellenea (1489). In the Miscellenea, Poliziano brought to textual criticism a new concern for the accuracy and validity of his sources. It is this concern on the part of Poliziano that I will begin to discuss now, for it was to have a long-lasting influence on textual scholarship.

Poliziano believed that the earliest recoverable stage of a tradition was the the most accurate representative of that tradition, being the most free of the errors that inevitably arise over time. Poliziano followed the principle that "earlier is better," his idea being, by analogy, that the water from a spring is more likely to be pure near its source than after it has passed through the pastures and villages where corruption easily occurs. This attitude toward his material invariably led him to eliminate testimony derived from a later witness; for example, he would not quote Herodotus on a subject for which Homer or Hesiod also provided a witness. Poliziano strove to return to the earliest stages of a tradition for his sources, eliminating the intermediate stages from consideration. Clearly this is not a valid method for studying the development of a tradition and the changes it underwent over the course of time, especially when those changes are important indicators of historical and cultural changes. If, for example, we preserve Aeschylus's Oresteia, but discard all later versions of the same story--those of Sophocles, Euripides, Eugene O'Neill, Sartre, Richard Strauss, Shakespeare's Hamlet, and all other later versions of the Electra story--we show ourselves to be ignorant of the important ways in which a tradition is adapted to cultural and historical contexts. In this sense, Poliziano's method is not historical. But his method does have an obvious application to the field of textual criticism, in which changes in a manuscript--errors of transcription and the like--can be seen more unambiguously as corruptions rather than as historically important adaptations.

When applied to textual criticism, this set of assumptions led Poliziano to favor the oldest extant witness in a manuscript tradition. Poliziano identified his preferred witness by arranging his manuscripts genealogically, which allowed him to eliminate the codices descripti, those manuscripts which merely copied an earlier archetype.<sup>8</sup> Poliziano's preference for older manuscripts was, as I have said, conditioned by an awareness that intermediate stages in the manuscript tradition were more likely to be contaminated with scribal error. He also realized that later humanist copies, which incorporated conjectural emendations, were particularly unreliable, because while attractive but purely conjectural emendations tended to obscure the original manuscript reading, at least the errors of the old manuscripts "preserve some fairly clear traces of the true reading which we must restore. Dishonest scribes have expunged these completely from the new texts."<sup>9</sup> If the textual critic is to resort to conjectural emendation, such emendation "must start from the earliest recoverable stage of the tradition."<sup>10</sup>

It should be noted, however, that even in textual criticism earlier is not always better. Philologists since the time of Poliziano have worked out the principle of "internal antiquity," which states that later manuscripts may indeed contain older and more valuable readings than earlier manuscripts. For example, a twelfth-century manuscript may contain older, more valuable readings than a tenth-century manuscript of the same work because it is part of a superior family of manuscripts descended from a more ancient, though lost, archetype. But, although his principles were later superseded, we must not dismiss Poliziano,



for he really began the trend toward a careful and systematic examination of manuscripts which would lead to the important discoveries of later philologists.

By eliminating the codices descripti, Poliziano was able to attack, on historical and textual grounds, medieval jurists who had used "faulty" manuscripts of Justinian's Digest as the basis upon which to make their interpretations of the law. This practical use of textual criticism as a means of attacking medieval corruptions and of introducing reform clearly influenced Erasmus, as we see from his work on the text of the New Testament.

After Poliziano's death, his methods continued to be applied to textual criticism with varying degrees of success. Aldus Manutius's ideal of presenting texts "in their purest possible form,"<sup>11</sup> by comparing manuscripts and refraining from emendation of all but "the most glaring defects,"<sup>12</sup> was frustrated by his "subjective and arbitrary editorship"<sup>13</sup> and by the rush to get a work into print. Aldus did, however, introduce the widely-used custom "of marking passages which he could not fathom with asterisks."<sup>14</sup> This practice was followed by a more successful disciple of Poliziano, Filippo Beroaldo (1472-1518), who produced an edition of Tacitus's Annales I-VI in 1515.<sup>15</sup> Erasmus used asterisks for the same purpose in his first edition of Seneca, also published in 1515, but dropped the practice in the 1529 edition, preferring to wrestle with difficult passages in his notes.

The general aim of Italian textual criticism was to produce

editions which would faithfully report the manuscript readings, even preserving obviously corrupt readings, for the use of other scholars. Thus Aldus sought to print "plain texts" which left emendation and interpretation to the learned reader; as he said in the preface to his 1495 edition of Theocritus, "I do not assume the task of emendation."<sup>16</sup> The aims of the entire school of Italian textual criticism were best summarized by Pier Vettori (1499-1585) in his commentary on Cicero's Ad Familiares (1538), in which he writes:

...our whole aim was to restore these books to their original and genuine reading. For we did not want to correct or emend the accepted texts of Cicero, but to expel and erase the rash and unsuitable emendations of certain arrogant correctors with the help of ancient exemplars.<sup>17</sup>

The Italian style of textual criticism, then, was based upon the "primal" authority of a particularly ancient and valuable text and eschewed speculation on the problematic readings that might be found in it.

There was also another current approach to philology, found in France. The French school of textual criticism also drew its inspiration from Poliziano, but drew on a different aspect of Poliziano's scholarship. In his Miscellanea, Poliziano made extensive use of Greek sources in criticizing and explicating Latin literature. This practice included recognizing and restoring Greek words used in Latin texts which scribes unacquainted with Greek had corrupted out of ignorance, and identifying Latin translations of Greek originals. This use of Greek sources in illustrative commentaries is a "defining feature" of the French school of textual criticism.<sup>18</sup> The French were less interested, however, in following Poliziano's use of

manuscripts. In this respect, French textual criticism was characterized by "conjectural emendation helped along by the unsystematic use of manuscripts."<sup>19</sup>

Hence we have in the Italian and French schools of textual criticism two different editorial methods, the Italian school stressing the principle that editions should be based on the superior authority of a text deemed to be canonical because of its antiquity, and the French school, which relied on the "idiosyncratic" authority of a learned scholar's emendations rather than on the analysis of the manuscript tradition as a means of finding the correct reading of a text.<sup>20</sup> In the following discussion, I will look at the overtly stated aims of Erasmus as a textual critic, found in his prefaces and letters, in an attempt to place him as a textual critic within these two traditions of textual criticism. In my next chapter, I will look at how Erasmus actually carried out these aims in his treatment of a specific part of the corpus of Seneca, the De beneficiis.

A period of forty years separates the publication of Erasmus's first edition of Seneca in 1515 from the publication of the editio princeps, the first printed edition, in 1475. These forty years form what one scholar has called "Seneca's Incunabula Period."<sup>21</sup> During this period there was "no effective division between the functions of printer and editor,"<sup>22</sup> the printed editions being little more than transcriptions of the vulgate text, the commonly received and accepted text of Seneca. Any editing that was done was the anonymous, and for the most part arbitrary, work of the printer or his assistants. In 1475, four

editions of Seneca appeared; the first, and hence the editio princeps, is known as the editio Mentelina, printed in Strasbourg by "the R-printer."<sup>23</sup> This was followed by an edition produced by the printer Arnold Pannartz in Rome, an edition produced by the printer Mathias Moravus in Naples (the editio princeps of the Dialogues), and an inferior edition published at Paris. This last edition contained only Letters 1-88, reflecting the fact that there had been a division of the Letters into two parts within the manuscript tradition of this collection at an early stage of their transmission.<sup>24</sup> Early editions of Seneca, including that of Erasmus, also reflected the double manuscript tradition of the works of the Elder Seneca (at the time identified with his son the philosopher) into a book of Controversiae and Suasoriae and a book of excerpts known as the Declamations.

In 1478 an edition of Seneca was printed at Treviso, which Rudolf Agricola used as a basis for his emendations of the text; Erasmus made use of Agricola's copy of this edition when preparing his own 1529 Seneca. Further editions appeared at Venice in 1490 and 1492; these added the Natural Questions and incorporated, for the first time, a number of corrections to the text. Editions were also printed at Leipzig in 1493 and 1495 and at Avignon in 1502; these editions offered little or no improvement to the text.<sup>25</sup>

In discussing Erasmus's editorial activity on the text of Seneca, the natural place to begin is with his manuscripts. Unfortunately, it appears to be impossible to identify most of the manuscripts used by Erasmus, and it is likely that, with one

exception, they are all lost. For his 1515 edition, Erasmus relied primarily on two manuscripts of Seneca, one from the library of King's College, Cambridge, and one from the personal library of the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Warham, both of which are lost.<sup>26</sup> Cambridge also furnished manuscripts of the Proverbia attributed to Seneca<sup>27</sup> and of the works of the Elder Seneca. For the 1529 edition, Erasmus asked his former assistant Robert Aldridge<sup>28</sup> to recollate the King's College manuscript, and actively sought manuscripts from other sources in England and on the Continent.<sup>29</sup> The only one of these which has been (conjecturally) identified is a manuscript containing the De beneficiis and De clementia which Erasmus described as the "Longobardicus vetustissimus," the "oldest" manuscript, in Lombardic script. This manuscript has been conjecturally identified as Cod. Pal. Lat. 1547--known as the "Nazarianus"--an early ninth-century manuscript from Northern Italy, now in the Vatican, which has provided modern editors with the basis for the text of the De beneficiis and De clementia.<sup>30</sup>

Erasmus did not have the resources to follow Poliziano's careful and systematic use of manuscripts; the best that can be said is that "he made judicious use of such manuscripts as he could muster...[although these] seem to have been an indifferent lot."<sup>31</sup> The exception is, of course, the Nazarianus. But "instead of basing his text on this prime witness, he drew on it spasmodically to emend what he had before him."<sup>32</sup> Erasmus's use of his manuscripts may seem haphazard to modern philologists, but it is unfair and above all unhistorical to "hold Erasmus

responsible for later textual discoveries."<sup>33</sup> First of all, Erasmus could not consult a catalogue of manuscripts as modern scholars can--such bibliographical aids did not exist. Furthermore, many of the most valuable manuscripts of Seneca's Letters did not surface until the nineteenth century. Second, "only centuries of comparisons, collations and accumulated insights enabled scholars to evaluate...manuscripts as accurately as they do today."<sup>34</sup> For example, the Nazarianus was not made the basis for the texts of the De beneficiis and De clementia until Martin Gertz's edition of 1876.<sup>35</sup> The early sixteenth century was for textual criticism, as it was for many other things, an age of discovery. It was an age in which religious and intellectual controversies called for scholars to employ only "the boldest and most dashing methods,"<sup>36</sup> an age in which heated battles were fought under the banner of philology.<sup>37</sup> Such an age did not encourage careful and detached scholarship.

If Erasmus's use of manuscripts shows that in some respects he was subject to the limitations of his age, in other respects Erasmus shows himself to possess "a critical equipment that must have been, at the very least, well above the average of his day."<sup>38</sup> This is in part revealed by his "extensive empirical knowledge of the habits of copyists."<sup>39</sup> Equipped with this knowledge, Erasmus was able to identify corruptions introduced into the text by copyists, and to suggest a possible emendation to restore the lectio germana, the genuine reading. Let us turn then to a more detailed look at Erasmus's task as an editor of Seneca.

As an editor of Seneca, Erasmus's task was divided into four

parts:<sup>40</sup> (1) to make emendations, removing the errors found in abundance in the corrupt manuscripts of his day; (2) To identify and separate out the spurious works attributed to Seneca; (3) Closely related to this, though not strictly the task of a textual editor per se, he sought to remove apocryphal and misleading stories from the author's biography, hence restoring his true identity as an historical figure.<sup>41</sup> In the case of Seneca, this meant removing the myth that he was a crypto-Christian and correspondent of Saint Paul; (4) Finally, Erasmus faced the task of elucidating the text with notes to clarify obscure passages or guard against future corruptions. In the case of the New Testament, this aspect of Erasmus's editorship yielded the massive and important Annotations. In the case of Seneca, it yielded shorter notes and marginal comments which are nonetheless important for understanding Erasmus's editorship of Seneca.

Let us return to the first of these tasks, the task of identifying and correcting errors in the text. This task was made easier by Erasmus's understanding of how error arose in the process of transmission. This issue is most fully discussed in the preface to the 1529 edition of Seneca. From Erasmus's discussion of the sources of error in manuscripts, we can divide these errors into three general types.

The first are errors stemming from ignorance, both on the part of scribes and medieval schoolmen. Erasmus complains that when the scribe did not understand a word or allusion, or could not read the script, "it was necessary either to mix in mere

approximations or to change what was written."<sup>42</sup> Although Erasmus found such ignorance disgraceful, he also found this type of error to be the most useful from the standpoint of an editor of the text. He writes that "what was done by the ignorance of the scribes still has some traces of the true wording, which holds out to clever men some inference of the true reading."<sup>43</sup> This point had also been realized by Poliziano, as I noted above,<sup>44</sup> and by Coluccio Salutati.<sup>45</sup> Like Salutati, Erasmus realized that ignorant scribes omitted words, changed what they did not understand, and sometimes even incorporated marginal glosses into the text.<sup>48</sup> Acting upon this realization, Erasmus corrected many passages in the text of Seneca, including places where such marginal glosses had found their way into the text.

Erasmus also shared with Salutati and Poliziano an awareness that readers more intelligent than the scribes responsible for such errors were also responsible for corruptions of the text. Hence, the second type of error, arbitrary alterations and indefensible emendations. These errors were more troublesome for editors, because they quite often diverged widely from the lectio germana. Erasmus writes, in the 1529 preface:

Sometimes the same location in the text shows such various corruptions, and I have hit upon things so shamelessly changed, that no word fits, neither among the more corrupt texts, nor with the true reading which we find in the ancient exemplars. Thus, while it was once corrupt, because another person of similar heedlessness strove to make emendations, and still others altered something from time to time, the fault was made irreparable, and no divination of even the most learned man is able to help.<sup>46</sup>

Because he found these errors so problematic, Erasmus strove to be especially careful in his own divination, and never used



divination without pointing it out and, if possible, discussing readings alternative to the ones he supported.

A third type of error is mechanical error, arising primarily from the process of dictation of the text to scribes by readers, and the differences in scribal styles of notation, script and abbreviations. Again, Erasmus quite successfully applied his fine discernment to the correction of this type of error. He was also aided by his own experience with copyists and his research into pronunciation. In the 1529 preface he writes:

For truly professors are accustomed to dictate to a scribe what is written down. Not all of these men were of the same nationality, and national pronunciations vary, and the language is not always articulated equally. Thence it came about that contantius was written in place of constantius, and alea in place of area. Similarly, the variety of styles of notation gave an opportunity for error.<sup>47</sup>

It is fairly certain that Erasmus gained this knowledge in part from his own practice of dictating to an amanuensis.<sup>48</sup> Also, his far-flung travels no doubt acquainted him with the diverse pronunciations of Latin in different parts of Europe.

Given Erasmus's keen eye for errors, we must now examine the way in which he applied this skill to a successful emendation of the text. This was done for the most part through a combination of collation and conjecture. As we shall see when we come to look at Erasmus's work on the text of the De beneficiis, he was often confronted with several different manuscript readings, none of which seemed to make sense. In such cases, Erasmus compared the readings and sought to infer the true reading from this comparison. Erasmus described this technique in his preface to the 1515 edition of Seneca:

[the manuscripts I used] did not agree in error, as is bound

to happen in printed texts set up from the same printer's copy; and thus, just as it sometimes happens that an experienced and attentive judge pieces together what really took place from the statements of many witnesses, none of whom is telling the truth, so I conjectured the true reading on the basis of their differing mistakes. Besides which, I tracked down many things as if by scent, following the trail of actual letters and strokes of the pen. In some places I had to guess; although I did that sparingly, knowing that the surviving works of such great men are a sacred heritage...<sup>49</sup>

This method of correcting the text is what has been called emendatio ope codicum, emendation aided by the manuscripts.<sup>50</sup> Only as a last resort did he employ divinatio, what he would call "informed guesswork,"<sup>51</sup> based on his understanding of Seneca's style, the sense of the passage, and other criteria. Style and interpretation also guided Erasmus as he chose between different readings offered by the manuscripts.

As I mentioned earlier, Erasmus did not have the resources to make a complete recension of the manuscript witnesses. That is, he was unable to survey all the manuscripts and select the most valuable witness, by process of elimination, as his base, calling upon other manuscripts for disputed passages. Erasmus's method of emendatio ope codicum was dependent upon both the manuscripts he was aware of and upon his own literary judgment as an editor.

Let us turn now to another important aspect of Erasmus's textual criticism: his attempt to separate the spuria out of the actual canon of Senecan works. In the 1515 preface, Erasmus writes:

The pieces which had wrongly acquired the name of Seneca I have not thrown out, for fear the reader might need something and not find it, but I have relegated them to the end...<sup>52</sup>

These spurious works include the De quattuor virtutibus moralibus (now attributed to Martin of Braga),<sup>53</sup> the Correspondence with Saint Paul and the Mimi Publiani. In the 1515 edition, these works stand without separate introductions; the Seneca-Paul correspondence is merely prefaced by the testimonium of Saint Jerome from the De viris inlustribus.<sup>54</sup> In his brief chapter devoted to Seneca (chapter 12), Jerome is exclusively interested in the correspondence with Paul; he writes:

Lucius Annaeus Seneca of Cordoba, the pupil of the Stoic Sotio and the uncle of the poet Lucan, led a most continent life, but I would not have placed him in this Catalogue of the Holy had not those epistles provoked me, the epistles from Paul to Seneca and from Seneca to Paul, which are read by many people.<sup>55</sup>

Here it seems that Jerome is less interested in Seneca's "continent life" than in his connection, spurious or otherwise, with Saint Paul. J.-P. Migne, who includes the edition of Jerome just cited in his massive Patrologia Latina, tries to vindicate Jerome:

...Jerome does not affirm that [the epistles] are genuine, but only that they exist and are widely read.<sup>56</sup>

In his general preface to the 1515 edition, Erasmus passes quickly over the issue of the correspondence, saying only that "being a critic of keen discernment, Jerome well knew that [the spurious letters between Paul and Seneca] were written by neither of them, though he wrongly uses them as a pretext for praising Seneca."<sup>57</sup> The truth is that Jerome never explicitly denies that the correspondence is genuine and appears, implicitly, to accept it as such. In 1515, Erasmus seems to be writing out of a desire to exonerate Jerome. In the 1529 edition, Erasmus devotes separate prefaces both to this spurious correspondence and to the

Mimi Publiani,<sup>58</sup> discussing his reasons for declaring them spurious. In his preface to the correspondence with Paul, Erasmus again says of Jerome that he "was not ignorant of the fraud."<sup>59</sup> He continues his exposé of the spurious correspondence by pointing out its inconsistencies and absurdities, both logical and stylistic. He asks, for example, why Seneca would have reported Nero's persecution of the Christians to Paul, when certainly Paul, a Christian living in Rome, would have been keenly aware of it.<sup>60</sup> He points out many such logical inconsistencies, then turns to a criticism of the correspondence on stylistic grounds. Why, he asks, would Seneca send Paul a handbook on style?<sup>61</sup> If Paul could not write well in Latin, certainly Seneca could have corresponded with him in Greek. But as it is, says Erasmus:

In these epistles Seneca's style is no more cultivated than Paul's, but both stammer along, stiff and inept with regard to sense.<sup>62</sup>

Hence, it is on grounds of both style and content that Erasmus rejects the Seneca-Paul correspondence. As for the Mimi Publiani, he points out only that they are culled primarily from the mimes of Publilius Syrus (whom he calls Publius) and Laberius, and suggests how they might be put into metre. He says that some are indeed found in Seneca, and suggests that some are derived from other sources, though these are not systematically identified.

Although Erasmus successfully sifts out these spuria, he fails to attribute the Declamations to Seneca the Elder, though he does consider the possibility that the Tragedies were written by a son or brother of Seneca.<sup>63</sup> The question of the

Declamations is particularly interesting. In the printed editions prior to those of Erasmus, several works of the younger Seneca are placed, by the editors, between the so-called Declamations and the Suasoriae and Controversiae. Erasmus was the first to print these works together, with the Suasoriae and Controversiae immediately following the Declamations.<sup>64</sup> Erasmus also realized that the Declamations represented an epitome, made for school use in the early Middle Ages, of the larger work of which the Suasoriae and Controversiae also form a part. In his 1529 edition, Erasmus notes the locations in which the epitome repeats material contained in the Controversiae. He also notes that the epitome also contains the preface to Book VII of the Controversiae. Erasmus also observes, on the basis of a comment by Seneca in the Controversiae,<sup>65</sup> that Seneca wrote the Controversiae first, although the Suasoriae had always been printed first. Finally, Erasmus states that he used the epitome to correct many of the corresponding passages in the Controversiae. Although the most important work on the Elder Seneca was done by Erasmus's successors, notably Andre Schott,<sup>66</sup> Erasmus seems to have been the first editor to realize that the Declamations was essentially a book of excerpts that stood in a close relationship to the longer Suasoriae and Controversiae. With this realization, later editors began to reconstruct the true shape of the Elder Seneca's work.

The final task that Erasmus faced as an editor of Seneca was, as I mentioned, to elucidate difficulties in the text through annotations. Erasmus did this only in the 1529 edition, and then

only sparingly. These notes, however, are important for understanding Erasmus's methods as a textual critic. The notes serve a dual purpose--they discuss problems in the text and possible emendations, and they suggest an interpretation of the passage in question. These two aspects of Erasmus's annotations actually complement each other: any emendations must aid the sense of the passage, and the interpretation must make sense of the passage in light of the emendation. Of these annotations, Erasmus writes in his preface to the 1529 edition:

I have added annotations, but these are few, and only where I wished to exclude all possibility of corruption; otherwise there would be no end of annotation if I had wished to remark on whatever was changed, as [Mattheus] Fortunatus did. And so I would strongly wish this author to be elucidated with scholia, as a barrier to ward off the recklessness of corruptions.<sup>67</sup>

Hence, Erasmus's notes are not exhaustive, but they do give a fair indication of how he handled textual problems. I will look somewhat more closely at these notes in my next chapter in an attempt to determine what functional criteria Erasmus actually applied to the task of emendatio ope codicum.

Viewed as a whole, Erasmus's editions of Seneca display a careful critical approach to the text not found in earlier editions of Seneca. He did not follow Poliziano's method of selecting the superior manuscript witness, deemed to be superior on the grounds of antiquity alone, and basing his text on that manuscript. He did have access to a fine manuscript of the De beneficiis for his 1529 edition, and his notes on that work confirm that he recognized its importance, although there is no indication that he used it systematically as the basis of his text. Indeed, the conditions under which Erasmus and his

printers worked themselves prevented a thoroughly systematic approach. The 1529 edition went to the presses in September of 1528; manuscripts were still arriving as late as November.<sup>68</sup> It appears from the notes to the De beneficiis that the prime manuscript was not available to Erasmus until he had begun editing Book IV of that work.<sup>69</sup> Rudolf Agricola's notes on the De beneficiis and Epistolae arrived only in time to form part of an Appendix Annotationum to those works. Such haste and disorder were also, of course, characteristic of Erasmus's work on the 1515 edition; we have Beatus Rhenanus's letter indicating that he corrected some passages after they had already been set up on the presses.<sup>70</sup>

It should be noted that the process of printing at this time itself multiplied errors. Often printers and proofreaders made changes not sanctioned by Erasmus;<sup>71</sup> often Erasmus's assistants simply displayed "a flair for mistakes."<sup>72</sup> The main barrier to careful work, however, was the rush into print.

In general, Erasmus's textual criticism of Seneca more closely resembles that of the French school of Renaissance textual criticism than that of Poliziano and his Italian followers. Like Poliziano's French followers, Erasmus does make good use of his knowledge of Greek in approaching the Latin text of Seneca. In the preface to the 1529 edition, he identifies Seneca's phrase "nemo sibi contingit" ("no one comes into being for his own sake")<sup>73</sup> as a translation in Latin of Plato's "hekastos hemon ouk auto monon gegonen" ("each of us is not born for himself alone").<sup>74</sup> Several times in his notes to the De

beneficiis, Erasmus uses specific knowledge of Greek to emend or explicate the Latin.<sup>75</sup> Finally, Erasmus's method of emendatio ope codicum relies more heavily on the "idiosyncratic" authority of the editor than on the "primal" authority of a superior manuscript.

These editorial principles, of which Erasmus was consciously aware, and which he discusses in his prefaces and letters, will next be examined in practice, as we consider, from an analysis of the De beneficiis, the grounds upon which he established his reading of the text.



Chapter 3. A Discussion of Erasmus's Corrections  
in the Text of Seneca's De beneficiis

In the first chapter of this thesis, I attempted to answer the question, "Why Seneca?" In the second chapter the more general principles of how to edit Seneca were addressed. As I move now from a general discussion of Erasmus's work on the text of Seneca to a more detailed consideration of his corrections in the text of the De beneficiis, I will preface my remarks with a brief justification of my choice of this particular treatise as an index of the larger questions surrounding Erasmus's method.

Erasmus appears to have had a special fondness for the De beneficiis, in part because it had a special application to his own situation as he took up Seneca for the first time in 1512. Seneca's classical work on the giving and receiving of benefits enabled the young scholar, ever anxious to have his work subsidized by generous patrons, to soften his requests for money with tactful references to the De beneficiis. A letter of October 1511, to John Colet, shows how Erasmus could hide behind Seneca to save his pride in relationships with patrons. Erasmus writes:

As for your offer of your own money, there I recognize your old kindly attitude towards me and am full of the deepest gratitude. But my feelings were a little piqued by that remark, however much it was made in fun, "if you beg humbly."<sup>1</sup>

Erasmus goes on to give Colet a polite lecture on the giving of benefits, with appropriate illustrations from Seneca. Having invoked Seneca,<sup>2</sup> Erasmus concludes, "he who waits for that humble

word 'please' from a friend is no friend at all."<sup>3</sup> A more important reason for choosing the De beneficiis, from the overall perspective of this chapter, is the opportunity it provides for examining Erasmus's handling of a work for which, in his 1529 edition, he had access to the preeminent manuscript witness. In the last chapter<sup>4</sup> I mentioned that Erasmus almost certainly had access to the important Carolingian manuscript of the De beneficiis and De clementia known as the Nazarianus. A complete collation of the seven books of the De beneficiis seems to confirm that Erasmus used this manuscript. In the edition of 1515, only five of Erasmus's readings can be traced, through the modern apparatus criticus, to the Nazarianus; the overwhelming majority of documented readings in this edition are traceable to later medieval copies. In the 1529 edition, over twenty documented readings can be traced to the Nazarianus, and the number traceable to later medieval copies declines.

The most convincing evidence that Erasmus used the Nazarianus is found in his Appendix Annotationum to the De beneficiis, which occupies pages 271-273 of the 1529 edition. At I.ix.5 (Hosius 13.7),<sup>5</sup> Erasmus suggests the reading Iam rapta spargere, sparsa rapaci avaricia recolligere ("Now men vie to squander what they have stolen and to regain again by fierce greed what they have squandered"), saying that "the most ancient codex had this location corrected in an old hand."<sup>6</sup> The apparatus criticus of Hosius's Teubner edition ascribes this reading (with the addition of vel acri after rapaci) to the "correctores posteriores codicis N"--the later correctors of codex N (the Nazarianus). This corresponds to Erasmus's

information about the reading if we suggest that Erasmus dropped the vel acri ("or acri") as an extraneous second guess by the corrector of the manuscript.

At another location in this Appendix, Erasmus records this reading for I.xii.3 (Hosius 17.18), et personas, where he reads simply, personas. He states in the note that the "old codex" had this reading, but that the conjunction et was written in above the line. This coincides with the ascription of the apparatus criticus of this reading to "manus altera codicis N paulo recentior"--a second hand, slightly more recent, in codex N.

In any case, Erasmus seems to have made use of what he considered his best manuscript. He seems to have received it only while working on Book IV; it is first mentioned in a note to IV.xxxix, and is called upon in twenty-one of the remaining forty notes to the De beneficiis, and in numerous notes in the Appendix.

A final reason to examine the De beneficiis is that in the Appendix Annotationum, Erasmus had access to the emendations made to the De beneficiis by Rudolf Agricola. Here we have an opportunity to evaluate Erasmus's use, not only of the manuscripts and of his own conjectures, but also of the work of another humanist.

Hence, we have in the De beneficiis a work for which Erasmus had access, in the 1529 edition, to many sources not available to him when he first edited Seneca in 1515. Perhaps for this reason, the De beneficiis is the most profusely annotated of all the works of Seneca in the 1529 edition. For the seven books of

the De beneficiis there are eighty-nine actual annotations--substantial notes placed at the end of each book; for the Epistles there are ninety-six annotations, but these are spread throughout twenty-two books. In general, the annotations to the De beneficiis seem to be fairly typical of Erasmus's editorial style, and give a fair indication of the techniques he applied to his scrutiny of the other works in the Senecan corpus.

In his preface to the 1529 edition of Seneca, Erasmus suggests that if anyone were to compare this edition with the edition of 1515, "he will immediately confess that a new Seneca has been brought forth."<sup>7</sup> This statement is clearly borne out by a collation of the two editions of the the seven books of the De beneficiis, which records a total of 769 changes introduced into the latter text or given in the margins as alternate readings. Of these 769 changes, 504 have been sanctioned by the modern critical edition of Hosius.<sup>8</sup> From a modern standpoint, this gives Erasmus a "success rate" of approximately 79%. But, as Bentley<sup>9</sup> and others have warned, we must resist the urge to judge Erasmus's textual scholarship by modern standards. We must instead examine Erasmus's changes and annotations in an effort to understand his methods for arriving at what he believed to be the lectio germana, the true reading.

As I have suggested elsewhere in this thesis,<sup>10</sup> the most important critical skills that Erasmus brought to his examination of Seneca were his understanding of Seneca's style and his understanding of the sources of corruption in texts. In the light of this understanding, Erasmus was able to isolate

possible corruptions in the text and to suggest emendations.<sup>11</sup> As I stated in chapter 2,<sup>12</sup> Erasmus's editorship of Seneca relied on the editorial principal of emendatio ope codicum, emendation aided by the manuscripts. In collating the various manuscripts available to him, Erasmus was presented with a pool of possible readings from which to choose. If none of these readings struck him as the correct reading, he attempted to infer the correct reading on the basis of a comparative analysis of the manuscripts' differing errors. If the manuscripts failed him altogether, he resorted to "guesswork"--divinatio--to supply what he judged to be the correct reading. He stresses that divinatio is a technique to be employed only as a last resort; as he says in his preface: "I have not indulged in divination recklessly, having learned from experience that this is not done safely."<sup>13</sup>

When confronted with a corrupt manuscript reading, or with a choice between several manuscript readings, Erasmus's judgments are generally what could be called "stylistic" and "interpretive." That is, he chooses readings which seem to make the most sense in light of Seneca's style and in light of the overall context of his argument. Erasmus again and again draws upon his vast knowledge of Latin usage and his sense of the mot juste to arrive at his reading of the text. To these considerations is allied Erasmus's sensitivity to the possibilities of corruption in the text. It is difficult to break down the criteria employed by Erasmus in choosing a reading into distinct categories. In approaching what he considers to be a corrupt passage, he simultaneously balances considerations of style, interpretation and the possibility of mechanical error. A

good example of the coming together of these factors can be found in Erasmus's annotation at II.xx.3 (Hosius 38.20):<sup>14</sup>

...qui in ius dandi beneficii iniuria venerat.  
["...who came into the right of giving benefits  
through wrongdoing..."]

Qui unius dandi beneficii iniuria venerat. Thus the former edition. Certain codices had in tus dandi beneficii; certain others, in eius. However, from the shape of the corrupt script, it is understood to read in ius, which creates "opposition" (enantiosis) between the two words, ius and iniuria. Caesar had the right (ius) to give life, but he acquired this right through wrongdoing (iniuria).<sup>15</sup>

Erasmus takes as his point of departure a survey of the manuscripts available to him. In a case such as this in which he deems none of the manuscript readings correct, he attempts to infer the correct reading on the basis of the differing mistakes in the manuscripts. What, he might ask, could be transcribed variously as in tus, unius and in eius? Here, the context of the passage provides a clue in the form of the word iniuria. Drawing on his knowledge of rhetoric, Erasmus invokes the stylistic formula of enantiosis; the restoration of the words in ius in the context would create "opposition" (enantiosis) between the concepts or "right" (ius) and of "wrongdoing" (iniuria). Erasmus undoubtedly had in mind parallels to support his use of this device of enantiosis; indeed, the same "opposition" is found in Cicero's De officiis, I.33: "summum ius, summa iniuria (the greatest right, the greatest injury)."

Erasmus's invocation of enantiosis above illustrates an important aspect of Erasmus's classical scholarship--his understanding of rhetorical principles and indeed of all aspects of the Latin language's use. A recent article on fourteenth- and

fifteenth-century Italian interpretations of Seneca's First Letter to Lucilius suggests that the Italians displayed "a marked inability to apply the rhetorical expertise required" for the understanding of classical texts.<sup>16</sup> In discussing a hotly debated passage in the First Letter,<sup>17</sup> the author continues, "only Salutati and Erasmus call on [the rhetorical formula] of gradatio, nobody appears to discuss the passage in terms of alliteration, anaphora, repetition, antithesis, paradox, the unusual syntactic structure, or the even more unusual choice of words."<sup>18</sup> In contrast, throughout his editions of the De beneficiis, Erasmus shows himself to be sensitive to these considerations. Erasmus demonstrates not only "rhetorical expertise," but an impressive command of Latin vocabulary and idiomatic usages. Hence, Erasmus makes use of the margins throughout the De beneficiis to call attention to many of the striking idioms and unfamiliar usages found in the work. This attention to individual words and phrases is not unusual from the author of the De Copia (1512),<sup>19</sup> a thesaurus of words and phrases for all occasions. This impressive command of Latin vocabulary often came to Erasmus's aid in correcting the text of Seneca. So at II.xvi.2 (Hosius 33.19) he notes:

...ut congiaria tua urbes sint...  
("...that cities would be your largesse...")

Ut coniugia tua urbes sint. Thus the older editions render this passage; but here it is permitted to contradict the exemplars--nevertheless, I hope I shall win the approval of learned men. I have replaced coniugia with congiaria, which is what the gifts of princes are called. For the word coniugia makes no sense.<sup>20</sup>

Again, at IV.xxviii.2 (Hosius 104.28), he removes the words Donatio Imperatoris which in the 1515 edition come after the word

congiarium, realizing that the scribe had incorporated a marginal definition of congiarium into the text. Whether he bases his emendation upon a rhetorical formula such as enantiosis, or upon a precise knowledge of the word required by the context, Erasmus shows what might be called an "insider's" knowledge of the Latin language.

Let us look at two other examples of Erasmus's precise judgment in the selection of a reading, first considering II.xi.6 (Hosius 29.16):

Non tantum ingratum, sed invisum est beneficium, superbe datum...

("The benefit given boastfully is not only unpleasing, but hateful.")

...the former edition had iniustum est. But invisum, which I have restored using the manuscript, shows a little more subtlety. Something is ingratus if we dislike it, something is invisus if we hate it.<sup>21</sup>

Here, Erasmus draws upon his sensitivity to the subtle shades of meaning of Latin words to emend the passage. Again, at VI.xvi.6 (Hosius 158.18), he notes:

...modo laudibus affecit animos...

("...he influenced their spirits with praises...")

The Longobardicus had fecit animum ("encourage"), that is, animavit ad studia. And facere animos is elegant.<sup>22</sup>

Here, on the basis of elegance, Erasmus decides in favor of the reading fecit animum, the reading accepted by modern editors. In both of the cases illustrated here, Erasmus weighed the manuscript evidence against his own stylistic sensibility to produce a successful emendation.

Erasmus's linguistic knowledge is not confined solely to Latin. Like Poliziano's followers of the French school of



textual criticism, Erasmus also draws upon his knowledge of Greek to illustrate and emend the Latin text. For example, at VI.19.4 (Hosius 160.5), he emends the manuscripts' munus ex populo as unus e populo, recognizing this as a rendering in Latin of the Greek phrase heis ton pollon ("one out of many"). Again, at I.3.9. (Hosius 7.23), he explains the Greek name Eurynome saying that she "was named after the spacious pastures (spatiosis pascuis) by the Greeks, as in Latin you might say latipascua."<sup>23</sup>

Erasmus's sensitivity to the subtle shades of meaning of Latin words and his sense of style and idiom were two of the most important skills that he brought to the text of Seneca. The other was his knowledge of the habits of copyists. A remarkable example of this knowledge can be found in a note at VI.xxxiv.3 (Hosius 172.28-173.1):

Huic pervenire ad distringendam libertatem licet cuius vulgare et publicum verbum et promiscuum ignotis, Ave, non nisi suo ordine emittitur?

("Can anyone reach the point of even approaching frankness when he must take his turn simply to say "How do you do?", the ordinary common term of greeting universally used by strangers?")

The former edition had Hunc pervenire usque ad distribuendam libertatem licet, cuius vulgare et publicum verbum et promiscuum? Ignotus non nisi suo ordine emittitur. Out of this passage, whose arrangement and words were corrupted, no sense at all could be elicited. The oldest exemplar was useful to the extent that from certain vestiges we could understand the correct reading. For hunc it had huic, after ignotus, it had habe. Now, it is peculiar to certain nations to pronounce the consonant "v" as "b," and it is a German trait often to aspirate slightly, so that habe was written for ave. Thus we replaced the genuine reading...<sup>24</sup>

This amazing ability to detect errors resulting from the process of copying from dictation is again less surprising when we consider that Erasmus devoted an entire book, the De Recta Pronuntiatione (1528),<sup>25</sup> to the problems of Greek and Latin

pronunciation. In this work he specifically addresses the confusion of "b" and "v,"<sup>26</sup> misplaced aspiration<sup>27</sup> and the horrors of German pronunciation of Greek and Latin.<sup>28</sup> Just as he drew upon his abundant knowledge of Latin style, as displayed in the De Copia, to correct the text of Seneca, so too did he draw on his researches into Greek and Latin pronunciation in the De Recta Pronuntiatione to explain the errors of copyists.

In this sense, Erasmus's work on the text of Seneca reveals the essential unity of his work as a scholar. As I showed in my first chapter, Erasmus's editions of Seneca can be placed into the larger context of his educational and religious thought. Here it becomes clear that the editions of Seneca also complemented his work as a student of the Latin language. The text of Seneca became a proving ground for Erasmus's philological research. His goal, as a scholar and reformer, was to come to a correct understanding of the Word--in this case the word of Seneca, but preeminently the Word of God. Once the Word is correctly understood, reform can be guided by that understanding. For Erasmus, then, philology served the cause of the true religion. Erasmus's removal of corruptions introduced to the text by medieval scribes illustrates the same concern raised by his work on sacred texts such as the Novum Instrumentum--to remove errors that distort the true meaning of the written word.

Erasmus's knowledge of the habits of copyists also made him aware of locations in the text where the scribe had introduced marginal notes into the body of the text, as at IV.xxviii.2 (Hosius 104.28, discussed above). In some places he indicates that there may be a lacuna, and suggests how it may be filled.

In the foregoing discussion, I have isolated two of the most important editorial criteria employed by Erasmus in editing the text of the De beneficiis: his extensive familiarity with the Latin language, and his understanding of scribal error. We can add to this his ability to interpret Seneca's argument. This aspect of Erasmus's editorship figures very prominently in his annotations to the De beneficiis, but it is difficult to determine a cause and effect relationship between his emendation and his explanation of a passage. That is, it is difficult to determine whether he emended in order to fit a preconceived interpretation, or whether the interpretation followed as a means of defending an emendation. It seems most likely that the overall context of a passage suggested an interpretation, and that Erasmus's emendations merely filled out or improved upon the sense of the passage. In some cases, Erasmus devotes a note to a passage which he has not emended, but which presents enough of a problem to the reader that an interpretation is required. As we shall see, the majority of Erasmus's annotations are in some sense interpretive, clarifying difficulties encountered in reading the text.

Finally, it remains to look at Erasmus's use of the emendations made by Rudolf Agricola. In the preface to the 1529 edition of Seneca, Erasmus writes:

I was provided with a codex which belonged to Rudolf Agricola, printed by a printer of Treviso fifty years before; he seems to have studied it very carefully. There were many notes in his own hand, by means of which he corrected many places: but in many places, as it seems, he followed his genius for divination rather than the witness of an ancient exemplar.<sup>29</sup>

In his Appendix Annotationum to the De beneficiis, Erasmus cites Agricola's conjectures over forty times in his nearly one hundred annotatiunculas. Erasmus is generous in his use of "Agricola noster," but he rarely accepts Agricola's conjectures without weighing them first against either the manuscripts or his own sense of the true reading. In his additional notes to Book I, Erasmus calls upon Agricola thirteen times; seven of these appeals yielded a correct reading. In two of these notes, Erasmus improved upon Agricola's conjecture, with the aid of the manuscripts, to arrive at the correct reading:

(Hosius 5.10) Agricola: cumulatio  
Erasmus: imitatio

(Hosius 9.3) Agricola: patratum ingens sacriligium  
Erasmus: parum se grate gerere, sacriligium  
sit<sup>30</sup>  
("to be insufficiently grateful is sacrilege")

This use of Agricola's notes by Erasmus reveals one facet of the importance of Erasmus's 1529 edition in the history of the text of Seneca. Before the introduction of printing, the process of copying introduced numerous errors into the text, including countless marginal conjectures which scribes unwittingly incorporated into the text. Beginning with Erasmus, these errors were slowly sifted out of the text, and a standard text began to emerge. And henceforward, notable conjectures could be traced to an identifiable source--a particular editor. Finally, as we have seen with Erasmus and Agricola, one editor's attention to a particular problem in the text often led others to examine that problem, thus opening up a fruitful dialogue between scholars on important textual problems.

Thus, even in places where the text is particularly problematic, and Erasmus does not arrive at a fully satisfactory reading, he does not shrink from discussing the passage and giving a possible interpretation. So, at III.xxviii.2 (Hosius 70.30-71.1):

Non est, quod te isti decipiant, cum maiores suos recensent.  
Ubicunque fecit nomen illustre, illico deum fingunt.  
("You must not be fooled by those men when they review their ancestors. Whenever a name makes them illustrious, they think themselves gods.")

In this location the manuscripts vary, but in such a way that there is nothing which can be fully accepted. In some, qui is found: qui cum maiores suos...; truly this makes little sense, unless because it makes the style more abrupt, which is a Senecan trademark. Some have illo dominum fugiant; others, illo deum fugiunt; still others, dominum fingunt. From these clues it is permitted to guess at what was written: Ubi quenque nomen fecit illustrem, illico deum fingunt. Ubicunque is not displeasing if you read illustrem, nor is illustre displeasing if you understand aliquis. Unless perhaps for fecit, stetit is to be read. Here Seneca discusses those who are puffed up with the nobility of their ancestors, and who seem to themselves to be gods and not men, and who loathe those who remain.<sup>31</sup>

Here, the modern editors have accepted the emendation of the French humanist Claudius Salmasius: ubicumque nomen inlustre deficit, illo deum infulciunt.<sup>32</sup> Although Erasmus himself did not arrive at a successful emendation, his note at this location is nonetheless important because it recognizes the need for emendation and points out this need to future scholars. Erasmus, we must remember, was the first scholar to submit the text of Seneca to a thorough critical examination; with him began the accumulation of critical insights that would yield the modern critical edition. Erasmus himself realized that the work on the text of Seneca did not end with him, for in his preface he writes:

It is my guess, however, that if anyone more learned and quick of mind were to make as many changes to this edition as I did to the former edition, I would hope that Seneca would be in such a state as to be read with minimum weariness and greatest benefit.<sup>33</sup>

Just as I was drawn to my work on this thesis by an article by Anthony Grafton, and just as Erasmus was drawn to correct certain passages in Seneca by Agricola's notes, it is not unreasonable to imagine Salmasius being drawn to the passage above by Erasmus's note.<sup>34</sup>

The editorial principles discussed in this chapter have been isolated by examining a large cross-section of Erasmus's annotations to the De beneficiis. If we confine ourselves to the annotated passages of a single book of the De beneficiis, we find that Erasmus usually gives us little indication of the specific criteria involved in choosing a reading. He often does little more than record variant readings, giving no indication of his reasons for choosing the reading that he does. In Appendix C I have given the annotated passages from Book IV of the De beneficiis in Erasmus's 1529 edition, along with the same passages from the 1515 edition and the critical edition of Hosius (1904). I have chosen to deal only with these passages, rather than with a complete collation of Erasmus's two editions, because I feel it is safer to discuss what Erasmus himself discusses than to second guess him on passages about which he is silent. From an examination of the seventeen annotated passages in Book IV, we can categorize Erasmus's annotations as follows:

- 1) Notes listing variant manuscript readings (9).
- 2) Notes giving an interpretation of Seneca's meaning in the disputed passage (8).
- 3) Notes removing marginalia from the text (3).
- 4) Notes specifically invoking Seneca's use of language (3).

- 5) Notes which merely call attention to an emendation without comment (2).

Obviously the numbers given in parentheses total more than seventeen. This is because Erasmus rarely invokes any one of his editorial principles in isolation.

As the evidence suggests, the majority of Erasmus's notes are notes giving the variant readings from which he chooses his own reading. This evidence supports Erasmus's assertion, which I have accepted, that he edited by comparing manuscripts, and that he attempted to infer the correct reading on the basis of that comparison. In these notes, Erasmus seems to be concerned, in part, with warding off the criticism that he indulged too recklessly in divination. In one of the notes he writes, "I point this out lest anyone condemn it as divination on my part."<sup>35</sup> Erasmus seems to have been sensitive to the common Italian criticism of the French school of textual critics--that they paid scant heed to manuscripts in the process of emendation, relying too heavily on divination. Erasmus seems eager to display his extensive use of the manuscript evidence available to him, although his imprecise identification of the manuscripts he used is bound to leave modern scholars frustrated.

We may be surprised to find Erasmus adverting so seldom to language and style in these notes, and so often to interpretation of the meaning of Seneca's argument. This is less surprising when we consider Erasmus's aims in providing these notes. First, Erasmus states in his preface that he has annotated "only where I wished to exclude all possibility of corruption."<sup>36</sup> Again, in his first annotation in Book I, he writes: "Let me not detain the

reader with the obvious...Other things which I have changed are clearer, and thus lack a warning."<sup>37</sup> Erasmus never intended his annotations to give a complete picture of his editorial activity. Seneca's use of language and Erasmus's understanding of scribal error were unquestionably guiding principles in the editorial process-- they are discussed at length in the preface and do indeed figure in the annotations, as we have seen from the above discussion. A detailed analysis of how these principles are applied to the editing of the text, however, is not the primary concern of Erasmus's annotations; these annotations were designed to exclude the possibility of further corruption and to explain difficult passages so that, as Erasmus says in the preface, Seneca may be read "with minimum weariness and greatest benefit."<sup>38</sup> The notes are not designed for the philologist interested in Erasmus's editorial practice. Rather they are designed for the literary humanist interested in reading Seneca. Hence, Erasmus's 1529 edition of Seneca emerges as being somewhat like a modern school text of Seneca--a volume in the Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics series, for example--for a student with some non-specialized interest in the work of the textual critic and the apparatus criticus, and a great deal of interest in how to read what Seneca actually says. In his annotations and emendations to the De beneficiis, Erasmus's primary goal is to present as accurately as possible what Seneca actually said.



Chapter 4. Erasmus's Heirs:  
Textual Criticism and Seneca in the  
Second Half of the Sixteenth Century

Erasmus's second edition of the works of Seneca, published in 1529, remained the standard edition of that author until Muretus's edition in 1585. In the half-century that separated the edition of Erasmus from that of Muretus, there emerged three men who became known, like Erasmus, as the preeminent classical scholars of their day. These men were Joseph Scaliger (1540-1609), Justus Lipsius (1547-1609) and Isaac Casaubon (1559-1614). In an oft-quoted passage,<sup>1</sup> C. Nisard, referring to Erasmus, Melanchthon and Camererius, writes:

These three men had hardly concluded the first fifty or sixty years of the sixteenth century, when three others equally illustrious, Joseph Scaliger, Justus Lipsius and Isaac Casaubon, were born...And they came to occupy, in the second half of the century, the glorious place which their predecessors had held in the first half...<sup>2</sup>

The work of these three men perhaps best exemplifies the nature of post-Erasman classical scholarship. In this chapter I will look very briefly at two of these men, Scaliger and Lipsius, in order to bring this tale of textual scholarship to the end of the sixteenth century. I will also have occasion to look briefly at the fortunes of Seneca during this same period when I turn to Lipsius, who produced an edition of Seneca in 1605. This topic itself deserves, and has received, a more detailed treatment than I can give it here; the interested reader is directed to the excellent sources listed in the footnotes below. This is where my thesis must end, and where another scholar's thesis must begin.

Even at the time of Scaliger and Lipsius, the standard for textual scholarship was still that set by Angelo Poliziano.<sup>3</sup> In Italy, in the second half of the sixteenth century, the methods of Poliziano were eloquently espoused by the Florentine scholar Pier Vettori,<sup>4</sup> and in France Poliziano became the model for the early work of Joseph Scaliger. As I have said earlier,<sup>5</sup> the aim of the Italian school of textual criticism was to represent the text of an author as faithfully as possible. This involved careful collation of manuscripts, and the selection of the manuscript which provided the earliest independent witness to the original text by elimination of the codices descripti, those manuscripts which merely copied an earlier archetype. These principles guided Scaliger as he prepared his edition of Catullus, published in 1577. Not only did Scaliger publish a systematic collation listing the variant readings of his manuscript (British Library MS Egerton 3027), the manuscript upon which he based his text, but he went one step beyond the Italians in suggesting that the characteristics of a lost archetype could be reconstructed by drawing analogies from extant manuscripts.<sup>6</sup> The idea implicit here is that errors in the newer manuscripts offer clues as to the character of the original manuscript. Scaliger writes:

...I surmise that the French exemplar [of Catullus; i.e.; his hypothetical archetype] was written in Lombardic script. For the errors, which were spread about in the later manuscripts by ignorant scribes, seem definitely to have sprung from that wretched script...Moreover, not only the script, but also the archaic word-forms resulted in mistakes.<sup>7</sup>

The same ability to explain errors and thereby to correct the text is found in Erasmus's work on Seneca. But whereas Erasmus

invokes this principle only on a case by case basis to solve individual problems in the text, Scaliger uses it to reconstruct the characteristics of a hypothetical archetype of the entire text.

Scaliger's approach to textual problems is in many ways representative of the trends in French historical scholarship of his day, a field in which Scaliger was the major figure of his age. As a scholar, Scaliger attempted to reconstruct the contours of the ancient past using clues preserved in the ancient texts. His use of this historical method in classical scholarship is perhaps best exemplified by his De emendatione temporum (1583). In this work he attempted to "reconstruct each ancient calendar from the references to it, often fragmentary, in ancient historians, poets and scholiasts," just as he "had reconstructed a lost archetype [of Catullus] on the basis of errors preserved in extant manuscripts."<sup>8</sup>

Scaliger shared with Erasmus the belief that "all controversies in religion arise from ignorance of grammatica"<sup>9</sup>-- that is, from lack of critical skill, including ignorance of the classical languages. Scaliger did not, however, use his scholarly work as a forum in which to discuss religious controversies. In the words of his greatest friend, the Catholic historian Jacques Auguste de Thou, "he did not dispute on the controversial points of faith."<sup>10</sup> Scaliger was indeed involved in religious controversies, living as he did at a time when his native France was torn by the confrontation between the Catholics and the Calvinists, but he did not involve his scholarship in

these controversies as Erasmus did. His historical approach to classical scholarship does, however, show an Erasmian desire to remove ignorance and error by developing a clear and accurate picture of the ancient past. In calling for a thorough knowledge of all aspects of ancient life, Scaliger "anticipated much of F.A. Wolf's conception of Altertumswissenschaft"<sup>11</sup>--Scaliger's view was that "the history of the ancient world had to be known as a whole, if at all."<sup>12</sup>

The task of attempting to reconstruct a more accurate picture of the past through clues found in the texts of classical authors was also undertaken, to some extent, by Lipsius in his 1605 edition of Seneca. In this edition he attempted to place each work of Seneca within the context of the author's life, thereby gaining a clearer knowledge of Seneca's biography.<sup>13</sup> Lipsius also, picking up on the suggestion of Raphael Volaterranus (1452-1522), confirmed that the Declamations were the work of an elder Seneca, the father of the author of the philosophical works.

Lipsius's work as a classical scholar, however, was not only directed toward a clearer understanding of the distant past; it was meant, like the scholarship of Erasmus, to have some application to the present. With his work on Seneca, "Lipsius tried to promote the knowledge of Stoic philosophy,"<sup>14</sup> which, in its Christianized form, he hoped to promote as an alternative to the Christian Platonism, "entrenched in Italy and in transalpine countries."<sup>15</sup> Lipsius's aim--in his edition of Seneca, his edition of Tacitus (1600) and his treatise Politicorum sive civilis doctrinae libri sex (which underwent three editions

between 1589 and 1605)--was "to combine all [his] knowledge of Roman history and [his] skill in the heroic eloquence of the later Roman authors with Stoic philosophy in the foundation of a new 'doctrina civilis' [political training], aiming not at self-sufficient scholarship or 'humanitas,' but at the education of the 'homo politicus' [political man]."<sup>16</sup>

Turning to Seneca's style, Lipsius is much more generous in his praise than is Erasmus. Lipsius, like Erasmus and Muretus, the two previous editors of Seneca, was a critic of the so-called Ciceronians. But whereas Erasmus, who favored an eclectic prose style which imitated neither Cicero nor Seneca, criticized the "abruptness" and frequent sterility of Seneca's sententious style, Lipsius found Seneca's very sententiousness the perfect foil for the long-winded periodicity of the Ciceronians. What Erasmus saw as abrupt and sterile, Lipsius saw as the mark of Seneca's genius as a stylist; Lipsius writes of Seneca:

And this seems a special genius of his, that in an economy of words he has a wonderful force and efficacy; in brevity he has clearness and brilliance...There is carefulness without affectation; ornament without finery; there is close arrangement in what he says, but nothing is forced or crabbed...Then, too, in his very brevity and terseness of speech there is manifest a certain happy abundance: his words well forth amply, though not wastefully; they flow, not rush; they are like a river, not a torrent; they move on with strength, but without spate.<sup>17</sup>

Where Erasmus characteristically stood in the middle ground and urged against taking either Cicero or Seneca as a stylistic model, Lipsius, like Muretus, who also edited both Seneca and Tacitus, looked to Silver Latin as a stylistic alternative to Ciceronianism. In any case, the Senecan prose style became "a favorite of the rationalistic thinkers of the late sixteenth

century"<sup>18</sup>--due in large part to the influence of Lipsius.

Finally, Scaliger and Lipsius both displayed a skill that was central to Erasmus's emendation of the text of Seneca: both scholars were led in the process of emendation by a remarkable feeling for the language of their authors. Scaliger made many of his emendations to the text of Catullus based upon his knowledge of the archaic idiom in which Catullus wrote.<sup>19</sup> Lipsius, too, brought to his work on Tacitus and Seneca "a knowledge of Silver Latin idiom,"<sup>20</sup>--"a feeling for the word that really required emending, and a flair for the way in which the right expression is restored by a light touch."<sup>21</sup> As we have seen, a feeling for Seneca's style was an important guide for Erasmus in emending the text of Seneca.

Scaliger was, however, more faithful than Erasmus to Poliziano's principles for the use of manuscripts, and is therefore closer than Erasmus to the Italian school of textual criticism. In his 1577 edition of Catullus, Scaliger based his text on what he believed to be a particularly valuable manuscript--now British Library MS 3027--of which he had made a complete collation. In contrast to this, Erasmus failed to make his particularly valuable manuscript--the "Nazarianus"--the basis for his text of the De beneficiis, instead merely drawing upon it "to emend what he had before him."<sup>22</sup> Erasmus did, however, bring other important skills to the task of editing the text of Seneca--notably his sensitivity to Seneca's use of language and his ability to track down scribal error. These skills were also shared by Scaliger. Hence, Scaliger takes his approach to manuscripts and source criticism from Poliziano and his Italian

followers, while sharing Erasmus's "idiosyncratic" feeling for language when it came to the actual process of emendation.

In conclusion, the work of both Scaliger and Lipsius in the field of classical scholarship continued and elaborated upon Erasmus's concerns as a philologist, although they often differed from Erasmus's work in editorial practice. All three scholars sought to reconstruct, to some degree, an accurate picture of the ancient past by a careful examination of ancient texts. Lipsius, like Erasmus, believed that knowledge of the ancient world--in Lipsius's case, a knowledge of Stoic philosophy--could be applied to the problems of his contemporary world. Finally, although Lipsius and Erasmus arrived at different estimates of Seneca's style, the work of both men helped to turn the tide of Ciceronianism. Ironically, although Erasmus certainly did not advocate imitation of Seneca's style as an alternative to Ciceronianism, his Ciceronianus began the trend which led Senecan, "Silver Latin" style to supplant Ciceronianism as the sixteenth century stylistic standard.<sup>23</sup> His editions of Seneca were also a part of this trend, for it was Muretus and Lipsius, Erasmus's successors as editors of Seneca, who led the growing ranks of Anti-Ciceronians.<sup>24</sup> Finally, although Scaliger showed a more careful and systematic use of his manuscripts, he nevertheless displayed Erasmus's keen feeling for language and his eye for scribal error, which provided an invaluable tool in emending the text.

## Conclusion

When it comes time to draw conclusions about a subject to which we have devoted many hours of research, writing and revision, we may be tempted to exaggerate the importance of what we have discovered. I do think, however, that it would be a mistake to be led by my fondness for Erasmus into attributing too great an overall importance to his editions of Seneca. Erasmus was indeed an able corrector of the text of Seneca; his ability to correct and explain difficulties in the text is admirable. His preface to the 1529 edition is, I think, an important document in its own right as it balances an insightful discussion of Seneca's content and style with Erasmus's own concerns as a reformer. As a work of philology, however, the two editions are solid but unremarkable. The 1515 edition suffers markedly from the haste in which it was prepared. The same haste is evident in the 1529 edition, though to a lesser extent, as Erasmus draws upon manuscripts which arrived in Basle even as the sheets were running on the presses. Unlike Poliziano and Scaliger, Erasmus did not select as the basis of his text what he considered to be the oldest and most valuable manuscript; instead he drew upon whatever sources were available to him to correct the received text. Erasmus did, however, show considerable skill in selecting a reading from among these sources, drawing upon his feeling for Seneca's style and his understanding of scribal error. And despite what might be considered its drawbacks, Erasmus's 1529



edition remained the authoritative edition of that author for half a century.

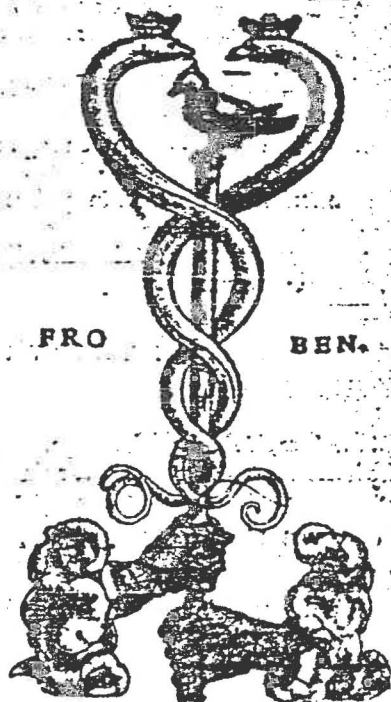
Erasmus was not the great textual critic that Poliziano or Scaliger was, and even if this were a more technical and complete study of his scholarship than the scope of this thesis makes possible, I doubt that I would be able to make that claim for him. He simply did not have the time nor the resources for Poliziano's careful source criticism. This is not to say that we can dismiss Erasmus's editions of Seneca as unimportant. They are important as reflections of precisely those things for which Erasmus is considered great--his mastery of the Latin language, his educational theory, and his ideas on religious reform. They are important because they help to demonstrate how Erasmus integrated classical scholarship into that overall way of thinking that we have come to define as Erasmian.

*1529*  
*Erasmus Roterd.*

# L. ANNEI SENECAE

OPERA, ET AD DICENDI FACULTATEM, ET AD  
bene uiendū utilissima, per DES. ERASMVH ROTEROD. ex  
fide ueterum codicū, tum ex probatis autoribus, postremo sagaci non  
nunquā diuinatione, sic emendata, ut merito priorē additionē, ipso ab-  
sente peractā, nolit haberi pro sua. Conser & ita rem habere cōperies.

Adiecta sunt eiusdem scholia nonnulla.  
Prof: Erasmus Roterd.: A.D.



*John Herman*

BASILEAE IN OFFICINA PROBENTIANÆ.  
ANNO M. D. XXIX.

1529

Title page from  
the 1529 edition  
of Seneca

Appendix A.

A Translation of Erasmus's Dedicatory Epistle to the  
1529 Edition of Seneca  
Addressed to Peter Tomiczski, Vice-Chancellor of Poland

Translated by Robert B. Hardy III

On opening this work to its very first page, perhaps some  
astonishment has taken hold of you, most distinguished Patron, to  
see that, contrary to my usual practice, Seneca now appears  
bearing the name of a different man than the one to whom it was  
previously dedicated. Although in fact certain others frequently 5  
dedicate the same book to many people, and some dedicate  
individual volumes of the same work to different people, and some  
even dedicate the appendices to men other than those to whom they  
dedicated the work itself, I nevertheless have guaranteed the  
greatest constancy in this matter. Take this example: when once 10  
I offered to William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, only the  
Hecuba of Euripides, I later added, in another volume, the  
Iphigenia at Aulis, dedicated also to him. Moreover, recall how  
small the book of Adages was when first I dedicated it to the  
most famous Lord William Montjoy; how massive it now is, is clear, 15  
yet no part of the dedication has changed. Certainly I had the  
opportunity, in my Chiliades or Centuria, to do what Celius  
Rodiginus did in the sixteen books of the Antiquae Lectiones. I  
am so far removed from such ambition that I have issued several  
books without a dedication; truly I am even further from the 20  
impudence of those who, having done no more than alter the  
preface, dedicate the same work to many men: many men adopting  
the same daughter, as they say.

Since I have maintained my practice, contrary to such  
examples as I have cited above, for such a long time, anyone 25  
would be exceedingly amazed to see a work previously dedicated to  
Thomas, the Bishop of Durham, now displaying the name of another

man. This, most generous Patron, is neither by accident nor by chance, but I confess that it has been done deliberately. The reason is that the former edition is not mine, although, relying more than I should have on the promises of a certain friend, I did add a preface. When at Cambridge I found some manuscripts of Seneca and, having employed an assistant, I rushed through rather than read through all of Seneca; I made annotations in the margins which I obtained either by comparing readings in the manuscripts or by relying on the authority of my own conjectures. In this endeavor there were many things which required the attention of someone alert and knowledgeable. When it was not convenient for me to linger any longer in Basel, I entrusted all of this work to a certain friend, about whose good faith I had no doubt then, nor do I have any occasion to complain loudly now. But when I returned to Basel after several months, I found the work treated in such a manner that I was strongly ashamed of that edition.

In this matter, I will not place the blame on someone else, as is the vulgar practice; but I, who entrusted to work to someone else, will suffer more than he to whom the work was entrusted. It was my fault because, forgetful of the most wise fable about the thrush, I depended on the work of friends in an affair which rightly could and should have been done by me: I say this because my assistants clearly took a load upon inexperienced shoulders which was clearly meant for one of greater strength. However, I do not by any means know whether a greater portion of blame should fall to me--if indeed he is more inept who puts a pack saddle on an ox than the ox who receives the saddle on his

back. But it is more civil, I think, if it is not permitted to excuse the blame of both parties, at least to diminish the blame. While I clearly had faith in the learning, intelligence and judgment of my friend, I also sensed that on his part he was more notable for his kindness toward me than for his ability to perform the task; and for the sake of his shared affection, to gratify his zeal, and perhaps contrary to his own modesty, he took on more than he was able to handle. My fault lay in simplicity and sincerity; his, in earnestness and compliance. For the rest, because that part of the exemplar which contained the most numerous annotations has been carried off, it is perhaps most pleasing to conclude that he did not do this, or that it was done out of regard for me, because he preferred to forget his promise of good faith rather than endanger our friendship. 60 65

But from this evil another twin evil proceeded, so that you may understand that the whole business was carried out under sinister auspices. I entrusted to a certain messenger--favorable to himself, most unfavorable to others--to carry the book of Seneca to the Bishop to whom it was dedicated. When this messenger returned from England, he affirmed that he had faithfully executed his orders. I believed him: truly, who would not believe a man who insisted so? Meanwhile, I again and again, in my letters to the Bishop, made mention of the volume I had dedicated and sent to him. He, who had received nothing, believed that I was making a mockery of him. Indeed, a certain lawyer, his councillor, exasperated this man's irritation, for he pointed out to the Bishop several places which had such glaring 70 75 80

defects that it was amazing that they were not noticed by the printers. Finally, when I returned to England, ignorant of these matters, I found that Patron, whom I was accustomed to consider a very good friend, remarkably cold; and I have discovered the reason. And so, because of the disgrace of that edition, I nearly lost a friend of rare quality. 85

Meanwhile, the stimulus of disgrace always urges the spirit on; just as soldiers, after defeat has been accepted, are accustomed to compensate for the disgrace they have received by excellence in the next conflict; so I shall make good, by means of a more favorable examination, the errors committed in the previous edition. Although that edition, such as it was, did, also, set many things right, and certainly it shows the prospect of a man learned in the ways of clearing a fallow field of its thornbrakes. And so, unless I am mistaken, I have now taken up Seneca under better auspices: in purifying this work so much care and effort have been expended that I have every right to disown the previous edition. And lest some unfavorable auspices remain here--although clearly a new work appears now with a new genius--the preface has been changed, and it is seen to dedicate these labors of mine to your most auspicious name. And I hope that you will be favorable and favored among nobles, you who furnish faithful and prudent councils to King Sigismund--a man equally versed in the arts of war and peace, the most bountiful king of Poland, to whom you are a most vigilant Chancellor. With your name prefixed thus to Seneca, a certain happy omen will be conveyed to all studious men, whom thus far this author has miserably tortured--being most worthy of reading, but having been 90 95 100 105 110

treated in such a way that the reader is scarcely ever able to explain him.

I do not by these words exalt the amount of labor I have endured. I know that no man will believe, unless he compares the former edition to this one. If someone will not shrink from doing this, he will immediately confess that a new Seneca has been brought forth: not because nothing will remain to be examined, but because I have removed innumerable absurdities no less successfully than boldly, and I did this with the aid of diverse codices, among which there were many of remarkable antiquity. I have not indulged in divination recklessly, having learned from experience that this is not done safely. But nevertheless there are places where I had to rely on divination; but I seldom resorted to conjecture unless everything else failed me. The industry of Matthaëus Fortunatus helped me not a little in this enterprise--he is a man, as the matter indicates, of precise learning, diligent, and of sober and sane judgment. Indeed, he very accurately examined the books of the Natural Questions: oh that he were able to take such a task upon himself for all the other authors! Although I followed him freely in many things, I did disagree with him often, particularly where I felt that the exemplar supported me. I was provided with a codex which belonged to Rudolf Agricola, printed by a printer of Treviso fifty years before; he seems to have studied it very carefully. There were many notes in his own hand, by means of which he corrected many places: but in many places, as it seems, he followed his genius for divination rather than the witness of



an ancient exemplar. It is truly remarkable how many good guesses that divine man made; truly I am unable to encompass briefly the many outstanding endowments of Rudolf Agricola. Hayo Hermannus Phrysius provided me with this codex, he being a young man who was born with such a fine genius that he seems to me to be the one man capable of attaining the reputation of an Agricola, and of sustaining the glory of so great a man. Otherwise, he shares a fatherland with Agricola, and is his kinsman by marriage. And let me not forget Sigismundus Gelenius who has long since carried out the office of overseeing the corrections in the printing office of Froben,--he is a man exquisitely educated in every display of learning and, because he is remarkable among the learned, being of nice discernment and exact judgment, he detected not a few things which, in the midst of many distractions and occasional exhaustion, had escaped my notice. Indeed, it is not in my character to cheat anyone of the praise they deserve.

But as it is, we possess a very badly corrupted Seneca; besides these common causes--the carelessness and ignorance of the scribes--there is the recklessness of the scholiasts in changing whatever they did not follow; I perceive that the following were the most prominent causes. First let us consider the style of Seneca itself, which since nowhere does it not aim at rhetorical argumentation, occasionally to the point of enigmatic obscurity--especially when it becomes choppy and abrupt--it was perilously easy for the less learned or the negligent to make mistakes; but more on this topic later. The

other thing is that the ancient Christians claimed this writer as  
their own and they embraced many of his writings as nearly  
orthodox--partly because of the sanctity of the precepts which  
they observed in his books, and partly at the recommendation of  
the book which contains some letters which were sent back and  
forth between the Apostle Paul and Seneca: indeed they are 170  
spurious, but it is amazing how much importance fictions and  
frivolous trifles occasionally have in human affairs. Not only  
many things of war, as the proverb states, but many things of the  
entire life of men, are empty and meaningless.

Nothing was easier, in that age more prone to piety, more 175  
credulous and less suspicious, than for this spurious  
correspondence to instill piety by means of fraud. Nor did any  
less favor fall to this correspondence through the recommendation  
of Jerome, who included Seneca in his Catalogue of the holy:  
although in that same Catalogue are included some not altogether 180  
recommended for their sanctity, like Josephus the Jew,  
Tertullian, Novatian, and Donatus the heretic. Thus it came about  
that through love of religion, without the knowledge of the  
refined literature of the pagans, or the learning, languages and  
knowledge of antiquity, they read the books of Seneca in private 185  
and recited them for the youth in public--those ignorant and  
scarcely half-educated men, so ignorant in their disgraceful and  
confused philosophy, dreaming rather than thinking, who entered  
the scholarly profession by explaining the four causes:  
material, formal, efficient and final. Finally, having said 190  
beforehand that an epistle treated moral philosophy, they divided  
it into two principal parts, and again they divided each one of

these into three or four minor parts. When they had thrown up  
this smoke screen, if ever a rather uncommon word occurred, or  
any figure of speech, any allusion to any authors not common, any  
Hellenism, any bit of ancient history--briefly, if any bit of  
knowledge unknown to them occurred (the kind of thing Seneca  
teems with nearly to the point of bravura display)-- it was  
necessary either to mix in mere approximations or to change what  
was written. Why not? For it is disgraceful to be silent when  
once you have got up into the professor's chair, and for anyone  
who has the dignity of the academic cap and the master's degree  
to admit ignorance is really quite unfitting.

It is scarcely believable how much unfaithfulness I have  
found perpetrated here. Sometimes the same location in the text  
shows such various corruptions, and I have hit upon things so  
shamelessly changed that no word fits, neither among the more  
corrupt texts, nor with the true reading which we find in the  
ancient exemplars. Thus, while it was once corrupt, because  
another person of similar heedlessness strove to make  
emendations, and still others altered something from time to  
time, the fault was made irreparable, so that no divination of  
even the most learned man is able to help. For what is done by  
the ignorance of the scribes still has some traces of the true  
wording, which holds out to clever men some inference of the true  
reading. Just as some things are corrupted, things which are not  
conveyed correctly to the ears of all, either from the notes of  
those taking dictation or from the voice of the one who is  
speaking, so in some places the erroneous conjectures of learned

men are often left behind in the text. For truly professors are 220  
accustomed to dictate to a scribe what is written down. Not all  
of these scribes were of the same nationality, and national  
pronunciations vary, and the language is not always articulated  
equally. Thence it came about that contantius was written in  
place of constantius, and alea in place of area. Similarly, the 225  
variety of styles of notation gave an opportunity for error. But  
nevertheless, we owe it to the zeal of the Christians that, while  
so many of the most illustrious authors perished, Seneca in a  
large degree survives for us, if indeed this is survival.

It is my guess, however, that if anyone more learned, 230  
favorable and quick of mind were to make as many changes to this  
edition as I did to the former edition, I would hope that Seneca  
would be in such a state as to be read with minimum weariness and  
greatest benefit. I have added annotations, but these are few,  
and only where I wished to exclude all possibility of corruption; 235  
otherwise there would be no end of annotation if I had wished to  
remark on whatever was changed, as Fortunatus did. And so I  
would strongly wish this author to be elucidated with scholia, as  
a barrier to ward off the recklessness of corruptions. Someone  
not entirely careless provided a Life of Seneca, culled from the 240  
writings of Suetonius, Cornelius Tacitus, and Jerome: it is from  
this book that the Life which we seen added here has been  
selected.

Still, I do not agree with those who strive to make Seneca a  
Christian, similar to Nicodemus: these people have no evidence 245  
except those epistles which I have learned were spurious, and  
supported only by the fact that Seneca and Paul lived in Rome

under the same Caesar. But let us imagine that Seneca, than whom no one wrote more often or more strongly about despising death--was so careful lest anyone should declare his faith in letters brought forth in his extreme old age, and so cautious that Nero would suspect nothing; indeed, when Nero decided to do away with Seneca, he made up false pretexts, and did not bring up a charge of Christianity. Will we defend it as mere outward appearance, that he continually, even up to the end, speaks of "gods" and "goddesses," and repeatedly doubts whether man's soul survives death? If we grant that it is proper for a Christian to dissemble using the fear of death as a cover, it is certainly an impious dissimulation which disguises piety with impiety. It is one thing to hide Christ in a profane dress and it is another to contend with the doctrines of Christ in published works; it is one thing to be silent about Christ, another to say things unworthy of Him.

But to what end is this comment directed? Is there anything to recommend these books to Christian men? Indeed, I consider it better for the reader of the works of Seneca to read them as the works of one who was ignorant of our religion. For indeed, if you read him as a pagan, he wrote like a Christian; if you read him as a Christian, he wrote like a pagan. Although there are in his writing many things which can excite our sluggishness to the pursuit of virtue, at the same time they have a sharper sting, if we think of them as produced by a pagan. Among those there are certain sayings which according to the Christian philosophy are to be rejected forcefully, which nevertheless may carry in them

an admirable native virtue: as that saying of 275  
Socrates: "I know one thing, that I know nothing"--although it  
is said ironically, nonetheless it points out to us our arrogance.  
And the achievement of Lucretius, although in the best judgment  
detestable, nevertheless commends the pursuit of virtue to us;  
and this is the most effective recommendation, that an example 280  
can be found in the pagans.

And so, for what he tells of morality, Seneca will be read  
with greater profit if he is read as the pagan that he was. For  
then his words will impress us in a Christian manner, and  
otherwise the words will do less harm. In other respects, he 285  
never departs so far from Christianity as when he treats things  
which are principal tenets of our faith. The highest goal of our  
religion is to know God. But Seneca would clearly point out to  
us what God is, saying: "God is all that is seen and unseen," as  
if the whole world were a huge animal, whose body is apparent to 290  
the eyes but whose spirit is concealed--as if this were God.  
Now, about whether there is one God or many, he is forcefully  
ambiguous, and nevertheless he frequently repeats "gods and  
goddesses." On the other hand, he does mock those who think  
that nothing is done in this world which does not escape the 295  
notice of God, as if in like manner the elephant would notice the  
fly. Now, as to whether the spirit survives the body, he dis-  
cusses this question as if nothing leads one to believe either  
possibility. Somewhere, as Tertullian mentions, he declares that  
all things end with death, even death itself. Finally, how many 300  
times does he exalt the Stoic sage so that he often makes him the

equal of the gods, and sometimes even raises him above the gods. He says that the sage owes his complete felicity to himself alone, that nothing is the work of the gods, nay: the gods owe something to the sage. But piety persuades us that doves and lilies are the concerns of God, and that man has no good of his own power, but owes the height of his felicity to the grace of God. Still, as regards learning and eloquence, Quintilian once warned that Seneca ought to be read with discrimination and judgment, tempering his censure of Seneca with such fairness that he does not zealously praise what ought to be rejected or reject in disgust what ought to be praised. 305 310

Consequently, perhaps it would not be off the mark if there were to be some indication for students of what ought to be shunned in this author, and of what ought to be followed. First, he has a style which seems to aim at being unlike Cicero-- although he has this in common with Quintilian and Pliny and, for all I know, with the whole age, which succeeded the age of Cicero as silver follows gold. I will add a few examples of this type of thing, and the reader may multiply these examples. He frequently uses the reflexive pronouns sui, sibi, se somewhat awkwardly. Also, he always makes use of tanquam instead of velut, sive or ut when he wants to give an example. Several times he says aeque quam for aeque atque. He likes to add cum to superlatives--quam, as far as I know, never; as in cum maxime for quam maxime. Quite often he uses adversus in place of erga, as in gratus adversus deos. In sentences like this one "non modo contemnit homines, sed deos negligit," he scarcely ever uses a conjunction, as sed et deos or sed deos quoque. In these and in 315 320 325

similar ways, I do not blame or condemn him, I only declare that 330  
he does not display the simplicity of a Cicero.

Quintilian, in his tenth book, grants some value to Seneca's  
style, because he was versed in every type of writing; he grants  
that he had an industry and knowledge of many things; he  
confesses that he abounds in many excellent sententiae; he 335  
approves of his freedom in attacking the vices of men--adding  
that his books are conducive to the formation of character. In  
sum, he confesses that in Seneca's books there are many things  
which not only must be esteemed, but which are also truly  
entitled to admiration. But against him, Quintilian denies that 340  
Seneca had an exact knowledge of philosophy and calls into  
question his judgment, because he was marred by the human vice of  
self-love. This vice is not always lacking in learned and good  
men, but they counterbalance it with many virtues. Quintilian  
indicates that Seneca had this vice when he says, "If only he did 345  
not have such affection for all that was his own." And shortly  
before this he says, "One could wish that, while he relied on his  
own intelligence, he had allowed himself to be guided by the  
taste of others." And so Seneca seemed to be a less than fair  
judge of other writers, as Quintilian states in these words: "my 350  
aim was not to ban his reading altogether, but to prevent his  
being preferred to authors superior to himself, but whom he never  
tired of disparaging, for, being conscious of the fact that his  
own style was very different from theirs, he was afraid that he  
would fail to please those who admired him." In matters of 355  
diction, he thinks that many things are corrupt in Seneca, which



are even more harmful--"because he abounds in sweet vices." He especially criticises the fact that Seneca impairs the solidity of his subject matter by striving after epigrammatic brevity, and elsewhere, unless I am mistaken, he notes in Seneca a sharp and abrupt mannner of writing. 360

Suetonius as well seems to find a lack of sincerity in Seneca, writing after this manner in his book on Nero: "While still a boy he mastered all the liberal disciplines; but his mother turned him from philosophy, warning him that it was a drawback to one who was going to rule, while Seneca kept him from the early orators, to make his admiration for his teacher last longer." And the same writer, in his book on Caligula, seems to attribute a polished and elegant style to Seneca, speaking thus about Caligula Caesar: "he had such a scorn of polished and elegant style that he used to say that Seneca, who was very popular just then, composed 'mere school exercises,' and that he was 'sand without lime.'" Seneca is so fond of tragic affectations that I am surprised that Suetonius finds him so polished, but let us not argue about refinements of style. 365 370 375

And Aulus Gellius, even, is irritated by these things in Seneca, as we see in the twelfth book of the Noctes Atticae, chapter two. Here he mentions the judgment of others about Seneca--some of whom condemn his books as unworthy "since his style seems commonplace and ordinary, while the matter and thought are characterized now by a foolish and empty vehemence, now by an empty and affected cleverness; and because his learning is common and plebeian, gaining neither charm nor distinction from familiarity with the earlier writers." Others, slightly 380

more favorable, though they for the most part consider his style 385  
lacking in elegance, do not deny that he has a true knowledge of  
things: "however, he censures the vices of the times with a  
seriousness and dignity not wanting in charm;" this they  
acknowledge. In particular, Gellius finds fault with Seneca's  
judgment of Cicero; he grows so angry that he calls Seneca a 390  
"trifler." And soon after he adds: "But I am already tired of  
quoting Seneca; yet I shall not pass by these jokes of that  
foolish and tasteless man." Finally, he finishes off his  
criticism with this piece of irony: "Worthy indeed would Seneca  
appear of the reading and study of the young." Then, in order to 395  
show, among all his criticisms of Seneca, which he wants to seem  
more numerous than his praises, that there is something in Seneca  
of which one may approve, he offers this one sentence, and only  
this: "What difference does it make how much you have? There is  
much more which you do not have." Although this seems to be not 400  
a saying of Seneca, but of the mimes of Publius, which are verses  
in trochaic tetrameter. In this matter, the opinion of Gellius  
has some validity, but nevertheless not all that he says is true.

Cornelius Tacitus is more favorable in this matter. While  
he commends the integrity and constancy of the man as do other 405  
writers about these things, he even attributes to him some  
refinement of style; he pardons Seneca's style for being suited  
to enjoyment rather than seriousness, on these grounds: that the  
prudent man, when he saw that the wild temperament of youth could  
not be turned to the love of virtue through philosophical 410  
precepts, tried to soften or win over that temperament by gentler

and more pleasant means. Thence it came that Nero excelled in composing songs, although he passed off as his own orations composed by Seneca.

Among the virtues in the writings of Seneca, which Quintilian avowed to be many and distinguished, none is greater than the fact that he excites the reader with remarkable acumen to the pursuit of virtue and calls away the reader from low cares and sordid pleasures. What does it matter in what sort of diction you accomplish whatever is best? Although his style was such that it was among those preferred in a much more learned age, it is so inappropriate that in these times it is able to be despised. 415 420

And indeed those things which the most learned writers say about him do have some truth. The honest moralist did not respect the talent of others enough. He repeatedly makes fun of Philhellenes, now and then without warrant. Nor as a rule does he mention what he does not try to undermine in the authors he esteems, as if it were shameful to agree entirely with someone. Moreover, how often did he take upon himself the censure of the eloquence and talent of others--something he did especially in his Declamations, which he approached more smugly than his others books--attributing foolish notions to some writers, crazy notions to others, stupid notions to still others, making fun of most writers with a wit too sarcastic and unworthy of a serious man? All of which smacks of a mind not well-disposed enough to the praise of others, and too indulgent in praising himself. However, this haughtiness is generally the disease of all learned men, so that scarcely anything exists that is so perfect that it 425 430 435

satisfies a learned man altogether, unless the long usage of  
time, far removed from the freedom of judgment, instills in 440  
the minds of all a kind of religious reverence. Several times  
he mentions Ovid not very affectionately, because he indulged his  
own talent and preferred to prize his vices rather than correct  
them. This judgment seems to please Quintilian as well, who  
believes that he could collect from Ovid's Medea much that could 445  
be outstanding, if only Ovid did not indulge his talent so  
heedlessly. But certainly Seneca indulges his own talent in his  
oratorical prose and in his serious essays more than Ovid does in  
his poems, and with much more theatricality. In some places he  
aims at a serious tone worthy of the subject matter, as in the 450  
description of the Flood of Deucalion; in other places his  
abundant style is offensive, because he does not know when to  
stop. Sometimes he brings up some sententia borrowed from  
Porcius Latrone; as if he could not think up such a sententia on  
his own, or as if it could not come about that the same notion 455  
should come to the minds of two men. Meanwhile he does not spare  
Vergil, nor Cicero;--criticism can profit one's studies, if it is  
fair in its judgments and without petulance.

Now, what is especially praised in Seneca is itself  
corrupt. He reproaches the characters of men freely and wittily, 460  
but not always in the proper place, sometimes immoderately, and  
sometimes affectedly, so that it seems not far removed from  
mockery. Certain vices he describes in such a way that, while he  
is censuring them, he seems to desire them rather than hate them,  
as if he would rather teach them than detest them. There are 465  
certain things of his which he depicted either to teach or to

titillate, it is hard to say which: such is the most obscene excursus in the first book of the Natural Questions, "On the Use of Mirrors." Now, although he writes the books of the Declamations to his sons, Seneca, Mela and Novatus, nevertheless 470 he adds things which a modest man should scarcely hear; truly not the type of things you would say openly, much less as a father among your children. And he indeed has this pungent wit in dealing with corruption in public morals, at any rate, but he is not generous enough, so that he lacks the motive of decency; nor 475 is there anything easier to do than to wax eloquent over these matters. Thus it is today that certain churchmen, if they must discuss sacred things, are silent, but are most eloquent on these matters of public morality.

Indeed, everywhere he seems very much the joker, even in 480 greatly serious matters, in which I would wish him to be somewhat farther from absurdity, obscenity, and the vices of scurrility and petulance. Admittedly there can be a certain generous manner of joking, and there is a certain general agreeableness of style which is not unbecoming for a good man, if it is employed in the 485 proper place; but in Seneca one often senses a scoff rather than a laugh. Nor is it entirely without basis that Quintilian complains about his sententiae, which are nowhere without affectation. Thus it comes about that, while he tries to say everything through sententiae, although he sometimes creates 490 these very successfully, nevertheless some of his sententiae are quite hard, frigid and absurd. Also, there is occasion for adopting epiphonemata and clever expressions, which in this

author frequently give more weight to the words than to the matter at hand, as a result of which they are always stiff and obscure. An example of this is found right away in the first letter to Lucilius: "Some times are snatched away from us, some are stolen, some escape." And soon afterwards: "A great part of life is spent in doing evil, the greater part doing nothing, and the whole thing doing what is not to the point." Something is said about this sentence in its place. 495 500

And Seneca is also at fault in striving after emotions which others move for the purpose of teaching. For stirring up the emotions throughout a work finds such disapproval from the learned that certain writers avoid emotional display altogether, as if to thwart criticism. But whenever he wishes--even at the very outset--Seneca enflames rather than moves these emotions, and among these especially those tragic emotions which the Greeks call pathe. And so he falls upon so many grand themes--for instance: On the Universe, On the Nature of the Gods, On the Stoic Sage, On the Earthquake, On Lightning, On the Flood, On the End of the World, On the Contempt of Death, On Suicides--as if, having found his field, he seems to show off his grandiloquence, and to aspire to I know not what tragic heights. 505 510

A good many of these vices are probably due to the influence of rhetorical exercises, an influence still felt by later authors. For Quintilian also confesses that this type of exercise, although shown to be useful for perfecting eloquence, somehow brought about corruptions. Truly the things which capture the applause of the listeners, the most important consideration in the mind of an orator, are not always the best 515 520

things, but those things which are most pleasing. Nor in these cases would he easily win applause from indifferent or fastidious men, unless by sententiae, clever sayings, figures of speech and tags, or by anything that was novel or excessive; common things, though best, were despised. Nor was it seldom that the worst sayings were applauded by these listeners. Thus he has departed from that simple and natural style which is esteemed above all others, especially on the ground that it is recommended by its faithfulness. For indeed, what is refined oratory without faithfulness? Nothing but a well-performed song. Here is what Quintilian complains of: that Seneca carried certain faults of his own, to which his hearers had grown accustomed through the declamatory exercises, into the forum, and applied them to serious litigations, to the grave detriment of the defendant. Meanwhile, the advocate preferred to lose the case rather than to lose the opportunity to make a joke or use a clever figure of speech, always accompanied by the laughter of the judge and the gallery. And certain things such as these Seneca carries over even into his books; and there are also those patently untrue statements which he frequently makes: "Hereafter I will hang on your every word," etc. And indeed, he is occasionally sudden in changing his "persona," and from this there arises some obscurity, so that you might sometimes wonder whether he himself is speaking, or whether he takes the role of his opponent or of some third party. Not that this is not done by others, but they do it more sparingly, more softly, and more plainly. This happens often in the dialogues, when he invents a speech for this

character or that--he uses these as occasions for luxuriance,  
emotion and display: not that he does this poorly, it is because 550  
he does it so frequently and rhetorically that this contributes  
more to pleasure than to the serious exposition of his intended  
theme.

The judgment of Caligula Caesar could be disregarded as that  
of a man with an unbalanced mind, and of a man who, after all, 555  
tried to remove the statues of Vergil and Livy from the  
libraries, were it not for the fact that Quintilian also takes  
note of this, and that the matter clearly speaks for itself. As  
a rule you might find a lack of order and arrangement in the  
writings of Seneca. Every argument, as you know, has a premise, 560  
a beginning, a development, and an end. Here let me first  
discuss how things should be. Here are the proper divisions of an  
argument: the parts of an argument are arranged in order, and  
each thing is discussed in its proper place--those things are  
discussed first which pertain most closely to the substance of 565  
the matter, then those things which are accidental; then whatever  
is related or conflicting is taken up, and whether each thing is  
appropriate or inappropriate; finally it should be discussed how  
these things can be accomplished, maintained, and enlarged or, on  
the other hand, avoided, displaced, or decreased, so that the 570  
whole book is like a well-formed body, standing with its limbs  
properly placed. But what you admire in Aristotle, you  
will find lacking in Seneca. In fact, he does not always make a  
proposition and arrange his argument, and if he does do this, he  
does not always follow up on what he proposed, but rushes forth 575  
headlong at every occasion, and soon afterwards he begins again



as if it were afresh. He seldom uses transitions, which contribute much clarity to teaching, and frequently he begins to digress near the end of a work. There are places where, having forgotten himself, he repeats the same things. These instances show that he either inherited these vices from the rhetorical exercises, or, which may be more likely, he began to write without thinking first, and did not follow judgment and reason so much as the force of his own wit. In truth, his language does not "happen" so much as it is "displayed"--it leaps rather than advancing steadily: a mark of the sententious style. 580 585

Now, when it comes to the composition of sentences, he is quite sparing in his use of conjunctions, which are like the sinews of language. He delights in asyndetons, which contribute to forcefulness of diction, or rather, to liveliness. And the context of his discourse is often so unclear that you are left guessing whether a clause should be referred to what precedes or what follows. 590

He is occasionally somewhat annoying in his eagerness for different ways of saying the same thing. Take the example of that saying of Plato--"hekastos hemon ouk auto monon gegonen"--which Cicero elegantly rendered as "nemo nostrum sibi tantum nascitur." Seneca did not follow Cicero here, but preferred to say, in a worse rendering, "nemo sibi contingit." These words, as I confess quite frankly, I never would have understood, unless I had guessed from the tenor of the language that Seneca wished to emulate Plato. There is certainly merit in wishing to say the same thing differently, but what is the merit if the changes are 595 600

for the worse? Why is it that, in censuring capriciousness, Seneca frequently commits the same errors that he reproaches in others? He takes note of several instances of base language in an author, finding things such as spongia, laterna, pulegium and acetum; and he criticizes with remarkable sarcasm the fact that a certain person, when declaiming, asked why a pot (testa), when it falls, shatters, and a sponge (spongia), when it falls, does not shatter--when he himself, in one epistle, crams in many more sordid phrases, while describing the entire equipment of the public bath, and the performance therein, in bizarre terms. Why is it less proper to call a pot a pot or a sponge a sponge, if the subject calls for it, than to call a fig a fig or a bean a bean?

Seneca takes pleasure in indulging, in jest, in sophistic quibblings and little questions that are much more subtle than necessary--and by such nonsense he often delays the reader too long. From this it appears that Quintilian was right in his assessment of Seneca as one not properly versed in philosophy. Truly he is a master of skillfully mocking those things which are taught, not without skill, by the sophists and most wittily derided by Socrates. And truly, to what end did Chrysippus fill up all those pages with those little questions?--"Whether wise men are able to be given benefits by the gods," "Whether virtues are living things," "Whether individual virtues are individual living things," "Whether all things are one," "Whether to defend one's father is a living thing." Such trifles, which he frequently forces upon the reader to the point of tedium, he nevertheless frequently condemns. What is the point of doing the

very thing which you censure? That he in some places incorrectly cites something out of other authors, Quintilian excuses him, saying that he was led into error by those to whom he had entrusted the task of investigating these points. Of this type 635 of error several instances have been noted by learned men. In one place he credits Ovid with a saying of Tibullus.

I make mention of these things about him not in order to repress the zeal of the reader, but so that a man commendable for so many fine virtues might be read with greater benefit. I might 640 add that I sometimes perceived a certain rhetorical affectation in him, as I said, and sometimes I find a simple and natural quality lacking. Hence the mother of Nero, when she wished to move her son to envy, announced that the imperium had been entrusted to Burrus and to Seneca--of these two she called Burrus 645 the base and crippled hand, and Seneca the exile, the professor's tongue.

It is inferred from this that he had a quick and versatile talent, because he exercised his style in so many different subjects with nearly equal success, something which Cicero and 650 Vergil did not do. But Tacitus calls to mind Seneca's poems, about which Tacitus has an undecided opinion. And several learned men prefer to attribute the Tragedies to the son of Seneca rather than to this Seneca, and there are those who attribute them to Seneca's brother. Several lines from the first 655 Tragedy--"Duc me parens summique dominator poli, etc."--lead me to think that the Tragedies are not the work of one man. Certainly one may conjecture, from the evidence of the jesting

little book on the death of Claudius, that Seneca was not at all schooled by the satirical Muses and Apollo in this type of pursuit. Notwithstanding, Quintilian thinks that this versatility harmed Seneca: he was less successful in each individual genre because he was versed in all genres; he spread himself too thin. I suspect this is why Quintilian writes, "If only he had striven for less." Surely it is because of this that Tacitus declares that the envy of others followed him, because he seemed to leave no opportunity for praise to others. 660 665

Tacitus also calls to mind some orations of this writer, which we no longer have, unless he means those which we know as Consolations: one to Marcia, another to Polybius and a third to Albina or, as it sometimes appears, Helvia, his mother; these can be called books more accurately than orations. The same source [Tacitus] mentions certain other orations that were circulated among the masses under the name of Nero, but which were written by Seneca. He does not, I believe, mention these among Seneca's works. I have added in this edition one thing out of Tacitus--it is brief but elegant, clearly an attribute of Seneca's style. Oh that those things were extant which he dictated on his deathbed! For they were in circulation in the days of Tacitus. 670 675 680

Tacitus also calls to mind Seneca's Dialogues, of which Quintilian also makes mention. Of these nothing is extant except a single brief piece, to which he gave the title Of the Senses and Reason. I do not know what others there were--certainly what we have is mutilated and in sorry condition. Saint Jerome, in the work Against Jovinian, cites the book of Seneca On 685

Marriage. Seneca himself, in his Natural Questions indicates that as a youth he wrote On the Earthquake. He also brought forth a work On the Superstitious Rites of Worshipping the Gods; for Augustine, in his work on the City of God, book six, chapter five, reviews many points from this work. 690

Tacitus, along with Quintilian, calls to mind the epistles which Seneca wrote in imitation of Plato, but all to the same man, that is, to Lucilius Balbus, the administrator of Sicily. These seem to have displayed to Tacitus that Seneca indulged his own talent; truly he did nothing more freely. For whatever you might hear or see, or whatever occurs in dreams, these epistles take as a theme. Finally, you may begin reading these wherever you wish, and read as far as you wish, and stop reading wherever you wish. But meanwhile they lack what is most pleasing in other epistles which are written with truth and substance; otherwise we too would be able to write whole epistles from single proverbs. Now, whether we have this work whole and undamaged I do not know; certainly the words of Seneca which Gellius examined came from a twenty-second book of epistles, and do not exist in any other written form. And, also, there is a certain epistle which begins Quare quibusdam temporibus, in which Seneca censures the bad taste and stylistic vices of certain other writers. From this I have conjectured that someone, wishing Cicero well, removed that section where Seneca criticizes Cicero's eloquence. 700 705 710

Now, out of all the works of Seneca, learned men could wish none of his works intact more than his book of Declamations, which the Epitome that we have indicates were numerous. Most he

devoted to devising arguments and judging their validity. I shall say more about this in the proper place.

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Therefore, for Seneca to be published under the favorable auspices of your name, I seem to myself to have accomplished this not entirely slothfully and unfavorably. Certainly I have expended as much care as if I were a young man about to receive a handsome stipend. Ovid did not lie when he said:

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Renown possesses a mighty spur.

But in fact, I have found that disgrace has a keener spur. Not a little did that most illustrious youth, Andreas Zebridovius--worthy in his own right and worthy because of you, his uncle--stimulate this endeavor, because I realized how useful it would be to his studies of how to live and write well. Having learned from my mistake, henceforth I will remember better the wise warning of the thrush, lest I expect friends to accomplish what I am better able to accomplish; nor will that old proverb be forgotten which forbids the saddling of an ox. But if I seem to you to have blotted out the disgrace of the former edition with this edition, then it was worth the trouble it cost me.

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Among the learned, moreover, the most favor and dignity will be added to Seneca if he is sanctioned by your name--that of a most learned and irreproachable Patron: you who, as highest Chancellor to the illustrious King Sigismund of Poland, and to the entire realm, in these most turbulent times present yourself as a most incorruptible patron of the Church; you who also display the most generous Maecenas for the liberal disciplines, in which you yourself are most skilled. At the same time, I pray that Christ, the Greatest and Most High, will find your most

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glorious endeavors worthy of good fortune. Truly my soul is greatly tortured by that fatal calamity which throughout almost the entire world mars the concord of Princes, the religion of the people and the most honorable liberal disciplines, to such an extent that my own studies, than which otherwise nothing is sweeter, occasionally irk me. But I hope, first in the clemency of the Lord, and, finally, in your vigilance and that of others like you, that to this more than iron age will succeed an age, if not golden, then certainly more fortunate than this.

Basle. January 1529.

ERASMUS'S DEDICATORY PREFACE TO THE SENECAE OPERA OF 1529 (BASLE, FROBEN AND HERWAGEN), TO PETER TOMICZKI, VICE-CHANCELLOR TO THE KING OF POLAND.

The text of this letter as printed here is a translation of Epistle 2091 in Allen's edition of the Epistles of Erasmus. Brief summaries in English of the major points of the letter can be found in:

Ford Lewis Battles & Andre Malan Hugo, Calvin's Commentary on Seneca's De Clementia (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1969), pp. 33\*, 44\*-45\*.

Margaret Mann Phillips, "Erasmus and the Classics," in T.A. Dorey, Erasmus (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1970), pp. 15ff.

G.M. Ross, "Seneca's Philosophical Influence," in C.D.N. Costa, ed., Seneca (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), pp. 143-5.

A fuller summary is available, in Dutch, in Andre Malan Hugo, Calvijn en Seneca (Groningen, J.B. Wolters, 1957), pp. 123-139.

At the time of this writing I have been unable to find a complete English translation of the letter other than my own. It is not included in the older English translation of the Epistles by Nichols, nor, at present, in the translation being undertaken by the University of Toronto Press of the complete correspondence. A French translation can be found in La Correspondance D'Érasme, ed. Jean-Claude Margolin (Bruxelles, University Press, 1979), vol. 8.

On the dedicatee, Peter Tomiczki, see Allen's introductory note to EE 1919.

#### Abbreviations used in the notes

EE Erasmi Epistolae=Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami, ed. P.S. Allen. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906-1958.

CE Correspondence of Erasmus, trans. by R.A.B. Mynors and D.F.S. Thomson. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974.

Novati Francesco Novati, ed. Epistolario di Coluccio Salutati. Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano, 1896.

Annotations not attributed to the above sources have been added by myself.

Translations from classical authors are taken from the Loeb editions of those authors.

#### Notes on the Text

4) he to whom it was previously dedicated: Thomas Ruthall, then



Bishop of Durham; see EE 325.

9] I nevertheless have guaranteed...: Although he loudly protests to the contrary, Erasmus is not entirely innocent in this matter. In his volume of translations of Lucian's Dialogues (1506), Erasmus furnishes a separate dedication, each to a different patron, for each dialogue. For a young man struggling for patronage, as Erasmus was in 1506, this has its obvious advantage: "by dedicating each dialogue separately Erasmus was able to pay off debts or win the favour of potential patrons" (CE, 2, p. 112).

17] Caelius: Lud. Caelius Richerius (c. 1450-1525), whose Antiquae Lectiones (Aldus, 1516) consisted of sixteen books, each with a separate dedication. Allen (EE 469.8n.) describes the work as "a miscellany of notes on passages of the classics or on general topics" which "borrowed extensively from the Adagia [of Erasmus] without acknowledgement," much to Erasmus's displeasure.

33] assistant: Robert Aldridge.

40] friend: William Nesen; see EE 329, introduction.

Erasmus's tone has changed remarkably here from that of EE 1804 to Thomas More, in which he writes "perfidissime me tractavit stolidissimus ille Nessenus" (1804.73).

49] fable: cf. Gellius, Noct. Att. 2.29 for fable, and Ennius ap. Gell. 2.29.30 for the moral: "Do not expect friends to do what you should do yourself."

55] pack saddle on an ox: see Adag. 1884: "non nostrum onus, bos clitellas."

65] that part of the exemplar...: see EE 1479.86-9: "In Seneca fefellit nos amicus quidam, qui non susceperat, vel noluit vel non potuit--nam ipsi huic aeditioni non adfuimus; qui sentiens male navatam operam, exemplar denique mea manu notatum sustulit."

84] when I returned...: In July-August 1516.

125] Matthaeus Fortunatus: see EE 1479.89n. Fortunatus produced an edition of Seneca's Natural Questions, printed by Aldus, in 1522/3. In his preface to this volume, Fortunatus writes: "Annotavimus vero loca depravata ex his exemplaribus, quae nuper ab Erasmo Roterodamo, maximo bonarum literarum assertore et principe, recognita et in Germania Basileae septimo ab hinc anno impressa sunt. Quae castigata inter caetera vulgata, ut sint, credidimus. Atque ea tantum quae Erasmus, qui primum aliquam lucem in Senecam apervit, spemque dedit posse illum emendari, praeterierant, quae prope infinita sunt, quoad licuit restituimus. Ille enim iandudum ad fastigium usque evectae famae securus, neglegentius ista, ut sua curatione minora, tractavit, alioqui, certo scio, nostro labore consulisset."

133] Rudolf Agricola: (1443/4-1485), Dutch humanist, who sought, like Erasmus, to use the ideal of the Philosophia Christi "to mediate between antique wisdom and Christian faith." Erasmus met Agricola while still a young student, and the meeting had a lasting impression on Erasmus. On Agricola, see Lewis W. Spitz, The Religious Renaissance of the German Humanists (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 20-40. The Treviso edition of Seneca was printed in 1479; Allen (EE 2091.108n.) was unable to discover whether Agricola's annotated

copy still exists.

140] Hayo Hermannus: Haio Hermann Hompen (Humpius) of Emden, (1500?-1539?), a kinsman of Agricola. Met Erasmus in Louvain in 1519; also a friend of the Humanists Vives, Brixius, Budaeus and More. In 1529 he became the son-in-law of Pompeius Occo, the nephew of Adolphus Occo, who had been Agricola's physician and friend (see EE 485.30n.). Pompeius Occo had inherited from his uncle the papers of Agricola, to which Haio Hermann now had easy access. It was through this connection that he was able to provide Erasmus with Agricola's notes on Seneca. See EE 903.12n.

146] Sigismudus Gelenius: Sigismund Gelensky (c. 1498-1554), born to an aristocratic family in Prague. After beginning his career as a teacher of Greek in Prague, he made his way to Basle, where he stayed for some time at the home of Erasmus. Gelenius turned down an invitation from Melanchthon to teach Greek at Nuremburg, preferring to stay on in Basle as Froben's corrector for the press. In his will, Erasmus stipulated that Gelenius should supervise the projected publication of Erasmus's collected works; he also left Gelenius clothes and 150 ducats, a token of the high esteem in which Erasmus held him. See EE 1702.8n.

173] proverb: see Adag. 1919: "Multa in bellis inania"

179] Jerome: De viris inlustribus, 12

204ff.] on the source of corruptions, see a similar discussion by Coluccio Salutati in Berthold Ullman, The Humanism of Coluccio Salutati (Padua, Editrice Antenore, 1943), p. 100.

214] ignorance of the scribes...: for a similar discussion of scribal error, see Poliziano in Anthony Grafton, "On the Scholarship of Politian and its Context," JWCI 40(1977):165, where he quotes Poliziano, Miscellanea, i.57.

221] dictate to a scribe...: for a modern discussion of the use of dictation in the production of manuscripts, and of the errors that resulted, see T.C. Skeat, "The Use of Dictation in Ancient Book Production," Proceedings of the British Academy 42(1956):179-208.

226] variety of styles of notation: various forms of abbreviations were used by mediaeval scribes in producing manuscripts, and these abbreviations were by no means standardized, frequently leading to confusion among copyists. There are several reference works which describe many of these abbreviations, including: A. Capelli, Lexicon Abbruevaturarum (Milan, Manuali Hoepli, 1929; reprinted 1954) and W.M. Lindsey, Notae Latinae (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1915).

278] Lucretius: Titus Lucretius Carus (c.99-55 BC), Roman poet. Lucretius's poem, the De rerum natura, contains many things which run counter to Christianity--e.g., he argues for the mortality of the soul, he argues that the gods play no role in human affairs, etc.

289] "God is all that is seen and unseen": Natural Questions (hereafter, NQ) I. prol. 13, 2.45.3

294] he does mock those who think: cf. De beneficiis 4.4-6

296] elephant: for an interesting discussion of the metaphor of the elephant and the fly, see Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle, Rhetoric and Reform: Erasmus' Civil Dispute with Luther (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1983), pp. 1-4

299] Tertullian: Ressur. 1; Anim. 42

- 308] Quintilian: Inst. 10.1.131  
 332] Quintilian: Inst. 10.1.125-31  
 345] "If only...": Inst. 10.1.130  
 347] "One could...": Inst. 10.1.130  
 350] "my aim...": Inst. 10.1.26  
 357] "because he abounds...": Inst. 10.1.129  
 362] Suetonius: Nero 52, Caligula 53  
 376] Aulus Gellius: Noct. Att. 12.2.1, 8, 11, 12, 13  
 379] "since his style...": Noct. Att. 12.2.1  
 391] "but I am already tired...": Noct. Att. 12.2.11  
 394] "Worthy indeed...": Noct. Att. 12.2.12  
 399] "What difference...": Noct. Att. 12.2.12. In Erasmus's

editions, this sententia is included among several other miscellaneous sententiae attributed to Seneca; these appear without comment in the 1515 edition and with a separate preface (EE 2132) in the 1529 edition.

401] mimes of Publius: a collection of sententiae, the work of Publilius Syrus, a popular writer of mimes of the Caesarian age in Rome; over the centuries many sententiae from other sources have been "foisted" upon Publilius, including some out of Seneca; see J.W. and A.M. Duff, Minor Latin Poets, in the Loeb Classical Library (London, William Heinemann, 1934), pp. 3-12. Erasmus edited Publilius Syrus in his Opuscula aliquot (Louvain, Th. Martens, 1514); see EE 678. The sentence quoted here is added, from Gellius, in Erasmus's 1529 edition of Seneca, p. 688.

404] Tacitus: Ann. 13.2.2

405] commends the integrity...: Ann. 15.63.4

406] he even attributes to him...: Ann. 13.3.2

415] Quintilian: Inst. 10.1.128

444] Quintilian: Inst. 10.1.98

451] Flood of Deucalion: Seneca, NQ 3.27.13-14

454] Porcius Latrone: Marcus Porcius Latro (d. AD 4), Augustan rhetor, contemporary and friend of the Elder Seneca. See Seneca the Elder, Controversiae 1 pr. 13-24 on Latro, and 2.2.8 for the sententia mentioned by Erasmus.

457] Vergil, nor Cicero: Seneca, Ep. 108; cf. Gell. Noct. Att. 12.2.2-10

468] On the Use of Mirrors: NQ 1.17

470] Declamations: Here Erasmus is confusing Seneca the Elder, also known as the Rhetor, with his son, Seneca the Younger, the Philosopher. The Elder Seneca wrote a book on rhetoric, the Oratorum sententiae divisiones colores, which Erasmus refers to as the Declamations. This book originally consisted of ten books of controversiae (rhetorical exercises) and at least two books of suasoriae (in which historical or mythological characters are given advice on what to do in a given situation). Of these books, our manuscripts preserve only five of controversiae and one of suasoriae. The Epitome mentioned by Erasmus (line 713) is an abridgement made for school use in the fourth century AD. The first to suggest that there were two Senecas, father and son, was Raphael Volaterranus (Raphael Maffei; 1452-1522); this suggestion was confirmed by Justus Lipsius (1547-1606).

498] "A great part of life...": Seneca, Ep. 1. This Epistle, and this sentence in particular, were a "source of

lively debate" throughout the Renaissance. Coluccio Salutati remarks that the content of this Epistle is expressed "dubio et obscuro et abdito sensu" (Novati, I, p.63). Much of the discussion centered around a textual problem in the sentence quoted here. Some commentators favored the reading chosen here by Erasmus, i.e. "A great part...the greater part...the whole..." ("magna...maxima...tota..."). Salutati is among those who favor this reading (cf. Novati, III, pp. 244-246), as is Erasmus. Other Humanists favored the reading "maxima...magna...tota..." (e.g. Peter of Mantua). Modern editors retain this latter reading. It is interesting that Peter of Mantua chooses his reading on a contextual basis--he feels that it fits in better with other things that Seneca says. Salutati, and Erasmus, on the other hand, choose their reading on a stylistic basis--the progression from smaller to larger part (magna...maxima...tota...) seems to make more sense stylistically. See Theodore E. James, "A Fragment of An Exposition of the First Letter of Seneca to Lucilius Attributed to Peter of Mantua," in Edward P. Mahoney, ed., Humanism and Philosophy (New York, Columbia University Press, 1976), pp. 531-541.

500] Something is said...: in a note to this Epistle in the 1529 edition

517] Quintilian: Inst. 7.1.41; 10.5.14

554] Caligula Caesar: see Suet. Caligula 53

557] Quintilian: Inst. 10.1.129

597] Cicero: "We are not born for ourselves alone." De Officiis 1.7.22, quoting Plato, Ep. 9

598] Seneca: "No one comes into being for his own sake." Ep. 32

611] in one epistle...: Seneca, Ep. 56

620] Quintilian: Inst. 10.1.129

624] Chrysippus: (c.280-207 BC), third master of the Stoa, known for great power and subtlety of his arguments.

633] Quintilian: Inst. 10.1.128

637] Ovid: NQ 4.2.2 (Tib. 1.7.26 is ascribed to Ovid)

643] mother of Nero: see Tac. Ann. 13.14.5

651] Tacitus: Ann. 14.52.3

656] "Duc me parens...": "Lead me, father and lord of high heaven." These lines are actually from Seneca, Ep. 107, where Seneca gives them as a translation of Cleanthes.

659] little book on the death of Claudius: Seneca,

#### Apocolocyntosis

664] Quintilian: Inst. 10.1.30: "si parum concupisset"--in modern editions of Quintilian, this appears as "si parum recta non concupisset" (recta added by Peterson in his edition of Book 10 [Oxford, 1891]). This is translated as "[if only he] had not been so fond of all that was incorrect." Erasmus's reading makes perfect sense in light of his overall argument about Seneca's style.

668] Tacitus: Ann. 14.54.1-2

672] the same source...: Ann. 13.11.2

676] one thing out of Tacitus: Ann. 14.53-56

679] on his deathbed: see Tac. Ann. 15.63.7

682] Quintilian: Inst. 10.1.129

685] Saint Jerome: adv. Jov. 1.49

687] Seneca himself: NQ 6.4.2

704] Gellius: 12.2.3

- 707] Quare quibusdam temporibus: Seneca, Ep. 114  
714] I shall say more...: prefatory note, p. 485 of 1529  
edition.  
720] Ovid: Pont. 4.2.36  
723] Andreas Zebridovius: Andrew Zebrzydowski (c.1496-1560),  
grand-nephew of Peter Tomiczki; in later life Bishop of Cracow  
(1550-1560) and Chancellor of Cracow University. On his tomb in  
Cracow is inscribed "magni illius Erasmi Roterodo: discipulus et  
auditor." See EE 1826.

## APPENDIX B

## TEXT

Senecae opera, 1529, p. 485

<Basle>  
<c. February 1529>

[Preface to the Declamations of the Elder Seneca]

## AD LECTOREM.

Inter omnes Senecae lucubrationes, nullum opus extare integrum et inviolatum magis referebat publicae studiorum utilitatis, quam hos declamationum libros, quos eruditus aliquis contraxit in compendium, delectis quae vel intelligebat, vel minus erant depravata, ac distinctis partibus, tum ex adiectis, quae extra controversiam dicebantur a censoribus. Quod ipsum si paulo copiosius ac dexterius praestitisset, operam sumpsisset haud quaquam aspernandam. Certe quisquis hoc aggressus est, eo consilio fecisse videtur, ut opus alioqui diffusum ac varium, deinde corruptissimum, postremo multis Graecis sententiis interlitum, in scholis praelegi posset. Quod honoris omnibus pene huius viri monumentis praestitere quondam Christiani. Quin in hanc epitomen extant iusti commentarii, morem scholasticum prae se ferentes. Nec mihi in hoc laborandum arbitror, ut doceam hos libros nihil aliud esse quam epitomen, quum aliquoties praefatio sit propemodum libro prolixior, nec praestetur in libris quod pollicentur exordia. Id magis etiam perspicuum sit, ex aliquot controversiis, quas habemus superstites, in quibus deprehenduntur quae hic compendarius decerpserit, quanquam interdum sibi permisit quasdam voces de suo vel addere vel immutare. Opus ipsum Seneca diviserat in controversias et suasorias. Sic enim aliquando loquitur in controversiis, de quo plura dicemus, quum ad suasorias venerimus. Nunc videmus inversum ordinem. Priore loco posuerunt paucas suasorias, sed primum akephalos, reliquas item truncas ac mutilas, adeoque depravatas, ut alicubi vix ipse Seneca, si reviviscat, divinaturus sit, quid scripserit. Posteriore controversias aliquanto plures, sed imperfectas aequae ac mendosas. Graecis aut prorsus omissis, aut tam inepte notatis, ut a nullo deprehendi lectio germana possit. In his tamen multa restituimus ex hac epitoma: non pauca divinavimus, plura reliquimus. Huius igitur operis si quod exemplar integrum et emendatum inveniatur, nescio quid amplius desiderari posset sapientis eloquentiae candidatis. Hic enim velut in speculo licet intueri, quomodo doctissimi viri, defensionis colorem invenerint, quomodo causae summam in propositiones diviserint, deinde singulas in alias subiectas partiri soleant, quibus argumentis unamquamque confirment, tum quas sententias adhibuerint, quae schemata, quos affectus moverint, quam varie idem thema a diversis ingeniis tractari potuerit: et in his quae perperam inventa, aut ineptis schematibus sive verbis explicata, quae stulta et causae officientia, quae asustata secum pugnantia,



quae aprodionusa et extra causam dicta. Hae censurae hominum in  
omni doctrinae genere praecellentium, incredible dictu, quantum  
utilitatis attulissent, non solum ad bene dicendum verumetiam ad  
iudicandum, sive in forensibus causis, sive in concionibus  
popularibus militaribusve, sive in confessibus, sive in omni  
vitae functione, quae maxima ex parte, linguae prudentis officio  
temperatur. Ea inveniendi iudicandique facultas, si statim  
pueris tradatur, mihi videntur multo plus fructus allatura, quam  
quae nunc in scholis traditur dialectica, quam tamen nec improbo,  
nec submovendam censeo, modo reflectis nugilibus argutiis, ad  
usum potiusquam ad puerilem ostentationem tradatur. Atque utinam  
felix aliquis casus hos Senecae libros nobis restituat. Ex his  
tamen qualibuscunque fragmentis non parum emolumenti capient, qui  
sagaci praediti ingenio non gravabuntur huc animum intendere.

45

50

55

21] Opus ipsum Seneca...: The full title of Seneca's  
work is the Oratorum et rhetorum sententiae  
divisiones colores; the work is divided into ten  
books of Controversiae and one of Suasoriae. There  
was originally at least one other book of  
Suasoriae, but this is no longer extant. The  
Suasoriae are fictitious deliberative debates in  
which the speaker gives advice to a historical or  
mythological character on what to do in a  
particular situation; the Controversiae are  
fictitious speeches in an assumed court case. The  
Suasoriae appear first in the manuscripts, perhaps  
because it was the common practice to begin  
rhetorical training with suasoriae before advancing  
to the more challenging controversiae, but, as  
Erasmus points out (nunc videmus inversum ordinem,  
in line 23), Seneca probably wrote the  
Controversiae first. In Controversiae II.4.8.,  
Seneca writes: "quae dixerit, suo loco reddam, cum  
ad suasorias venero (I will recount what he said in  
its proper place when I come to the suasoriae);"  
hence Erasmus's paraphrase, above: "de quo plura  
dicemus, quum ad suasorias venerimus."

#### TRANSLATION

##### To the Reader

Among all the works of Seneca, no work would, if it survived  
whole and undamaged, be of greater public benefit to learned men  
than the Declamations, which some learned man has condensed into  
a compendium, having chosen either what he understood or what was  
less damaged. These things were divided into parts, with those  
things added accordingly which were said by critics, outside the  
controversia. If the work itself had survived a little more  
completely and in better condition, the one who made this  
compendium would have done his work in a manner scarcely to be  
despised. Surely someone has undertaken this work with the  
intention of making a work otherwise diffuse and varied,  
completely corrupt, and, finally, interspersed with many Greek

sentences, fit to be read in the schools. This is an honor which at one time the Christians bestowed upon every work of Seneca. In fact, suitable commentaries of this epitome exist, placed before the work, in the scholastic manner. Nor do I believe that I am mistaken in calling this work nothing more than an epitome, since several times the preface is almost longer than the book itself, and sometimes the books do not supply what the prefaces promise. Truly this becomes more clear from the Controversiae, which we have intact, in which we can find many of the things which the maker of this abridgment selected--although he often allowed himself to add or alter things on his own authority. Seneca divided the work itself into Controversiae and Suasoriae. Thus he at one point says in the Controversiae that he will say more about a subject when he reaches the Suasoriae. Now we have the works in inverse order. First come a few suasoriae, but the first lacks a heading, and the remains are likewise shortened and mutilated, and corrupted to such an extent that in some places even Seneca himself, were he to come alive again, would scarcely be able to read what he wrote. Second come the Controversiae, more numerous than the Suasoriae, but equally incomplete and defective. The Greek is either omitted, or so carelessly transcribed that no one is able to discover what it says. In these Controversiae, nevertheless, I have restored many things out of the epitome: I have done not a little guesswork, I have left more things alone. I do not know what could be more greatly desired by candidates for wisdom and eloquence than that some whole and complete exemplar of this work be found. Here indeed it is permitted to observe, as if in a mirror, the way in which the most learned men devise the character of a defense: on the one hand, how they divide the substance of a case into propositions (since they are accustomed to subdivide individual subjects), by what argument they confirm each subject, and then what opinions they produce, what gestures, what emotions they move, how differently the same theme is able to be treated by different characters; and on the other hand, we see things which have been invented falsely, or explained by absurd gestures or words which are foolish and detrimental to the case, which are mal à propos and said without relevance to the case. These opinions, of men distinguished in every department of learning, to tell the truth, would be of much use, whether in forensic cases, or in popular or military discussions, or in confessions, and in all circumstances of life, which for the most part are moderated by the service of a prudent tongue. That ability to devise arguments and to judge their validity, if it is taught at once, seems to me to be capable of bearing much more fruit than the dialectics which are now taught in the schools, which, nevertheless, I do not condemn, nor urge to be removed-- I ask merely that, when trivial subtleties have been curtailed, they should be directed to usefulness rather than childish display. And would that some fortunate man would restore these ruined works of Seneca to us! Out of these fragments, such as they are, they will nonetheless gain not a small advantage, they who with a wise and gifted disposition do not hesitate to direct their attention to these works.



## Appendix C

### A Sample Collation Showing Changes Made in Annotated Passages of Book IV of the De beneficiis

The following passages are annotated by Erasmus with notes placed at the end of Book IV of the De beneficiis. Book IV was chosen because it contains an average number of annotations which are more or less representative of Erasmus's annotations throughout the seven books of the De beneficiis.

1515

1525

Hosius

IV.2

(1) Hoc qui dicit, non exaudi praedictantium vota, et undique sublatis in coelum manibus, vota facientibus privata geri et publica [p. 34].

Hoc qui dicit, non exaudit precantium voces, et undique sublatis in coelum manibus vota facientibus, privata gerit ac publica [p. 31].

Hoc qui dicit, non exaudit praecantium voces et undique sublatis in caelum vota facientium privata ac publica [88.25-7]

IX.2

(2) Dicis, inquit, diligenter eligendos, quibus beneficia debemus. Quia ne agricolae quidem semina arenis committant, pro fructu est [p. 35].

Dicis, inquit, inquit, diligenter eligendos, quibus beneficia debemus, quia ne agricolae quidem semina arenis committant [p. 32].

Dicitis, inquit, diligenter eligendos, quibus beneficia demus, quia ne agricolae quidem semina harenis committant [88.9-11].

XVIII.2

(3) Duas res dedit, quae illum obnoxio quolibet validissimum

Duas res dedit, quae illum obnoxium caeteris, validissimum... [p. 35].

Duas deus res dedit, quae illum obnoxium validissimum...

XVIII.2

(4) Itaque qui par esse nulli posset, si seduceretur... [p. 38].

Itaque qui par esse nulli posset, si seduceretur, rerum potitur... [p. 35].

Itaque qui par esse nulli posset, si seduceretur, rerum potitur... [96.21-22].

XXII.3

(5) ac multa hinc commoda oriuntur, et

Ac multa hinc commoda oriuntur.

At multa hoc commoda oriuntur,

tutior est vita  
melioribus, amatque,  
et secundum bonorum  
iudicium aetasque  
securior... [p. 39].

Et tutior est vita  
melioribus, atque  
secundum bonorum  
iudicium etiam  
securior... [p. 36].

et tutior est vita  
melioribus amorque  
et secundum bonorum  
iudicium aetasque  
securior... [100.14-16]

(6) Quantum ista  
nocte, quantum in  
numerum ac discrimen  
demum observas. Igi-  
tur quanta... [p. 39].

Quantum ista nocte  
quam tu in numerum  
ac discrimen demum  
observas, agitur?  
Quanta... [p. 36].

Quantum ista nocte  
quam tu in numerum  
ac discrimen dierum  
observas, agitur!  
quanta... [101.14-15].

#### XXVIII.2

(7) Rex honores dig-  
nis dat. Donatio im-  
peratoris est, con-  
giarium et indignis  
[p. 41].

Rex honores dignis  
dat, congiarium et  
indignis [p. 38]

Rex honores dignis  
dat, congiarium et  
indignis [104.27-8].

#### XXXI.3

(8)(9) Quid tu cum  
Maternum Scaurum  
heroa faceres? Ig-  
norabas ancillarum  
suarum menstruum ore  
illum hiante expectare  
[pp. 41-42].

Quid tu Mamercum  
Scaurum Cos. faceres,  
ignorabas ancillarum  
suarum menstruum ore  
illum hiante expectare  
[p. 39].

Quid? tu, cum  
Mamercum Scaurum  
consulem faceres,  
ignorabas ancillarum  
illum suarum  
menstruum ore hiante  
expectare [107.23-25]

#### XXXI.5-XXXII.1

(10) ...principem  
cogitasset indigne  
fert subolem eius  
iacere.  
Deos verisimile  
est... [p. 42].

...principem cogitasset  
indigne fert subolem  
iacere.  
Deos verisimile est  
... [p. 39].

principem cogitas  
et indigne fers  
subolem eius  
iacere.  
Idem facere  
deos veri simile est...  
[108.7-8].

#### XXXII.4

(11) apud me istae ex-  
pensorum acceptorum-  
que rationes disponuntur.  
Ego quid cui debeam scio.  
Aliis post longam diem  
repono. Aliis in ante-  
cessum est. Aut prout  
occasio, et meae facul-  
tas tulit [p. 42].

Apud me istae ex-  
pensorum acceptorum-  
que rationes dispung-  
untur. Ego quid cui  
debeam scio. aliis  
post longam diem re-  
pono, aliis in ante-  
cessum, aut prout  
occasio, et reipub  
[licae] meae facultas  
tulit [p. 39].

Apud me istae ex-  
pensorum accept-  
orum rationes dis-  
punguntur. ego,  
quid cui debeam,  
scio; aliis post  
longam diem re-  
pono, aliis in ante-  
cessum ac prout  
occasio et rei  
publicae meae

XXXV.3

(12) Omnia esse debent  
quae fuerunt cum pro-  
mitterem ut promittentis  
fidem teneam [p. 43].

Omnia esse debent  
eadem quae fuerunt  
cum promitterem, ut  
promittentis fidem  
teneas [p. 40]

Omnia esse debent  
eadem, quae  
fuerunt, cum pro-  
mitterem, ut pro-  
mittentis fidem  
teneas [111.18-19]

XXXVI.2

(13) Totum in eo est,  
quando promisi mea verba  
taxentur [p. 43].

Totum, inquam, in eo  
est, quanti promissi  
mei verba taxentur  
[p. 40].

Totum, inquam, in  
eo est, quanti  
promissi mei  
verba taxentur  
[112.8-9].

XXXVI.3

(14) Non tantum quod  
temere promissi re-  
tinebo... [p. 43].

Non tantum quod  
temere promissi re-  
tinebo... [p. 40].

Non tantum,  
quod temere  
promisi, re-  
tinebo... [112.9-10].

XXXIX.3

(15) ad sponsum des-  
cendam quia promisi,  
sed non si spondere  
me incertum videbis,  
si fisco obligabis  
[p. 44].

Sponsum descendam  
quia promisi, sed  
non si spondere in  
incertum iubebis, si  
fisco obligabis  
[p. 41].

Sponsum des-  
cendam, quia pro-  
misi, sed non,  
si spondere me  
in incertum  
iubebis, si in  
fisco obligabis  
[114.20-22].

XL.3

(16) ille praestitit  
mihi, nempe cum occa-  
sionem haberet, cum  
facultatem. Refert  
utrum bonus vir est,  
an malus [p. 44].

Ille praestitit  
mihi, nempe cum  
occasionem haberet,  
cum facultatem.  
Utrum bonus vir est,  
an malus? [p. 41].

Ille praestitit  
mihi, nempe cum  
occasionem haberet,  
cum facultatem;  
utrum bonus vir est  
an malus [115.15-17].

XL.4-5

(17) Reiciendi sunt,  
pignus est protinus  
aliud invicem mittere,  
et munus munere  
expungere.

Reiciendi genus  
est protinus aliud  
invicem mittere, et  
munus munere expungere.

reiciendi genus  
est protinus aliud  
invicem mittere  
et munus munere  
expungere.

multum accessurum  
erit [p. 44]

multum abcessurum  
erit [p. 41].

multum abcessurum  
erit [115.24-5; 28-29].

#### NOTES

- (3) deus added by Haase.
- (6) Erasmus cites dierum as the concensus omnium codicum, but rejects it in favor of demum, which he defines as being synonymous with tantum.
- (15) Hosius, in the apparatus criticus credits Erasmus with the addition of in

#### Content of Annotations

explanation of passage/emendation in terms of style: (1)  
explanation of Seneca's use of language: (1) (11) (15)  
interpretation of sense of passage: (1) (2) (3) (5) (6) (10) (11) (12)  
(15)  
listing of variant readings: (1) (3) (6) (11) (13) (14) (15) (16) (17)  
[three notes decide in favor of the  
reading in the Longobardicus vetustissimus:  
(13) (15) (17)]  
removal of marginalia: (2) (7) (8)

## NOTES

### Abbreviations Used in the Notes

- EE P.S. Allen, ed. Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami.  
Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906-1958.
- CE R.A.B. Mynors and D.F.S. Thomson, trans. The Correspondence  
of Erasmus. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974.
- JWCI Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes. London:  
University of London.

### Notes to the Introduction

1. Anthony Grafton, "The Origins of Scholarship," American Scholar 48(1979):236-261.
2. Rudolf Pfeiffer, History of Classical Scholarship from 1300 to 1850 (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1976).
3. Grafton, "The Origins of Scholarship," p. 256.
4. Winfried Trillitzsch, "Erasmus und Seneca," Philologus 109(1965):270-293.
5. Grafton, "The Origins of Scholarship," p. 256.

## Notes to Chapter I

1. CE 264.
2. For general information of Erasmus's biography, see Roland Bainton, Erasmus of Christendom, (New York, Scribner, 1969).
3. CE 152 to Jacob Voogd.
4. CE 152.
5. Pliny, Natural History, praef. 22; ed. H. Rackham (London, Heinemann, 1938).
6. Menander, Monosticha 433.
7. CE 152.
8. Lewis W. Spitz, The Religious Renaissance of the German Humanists (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 32. See also Albert Hyma, The Youth of Erasmus (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1930), p. 114.
9. Spitz, The Religious Renaissance, p. 32.
10. Agricola, translation of Isocrates, Parensis, as quoted by Spitz, The Religious Renaissance, p. 33.
11. Isocrates, Parensis, quoted by Spitz, The Religious Renaissance, p. 33.
12. CE 188.
13. CE 188.
14. CE 298.
15. CE 298.
16. Margaret Mann Phillips, "Erasmus and the Classics," in Erasmus, ed. T.A. Dorey (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1970), p. 17.
17. CE 298.
18. CE 333.
19. CE 333.
20. Bainton, Erasmus of Christendom, p. 113.
21. William J. Bouwsma, "The Two Faces of Humanism: Stoicism and Augustinianism in Renaissance Thought," in Itinerarium Italicum, ed. Heiko A. Oberman and Thomas A. Brady (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1975), p. 17.
22. CE 325.
23. CE 325.
24. Erasmus, The Education of a Christian Prince, trans. Lester K. Born (New York, Columbia University Press, 1936), p. 200.
25. CE 328.
26. CE 330.
27. CE 389.
28. CE 437.
29. CE 403.
30. EE 1656.
31. EE 2056.
32. EE 2108.
33. L.D. Reynolds and N.G. Wilson, Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature, second edition (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1974), p. 145.
34. Phillips, "Erasmus and the Classics," p. 15.
35. G.M. Ross, "Seneca's Philosophical Influence," in Seneca, ed. C.D.N. Costa (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), p. 144. See also Ford Lewis Battles and Andre Malan Hugo,

- Calvin's Commentary on Seneca's De Clementia (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1969), p. 33\*.
36. Appendix A, lines 89-94.
  37. Jerome, De viris illustribus, chapter 12, ed. J.-P. Migne, Patrologia Latina, (Paris, Garnier, 1883), 23:662.
  38. Rudolf Pfeiffer, History of Classical Scholarship from 1300 to 1850 (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1976), p.40.
  39. Appendix A, lines 165ff.
  40. L.D. Reynolds, The Medieval Tradition of Seneca's Letters (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 115.
  41. EE 2123.
  42. Appendix A, lines 285-287.
  43. See above, note 10; I am particularly indebted to Bouwsma's paper in this section.
  44. Bouwsma, p. 7.
  45. Bouwsma, p. 8.
  46. Bouwsma, p. 9.
  47. Appendix A, line 289.
  48. Appendix A, lines 289-291.
  49. Gordon Braden, Renaissance Tragedy and the Senecan Tradition: Anger's Privilege (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1985), p. 93; see also the discussion of Augustine's criticisms and use of Stoicism in Chapter 4 of Marcia L. Colish, The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages: II. Stoicism in Christian Latin Thought through the Sixth Century (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1985).
  50. Appendix A, lines 300-308.
  51. EE 1804, lines 81-87.
  52. EE 1804, lines 97-99.
  53. Appendix A, lines 282-284.
  54. Battles and Hugo, Calvin's Commentary, p. 44\*.
  55. Appendix A, line 331.
  56. Erasmus, Ciceronianus, or a Dialogue on the Best Style of Speaking, trans. Isora Scott (New York, Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1908), p. 81.
  57. Appendix A, lines 494-495.
  58. Erasmus to More, EE 1804, lines 100-101: "Truly in these things which pertain to piety there is no place for rhetoric."
  59. Erasmus, Ciceronianus, p. 75
  60. A. Gerlo, "The Opus de Conscribendis Epistolis of Erasmus and the Tradition of the Ars Epistolica" in Classical Influences on European Culture A.D. 500-1500, ed. R.R. Bolgar (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 111.
  61. Appendix A, lines 308-312.
  62. Appendix A, line 306.
  63. Erasmus, Ciceronianus, p. 82. For Seneca's use of this metaphor, see Seneca, Epistles 84.3ff. This same metaphor is used again in the fifth century by Macrobius (Saturnalia, Book I, preface, 5ff., trans., Percival Vaughn Davies [New York, Columbia University Press, 1969]) and in the twelfth century by John of Salisbury (Policraticus, Book VII, p. 133, trans. Joseph B. Pike in Frivolities of Courtiers and Footprints of Philosophers [Minneapolis, University of

Minnesota Press, 19381). John of Salisbury's use of the metaphor anticipates that of Erasmus, stressing that a wise selection of reading will include only what is "edifying to faith and morals": "The safe and cautious thing to do is to read only Catholic books. It is somewhat dangerous to expose the unsophisticated to pagan literature; but a training in both is very useful to those safe in the faith, for an accurate reading on a wide range of subjects makes the scholar; a careful reading of the better makes the saint." see Pike, p. 253.

64. Erasmus's preface to these works is furnished after the text as Appendix B. I include the Latin text, which does not appear in EE, and which I have transcribed directly from the 1529 edition of Seneca, as well as my translation.
65. EE 1334, lines 468-471.
66. EE 1334, lines 483-485.
67. Bouwsma, "The Two Faces of Humanism," p. 56. See also Eugene F. Rice, Saint Jerome in the Renaissance (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), p. 115.
68. Reynolds, The Medieval Tradition, p. 115. In this passage, Reynolds goes on to characterize the medieval approach to Seneca, so different from that of Erasmus; Seneca, he says, "quickly became the depersonalized stock and trade of the florilegist, his identity disappeared behind his morality, and quidam sapiens was often as much recognition as he achieved."
69. Bouwsma, "The Two Faces of Humanism," p. 55.
70. Rice, Saint Jerome in the Renaissance, p. 120.



Notes to Chapter 2

1. Anthony Grafton, Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Scholarship, I: Textual Criticism and Exegesis, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 12.
2. See Grafton, Joseph Scaliger, p. 13; Theodore H. James, "A Fragment of An Exposition of the First Letter of Seneca to Lucilius Attributed to Peter of Mantua," in Philosophy and Humanism, ed. Edward P. Mahoney (New York, Columbia University Press, 1976), p. 532; and, Letizia A. Panizza, "Textual Interpretation in Italy, 1350-1450: Seneca's Letter I to Lucilius," JWCI 46(1983):40-62.
3. Martin Lowry, The World of Aldus Manutius: Business and Scholarship in Renaissance Venice, (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1979), p. 237.
4. Grafton, Joseph Scaliger, p. 13.
5. Grafton, Joseph Scaliger, p. 13.
6. On humanist libraries: Dorothy M. Robathan, "Libraries of the Italian Renaissance," in James Westfall Thompson, The Medieval Library (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1939), pp. 509-588, L.D. Reynolds and N.G. Wilson, Scribes and Scholars, second edition (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1974), pp. 32, 34 and Lowry, Aldus Manutius, p. 229ff. On the invention of printing, M.D. Feld, "The Early Evolution of the Authoritative Text," Harvard Library Bulletin 26 (1978):82 and Grafton, Joseph Scaliger, p. 14.
7. Grafton, Joseph Scaliger, p. 17.
8. Grafton, Joseph Scaliger, p. 30. See also Sesto Prete, Observations on the History of Textual Criticism in the Medieval and Renaissance Periods, (Collegeville, Minn., St. John's University Press, 1970).
9. Poliziano, Miscellanea, I.57, as quoted by Anthony Grafton, "On the Scholarship of Poliziano and its Context," JWCI 40(1977):165.
10. Reynolds and Wilson, Scribes and Scholars, p. 128.
11. Lowry, Aldus Manutius, p. 217.
12. Feld, "The Early Evolution," p. 92.
13. Lowry, Aldus Manutius, p. 236.
14. Lowry, Aldus Manutius, p. 249.
15. On Beroaldo: Grafton, Joseph Scaliger, p. 34.
16. Aldus Manutius, preface to his edition of Theocritus (1495), quoted in Feld, "The Early Evolution," p. 99: non enim recipio me emendaturum libros.
17. Pier Vettori, quoted in Anthony Grafton, "Joseph Scaliger's Edition of Catullus (1577) and the Traditions of Textual Criticism in the Renaissance," JWCI 38 (1975):162.
18. Grafton, "The Scholarship of Politian," pp. 172-175.
19. Grafton, "Joseph Scaliger's Edition of Catullus," p. 179.
20. Feld, "The Early Evolution," p. 86.
21. L.D. Reynolds, The Medieval Tradition of Seneca's Letters (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 1.
22. Reynolds, The Medieval Tradition, p. 1.
23. See Reynolds, The Medieval Tradition, p. 2.
24. See L.D. Reynolds, (ed.), Texts and Transmission: A Survey of the

- Latin Classics, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1983), pp. 269ff.
25. Reynolds, The Medieval Tradition, pp. 3-4.
  26. On these manuscripts, see EE 1656 n. 3 and CE 325 n. 39.
  27. See EE 1797.3-7.
  28. Robert Aldridge was Erasmus's assistant while working on Seneca and Jerome at Cambridge in 1514.
  29. On these manuscripts, see EE 2091.introduction.
  30. Paul Lehmann, Johannes Sichardus und die von ihm Benutzen Bibliotheken und Handschriften, (Munich, C.H. Beck, 1911), p. 137; See Reynolds, The Medieval Tradition, p. 6, n. 3, and Texts and Transmission, p. 363.
  31. Reynolds and Wilson, Scribes and Scholars, p. 145.
  32. Reynolds and Wilson, Scribes and Scholars, p. 146.
  33. Jerry Bentley, Humanists and Holy Writ: New Testament Scholarship in the Renaissance, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 138.
  34. Bentley, Humanists and Holy Writ, p. 138.
  35. Reynolds, Texts and Transmission, p. 363.
  36. Eileen Bloch, "Erasmus and the Froben Press: The Making of an Editor," Library Quarterly 35 (1965):119.
  37. On such a dispute between Erasmus and Jacque Lefèvre d'Étaples, see David O. McNeil, Guillaume Budé and Humanism in the Reign of Francis I, (Geneva, Droz, 1975), chapter 6.
  38. E.J. Kenney, The Classical Text: Aspects of Editing in the Age of the Printed Book, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1974), p. 50.
  39. Kenney, The Classical Text, p. 50.
  40. P. Petitmengin, "Comment étudier l'activité d'Érasme éditeur de textes antiques?" Colloquia Erasmi Turonensia, vol. I, (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1972), p.217.
  41. Eugene F. Rice, Saint Jerome in the Renaissance, (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), p. 125.
  42. Appendix A, lines 199-200.
  43. Appendix A, lines 213-216.
  44. See above, p. 30 n.9.
  45. See Berthold Ullman, The Humanism of Coluccio Salutati, (Padua, Editrice Antenore, 1943), pp. 100-101.
  46. Appendix A, lines 205-213.
  47. Appendix A, lines 220-226.
  48. P.S. Allen, "Erasmus' Servant-Pupils," in Erasmus: Lectures and Wayfaring Sketches, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1934), p. 102.
  49. CE 325.45-53.
  50. Petitmengin, "Comment étudier," p. 217.
  52. CE 325.56-59.
  53. Reynolds, The Medieval Tradition, p. 112.
  54. Jerome, De viris illustribus XII in J.-P. Migne, Patrologia Latina, (Paris, Garnier, 1883), 23:662.
  55. Migne, PL 23:662.
  56. Migne, PL, 23:662, note 3.
  57. CE 325.79-81.
  58. EE 2091 and 2132 respectively.
  59. EE 2092.3.
  60. EE 2092.19-21.
  61. EE 2092.30-32.

62. EE 2092.38-40.
63. Appendix A, lines 652-657.
64. Seneca the Elder, Oratorum et Rhetorum sententiae divisiones colores, ed. H.J. Muller (Prague, F. Tempsky, 1887), p. xxxvi.
65. Seneca the Elder, Controversiae II.4.8.: "quae dixerit, suo loco reddam, cum ad suasorias venero (what he will have said, I will mention it its place, when I will come to the Suasoriae);" see William A. Edward, The Suasoriae of Seneca the Elder (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1928), p. xxx.
66. On Schott, see J. Fabri, "L'Odysée du Manuscrit <<Bruxellensis 2025>> des Oeuvres de Sénèque le Rheteur," Revue Belge de Philologie 44(1966):900-924.
67. Appendix A, lines 234-239.
68. EE 2091.introduction.
69. See Chapter 3, p. 50.
70. See Chapter 1, p. 12.
71. Kenney, The Classical Text, p. 50.
72. Petitmengin, "Comment étudier," p. 219.
73. See Appendix A, line 599. Seneca, Ep. 32.
74. See Appendix A, line 596. Plato, Ep. 9.
75. On this use of Greek by Poliziano, see Grafton, "The Scholarship of Politian," p. 172ff. and Grafton, Joseph Scaliger, p. 33.

### Notes to Chapter 3

1. CE 237.37-39
2. De beneficiis 2.1.4 L. Annaeus Seneca, Opera, ed. C. Hosius. (Leipzig, Teubner, 1914), p.22
3. CE 237.49
4. See above, chapter 2, p. 35.
5. Throughout this chapter, when referring to a location in the text of the De beneficiis, I will give the page and line number in the Teubner edition of Hosius in parentheses.
6. L. Annaeus Seneca, Opera, (Basle, Froben, 1529), p. 271.
7. Appendix A, lines 116-117.
8. See above, note 5.
9. See above, chapter 2, note 33.
10. See above, chapter 2, p. 40.
11. See Jerry H. Bentley, "Erasmus, Jean Le Clerc, and the Principle of the Harder Reading," Renaissance Quarterly 31(1978):309.
12. See chapter 2, p. 40.
13. Appendix A, lines 121-122.
14. Throughout this chapter I will give the line in question as it appears in the 1529 edition, followed by a translation of Erasmus's note.
15. Seneca, Opera (1529), p. 18. Hosius reads quia for qui.
16. Letizia A. Panizza, "Textual Interpretation in Italy, 1350-1450: Seneca's Letter I to Lucilius," JWCI 46(1983):62.
17. See Appendix A, line 498.n.
18. Panizza, "Textual Interpretation," p.62.
19. Erasmus, De Copia and De Ratione Studii trans. Brian McGregor, (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1978).
20. Seneca, Opera (1529), p.18.
21. Seneca, Opera (1529), p.18.
22. Seneca, Opera (1529), p.64.
23. Seneca, Opera (1529), p.8.
24. Seneca, Opera (1529), p.65.
25. Erasmus, De Recta Pronuntiatione, translated by Maurice Pope in Collected Works of Erasmus, (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1985), 26:439ff.
26. Erasmus, De Recta Pronuntiatione, p. 439.
27. Erasmus, De Recta Pronuntiatione, p. 442.
28. Erasmus, De Recta Pronuntiatione, p. 472.
29. Appendix A, lines 132-138.
30. Seneca, Opera (1529), p. 271.
31. Seneca, Opera (1529), p. 30.
32. See Hosius, p. 71. Claudius Salmasius, French Humanist (1588-1658).
33. Appendix A, lines 230-234.
34. So, at II.xii.6 (Hosius 30.4), the text was noted by Erasmus and later corrected by Scaliger, with other emendations suggested by Weise, Pincianus and Hosius.
35. Seneca, Opera (1529), p. 42.
36. Appendix A, line 235.
37. Seneca, Opera (1529), p. 7
38. Appendix A, lines 233-234

1. C. Nisard, Le Triumvirate littéraire au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, Juste Lipse, Joseph Scaliger, et Isaac Casaubon (Paris, 1852), p. 3; quoted in Basil Anderton, Sketches from a Library Window (Freeport, NY, Books for Libraries Press, 1968), pp. 20-21 and in Jason Lewis Saunders, Justus Lipsius: The Philosophy of Renaissance Stoicism (New York, Liberal Arts Press, 1955), p. 60.
2. Nisard, above, note 1, as quoted in Saunders, Justus Lipsius, p. 60.
3. See above, chapter 2, pp. 28ff.
4. See above, chapter 2, p. 32.
5. See above, chapter 2, p. 31.
6. Anthony Grafton, "Joseph Scaliger's Edition of Catullus (1577) and the Traditions of Textual Criticism in the Renaissance," JWCI 38(1975):172-173.
7. Scaliger, Catullus (1577), quoted in Grafton, "Joseph Scaliger's Edition of Catullus," p. 170.
8. Grafton, "Joseph Scaliger's Edition of Catullus," p. 173.
9. Rudolf Pfeiffer, History of Classical Scholarship from 1300 to 1850 (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1976), p. 116.
10. De Thou, quoted by Pfeiffer, History, p. 116.
11. Pfeiffer, History, p. 118; on Wolf, see Pfeiffer's chapter 14.
12. Pfeiffer, History, p. 118.
13. See Seneca, Opera, ed. J. Lipsius, G.F. Gronovius and A. Schott (Amsterdam, Elzevir, 1656); Lipsius's 1605 edition of Seneca was the basis for Thomas Lodge's translation of Seneca into English (1614).
14. Pfeiffer, History, p. 126.
15. Pfeiffer, History, p. 126.
16. Pfeiffer, History, p. 126.
17. Lipsius, Seneca (1644 ed.), quoted by Anderton, Sketches, pp. 29-30; compare Erasmus's assessment, Appendix A, lines 480ff.
18. Saunders, Justus Lipsius, p. 15, where he cites Montaigne, Bacon and others as exponents of the Senecan style; see also George Williamson, "Senecan Style in the Seventeenth Century," Philological Quarterly 15(1936):321-351 and The Senecan Amble: A Study in Prose Form from Bacon to Collier (London, Faber and Faber, 1951).
19. Scaliger, Catullus (1577), quoted in Grafton, "Joseph Scaliger's Edition of Catullus," p. 170. Poliziano cites Catullus's use of quor for cur, quom for cum, adepta's for adepta es, etc.
20. C.O. Brink, "Justus Lipsius and the Text of Tacitus," Journal of Roman Studies 41(1951):49.
21. Brink, "Justus Lipsius and the Text of Tacitus," p. 48.
22. L.D. Reynolds and N.G. Wilson, Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature, second edition, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1974), p. 146.
23. Williamson, The Senecan Amble, pp. 11-31.

24. Williamson, "Senecan Style," p. 325.

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