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TEMPERANTIA, GOLDEN MEAN OF SENECA THE YOUNGER, ROMAN STOIC

ABSTRACT. Dominika Budzanowska-Weglenda, *Temperantia*, Golden Mean of Seneca the Younger, Roman Stoic.

Seneca's philosophical writings concern a virtue, among others also the virtues of justice, temperance (or moderation), fortitude and prudence. They are four virtues from the time of St. Ambrose called cardinal. Seneca gives this definition of the virtue *temperantia*: "cupiditates refrenare" – to confine one's desires. So the temperance is practising self-control, abstention and moderation. Seneca discusses it very often in a wider context of the different virtues, with which it's tightly connected according to a stoical idea of the inseparability of the virtues. He claims that we have to learn virtue. Seneca reminds that life is not easy and only the indications of the philosophy concerning virtue preserve from the unjust fortune.

Keywords: philosophy; Stoicism; virtue; temperance (moderation); desires; Seneca the Younger.

The theory of active virtue accessible for every human regardless of their origin, social status, level of education, testified to a great power of stoicism in the history of mankind.¹ Lucius Annaeus Seneca as a Roman representative of the late Stoa taught how to live in accordance with the nature, that is virtuous, and thus happy life.

Happiness back then was perceived as greatly uncertain, as the beginning of the new era (i.e. the times of Seneca's life) brought Rome an epoch entailing a difficult systemic transformation. The Stoics demonstrated a way of becoming independent of any external factors by solely striving for the internal goods dependent of the man only, that is the virtue. A strong combination of wisdom, virtue, independence and happiness was critical for the Greek ethics after Socrates, but no-one was more concerned about it or deepen it so much as the Stoics did. They considered virtue as a sufficient condition of happiness, and even identified it with happiness, and deemed it the highest good or the only true good.²

The science of virtues was one of Seneca's most important philosophical considerations. Moreover, it had a considerable impact on the philosophy and

¹Cf. Krokiewicz 1978, 240–241.

²Cf. Tatarkiewicz 2005, 148.

theology of subsequent centuries. The virtue of *temperantia* is considered as one of the four cardinal virtues whose theory is rooted in Plato's writings, particularly the *Republic*. This blueprint of basic virtues became more significant in late Antiquity, mainly in the Christian tradition, where since the time of St. Ambrose of Milan (4th century) the teachings of the four virtues, from then on called *cardinal* ones, developed.

Seneca sees in philosophy *studium virtutis*,³ calling it also *vitae lex*.⁴ The only goal he sets for it is learning the truth about divine and human things ("huius opus unum est de divinis humanisque verum invenire").⁵ The generally perceived virtue has many variations that can be identified in keeping with various circumstances life and various activities of the man: "Ceterum multae eius species sunt, quae pro vitae varietate et pro actionibus explicantur."⁶ Nevertheless, all the virtues merge and create an entirety, like a retinue (*comitatus virtutum consertarum et inter se cohaerentium*).⁷ They are different names, as it were, of one virtuous man; they are all advantages of the same spirit ("unius animi bona sunt").⁸ Individual virtues are equal ("Ratio rationi par est, sicut rectum recto; ergo et virtus virtuti; nihil enim aliud est virtus quam recta ratio").⁹ as they are all based in the one and the same virtuousness which provides the soul with righteousness and invariability: "omnibus enim istis una virtus subest, quae animum rectum et indeclinabilem praestat."¹⁰

This principle also refers to the basic virtues, therefore *iustitia*, *temperantia*, *prudentia*, *fortitudo* appear in Seneca's philosophical writings mainly in a broader context, namely they often appear among other virtues. However, the Roman philosopher perceives the prominence of these four virtues, which can be testified to by a fragment in which Seneca, in drawing the picture of a virtuous man, explains, full of delight, that if we could look at the spirit of the virtuous man, we would see a very beautiful view, venerable and resplendent with clement brilliance, a view on the one side illuminated by justice, and on the other side by fortitude, and still on the third side by temperance, and finally prudence.

Si nobis animum boni viri liceret inspicere, o quam pulchram faciem, quam sanctam, quam ex magnifico placidoque fulgentem videremus, hinc iustitia, illinc fortitudine, hinc temperantia prudentiaque lucentibus!¹¹

³ Cf. *Ep.* 89, 8.

⁴ Cf. *Ep.* 94, 39.

⁵ *Ep.* 90, 3.

⁶ *Ep.* 66, 7.

⁷ Cf. *Ep.* 90, 3.

⁸ *Ben.* IV 8, 3.

⁹ *Ep.* 66, 32.

¹⁰ *Ep.* 66, 13.

¹¹ *Ep.* 115, 3.

These four most important virtues are joined in this spiritual picture of the man by others that add to the man beauty, significance and seriousness combined with the charm of dignity.¹² However, in this enumeration Seneca observes a certain sequence giving priority to the cardinal virtues.¹³

Passing on to the virtue of temperance, i.e. the notion *temperantia*, it's worth noticing that in his philosophical writings (naturally, the extant ones) Seneca mentioned this virtue eighteen times, the fewest number in comparison with the cardinal virtues. Furthermore, in the texts included in the Milan manuscript as *Dialogues*, the notion *temperantia* was only used in the dialogue *De vita beata*: twice in chapter ten and once in chapters twenty two and twenty five. In addition, Seneca mentioned this virtue once in the fourth book of *De beneficiis* together with other cardinal virtues. It also appears twice in *De clementia*. The most times, i.e. eleven, *temperantia* was mentioned in *Epistulae morales* – in nine letters, and thrice in letter 113.¹⁴

First, it's worth mentioning how the philosopher specified this virtue in his letter, in which he briefly defined four cardinal virtues. According to Seneca, *temperantia* consists in *cupiditates refrenare*,¹⁵ meaning *restraining lust and desire*. The verb *refrenare* calls up a legitimate association with the bit, *frenum*, from which it derives. It means *to restrain with the bit, tame*, and metaphorically also *to conquer, whip into line, restrict*.¹⁶ *Cupiditates* is also semantically related to the term *voluptates*, which appears in one of Seneca's letters with reference to temperance:

Temperantia voluptatibus imperat, alias odit atque abigit, alias dispensat et ad sanum modum redigit nec umquam ad illas propter ipsas venit; scit optimum esse modum cupitorum non quantum velis, sed quantum debeas sumere.¹⁷

Thus, the virtue of temperance is a power of giving orders to pleasures, to hate and chase away ones, and put in order others bringing them down to a

¹² *Ep.* 115, 3: "Praeter has frugalitas et continentia et tolerantia et liberalitas comitasque et (quis credat?) in homine rarum humanitas bonum splendorem illi suum adfunderent. Tunc providentia cum elegantia et ex istis magnanimitas eminentissima quantum, di boni, decoris illi, quantum ponderis gravitatisque adderent! quanta esset cum gratia auctoritas! Nemo illam amabilem qui non simul venerabilem diceret"; also, see Trillitzsch 1962, 112.

¹³ Their exceptional significance can be testified to by Seneca's dialogue *De officiis*, which was devoted to these virtues. However, it has not survived until the present time. To some extent, the content of dialogue *De officiis* can be introduced to us by an extensive extract from it made in the 6th century by bishop VI Martin of Braga (Bracara), and dedicated to king Miro – *Formula vitae honestae (Principles of virtuous life)*.

¹⁴ Statistical data after: Delatte, Evrard, Govaerts, Denooz 1981, 785.

¹⁵ Cf. *Ep.* 120, 11: "oportebat cupiditates refrenari."

¹⁶ Cf. Plezia 1974, 488.

¹⁷ *Ep.* 88, 29.

proper measure, never according to what the man wants, but what they should. Comte-Sponville concludes:

Temperance is not matter of refusing to enjoy ourselves or enjoying ourselves as little as possible. That would not be virtue but sadness, not moderation but impotence, not temperance but ascetism.¹⁸

Wyszomirski argues that in demonstrating in this fragment the role of temperance which it plays in removing lust, Seneca is in concord with the Stoic doctrine, and refers to the golden mean (ἕξις προαιρετικῆ ἐν μεσότητι¹⁹), which principle was compared by Aristotle to the virtue of temperance, wanting to say that compared to desire this virtue takes a middle place so that the man could not become voluptuous, but also it does not recommend the man to preserve excessive restraint.²⁰ As regards Seneca's views on the task that *temperantia* should serve towards lust, they are closest to the teachings of Aristo of Chios who ascribed the function of restraining of lust ἡ ἀρετὴ ἐπιθυμίαν δε. κοσμοῦσα και. τὸ μέτριον και. το. ευ;καιρον ἐν ἡδοναῖς ὀρίζουσα κέκληται σωφροσύνη το της αἰρτυε οφ σωφροσύνη.²¹

Thus, temperance is rightly associated with measure. Latin noun *modus* is also linked with verb *moderari* or adjective *modestus*, so no wonder that Cicero struggling with devising Latin philosophical terminology wrote about *moderatio* or *modestia* (he hesitated about the name *frugalitas*): “soleo equidem tum temperantiam, tum moderationem appellare, non numquam etiam modestiam; sed haud scio an recte ea virtus frugalitas appellari possit.”²² No doubt, in *moderatio* he saw one of the more cardinal virtues:

Nam cum omnis honestas manet a partibus quattuor, quarum una sit cognitionis, altera communitatis, tertia magnanimitatis, quarta moderationis, haec in deligendo officio saepe inter se comparentur necesse est.²³

The term *moderatio* and the like were also used by Seneca in his writings, which can be evidenced by a fragment from dialogue *De beneficiis*: “quae est enim alienam rem non accipere moderatio”?,²⁴ or other dialogues, like *De ira*:

‘Ita’ inquit, utilis adfectus est, si modicus est. Immo si natura utilis est. Sed si inpatiens imperii rationisque est, hoc dum taxat moderatione consequetur, ut quo minor fuerit minus noceat;

¹⁸ Comte-Sponville 2000, 38.

¹⁹ Arist, *EN*. 1106 b, 36.

²⁰ Compare Wyszomirski 1993, 87; also, see Arist, *EN*. 1107 b, 4–6.

²¹ *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* collegit Ioannes ab Armim, vol. III 262 Stuttgartiae 1964 I 375.

²² Cic. *Tusc.* III 16.

²³ Cic. *Off.* I 152.

²⁴ *Ben.* II 21, 4.

ergo modicus adfectus nihil aliud quam malum modicum est,²⁵ De tranquillitate animi: Sed, ut libertatis, ita vini salubris moderatio est,²⁶ or letters: ingentis irae exitus furor est, et ideo ira vitanda est non moderationis causa sed sanitatis,²⁷ moderatio vocatur ignavia,²⁸ (on the soul of Scipio the African) Animum quidem eius in caelum ex quo erat redisse persuadeo mihi, non quia magnos exercitus duxit (...), sed ob egregiam moderationem pietatemque.²⁹

Seemingly, the term *moderatio* is in Seneca equal to *temperantia*, as *moderatio* also has the task of restraining and calling to certain measure: *non moderatio refrenat ac revocat?*³⁰ Śnieżewski thinks just this, and gives other synonyms for the cardinal virtue of temperance: *modestia*, *continentia*, *clementia*, *constantia*. In the case of Seneca, however, it seems that *temperantia* is not identical with *moderatio*. This can be demonstrated by a fragment of one of the letters in which the philosopher, having discussed the virtue of *temperantia* (and still earlier *fortitudo*),³¹ explaining that liberal sciences teach the virtues, but he (philosophy) enumerates examples of virtues, among which there appears no name of any cardinal virtue. Moreover, the three terms (*modestia*, *moderatio*, *frugalitas*), over which Cicero in the above fragment) pondered as Latin terms-equivalents for Greek σωφροσύνη, here (in Seneca) are mentioned as separate virtues: “non magis quam simplicitatem, quam modestiam ac moderationem, non magis quam frugalitatem ac parsimoniam, non magis quam clementiam.”³² Therefore, it seems legitimate to adopt the name *temperantia* only to define one of the cardinal virtues, and this is assumed for the sake of this exposition.

It must be noticed that to this virtue, like to the virtue of justice or other virtues, refer certain general philosophical arrangements. Therefore, *temperantia* appears (as many as three times³³) beside other *virtutes* in Seneca’s considerations devoted to whether virtue is a living being. As other virtues, also *temperantia* is a real adornment of human soul as opposed to external decorations.³⁴ It is not an inborn gift either: one must become virtuous, and constantly exercise perfection.³⁵ Stoic virtue is the highest good, therefore its prize is in itself, so the virtues (including temperance) must be desired for themselves, and not for any material benefit.³⁶

²⁵ *Ira* I 10, 4.

²⁶ *Tr.* 17, 9.

²⁷ *Ep.* 18, 15.

²⁸ *Ep.* 45, 7.

²⁹ *Ep.* 86, 1.

³⁰ *Ep.* 106, 9.

³¹ Cf. *Ep.* 88, 29.

³² *Ep.* 88, 30.

³³ *Temperantia* in these considerations from *Ep.* 113 is mentioned in: 12, 15; 14, 11. 27.

³⁴ Cf. *Ep.* 115, 3.

³⁵ Cf. e.g. *Ep.* 90, 46.

³⁶ Cf. e.g. *Ben.* IV 12, 4.

It's worth reminding that in dialogue *De vita beata* Seneca in referring to Socrates ("Hoc tibi ille Socrates dicit"³⁷) introduces a division of virtues. Reminding that virtues are not acquired without effort, he divides the virtues into those that need a spur and those that need a bit: "Non est enim quod existimes ullam esse sine labore virtutem, sed quaedam virtutes stimulis, quaedam frenis egent."³⁸ Metaphorically, he explains that just as a man descending a steep slope must be restrained, and one climbing a steep mountain must be pushed, likewise, some virtues are on a steep hillside, and some go up. "Quemadmodum corpus in proclivi retineri debet, adversus ardua inpelli, ita quaedam virtutes in proclivi sunt, quaedam clivum subeunt."³⁹ To the former (ascending, exerting themselves and struggling ones) belong those virtues which are exposed to hardships, and conquer the fate, like patience, fortitude and perseverance: "An dubium est quin escendat nitatur obluctetur patientia fortitudo perseverantia et quaecumque alia duris opposita virtus est et fortunam subigit?"⁴⁰ Temperance (including generosity and graciousness), in turn, undoubtedly goes down the steep hillside: "non aequae manifestum est per devexum ire liberalitatem temperantiam mansuetudinem?"⁴¹ So, *temperantia* and similar virtues restrain the spirit not to fall down as opposed to the first-group virtues which encourage it and extremely keenly animate it: "In his continemus animum ne prolabatur, in illis exhortamur incitamusque acerrime."⁴² In subsequent statement: "Cum hoc ita divisum sit, malo has in usu mihi esse quae exercendae tranquillius sunt quam eas quarum experimentum sanguis et sudor est,"⁴³ echoes the philosopher's will to use more tranquil virtues in exercise (such as *temperantia*) rather than those which are associated with sweat and blood from the outset.

Coming back to the definition of *temperantia*, it's worth noticing that the Roman philosopher recommends temperance not only with reference to lust or pleasures, but also in human relations, particularly when it comes to punishing somebody. Precisely such a situation is described by Seneca in *De clementia* (this text is a peculiar handbook of wisdom for the young ruler, Nero, Seneca's student; in this writing the author mentioned *temperantia* twice, and each of these two fragments brings, as it were, a definition of this *virtus*), in book two, where he refers clemency (the title *clementia*) to this virtue. Concerned that *clementia* could be wrongly understood, and its pretence could lead to the opposite⁴⁴ of this virtue,

³⁷ *VB* 25, 4.

³⁸ *VB* 25, 5.

³⁹ *VB* 25, 6.

⁴⁰ *VB* 25, 6.

⁴¹ *VB* 25, 7.

⁴² *VB* 25, 7.

⁴³ *VB* 25, 8.

⁴⁴ Its opposite is not severity (as it's also a virtue, and virtues are oppose one another), but cruelty, i.e. ferocity in inflicting punishments: "Huic contrariam imperiti putant severitatem; sed

he wants to consider what it is like and what are its limits: “Et ne forte decipiat nos speciosum clementiae nomen aliquando et in contrarium abducat, videamus, quid sit clementia qualisque sit et quos fines habeat.”⁴⁵ First, he defines clemency by making reference to temperance of the soul – in the punishing power and punishing out of revenge: “Clementia est temperantia animi in potestate ulciscendi.”⁴⁶ The first definition is broadened by the philosopher by two subsequent ones to avoid a dangerous situation where one definition would not exhaust the subject matter, and the subject matter itself would be affected by an error in the formula (“Plura proponere tutius est, ne una finitio parum rem comprehendat et, ut ita dicam, formula excidat”⁴⁷). So, he defines clemency also as graciousness of a social superior towards a social inferior showed in punishment (“lenitas superioris adversus inferiorem in constituendis penis”), and as the soul’s disposition to lenience in punishing (“inclinatio animi ad lenitatem in poena exigenda”⁴⁸).

On these three terms Seneca in the treatise *De clementia* does not complete his definition of clemency, as he also puts forth a definition closest to the truth (in his opinion) of this virtue as moderation that somehow restrains punishment, although it may be rightly inflicted, however, the philosopher points out that such formulation may meet the utmost opposition, because no virtue does less than anybody deserves: “Illa finitio contradictiones inveniet, quamvis maxime ad verum accedat, si dixerimus clementiam esse moderationem aliquid ex merita ac debita poena remittentem: reclamabitur nullam virtutem cuiquam minus debito facere.”⁴⁹ To this problem Seneca answers that clemency, as it is commonly understood, consists precisely in alleviating of what can be justly adjudicated: “Atqui hoc omnes intellegunt clementiam esse, quae se flectit citra id, quod merito constitui posset.”⁵⁰ It’s worth adding that also in one of his letters the philosopher speaks similarly and quite vividly on clementia as a virtue that saves somebody else’s blood as one’s own, and knows that the man should not prodigally abuse other people: “alieno sanguini tamquam suo parcit et scit homini non esse homine prodige utendum.”⁵¹

nulla virtus virtuti contraria est. Quid ergo opponitur clementiae? Crudelitas, quae nihil aliud est quam atrocitas animi in exigendis poenis” (Cl. II 4, 1). On the other hand, people often confuse clemency with pity which is not a virtue, but a disease of the soul: “Ad rem pertinet quaerere hoc loco, quid sit misericordia; plerique enim ut virtutem eam laudant et bonum hominem vocant misericordem. Et haec vitium animi est. Utraque circa severitatem circaque clementiam posita sunt, quae vitare debemus; per speciem enim severitatis in crudelitatem incidimus, per speciem clementiae in misericordiam” (Cl. II 4, 4)

⁴⁵ Cl. II 3, 1.

⁴⁶ Cl. II 3, 1.

⁴⁷ Cl. II 3, 1.

⁴⁸ Cl. II 3, 1.

⁴⁹ Cl. II 3, 2.

⁵⁰ Cl. II 3, 2..

⁵¹ Ep. 88, 30.

Coming back to *De clementia*, it's worth looking at another fragment of book one. Also here, *temperantia* is combined with the virtue of clemency. First, Seneca reminds young Nero the history of his ancestor, cesar Augustus, presenting him as a clement ruler (although since he began ruling independently), as during the republic he had been famous for his severity in battle): "Hoc quam verum sit, admonere te exemplo domestico volo. Divus Augustus fuit mitis princeps, si quis illum a principatu suo aestimare incipiat; in communi quidem rei publicae gladium movit."⁵² Long singling out and presentation of the actions of the first Roman princeps is crowned by Seneca with a praise for Augustus whose deification he recognises with no compulsion, and whom he considers as a good ruler fully deserving to be called the homeland's father for the sole reason of having been clement, which is expressed by Seneca in four examples. Namely, he writes that Augustus never took any cruel revenge whatsoever for insulting him (which vices usually hurt rulers more than breaking the law), but he condoned insults with a smile. Apart from that, it was visible that he himself was suffering the punishments that he inflicted on other. And finally, those whom he convicted for adultery with his daughter he not only spared, but also gave recommendation letters to those banished for their greater safety.

Deum esse non tamquam iussi credimus; bonum fuisse principem Augustum, bene illi parentis nomen convenisse fatemur ob nullam aliam causam, quam quod contumelias quoque suas, quae acerbiores principibus solent esse quam iniuriae, nulla crudelitate exsequatur, quod probrosis in se dictis adrisit, quod dare illum poenas apparebat, cum exigeret, quod, quoscumque ob adulterium filiae suae damnaverat, adeo non occidit, ut dimissis, quo tutiores essent, diplomata daret.⁵³

The philosopher specifies with rapture as a real act of forgiveness, as the ruler not only spares the lives of the offenders, but also provides them with protection knowing that there will be many willing to help him out in anger by shedding the blood of others: "Hoc est ignoscere, cum scias multos futuros, qui pro te irascantur et tibi sanguine alieno gratificentur, non dare tantum salutem, sed praestare."⁵⁴ However, after all these praise there recurs the statement that such a ruler Augustus was only in his old age, or approaching it, but in his youth had been angry and did many things he averted his gaze from (literally: eyes) with aversion: "Haec Augustus senex aut iam in senectutem annis vergentibus; in adulescentia caluit, arsit ira, multa fecit, ad quae invitus oculos retorquebat."⁵⁵

Further on, Seneca makes outright reference to young Nero whom he does not want to compare to Augustus even in the latter's great age (he argues that

⁵² *Cl.* I 9, 1.

⁵³ *Cl.* I 10, 3.

⁵⁴ *Cl.* I 10, 4.

⁵⁵ *Cl.* I II, 1.

no-one would dare do that) for clemency. Although he confirms that the former with time became marked with restraint – Seneca uses here the term *moderatus* – and clemency, but only after many bloody war actions of which we reminds three. Namely, he invokes the sea Battle of Actium, in which Augustus defeated Antony and Cleopatra in 31 B.C., then the war with Sextus Pompeius (son of Pompey the Great) who after initial victories was finally defeated by him in Naulochos bay near the coast of Sicily in 36 B.C. on following six years of ever more fierce sea combat,⁵⁶ and finally the war with Lucius Antonius, brother of triumvir Antony, when, after conquering and burning Perusia in Etruria in 40 B.C., on the Ides of March he made bloody offering of several hundreds of his opponents taken captive despite their requesting and begging for acquittal or pardon.⁵⁷ Moreover, Augustus made a proscription:

Comparare nemo mansuetudini tuae audebit divum Augustum, etiam si in certamen iuveniliū annorum deduxerit senectutem plus quam maturam; fuerit moderatus et clemens, nempe post mare Actiacum Romano cruore infectum, nempe post fractas in Sicilia classes et suas et alienas, nempe post Perusinas aras et proscriptiones.⁵⁸

Thus, in Seneca's opinion this ruler was not actually clement (and, as it results from the context of the discussed fragment, he wasn't moderate either). The philosopher harshly expresses his view that he will not call tired cruelty clemency: "Ego vero clementiam non voco lassam crudelitatem."⁵⁹

An opposite example (this time totally positive) of the virtues of clemency and temperance is young Nero. Seneca extols him by writing that his clemency is real, because it does not result from his repentance for his sins, it has no flaws and is not soaked with citizen blood: "haec est, Caesar, clementia vera, quam tu praestas, quae non saevitiae paenitentia coepit, nullam habere maculam, numquam civilem sanguinem fudisse."⁶⁰ Further on, Seneca will revert to praising Nero as the ruler who saved the state from bloodshed, did not shed a single drop of human blood in the entire world, which must be admired all the more so as no-one had previously received the sword of power at such a young age: "Praestitisti, Caesar, civitatem incruentam, et hoc, quod magno animo

⁵⁶This battle is considered as the greatest and the most crucial sea combat ever fought in the ancient times on western waters – compare Cary, Scullard 1992, 573.

⁵⁷The events in Perusia were so described by Suetonius: "Perusia capta in plurimos animadvertit, orare veniam vel excusare se conantibus una voce occurrens, moriendum esse. Scribunt quidam, trecentos ex dediticiis electos, utriusque ordinis ad aram Divo Iulio extractam Idibus Martiis hostiarum more mactatos" (*Aug.* 15). In fact, Octavian greatly undermined his reputation then by sending to death the entire innocent city council of Perusia; Cf., e.g. Cary, Scullard 1992, 570.

⁵⁸*Cl.* I II, 1.

⁵⁹*Cl.* I II, 2.

⁶⁰*Cl.* I II, 2.

gloriatu es nullam te toto orbe stillam cruoris humani misisse, eo maius est mirabiliusque, quod nulli umquam citius gladius commissus est.”⁶¹

Here it’s worth reminding that Nero is only seventeen back then:

“all his predecessors were older by the time they received the emperor’s purple, even Caligula, (the youngest of them) was already 25. Thus, it was also his boyhood which made people like him and pin their hopes on him. People believed that the young emperor would introduce some joyfulness, fun and new ideas into his court and the whole city. Everybody knew (...) that Nero had received a very good education, directed by Seneca himself; that he adored everything, that was Greek; that he shared the interest in music and theatre that was normal for youngsters.”⁶²

Unfortunately, it must not be forgotten that shortly it was to turn out that Nero, like his predecessors, would stand in contradiction to the assumptions of the Stoic doctrine of the ruler. All those emperors were “quite the opposite of that ideal, although, at the moment of the investiture, the senate was likely to regard each of them as the incarnation of this Stoic doctrine of the ruler. While that balloon of illusions was being burst, some conflicts started and the emperors reacted in reprisals (...). That is why this period is known as a period of storm, dramatic tension and dramatic deaths.”⁶³

After the praise of Nero’s *clementia vera*, Seneca passes on immediately to *temperantia*. He gives a proper definition of this virtue in the person exercising supreme authority in the state. Namely, in the positive sense the ruler’s temperance is the most genuine when it means loving the human race as one’s own, and consequently, being moderate in a negative sense means for the ruler not to be guided by lust, recklessness, and not to imitate bad models left by previous rulers, trying to follow their example to examine to what extent one can be cruel to their citizens instead of blunting the blade of their power:

haec est in maxima potestate verissima animi temperantia et humani generis comprehendens ut sui amor non cupiditate aliqua, non temeritate ingenii, non priorum principum exemplis corruptum, quantum sibi cives suos liceat, experiendo temptare, sed hebetare aciem imperii sui.⁶⁴

It’s worth noticing that in the case of a good and clement ruler, his subjects should bear the bit he restricts them with as long as he lives and rules. Otherwise (when they strip it or won’t allow to impose it onto them again), their state will break up into many pieces. Seneca means a specific state, namely Roman one, and the system that prevails there:

⁶¹ *Cl.* I II, 3.

⁶² Krawczuk 1986, 67–68 (trans. by the ed.).

⁶³ Strzelecki 1965, 405. (trans. by the ed.)

⁶⁴ *Cl.* I 11, 2.

Hic casus Romanae pacis exitium erit, hic tanti fortunam populi in ruinas aget; tam diu ab isto periculo aberit hic populus, quam diu sciet ferre frenos, quos si quando abruperit vel aliquo casu discussos reponi sibi passus non erit, haec unitas et hic maximi imperii contextus in partes multas dissiliet, idemque huic urbi finis dominandi erit, qui parendi fuerit.⁶⁵

So temperantia of a clement ruler, respected by the citizens, ensures the state sustainability and unity. Therefore, Seneca sees this virtue in the ruler as strictly intertwined with *clementia*. This insight mainly results from the three above discussed fragments of his work *De clementia*.

Seneca writes about *temperantia* in yet other contexts. One of the most interesting (and somewhat contrasting with the message included in *De clementia*) is appearing of this virtue among the incentives to withdraw from any matters related to politics. In one of his letters, he begins this exposition with discussing people's relationship to their bodies, and states that they love it and try to protect it. Seneca himself agrees that caring for the body is right, the only thing that's wrong is serving it, because those who serve their bodies, who worry too much about them, and who relate everything to them, are at the service of many things. However, it is necessary for the man not to live for the body, but the way they couldn't live without the body. Otherwise, excessive love for one's body brings unrest and fears, and even insults, and, in addition, such a man finds no value in the virtue:

Fateor insitam esse nobis corporis nostri caritatem; fateor nos huius gerere tutelam. Non nego indulgendum illi, serviendum nego; multis enim serviet qui corpori servit, qui pro illo nimium timet, qui ad illud omnia refert. Sic gerere nos debemus, non tamquam propter corpus vivere debeamus, sed tamquam non possimus sine corpore; huius nos nimius amor timoribus inquietat, sollicitudinibus onerat, contumeliis obicit; honestum ei vile est cui corpus nimis carum est.⁶⁶

The philosopher emphasises that the body is not the highest value, and although it must be attentively cared for, the man must be ready to throw it into fire if so required by the mind or dignity: "Agatur eius diligentissime cura, ita tamen ut, cum exiget ratio, cum dignitas, cum fides, mittendum in ignes sit."⁶⁷ What results from this words is not contempt for the body, but only an indication that there are greater values than the body, about which he writes in another letter explaining that more important for the beauty of the body is beautiful spirit, as the soul is not marred by ugly body, whereas the soul's beauty adorns the body: "scire possemus non deformitate corporis foedari animum, sed pulchritudine animi corpus ornari."⁶⁸

⁶⁵ *Cl.* I 4, 2.

⁶⁶ *Ep.* 14, 1–2.

⁶⁷ *Ep.* 14, 2.

⁶⁸ *Ep.* 66, 4.

Seneca exhorts to avoid dangers and even discomforts as far as possible, that is, to withdraw to a safe place to contemplate there how to chase away ones fears: “Nihilominus quantum possumus evitemus incommoda quoque, non tantum pericula, et in tutum nos reducamus, excogitantes subinde quibus possint timenda depelli.”⁶⁹ These human fears are divided by the philosopher into three types. Namely, people are afraid of scarcity, diseases, and most of all, violence from the stronger, as it is accompanied by great uproar, turmoil and pump amid swords, fire, fetters, wild animals tearing human bodies to pieces (as opposed to natural afflictions, i.e. poverty and diseases, which silently creep in human lives without intimidating human senses, eyes or ears):

Quorum tria, nisi fallor, genera sunt: timetur inopia, timentur morbi, timentur quae per vim potentioris eveniunt. Ex his omnibus nihil nos magis concutit quam quod ex aliena potentia impendit; magno enim strepitu et tumultu venit. Naturalia mala quae rettuli, inopia atque morbus, silentio subeunt nec oculis nec auribus quicquam terroris incutiunt: ingens alterius mali pompa est; ferrum circa se et ignes habet et catenas et turbam ferarum quam in viscera immittat humana.⁷⁰

Seneca gives other attributes of violence done to people by the stronger by evoking prisons, crosses, horse-shaped instruments of torture, hooks, stakes coming out of staked people’s mouths, speeding carts pulling the body in opposite directions, inflammable tunics:

Cogita hoc loco carcerem et cruces et eculos et unicum et adactum per medium hominem qui per os emergeret stipitem et distracta in diversum actis curribus membra, illam tunicam alimentis ignium et illitam et textam, et quidquid aliud praeter haec commenta saevitia est.⁷¹

It must be remembered that those cruelties could be watched by the Romans, say, during shows organised by emperors.

According to Seneca, the greatest fear is aroused in the man not by poverty or diseases, but violence, and the reason is not its great diversity and horrific equipment, the mere sight of which appals people, as is often visible when an executioner unfolds his instruments of torture (although they would endure the torture itself). The same holds for the misfortunes afflicting human souls to conquer and subdue them. The most is achieved by those souls which demonstrate something:

Non est itaque mirum, si maximus huius rei timor est cuius et varietas magna et apparatus terribilis est. Nam quemadmodum plus agit tortor quo plura instrumenta doloris exposuit –

⁶⁹ *Ep.* 14, 3.

⁷⁰ *Ep.* 14, 3–4.

⁷¹ *Ep.* 14, 5.

specie enim vincuntur qui patientiae restitissent – ita ex iis quae animos nostros subigunt et domant plus proficiunt quae habent quod ostendant.⁷²

Seneca compares them to a great military which prevails with its mere appearance and armament: “haec ut magna bella aspectu paratuque vicerunt.”⁷³

From the above remarks Seneca will draw a conclusion to avoid situations in which one can fall into other person’s disfavour: *abstineamus offensis*.⁷⁴ The sage resembles a cautious helmsman who sticks to his course steering clear of notorious whirls: “longe ab illa regione verticibus infami cursum tenet.”⁷⁵ This is what the *sapiens* does, making sure first of all that his danger-avoiding is not visible. He does so because part of the security consists in not seeking it too overtly, as avoiding something also means reproving or judging it: “Idem facit sapiens: nocituram potentiam vitat, hoc primum cavens, ne vitare videatur; pars enim securitatis et in hoc est, non ex professo eam petere, quia quae quis fugit damnat.”⁷⁶ Apart from that, the philosopher advises to safeguard well against the populace in different ways. Hence, he recommends not to desire the same as others for there are arguments between rivals; secondly, not to possess too valuable things tempting a highwayman with a benefit, but wear as few clothes as possible that may fall prey to him (bloodshed for itself rarely takes place, and what in such an assault plays a major role is usually calculation, not hatred):

Circumspiciendum ergo nobis est quomodo a vulgo tuti esse possimus. Primum nihil idem concupiscamus: rixa est inter competitores. Deinde nihil habeamus quod cum magno emolumento insidiantis eripi possit; quam minimum sit in corpore tuo spoliolum. Nemo ad humanum sanguinem propter ipsum venit, aut admodum pauci; plures computant quam oderunt.⁷⁷

Seneca goes on to draw attention to avoiding (in accordance with an ancient principle) hatred, jealousy and contempt, and explains that only wisdom advises how to achieve it; therefore one must deal with philosophy: “Tria deinde ex praecepto veteri praestanda sunt ut vitentur: odium, invidia, contemptus. Quomodo hoc fiat sapientia sola monstrabit (...). Ad philosophiam ergo confugiendum est.”⁷⁸ Philosophy provides safety, shelter, becomes a peculiar place of refuge. As Seneca explains, it is quiet and occupied with itself, it cannot be despised since in contrast to other arts it enjoys respect of even the worst

⁷² *Ep.* 14, 6.

⁷³ *Ep.* 14, 6.

⁷⁴ *Ep.* 14, 7.

⁷⁵ *Ep.* 14, 8.

⁷⁶ *Ep.* 14, 8.

⁷⁷ *Ep.* 14, 9.

⁷⁸ *Ep.* 14, 10.

people; never will wickedness gain such power, and never will such a conspiracy against the virtues be hatched so the name of philosophy could not remain venerable and holy:

haec quieta et sui negotii contemni non potest, cui ab omnibus artibus etiam apud pessimos honor est. Numquam in tantum convalescet nequitia, numquam sic contra virtutes coniurabitur, ut non philosophiae nomen venerabile et sacrum maneat.⁷⁹

At this point of his deliberations, the Roman philosopher comes to the matter of restraint in philosophy. He continues to recommend, both generally in life and now in philosophy, peace and moderation: “philosophia ipsa tranquille modesteque tractanda est.”⁸⁰ He anticipates the allegation that after all Cato did not philosophise with restraint, since he even suppressed a civil war, stood amid troops of frenzied leaders, he fell into disfavour of Pompey and Caesar: “Quid ergo?” inquis ‘videtur tibi M. Cato modeste philosophari, qui bellum civile sententia reprimi? qui furentium principum armis medius intervenit? qui aliis Pompeium offendentibus, aliis Caesarem, simul lacessit duos?’,⁸¹ and explains that both those and recent times have not given the philosophy its rightful place, therefore the sage should not deal with politics, and invites to the circle of those Stoics who keeping away from state affairs moved aside to (not defying established customs or drawing people’s attention to their unusual way of life) devote themselves to ennobling their lives and creating laws for the mankind while not offending those who have greater power.

Ultimas partes attingi Catonis; sed ne priores quidem anni fuerunt qui sapientem in illam rapinam rei publicae admitterent. (...) Sed postea videbimus an sapienti opera rei publicae danda sit: interim ad hos te Stoicos voco qui a re publica exclusi secesserunt ad colendam vitam et humano generi iura condenda sine ulla potentioris offensa. Non conturbabit sapiens publicos mores nec populum in se vitae novitate convertet.⁸²

Admittedly, such behaviour does not guarantee security, but increases it, for which he gives an example of ships some of which really perish at port, but it happens more frequently on the high seas (“Perit aliqua navis in portu: sed quid tu accidere in medio mari credis?”⁸³). The same holds for people. Much greater dangers are waiting for those who deal and trouble themselves with many matters, for whom even rest is not safe; the guilty perish more often than the innocent; even a master happens to be struck by his work, but he stays proficient in his art:

⁷⁹ *Ep.* 14, 11.

⁸⁰ *Ep.* 14, 11.

⁸¹ *Ep.* 14, 12.

⁸² *Ep.* 14, 13–14.

⁸³ *Ep.* 14, 15.

Quanto huic periculum paratius foret multa agenti molientique, cui ne otium quidem tutum est? Pereunt aliquando innocentes – quis negat? – nocentes tamen saepius. Ars ei constat qui per ornamenta percussus est.⁸⁴

Among these remarks, there appears the following one:

“Quid ergo? utique erit tutus qui hoc propositum sequetur?” Promittere tibi hoc non magis possum quam in homine temperanti bonam valetudinem, et tamen facit temperantia bonam valetudinem.⁸⁵

Temperantia appears in response to the question about the sage’s effective withdrawal from public affairs to ensure himself safe life. Finally, Seneca will answer that the sage cares for the purpose of all things, and not their final effect, because whereas the beginning of these matters lies within human power, however, their result depends on the fortune, although this *fortuna* does not have the final say on the man: “Denique consilium rerum omnium sapiens, non exitum spectat; initia in potestate nostra sunt, de eventu fortuna iudicat, cui de me sententiam non do.”⁸⁶ Nevertheless, before this answer is given, the philosopher evokes, among others, the above mentioned picture of the moderate man, to whom *temperantia* guarantees health to a certain degree.

At this point, it can be reminded that Seneca, among the misfortunes afflicting man, mentioned scarcity (hunger and thirst) and diseases (like ulcers in the bowels and fever that devours them). In contrast to the violence from the stronger, these are not at all lesser, however, as opposed to violence, they remain in hiding, they show nothing, and thereby they do not instigate fear.

Illae pestes non minus graves sunt – famem dico et sitim et praecordiorum suppurationes et febrem viscera ipsa torrentem – sed latent, nihil habent quod intentent, quod praeferant: haec ut magna bella aspectu paratuque vicerunt.⁸⁷

The philosopher writes no more about these afflictions, however, its worth invoking a fragment of another letter.

Namely, there appears a theme of the virtue of temperance in the context of disease when Seneca describes to Lucius a meeting with Claranus, a friend from school time (“Claranum condiscipulum meum vidi post multos annos”⁸⁸). The man, although we was already old, and his body was tired, stayed young and strong in spirit, which for the philosopher proves that (although it seems that nature was unjust in this case by placing so great a spirit in so small a body) the

⁸⁴ *Ep.* 14, 15.

⁸⁵ *Ep.* 14, 15.

⁸⁶ *Ep.* 14, 16.

⁸⁷ *Ep.* 14, 16.

⁸⁸ *Ep.* 66, 1.

bravest and greatest spirit can be hidden behind any skin. Claranus overcame all obstacles, and by disdaining himself he disdained other things:

non, puto, exspectas ut adiciam senem, sed mehercules viridem animo ac vigentem et cum corpusculo suo colluctantem. Inique enim se natura gessit et talem animum male collocavit; aut fortasse voluit hoc ipsum nobis ostendere, posse ingenium fortissimum ac beatissimum sub qualibet cute latere. Vicit tamen omnia impedimenta et ad cetera contemnenda a contemptu sui venit.⁸⁹

For Seneca, he became an evidence of the fact that virtue needs no embellishment, as it is a huge adornment for itself, and sanctifies the body in which it settles. Therefore, Seneca even began to look differently at his friend from the old times, who now looks beautiful and good to him both in terms of the body and the soul: “Non enim ullo honestamento eget: ipsa magnum sui decus est et corpus suum consecrat. Aliter certe Claranum nostrum coepi intueri: formosus mihi videtur et tam rectus corpore quam est animo.”⁹⁰ After all, virtue can grow in everyone (“virtutem omni loco nasci”⁹¹). Claranus demonstrates that body ugliness does not mar the soul, and the soul’s beauty adorns the body: “Claranus mihi videtur in exemplar editus, ut scire possemus non deformitate corporis foedari animum, sed pulchritudine animi corpus ornari.”⁹²

The meeting with Claranus bore fruit with several remarks on disease-enduring in the letter. In the conversation with his old school friend, Seneca pondered on equality of all goods despite their three-fold condition (in accordance with the Stoic doctrine): “Hoc primo die quaesitum est, quomodo possint paria bona esse, si triplex eorum condicio est.”⁹³ The first group of goods includes, among others, joy, peace, the good of the homeland (“Quaedam, ut nostris videtur, prima bona sunt, tamquam gaudium, pax, salus patriae”), and in the second group there appears *temperantia* in serious illness coupled with patient enduring of torments (“quaedam secunda, in materia infelici expressa, tamquam tormentorum patientia et in morbo gravi temperantia”⁹⁴). The difference between these groups of goods consists in that the first ones are wished by people just like that, and the other ones by necessity: “Illa bona derecto optabimus nobis, haec, si necesse erit.”⁹⁵ One can add that Seneca observes a similar division in Epicurus who divides them into those he wishes (like body rest free from tribulation, and soul repose enjoying the view of its goods), and those he does not want to happen, yet he

⁸⁹ *Ep.* 66, 1.

⁹⁰ *Ep.* 66, 2.

⁹¹ *Ep.* 66, 3.

⁹² *Ep.* 66, 4.

⁹³ *Ep.* 66, 5.

⁹⁴ *Ep.* 66, 5.

⁹⁵ *Ep.* 66, 5.

endorses and approves them (like enduring bad health condition and the gravest sufferings):

Dabo apud Epicurum tibi etiam nunc simillimam huic nostrae divisionem bonorum. Alia enim sunt apud illum quae malit contingere sibi, ut corporis quietem ab omni incommodo liberam et animi remissionem bonorum suorum contemplatione gaudentis; alia sunt quae, quamvis nolit accidere, nihilominus laudat et comprobat, tamquam illam quam paulo ante dicebam malae valetudinis et dolorum gravissimorum perpersionem.⁹⁶

Following the Stoic doctrine, Seneca says that there is a third group of goods, like regular gait, calm and modest facial expression, or movements proper for a thoughtful man: “Sunt adhuc tertia, tamquam modestus incessus et compositus ac probus vultus et conveniens prudenti viro gestu.”⁹⁷

Initially, Seneca follows this Stoic doctrine of division of the goods, and hesitates about whether these goods may be equal since one should be wished and others averted: “Quomodo ista inter se paria esse possunt, cum alia optanda sint, alia aversanda?”⁹⁸ This division, invoked by the philosopher, may raise concern about the value of temperance, after all one of the cardinal virtues.

In discussing the first goods,⁹⁹ Seneca sees in them a state of mind, which is a virtue. “talis animus virtus est.”¹⁰⁰ Virtue is equal in all its varieties, thus, it clearly results from the philosopher’s reasoning that virtue is also unchanging, its significance and value cannot even grow any more, as no attribute that manifests itself to the greatest extent is not going to increase over time, which can be testified to by the fact that there can be found nothing fairer than the fair, nothing truer than the true or (what’s particularly essential for the subject matter) more moderate than the moderate: “Itaque vis eius et magnitudo ultra non potest surgere, quando incrementum maximo non est: nihil invenies rectius recto, non magis quam verius vero, quam temperato temperatius.”¹⁰¹

Every virtue has its due measure and size: “Omnis in modo est virtus; modo certa mensura est,”¹⁰² and as virtue equal one another, so do virtue deeds and individuals who attained the virtues: “virtutes inter se pares sunt et opera virtutis et omnes homines quibus illae contingere.”¹⁰³ Finally, Seneca decides that there are no differences among the manifestations of good, and therefore joy for instance (from the first group of goods, mentioned at the beginning of the letter), and steady enduring of torments (from the second group, which also includes similar

⁹⁶ *Ep.* 66, 47.

⁹⁷ *Ep.* 66, 5.

⁹⁸ *Ep.* 66, 6.

⁹⁹ *Ep.* 66, 6 et seq.

¹⁰⁰ *Ep.* 66, 6.

¹⁰¹ *Ep.* 66, 8.

¹⁰² *Ep.* 66, 9.

¹⁰³ *Ep.* 66, 10.

temperantia in serious illness) are equal, because in both of them the same spirit magnitude is visible: “Paria itaque sunt et gaudium et fortis atque obstinata tormentorum perpassio; in utroque enim eadem est animi magnitudo.”¹⁰⁴

The philosopher anticipates a question whether the goods like joy and steadfast enduring of pain really differ in nothing, and answers that in nothing, as regards the virtues themselves, only they differ greatly with relation to what these virtue manifest themselves, as in the former there appears natural rest and relief, and in the latter – unnatural pain:

Quid ergo? nihil interest inter gaudium et dolorum inflexibilem patientiam? Nihil, quantum ad ipsas virtutes: plurimum inter illa in quibus virtus utraque ostenditur; in altero enim naturalis est animi remissio ac laxitas, in altero contra naturam dolor.¹⁰⁵

It’s worth noting that later the expression *contra naturam* with reference to the goods is explained by the author of the letter as follows: the goods themselves are by no means contrary to nature, only sometimes what’s contrary to nature is that with regard to which the good originates, e.g. being injured, frying on fire, or being tormented by an illness are examples of things contrary to nature, however, behaviour of the spirit among those torments corresponds to nature.

Quid ergo? aliquid contra naturam bonum est? Minime; sed id aliquando contra naturam est in quo bonum illud existit. Vulnerari enim et subiecto igne tabescere et adversa valetudine affligi contra naturam est, sed inter ista servare animum infatigabilem secundum naturam est.¹⁰⁶

In conclusion, the philosopher argues that the causes of the good are sometimes contrary to nature, but the good itself is never like that: “... breviter, materia boni aliquando contra naturam est bonum numquam.”¹⁰⁷

Coming back to the previous fragment of the letter, it can be noticed that in continuing his reasoning Seneca once again confirms that the content of experience does not change the virtue itself; the virtue remains equal, identical, as neither the painful and difficult content makes it worse, nor the joyous and cheerful content makes it better: “Virtutem materia non mutat: nec peiorem facit dura ac difficilis nec meliorem hilaris et laeta; necessest ergo par sit.”¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, the virtue is equally worthy of praise: whether placed in a sound body free from anxieties, or in a sick body stricken by suffering: “aeque laudabilis virtus est in corpore valido ac libero posita quam in morbido ac vincto.”¹⁰⁹ What’s

¹⁰⁴ *Ep.* 66, 12.

¹⁰⁵ *Ep.* 66, 14.

¹⁰⁶ *Ep.* 66, 38.

¹⁰⁷ *Ep.* 66, 39.

¹⁰⁸ *Ep.* 66, 15.

¹⁰⁹ *Ep.* 66, 22.

interesting, further on Seneca will express his daring view that if some goods were to be greater than others, then those that seem unpleasant would be valued by him more than the pleasant and nice ones, and he would even call them more important, because it's more meaningful to overcome difficulties than search for meaning in prosperity:

Permitte mihi, Lucili virorum optime, aliquid audacius dicere: si ulla bona maiora esse aliis possent, haec ego quae tristia videntur mollibus illis et delicatis praetulissem, haec maiora dixissem. Maius est enim difficilia perfringere quam laeta moderari.¹¹⁰

Further on in his deliberations, Seneca once again, in a still clearer expression, emphasises that three types of goods (about which he wrote at the beginning of his letter) are equal: “Quod si par omnium virtutum natura est, tria genera bonorum in aequo sunt.”¹¹¹ Temperance is recommended both in suffering and joy, and is equally valuable in both these cases: “in aequo est moderate gaudere et moderate dolere.”¹¹² After all, the health alike is of equal value (whether it is not weakened by anything, “inconcussa valetudo”, or it is restored using strong means and patience after serious and life-threatening diseases, “ex gravibus morbis et extrema minitantibus in tutum vi quadam et patientia educta”¹¹³), because the only objective of the goods is correspondence with nature, and this is the same in all the goods: “Bonorum unum propositum est consentire naturae; hoc [contingere] in omnibus par est.”¹¹⁴ Seneca gives an example of Epicurus who considered enduring serious illnesses to be a good while knowing well what suffering meant as there had been a day in his life (the greatest and the happiest day), when due to a bladder condition and stomach irritation he endured torments that could not be greater, and still, he called that day happy for himself:

... malae valetudinis et dolorum gravissimorum perpersionem, in qua Epicurus fuit illo summo ac fortunatissimo die suo. Ait enim se vesicae et exulcerati ventris tormenta tolerare ulteriorem doloris accessionem non recipientia, esse nihilominus sibi illum beatum diem.¹¹⁵

It may be recalled that among human afflictions, beside diseases and violence, Seneca also mentioned scarcity, and devoted some space to this problem. The

¹¹⁰ *Ep.* 66, 49. It's worth noting that in another place Seneca highly appreciated such values as good health. He explains that in a frail body or having lost an eye he will certainly be well knowing that inside he has something stronger than the body, however, he would prefer to have a strong body; so, he will be enduring his bad health, but craving for the good one: “Et exilis corpore aut amisso oculo valebit, malet tamen sibi esse corporis robur, et hoc ita ut sciat esse aliud in se valentius; malam valetudinem tolerabit, bonam optabit” (*VB* 22, 2)

¹¹¹ *Ep.* 66, 29.

¹¹² *Ep.* 66, 29.

¹¹³ Cf. *Ep.* 66, 40.

¹¹⁴ *Ep.* 66, 41.

¹¹⁵ *Ep.* 66, 47.

issue of richness or its lack is quite often addressed in the writings of Seneca – philosopher and concurrently one of the wealthiest Romans at that time.

In the dialogue *De vita beata*, Seneca’s interesting utterance on wealth can be found, just as one on *temperantia*. Namely, possibly in defence of severe allegations of why he was so eager to deal with philosophy while being extremely rich (“Quare ille philosophiae studiosus est et tam dives vitam agit?”¹¹⁶), he strongly argues that there is no doubt that spiritual merits can be developed more in richness than poverty: “Quid autem dubii est quin haec maior materia sapienti viro sit animum explicandi suum in divitiis quam in paupertate.”¹¹⁷ *Paupertas* only favours one type of virtue, that is, it helps not to break down or get overwhelmed: “in hac unum genus virtutis sit non inclinari nec deprimi.”¹¹⁸

It’s different in the case of scarcity, as richness gives ample room to develop any other virtues, including temperance, but also generosity, diligence, frugality or magnanimity: “in divitiis et temperantia et liberalitas et diligentia et dispositio et magnificentia campum habeat patentem.”¹¹⁹

Wealth plays little role in acquiring virtues, including temperance, and can be taken away without major harm to the basic good (after all, riches are possessed by the sage, and not the other way around, like it happens with people who are not sages: “divitiae meae sunt, tu divitiarum es”¹²⁰), however, it belongs to the goods which to some extent contribute to incessant joy (originating in virtue): “Quaedam enim, etiam si in summam rei parva sunt [ait] et subduci sine ruina principalis boni possunt, adiciunt tamen aliquid ad perpetuam laetitiam et ex virtute nascentem.”¹²¹

In the context of this cheering function of wealth in the sage’s life, it’s worth recalling Seneca’s utterance on pleasure. It is particularly relevant as it is pleasure, lust and delight that the definition of *temperantia* in Seneca’s writings is related to: *cupiditas refrenare*.¹²² So, it’s not surprising for the Greek philosopher to say that the greatest human joy does not involve the body, as the real, permanent and eternal goods are only those that are provided by the mind: “Non est summa felicitatis nostrae in carne ponenda: bona illa sunt vera quae ratio dat, solida ac sempiterna, quae cadere non possunt, ne decrescere quidem ac minui.”¹²³ The other goods are called by Seneca presumed goods (*opinione bona*), and he only refers to them as comforts (*commoda*) and stately things

¹¹⁶ *VB* 21,1.

¹¹⁷ *VB* 22,1.

¹¹⁸ *VB* 22,1.

¹¹⁹ *VB* 22,1.

¹²⁰ *VB* 22,5.

¹²¹ *VB* 22,3.

¹²² Cf. *Ep.* 120, 11.

¹²³ *Ep.* 74, 16.

(*producta*)¹²⁴ whose using also requires participation of the mind which helps keep them longer; in addition, it must be remembered that happiness itself requires temperance not to be a torment: “Quisquis illa sine ratione possedit non diu tenuit; ipsa enim se felicitas, nisi temperatur, premit. Si fugacissimis bonis creditur, cito deseritur, et, ut deseratur, affligitur.”¹²⁵ Therefore, the philosopher draws attention to two aspects of possessing those *opinionem bona*: they fade away extremely quickly, and the man keeps on caring for them so they do not leave, while protecting temperance and reasonable approach to those goods.

The Roman philosopher argues that it is commonly known that the more stupid one is, the more delight they take, and that even wickedness flows with pleasures, and the soul itself provides many wicked delights, among them first of all wastefulness, too high opinion of oneself, pride lordling it over others, blind and unreasonable love of one’s things, great joy for most trivial or even childish reasons, followed by (as a second group of delights as it were) garrulousness, mockery-enjoying aloofness, sloth, and laziness of sluggish spirit flowing with pleasures and dozing in itself:

Atqui quis ignorat plenissimos esse voluptatibus vestris stultissimos quosque et nequitiam abundare iucundis animumque ipsum genera voluptatis prava et multa suggerere? — in primis insolentiam et nimiam aestimationem sui tumoremque elatum super ceteros et amorem rerum suarum caecum et improvidum et ex minimis ac puerilibus causis exultationem, iam dicacitatem ac superbiam contumeliis gaudentem, desidia dissolutionemque segnis animi, deliciis fluentis, indormientis sibi.¹²⁶

Having counted these examples of delights, the philosopher explains how virtue is related to them. So, virtue dispels them, and pulls the man’s ear: “Haec omnia virtus discutit et aurem pervellit.”¹²⁷ It’s worth explaining that the ancients considered the ear as the source of memory, about which Pliny the Elder wrote: “est in aure ima memoriae locus.”¹²⁸ Thus, pulling one’s ears may mean reminding someone their duties, obligations, reprimand or warning.¹²⁹ Seneca goes on to explain that virtue evaluates any pleasure before admitting it, and never any delight (none of the above mentioned groups); even if virtue admits it, it does not hold it in high esteem or enjoy using it: “et voluptates aestimat antequam admittat nec quas probavit magni pendit aut utique enim

¹²⁴ Cf. *Ep.* 74, 17. Term *producta* is a translation of Greek προηγμένα (compare Cicero, *De finibus bonorum et malorum* 3, 52: “productum esse ad dignitatem”).

¹²⁵ *Ep.* 74, 18.

¹²⁶ *VB* 10, 2

¹²⁷ *VB* 10, 3

¹²⁸ Plin. *Nat.* 11, 103 [251].

¹²⁹ Cf. Joachimowicz 1989, 698.

admittit nec usu earum (...) laeta est.”¹³⁰ Here, Seneca invokes temperance as a kind of contrast to all those delights. *Temperantia* is the reason for joy for the virtue: “... sed temperantia laeta est.”¹³¹ In an imaginary conversation with his opponent, Seneca says:

Temperantia autem, cum [voluptates] minuat, summi boni iniuria est. Tu voluptatem complecteris, ego compesco; tu voluptate frueris, ego utor; tu illam summum bonum putas, ego nec bonum; tu omnia voluptatis causa facis, ego nihil.¹³²

So, the philosopher does not embrace delight, but restricts it, he does not enjoy it, but uses it, he neither recognises it as the highest good, but fails to recognise it as the good at all, and finally, he does nothing in its name.

Further on in his exposition, Seneca establishes: “Non voco autem sapientem supra quem quicquam est, necdum voluptas.”¹³³ Hence, the philosopher may not depend on anything, an particularly delight. If he is overwhelmed by it, he will not stand up to hardships, dangers, poverty or so many other hazards that await everywhere, murmuring, to take human lives; neither will he bear the sight of death, sufferings, world bangs, a storm of the most severe enemies, since he has been defeated by delight, such a gentle opponent:

Atqui ab hac occupatus quomodo resistet labori et periculo, egestati et tot humanam vitam circumstrepentibus minis? Quomodo conspectum mortis, quomodo dolores feret, quomodo mundi fragores et tantum acerrimorum hostium, a tam molli adversario victus?¹³⁴

This will not be good for people overwhelmed by lust, as, although they live in delight, their happiness does not stem from the good: “Hos esse in voluptatibus dices, nec tamen illis bene erit, quia non bono gaudent.”¹³⁵ Those who take advantage of any delights (“magnas percipient voluptates”) are called by Seneca as fools (*stulti*) and fickle (*inaequales*), as well as mad and insane with delirious smile (“hilarem insaniam insanire as per risum furere”), although he believes that they sometimes feel sorry (“sub intu paenitentiae positi”).¹³⁶ What they are really missing is both virtue and delight, as they lose the former, and lack the latter, because they are possessed by delight which torments them by its shortage, and on other occasions by its excess, which Seneca illustrates by sailors on the sand, and their struggling with a tempest:

¹³⁰ *VB* 10, 3.

¹³¹ *VB* 10, 3.

¹³² *VB* 10, 3.

¹³³ *VB* 11, 1.

¹³⁴ *VB* 11, 1.

¹³⁵ *VB* 11, 4.

¹³⁶ Cf. *VB* 12, 1.

At ei qui voluptati tradidere principia utroque caruere; virtutem enim amittunt, ceterum non ipsi voluptatem, sed ipsos voluptas habet, cuius aut inopia torquentur aut copia strangulantur, miseri si deseruntur ab illa, miseriores si obruuntur; sicut deprenti mari Syrtico modo in sicco relinquuntur, modo torrente unda fluctuantur.¹³⁷

Undoubtedly, such people are not distinguished by *temperantia*. On the contrary, they are characterised by their *intemperantia*: “Evenit autem hoc nimia intemperantia et amore caeco rei.”¹³⁸ In striving for bad things instead for good ones, they are working towards their goal among hazards: “nam mala pro bonis petenti periculosum est adsequi.”¹³⁹

Seneca customarily illustrates this thought using an example. Namely, lustful people resemble hunters of wild animals which sometimes still tear their hunters to pieces after being caught, because great libertines fall into great misfortunes, and sometimes they get caught by what they caught (and the more numerous and greater those things are, the more debased and slave to more delights the libertine is, whom the rabble calls lucky):

Ut feras cum labore periculoque venamur et captarum quoque illarum sollicita possessio est – saepe enim laniant dominos – ita habent se magnae voluptates: in magnum malum evasere captaeque cepere; quae quo plures maioresque sunt, eo ille minor ac plurium servus est quem felicem vulgus appellat.¹⁴⁰

The philosopher does not want to forsake his comparison of lustful man to the hunter (“Permanere libet in hac etiam nunc huius rei imagine”¹⁴¹), as he wants to draw attention to another thing. Namely, The hunter inspects the lair of a wild animal, and strains to catch it using a net and dogs (Seneca invokes a poetic fragment of Vergil’s *Georgics*¹⁴²):

Quemadmodum qui bestiarum cubilia indagat et
laqueo captare feras
 magno aestimat et
*latos canibus circumdare saltus.*¹⁴³

Moreover, to be able to chase wild animals, he abandons many more important matters, and pushes aside his duties: “illarum vestigia premat, potiora

¹³⁷ *VB* 14, 1; the mentioned *mare Syrticum* is two gulfs, Great Sirte and Minor Sirte, off the northern coast of Africa; *syrtis* (Greek σὺρτις) means a sirte, a sandbank near the coast; these two African sirtes were particularly famous – Cf. e.g. Kruczkiewicz 1925, 856.

¹³⁸ *VB* 14, 2.

¹³⁹ *VB* 14, 2.

¹⁴⁰ *VB* 14, 2.

¹⁴¹ *VB* 14, 3.

¹⁴² Cf. Verg. *Georg.* I 139–140: “tunc laqueis captare feras et fallere visco / inventum et magnos canibus circumdare saltus”; this fragment is quoted by Seneca in full, also in *Ep.* 90, 11.

¹⁴³ *VB* 14, 3.

deserit multisque officiis renuntiat.”¹⁴⁴ In Seneca’s opinion, such behaviour reveals the similarity between a man indulging himself to delight, who follows it putting everything else beneath it, and particularly he neglects freedom by using it to pay for stomach delights, whereas, in reality, he does not buy the delights, but sells himself to them: “qui sectatur voluptatem omnia postponit et primam libertatem negligit ac pro ventre dependit, nec voluptates sibi emit sed se voluptatibus vendit.”¹⁴⁵

The philosopher’s delights are demonstrated by Seneca as totally different from those mentioned above. The sage’s delights are quiet and moderate, almost languid, muffled, barely visible, because they do not come on request, and they are neither held in esteem (should they come all by themselves) nor are welcomed by those who already experience them, mixing them with other games and entertainments of life:

At contra sapientium remissae voluptates et modestae ac paene languidae sunt compressaeque et vix notabiles, ut quae neque accersitae veniant nec, quamvis per se accesserint, in honore sint neque ullo gaudio percipientium exceptae; miscent enim illas et interponunt vitae ut ludum iocumque inter seria.¹⁴⁶

What’s most important for the sage is virtue which guides him and carries a banner in front of him, as it were, and as regards delight, he is its master and the one who moderates it, therefore it can only entreat something with him, but it is surely not able to force him to do anything: “Prima virtus eat, haec ferat signa: habebimus nihilominus voluptatem, sed domini eius et temperatores erimus; aliquid nos exorabit, nihil coget.”¹⁴⁷ Seneca uses the term *temperator* in this fragment. Undoubtedly, this term is associated with the virtue of *temperantia*, which is possessed by the sage, and this is particularly visible in his relation to *voluptas*, as it must be remembered that temperance is *voluptatibus imperare* or *cupiditates refrenare*.¹⁴⁸

Virtus and *voluptas* are impossible to reconcile. Seneca explains that part of what’s noble should also be like that: “pars honesti non potest esse nisi honestum,”¹⁴⁹ which implies that *voluptas* is not *honesta*. Another argument against combining (or merging¹⁵⁰) virtue with delight is arguing that the highest good would not maintain its purity if it had in itself anything different than the better whole: “nec summum bonum habebit sinceritatem suam, si aliquid in se viderit dissimile meliori.”¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁴ *VB* 14, 3.

¹⁴⁵ *VB* 14, 3.

¹⁴⁶ *VB* 12, 2.

¹⁴⁷ *VB* 14, 1.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. *Ep.* 88, 29; 120, 11.

¹⁴⁹ *VB* 15, 1.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. *VB* 15, 1: “... in unum virtutem voluptatemque confundi.”

¹⁵¹ *VB* 15, 1.

The philosopher cautions against merging virtue with delight by claiming that anyone who does that (even not placing them on equal footing) weaken with the mediocrity of one good the entire force of the other, and submits to the yoke of slavery this freedom which is invincible when the man has nothing more precious than this: “Qui vero virtutis voluptatisque societatem facit et ne ex aequo quidem, fragilitate alterius boni quidquid in altero vigoris est hebetat libertatemque illam, ita demum si nihil se pretiosius novit invictam, sub iugum mittit.”¹⁵² As a result of such improper actions, the man falls into greatest captivity, that is, the man becomes dependent on the fate, thereby living restlessly, suspiciously, fearfully, afraid of coincidences, subject to time; and it must be remembered that such a life is not a strong or stable foundation for virtue, but only an unstable little support: “Nam, quae maxima servitus est, incipit illi opus esse fortuna; sequitur vita anxia, suspiciosa, trepida, casum pavens, temporum suspensa momentis. Non das virtuti fundamentum grave, immobile, sed iubes illam in loco volubili stare.”¹⁵³

In general terms, these remarks concern all people: not only an average citizen, but also the ruler (which can be seen in the expression “patriae bonus tutor aut vindex”). Seneca claims that those who are guided by the tiniest impulses of delight and pain that convulse them constantly will not be obedient to god, and will not quietly accept what happens, but will complain about what the fate brings, and thus such people turned to delight will neither be good defenders or liberators of their homeland nor even guardians of their friends:

Quomodo hic potest deo parere et quidquid evenit bono animo excipere nec de fato queri casuum suorum benignus interpret, si ad voluptatum dolorumque punctiunculas concutitur? Sed ne patriae quidem bonus tutor aut vindex est nec amicorum propugnator, si ad voluptates vergit.¹⁵⁴

The highest good must be in a safe place. Seneca explains that it must stand so high that no force could knock it off from there, and it couldn't be reached by pain, hope, fear or any thing than could deplete its rights: “Illo ergo summum bonum escendat unde nulla vi detrahitur, quo neque dolori neque spei nec timori sit aditus nec ulli rei quae deterius summi boni ius faciat.”¹⁵⁵ Surely, only virtue can reach such heights, because it will stand courageously, it will eagerly endure any events knowing that present difficulties are established by nature, and it will follow god:

escendere autem illo sola virtus potest. (...) illa fortiter stabit et quidquid evenerit feret non patiens tantum sed etiam volens, omnemque temporum difficultatem sciet legem esse naturae et (...) habebit illud in animo vetus praeceptum: deum sequere.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵² *VB* 15, 3.

¹⁵³ *VB* 15, 3–4.

¹⁵⁴ *VB* 15, 4.

¹⁵⁵ *VB* 15, 5.

¹⁵⁶ *VB* 15, 5.

Acceptance of divine order is a duty of all people who by virtue of the oath are supposed to endure what's mortal not losing their peace of mind for things that are beyond human power: "Quidquid ex universi constitutione patiendum est, magno suscipiatur animo: ad hoc sacramentum adacti sumus, ferre mortalia nec perturbari iis quae vitare non est nostrae potestatis."¹⁵⁷ This exposition is concluded by Seneca briefly and specifically: "In regno nati sumus: deo parere libertas est."¹⁵⁸

In referring to the expression about kingdom, it's worth reminding a fragment of one of the philosopher's letters. Senecan writes in it that the man's king is the spirit: "Rex noster est animus."¹⁵⁹ So, one has to care for the spirit, because it is the source of thoughts, words, attitude, facial expression, and the way one walks, and when the spirit is sane and full of power, then everything else (like, say, human speech) is also robust, strong and brave, and when the spirit has weakened, then everything falls into decline: "Ideo ille curetur: ab illo sensus, ab illo verba exeunt, ab illo nobis est habitus, vultus, incessus. Illo sano ac valente oratio quoque robusta, fortis, virilis est: si ille procubuit, et cetera ruinam sequuntur."¹⁶⁰ Bad things happen to a man whose spirit has acquiesced itself to lust, because then his abilities and deeds become idle, and everything he tries to do is indolent and weak: "Cum vero cessit voluptati, artes quoque eius actusque marcent et omnis ex languido fluidoque conatus est."¹⁶¹ Promiscuous, lustful and spoiled spirit does not care for virtue or the body entrusted to it, to which he orders all that's disgraceful and unsightly, as it ceases to be the king, and becomes an abominable and atrocious tyrant:

Animus noster modo rex est, modo tyrannus: rex cum honesta intuetur, salutem commissi sibi corporis curat et illi nihil imperat turpe, nihil sordidum; ubi vero inpotens, cupidus, delicatus est, transit in nomen detestabile ac dirum et fit tyrannus.¹⁶²

Initially, he enjoys his unbridled passions, although similar to the way rabble does, filled with harmful patronage for free, catching what they cannot swallow any more: "Tunc illum excipiunt adfectus inpotentes et instant; qui initio quidem gaudet, ut solet populus largitione nocitura frustra plenus et quae non potest haurire contrectans."¹⁶³

However, over time this lust takes away strengths and brings diseases, and, as Seneca vividly explains, pleasures creep in the marrow and veins, and

¹⁵⁷ *VB* 15, 7.

¹⁵⁸ *VB* 15, 7.

¹⁵⁹ *Ep.* 114, 23.

¹⁶⁰ *Ep.* 114, 22.

¹⁶¹ *Ep.* 114, 23.

¹⁶² *Ep.* 114, 24.

¹⁶³ *Ep.* 114, 24.

delighted with the sight of pleasures which have made the man useless by being excessively desired, and he does not feel any delight any more. He can only watch the amusement of others as provider and witness to the lusts, which he has already taken away from him by bringing them earlier onto himself:

cum vero magis ac magis vires morbus exedit et in medullas nervosque descendere deliciae, conspectu eorum quibus se nimia aviditate inutilem reddidit laetus, pro suis voluptatibus habet alienarum spectaculum, sumministrator libidinum testisque, quarum usum sibi ingerendo abstulit.¹⁶⁴

Such a man, although he flows with pleasures, experiences bitterness, as he misses what he will not be able to use because of his illness, that is drinking to excess and stuffing himself with delicacies, taking part in orgies with debauchees and women:

Nec illi tam gratum est abundare iucundis quam acerbum quod non omnem illum apparatus per gulam ventremque transmittit, quod non cum omni exoletorum feminarumque turba convolutatur, maeretque quod magna pars suae felicitatis exclusa corporis angustiis cessat.¹⁶⁵

As a rich and influential man, Seneca must have seen such people quite often when participating or organising meetings at the table. He understands how pernicious such a behaviour is, and cautions Lucilius against it pointing out two matters.

One of them is the fact that licentious people are not moderate in their behaviour as they do not think of themselves as single persons: “immo quod nemo nostrum unum esse se cogitat?”¹⁶⁶ The philosopher clarifies this problem again very vividly by writing that cooks bustling about at hearths prepare so much food that that one stomach is not able to eat it all up. The similar case is with old wines from different countries collected in cellars for centuries:

Aspice culinas nostras et concursantis inter tot ignes cocos: unum videri putas ventrem cui tanto tumultu comparatur cibus? Aspice veteraria nostra et plena multorum saeculorum vindemiis horrea: unum putas videri ventrem cui tot consulum regionumque vina cluduntur?¹⁶⁷

Also, one stomach cannot eat what thousands of serfs working on the fields of Sicily and Africa sow and cultivate for him: “Aspice quot locis terra vertatur, quot millia colonorum arent, fodiant: unum videri putas ventrem cui et in Sicilia et in Africa seritur?”¹⁶⁸ In this way, Seneca explains frenzy of the mighty who

¹⁶⁴ *Ep.* 114, 25.

¹⁶⁵ *Ep.* 114, 25.

¹⁶⁶ *Ep.* 114, 26.

¹⁶⁷ *Ep.* 114, 26.

¹⁶⁸ *Ep.* 114, 26.

have indulged themselves with pleasures: each of them completely forgot about the limit of their possibilities as single person.

The philosopher draws Lucilius' attention to yet another matter: "Numquid enim, mi Lucili, [non] in hoc furor est, quod nemo nostrum mortalem se cogitat, quod nemo inbecillum."¹⁶⁹ In these words he poses a problem of human limitation, specifically mortality and weakness. A little bit further on, he combines good health with temperance in desires, and calls on to remember not only that one is a single person, but also that the body has its limits. So, one must know that the body is not able to accommodate much, and not for long: "Sani erimus et modica concupissemus si unusquisque se numeret, metiatur simul corpus, sciat quam nec multum capere nec diu possit."¹⁷⁰ Hence, Seneca calls for temperance, and what he considers as the most important factor helping to achieve the virtue of *temperantia* in everything is frequent meditation on how short and uncertain human life is: "Nihil tamen aequae tibi profuerit ad temperantiam omnium rerum quam frequens cogitatio brevis aevi et huius incerti: quidquid facies, respice ad mortem."¹⁷¹ He recommends for the man to remember about death in any activities.

With these deliberations of Seneca on *temperantia* in the context of fragility of human life (given virtually on the negative side), one must not forget about the positive approach to this problem, i.e. that temperance accompanies other virtues in leading the man to heavens: "hac 'itur ad astra"¹⁷² (...) hac secundum temperantiam."¹⁷³ Jupiter himself is not superior in anything to a perfect man. The god is only perfect for more time. However, the fact that the sage's virtues manifest themselves in a shorter time does not make him feel inferior to a deity, because the god is not superior to the sage in happiness even for the sake of his advantage in age. Greatness of virtue does not depend on its lasting in time:

Iuppiter quo antecedit virum bonum? diutius bonus est: sapiens nihilo se minoris aestimat quod virtutes eius spatio brevior cluduntur. (...) deus non vincit sapientem felicitate, etiam si vincit aetate; non est virtus maior quae longior.¹⁷⁴

Jupiter wants to share what he has with people; he has given to others what he had, and ensured using it to everyone: "Iuppiter omnia habet, sed nempe aliis tradidit habenda: (...) utendi omnibus causa est."¹⁷⁵ The gods do not abhor or envy people, but they act quite the opposite, as they allow people to be close to

¹⁶⁹ *Ep.* 114, 26.

¹⁷⁰ *Ep.* 114, 27.

¹⁷¹ *Ep.* 114, 27.

¹⁷² Cf. Verg. *Aen.* IX 641: "... sic itur ad astra."

¹⁷³ *Ep.* 73, 15.

¹⁷⁴ *Ep.* 73, 13.

¹⁷⁵ *Ep.* 73, 14.

them and give a hand to those who come to them: “Non sunt dii fastidiosi, non invidi: admittunt et ascendentibus manum porrigunt.”¹⁷⁶

From this statement of Seneca one can also conclude that the gods help in acquiring the virtue of *temperantia*, in developing its seeds. A god comes by himself, or actually enters into people, otherwise no human mind would be good. In human bodies are dispersed divine seeds which need a good carer to be able to grow to become plants they originated from, otherwise, under bad care, they will be destroyed by barren soil that only yields rubbish instead of fruit.

Deus ad homines venit, immo quod est propius, in homines venit: nulla sine deo mens bona est. Semina in corporibus humanis divina dispersa sunt, quae si bonus cultor excipit, similia origini prodeunt et paria iis ex quibus orta sunt surgunt: si malus, non aliter quam humus sterilis ac palustris necat ac deinde creat purgamenta pro frugibus.¹⁷⁷

In conclusion, Seneca calls *temperantia* as restraining desires, *cupiditates refrenare*. It is a power of ordering delights, it is supposed to hate and chase away ones, and subordinate other by bringing them to proper measures, never according to human whims, but human duty. The Roman philosopher recommends temperance not only with reference to one's own lust, but also human relations, like, say, imposing penalty, as this virtue is strongly related to *clementia*. This Roman philosopher and politician paid special attention to temperance of the ruler: his *temperantia* is truest when it is the love of the human race as himself. To be temperate means for the ruler not to be guided by lust, imprudence, and not to follow bad models left by predecessors cruel to their citizens: *temperantia* of a clement ruler, respected by his subjects ensures sustainability and unity to the state.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

In Seneca's writings, the author's name is skipped, the titles are given in short form:

Ben. – *De beneficiis*

Cl. – *De clementia*

Ep. – *Ad Lucilium Epistulae morales*

Ira – *Ad Novatum De ira*

Tr. – *Ad Serenum De tranquillitate animi*

VB – *Ad Gallionem De vita beata*

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¹⁷⁷ *Ep.* 73, 16.

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TEMPERANTIA, СТОИЦКАЯ „ЗОЛОТАЯ СЕРЕДИНА” ПО СЕНЕКЕ

Резюме

Сенека, будучи последователем и представителем философской школы младшей стои, склонялся к эклектике и ставил этику на первый план. Его философские сочинения посвящены вопросам практической морали. Он стремился дать людям утешение посредством житейской мудрости. Цель человека заключается в том, чтобы „жить в согласии с природой.” Сенека учил как жить и поэтому много писал о добродетелях. Философ хотел, чтобы император и каждый человек обладал такими качествами, как: воздержанность, мужество, разумность, справедливость и чтобы знал, что добродетель „следует обуздать желания, подавить боязнь, разумно заботиться о предстоящих делах, раздать всё, что должно быть отдано.” Сенека учил: „Воздержность умеряет наслажденья; одни она с ненавистью изгоняет, другие соразмеряет и сокращает до здорового предела, никогда не приближаясь к ним ради них самих. Она знает, что лучшая мера для всего желанного – взять не сколько хочется, а сколько необходимо.”