Jerome's Role in the Transmission of the Correspondence between Seneca and Paul

Pablo Alberto Molina

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Approved by:

Robert G. Babcock

Bart D. Ehrman

William H. Rice

ABSTRACT

PABLO A. MOLINA: Jerome's Role in the Transmission of the Correspondence between
Seneca and Paul
(Under the direction of Professor Robert G. Babcock and Professor Bart D. Ehrman)

In this thesis I examine Jerome's role in the transmission of the correspondence between

Seneca and Paul. Jerome was the first to mention the letters in *De Viris Illustribus* (DVI) in

393 C.E. The notice on Seneca in DVI greatly contributed to the survival and transmission

of the moralist's correspondence. I argue that: (1) contrary to what many scholars have

postulated, Jerome actually saw the forged correspondence in its entirety and was not fooled

by it (which can be demonstrated by a detailed analysis of authorship issues in DVI). (2)

Jerome found the forgery useful because it enabled him to co-opt Seneca as a pagan author

capable of advancing his views on marriage in his treatise *Adversus Iovinianum* - written

shortly after DVI - in which he copiously borrowed from Seneca's *De Matrimonio.*

In memoriam

Lala y Tana

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis deals with two problems frequently observed in the textual transmission of both pagan and Christian writings: (1) literary works that have come down to us in a fragmentary state and (2) texts of dubious authorship. The writings of many important ancient authors fall into the first category. For instance, the doctrines of most presocratic philosophers survive in quotations from subsequent Greek thinkers or were preserved in bits and pieces by later compilers. Cicero's *De Republica*, perhaps one of his most polished works, has been preserved in an extremely fragmentary way. So goes for Petronius' *Satyricon*, in all probability a very long novel from which we have parts of just three books. Petronius' contemporary, Seneca, was a very prolific writer. While a substantial portion of his writings has survived in complete form, quite a few of his works have been lost or are preserved only in quotations. In this thesis, I will examine what we have left of the stoic's treatise *De Matrimonio*; a considerable number of fragments of this work are preserved in Jerome's *Adversus Jovinianum*.

In the Middle Ages, Seneca was particularly known as one of the alleged writers of an epistolary exchange - hereafter, the correspondence - that has come down to us in the names of Seneca and Saint Paul. This apocryphal correspondence can be rightfully added to the list of letters transmitted in the name of Paul whose authorship has been questioned (among

which the canonical pastoral epistles and the noncanonical *Epistle to the Laodiceans* and the *Third Epistle to the Corinthians*).[1] These Christian writings are generally referred to as 'apocrypha'. While this term is correct, it does not actually address issues of authorship; instead it indicates that a particular work "was excluded from ecclesiastical usage very early".[2] In dealing with authorial issues, a more accurate term is *pseudepigrapha*. If one defines pseudepigraphy as the literary phenomenon by which the writings of an author appear under someone else's name, then two types of pseudepigraphic works can be distinguished. (1) <u>Misattributions</u>: when the readers of a literary work wrongly attribute its authorship to someone other than the author.[3] (2) <u>Forgeries</u>: when the author himself makes a false authorial claim and purposely attributes his work to someone else with the calculated attempt to deceive his readers.[4] Hence, the apocryphal correspondence between Seneca and Saint Paul should be classified as a forgery of double pseudepigraphic nature. An unknown

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[1] Pseudo-Pauline literature – while very important – quantitatively represents a small portion of the extant Christian apocrypha. In the comprehensive work of Wilhelm Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha* (Louisville, James Clarke Company, 1990) over eighty apocryphal writings are discussed. Needless to say, there is also authorial uncertainty about many books written by pagan authors; yet – perhaps due to the issues at stake - scholarly debates on false authorial claims in early Christianity receive more attention.

[2] An exact definition of apocrypha is difficult. See discussion on this in Schneemelcher, *Apocrypha*, Volume One: 9 (see previous note).

[3] For instance, in a rather ironical twist of fate, Pelagius' commentary of Pau's Epistles were transmitted under the name of Jerome, one his bitter opponents. For a general discussion on forgery see (a) Anthony Grafton, *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1990) and (b) Bruce M. Metzger, *Literary Forgeries and Canonical Pseudepigrapha* (Journal of Biblical Literature, Vol. 91, No. 1., Mar., 1972): 3-24.

[4] For definitions, see Metzger (n.3). We have an interesting instance of a forger 'caught in the act' who had to explain himself. About 440 C.E. there appeared an encyclical letter from one who identified himself as "Timothy, least of the servants of God," condemning the avarice of the times and appealing to the Church to renounce its wealth and luxury. The Bishop Salonius, read the tract and surmised that Salvian, a priest of Marseilles had written the apocryphal letter. He asked Salvian to explain his actions. Without acknowledging that he was the author of the letter Salvian had this to say about the forgery (1) we ought to be more concerned about the intrinsic value of its contents than about the name of the author, (2) the author wanted to avoid any pretense of earthly vainglory but be self-effacing, (3) the author wrote the treatise pseudonymously because he did not want the valuable message carried by the letter to fall into obscurity, (4) the author attributed the letter to the disciple Timothy out of reverence (recall that Timothy means the 'honor of God').

writer living between 325 and 393 C.E.[5] wrote fourteen short letters in the names of Seneca

and Paul to create a fictitious literary friendship between two of most important historical

figures in the first century.

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[5] The basis for the *terminus post quem* and *terminus ante quem* is discussed in ch III of this thesis (see n. 35).

CHAPTER II:

SENECA AND PAUL: POINTS OF CONTACT

The spurious correspondence between Seneca and Paul consists of fourteen letters (eight from Seneca to Paul and six from Paul to Seneca) purportedly written when Paul was in Rome. These letters helped to cement the reputation of the stoic moralist among Christian readers and contributed to the survival of some of his literary works through the Middle Ages.[6] The correspondence is first mentioned by Jerome in *De Viris Illustribus* (DVI) in 393 C.E. Before Jerome's reference, while several Christian writers regarded Seneca as an important author whose ideas often overlapped with Christian doctrine (Tertullian calls him *Seneca noster*)[7], there is no mention of this epistolary exchange. The stoic moralist was not only a contemporary of Paul but also one of the most important Roman statesmen of the Neronian era and it was not unreasonable for the forger and his Christian readers to imagine that Seneca and Paul had crossed roads at some point in their lives. Born in Cordoba, Spain around 3 B.C.E, Seneca served as the advisor of the Emperor Nero while the Apostle was residing in Rome (c.56 – c.65). Seneca committed suicide in 65 C.E. after he lost favor with the Emperor whereas Paul – according to Jerome[8] - was martyred two years later. Seneca was also the brother of Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia in 51 C.E. when Paul was brought to

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[6] Gian B. Conte, *Latin Literature: A History* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994): 422-423.

[7] Tertullian*; De Anima; 20,1.*

[8] Jerome, *De Viris Illustribus*. The notice on Seneca reads: "*Hic ante biennium quam Petrus et Paulus coronarentur martyrio, a Nerone interfectus est.*" The notice will be discussed in detail in Chapter III.

trial by the local Jews.[9] According to Acts, when the Apostle arrived in Rome, he was

entrusted to the care of "the prefect of the Praetorian guard". Some scholars have interpreted

this passage as a reference to Burrus, Seneca's associate and co-advisor to the Emperor.[10]

One can assume that many educated early Christians were aware of these connections

via 'two degrees of separation' between Seneca and Paul. Interest in Seneca's family is seen

in Jerome's *Chronicon*, who mentions Lucan (Seneca's nephew) and even describes Gallio's

manner of death in his entry for the year 64 A.D.*[11]* Moreover, Christians knew about eerily

familiar passages found in Seneca's writings (in particular his *Epistulae Morales ad

Lucilium*, *De Clementia, De Beneficiis* and *De Ira*). In these writings one finds coincidences

of thought and language between stoic and Christian teachings that range from duties

towards others to self-examination and confession.[12]

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[9] Gallio's reported words in Acts show the pragmatic approach that Roman officials used in governing in the provinces. "While Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him into court. "This man," they charged, "is persuading the people to worship God in ways contrary to the law." Just as Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to the Jews, "If you Jews were making a complaint about some misdemeanor or serious crime, it would be reasonable for me to listen to you. But since it involves questions about words and names and your own law - settle the matter yourselves. I will not be a judge of such things." Acts 18,12-17 (NIV Translation). Since practical-minded Romans would rather not intervene in local disputes that did not directly interfere with Roman rule, it is unlikely that Gallio gave too much thought to his encounter with the leader of a Jewish splinter sect.

[10] See detailed discussion in Claude Barlow, *Epistolae Senecae ad Paulum et Pauli ad Senecam (quae vocantur)* (Horn, American Academy in Rome, 1938): 2-3.

[11] *Junius Annaeus Gallio frater Senecae egregius declamator propria se manu interfecit.*

[12] The British theologian J.B. Lightfoot compiled a list of passages in Seneca's writings that strongly mirror moral sentiments found in the New Testament, in particular with passages found in the Sermon of the Mount and Paul's letters. See J.B Lightfoot's essay on *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians* (Lynn Hendrickson Publishers, 1881): 270-333. Lightfoot's essay has a wealth of information on these literary parallels. For instance, it is worth noting that Seneca states twice the golden rule. '*Ab alio expectes alteri quod feceris.*' *Epist. Mor.* 94.43; *sic demus, quomodo vellemus accipere. De Benef.* ii.1. Lightfoot speculated that Seneca - while a stoic at heart - may have been acquainted in some rudimentary form with Christian teachings that circulated orally in Rome.   He believed that an appreciable part of the lower population of Rome had become Christian by the early 60's C.E. and that it is not unlikely that Seneca acquired "an accidental knowledge of the new faith" while conversing with slaves. Seneca recounts that he made a practice of dining with some of his slaves and engaging them in familiar conversation. See Seneca's famous *Epist. Mor. 47*, where he condemns the

How can we account for these strange similarities of ideas and words? One has to remember

that stoicism – although it did not have the concept of sin - was the pagan philosophical

school that most closely resembled Christianity in terms of ethical principles.   Hence, it is

understandable that modern readers might experience feelings of déjà vu when reading the

stoic moralist. Still, the historicity of the relationship between Paul and Seneca has to be

approached with great caution. Despite the loose points of contact that exist in both their

lives and their writings, we cannot say with any certainty that the two men ever met; all we

can say is that they lived in the same era, inhabited the same the world, participated in the

same Zeitgeist and were influenced by the popular moral philosophy of their times. As

Sevenster puts it "If they happen to approach each other here and there or have ideas in

common, this happens unbeknown to both of them."[13] However, unlike many other Christian

forgeries[14], their epistolary fiction was conceived on plausible historical grounds.[15] The

chronological concurrences in their lives, the documented fact that Paul met Seneca's

brother, the possibility that he also met Burrus and the similarities in moral sentiments

expressed in their extant works rendered the historicity of their alleged friendship rather

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mistreatment of slaves. Lightfoot's hypothesis on the popularity of Christianity in this period runs against the evidence found in the letters between Pliny and the Emperor Trajan and also Tacitus' description of the Christians (*Annales*, XV, 44) which point to another direction. It seems as if the Roman upper class had little familiarity with Christianity even five decades after Paul's death in Rome. *Qui negabant esse se Christianos aut fuisse, cum praeeunte me deos appellarent et imagini tuae, quam propter hoc iusseram cum simulacris numinum afferri, ture ac vino supplicarent, praeterea male dicerent Christo, quorum nihil cogi posse dicuntur qui sunt re vera Christiani, dimittendos putavi* (Pliny, *Epistulae*, X, 96, 5) *Ergo abolendo rumori Nero subdidit reos et quaesitissimis poenis adfecit, quos per flagitia invisos vulgus Chrestianos appellabat. auctor nominis eius Christus Tibero imperitante per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio adfectus erat* (Tacitus, *Annales*, XV, 44).

[13] See J.N. Sevenster, *Paul and Seneca* (E. Leiden, J. Briel; 1961):14-15.

[14] Cf. for instance the highly fanciful *Acts of Pilate*.

[15] Even some modern scholars have engaged in bold speculation on this subject see: G. M. Lee, *Was Seneca the Theophilus of St. Luke?* (Hommages à M. Renard, ed. Bibauw, J, Brussels 1969) : 515-532.

credible. The forger just picked up these thin points of contact between Paul and Seneca and created an epistolary relationship between them.

CHAPTER III:

SENECA AND PAUL: THE SPURIOUS CORRESPONDENCE

Nowadays, the correspondence between Seneca and Paul is almost universally

thought to have been forged in the fourth century C.E.[16] As many scholars throughout the

centuries have pointed out, the fourteen letters that form this epistolary fiction are

uninteresting and insipid.[17] The correspondence - written in Latin (a language that the

historical Paul may not have learned) – is characterized by Seneca's insistence on the nobility

of Paul's message but his concerns about the coarseness of his literary style.[18]

Certum mihi velim concedas latinitati morem gerere, honestis vocibus et speciem adhibere,
ut generosi muneris concessio digne a te possit expediri.(Letter **XIII**).

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[16] For a modern scholar who recently considered parts of the correspondence to be authentic see Illaria Ramelli, *L'epistolario apocrifo Seneca-san Paolo: alcune observazioni*. VetChr 1997 34 (2): 299-310.

[17] G. Boissier, *Le Christianisme de Sénèque* (Revue des deux mondes, 1871): 43 "Jamais plus maladroit faussaire n'a fait plus sottement parler d'aussi grands esprits". Erasmus von Rotterdam, *Epist.* 2092. "*His epistolis non video quid fingi possit frigidius aut ineptius*".

[18] This is a common theme among Church Fathers in the late fourth century. Compare Augustine's words in the *Confessions* III. 5.9 "*itaque institui animum intendere in scripturas sanctas et videre quales essent. et ecce video rem non compertam superbis neque nudatam pueris, sed incessu humilem, successu excelsam et velatam mysteriis. et non eram ego talis ut intrare in eam possem aut inclinare cervicem ad eius gressus. non enim sicut modo loquor, ita sensi, cum attendi ad illam scripturam, sed visa est mihi indigna quam tullianae dignitati compararem.*" See also Erich Auerbach, *Literary Language and Its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Age* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993): 51. The simplicity of the style in the Scriptures contrasts with its subject matter. The lowly is the only medium in which the sublime can be expressed. Likewise, the sublime incarnation of Christ takes place in a manger in Bethlehem.

The moralist's appreciation for Paul's teachings along with his worries about the apostle's deficient rhetorical skills – all this wrapped in mellifluous politeness – reappear in several of the letters. In letter **VII** Seneca praises Paul's writings but points out that they lack refinement of language. He has read Paul's writings to Nero. The emperor was positively impressed but wondered how someone without education could have such lofty ideas. Seneca replied: "The gods speak through the mouths of the innocent".[19] In letter **IX** Seneca sends Paul a *liber de copia verborum* (apparently some sort of 'Word Power' book).[20] In letter **XII**, Seneca remarks that Paul ranks high among the Christians just as the moralist does among the Romans ("For the rank that is mine, I would it were yours, and yours I would were mine"); then again in letter **XIII** Seneca insists on the question of style: "I wish you would comply with the Pure Latin Style". Partly based on the repetition of this τόπος, Barlow[21] - who produced in 1938 the most complete critical edition of the correspondence - believed that the forgery started as an exercise in a rhetorical school. More recently, Alfons Furst[22] has subscribed to the same theory. As to the inspiration and motives of the forger,

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[19] See previous note on simplicity and the sublime.

[20] Interestingly, there is a 12th century Codex (Q) which contains along with our correspondence a work entitled *De Copia Verborum*. The work appears to be a pastiche of St. Martin de Braga's *Formula Vita Honestae* and some sentences taken from Seneca's *Epist. Mor.* Barlow (see n. 10, 18-19) collated this manuscript in 1936. The name of the scribe has been preserved: Hugo de Castris Armarius.

[21] See n. 10, Barlow, *Epistolae*

[22] Alfons Fürst, Therese Fuhrer, Folker Siegert and Peter Walter. *Der apokryphe Briefwechsel zwischen Seneca und Paulus: zusammen mit dem Brief des Mordechai an Alexander und dem Brief des Annaeus Seneca über Hochmut und Götterbilder* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006).

scholars have advanced many hypotheses. Could the forger have been inspired by the end of

the Letter to the Philippians (Phil .4.22)?[23]   Was the forger familiar with the *Apocryphal Acts*

of Paul?[24]   Was he inspired by the verbal similarity between a passage in *Epist. Mor.* 78[25]

and 1 Cor 9.24-27? Was the forger a malicious counterfeiter who sought to sell a *liber de*

copia verborum, attributing it to Seneca and using the philosopher's relationship with the

Apostle as a marketing strategy?[26] Or more likely and more plainly, could it be that the

forger was trying to promote through "trite little missives" the idea that these two figures

knew each other?[27]   The possibilities are numerous and due to the absence of any

documentary evidence on the forger's identity, all we can do is speculate. Based on the

internal evidence, one can say that the forger was somewhat educated and that he likely used

as source materials Seneca's *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium*, Paul's epistles and some

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[23] ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς πάντες οἱ ἅγιοι, μάλιστα δὲ οἱ ἐκ τῆς Καίσαρος οἰκίας. See Lightfoot (n. 12). Did the forger think that the words 'Caesar's household' included Nero's most powerful advisors?

[24] Laura, Bocciolini Palagi, *Epistolario Apocrifo di Seneca e San Paolo*, (Florence, Nardini Editore 1985): 101-102. Letter VII of the correspondence is addressed to Theophilus (perhaps not the friend of Luke but the Theophilus who appears in the apocryphal *Third Corinthians* (1,1) mentioned in the Introduction of this thesis). Likewise, the scene in which Seneca reads Paul's epistles to Nero is reminiscent of a scene in the *Martyrdom of Paul*. Bocciolini Palagi states that the forger (p.140) conflates Seneca the Elder and Seneca the Philosopher which accounts for the emphasis on rhetorical themes in the correspondence.

[25] "Consider the quantity of blows that athletes receive on their faces and all over their bodies. But they endure every kind of suffering in their desire for glory… Let us too overcome all things, though our reward is not the victor's wreath or palm…our reward will be virtue, strength of mind and a lasting tranquility" See discussion in C.D.N Costa, *Seneca 17 Letters*, (Wiltshire, Aris & Philips Ltd; 1988): 179

[26] Edmond Liénard,; *Sur la Correspondance Apocryphe de Sénèque et de Saint-Paul* (Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire XI, 1932): 5-23.

[27] Richard I Pervo, *The Making of Paul* (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2010): 110-115. Pervo argues that a modern forger trying to show a loving relationship between T.S. Elliot and his grandparents would claim to have found in Elliot's attic cards such as "From the Louvre: Having a great time. Wish you were here." It would not be the banal content of the cards that matters but the fact they establish a loving relationship.

apocryphal writings. Yet, he made blatant historical mistakes. For instance, he imagined an

anachronistic world in which 1st century Roman officers secretly embraced Christianity (as

had actually happened in the reigns of Diocletian and Constantine).   Interested in history as

he was, the forger would certainly have been pleased with the Nachleben of his creation. For

many centuries the correspondence rendered Seneca's opinion authoritative, as exemplified

by this passage of John of Salisbury (written in 1159 C.E.) where he defends Seneca against

his attackers.

     "rectius videatur. Sunt tamen qui eum contemnere audeant, Quintiliani auctoritate
freti, suum ex eo nobilitantes judicium, si ei detrahant, qui plurimis placet, ut apud indoctos
eorum gloriam videantur praecedere, quorum virtutem nequeunt imitari. Mihi tamen
desipere videntur, qui quemcunque secuti, non venerantur eum, quem et apostoli
familiaritatem meruisse constat, et a doctissimo Patre Hieronymo in sanctorum catalogo
positum". [28]

     Apart from the aforementioned historical improbabilities, the correspondence

presents many instances of non-classical vocabulary.[29] What follows is a non-exhaustive list

of lexical features that demonstrate – based on word usage only[30] - that our letters can't

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[28] John of Salisbury, *Polycraticus*, lib. 8, cap.: 13, (*Patrologia Latina*, Vol. 199 [Col.0763B])

[29] See detailed discussion in Barlow, *Epistulae* (n.10); Bocciolini Palagi, *Epistolario* (n.24) and Liénard, *Sur la Correspondance* (n.26). The list presented in the thesis was complemented by a search done on the LLT database (Library of Latin Texts – Series A, Brepols Publishers, Turnhout, 2010).

[30] Both Barlow and Bocciolini Palagi deal with grammatical oddities in the Correspondence. Among which, (a) violation of the sequence of tenses, (b) unusual 'biblical' genitives (*tui prasentiam*) and (c) *nisi quia* followed by the indicative which is found in classical Latin but is much more common in ecclesiastical Latin.

possibly represent a genuine first century correspondence.[31] On the list below, the Roman

numeral indicates the letter of the correspondence in which the word under study is found. A

look at the dates of first attestations and frequency of use will make it clear that we are

dealing with a correspondence written in the second half of the fourth century.

New or very rare words:

(a) *derivamentum* (**XIV**) is only attested in our correspondence; (b) *subsecundare* (**X**) is first
attested in Saint Hilary of Poitiers (c. 355); (c) *aenigmatice* (**XIII**), is used twice in
combination with *allegorice* in the Seneca-Paul correspondence, in which it is first attested;
the next attestation appears in Cassiodorus (sixth century).

Words that are exclusively Christian (mostly in use from Tertullian's time):

(a) *spiritus sanctus* (Letter **VII**, allegedly written by Seneca) is first attested in the Latin
language in Tertullian. After that, it became very common among Christian writers. (b)
allegorice (**XIII**) first attested in Tertullian and very common in Augustine. (c)
inreprehensibilis (**XIV**) first attested in bishop Lucifer of Cagliari (c. 370) and very common
in the writings of Ambrose. (d) *indeficiens* (**XIV**) first attested in Cyprian and very common
in the writings of Augustine. (e) *apocrypha* (**I**), Greek word first attested in Tertullian,
appears later in Augustine and Jerome. (f) *incapabilis* (**XIV**), first attested in Philaster (c.
384), then common in Augustine's writings.

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[31] Liénard (see n. 26) points out that apart from the problems with its vocabulary, the correspondence presents a
striking resemblance with the epistolary style characteristic of Symmachus (c. 345 – 402), a Roman stateman
whose collection of private letters was published posthumously. Liénard examined the structure and
phraseology of the letters and compiled a list of thematic agreements. The average length of the letters in the
forged correspondence – about ten lines – is consistent with the usual length of most of Symmachus' letters
which are normally either short or very short. There are no interesting theological or philosophical discussions
between Seneca and Paul in their correspondence but instead, just as in Symmachus' letters, we find an inane
hollowness that irks the modern reader. This is because in Symmachus' milieu, important subjects were not
addressed via letters. The epistolary genre within this social group had a different social function: "to maintain
friendships through epistolary *salutatio* or to recommend friends, relatives and acquaintances". Hence, these
short letters abound in empty verbiage whose sole purpose is to flatter one's correspondent with what for us
amounts to excessive politeness, to give excuses for one's absence and to express desire to see one's
correspondent. While Liénard presents some valid points, his evidence is not entirely convincing. More work
needs to be done in this area. For a discussion on the epistolary style of Symmachus: see Cristiana Sogno, *Q. A.
Symmachus: A Political Biography* (Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press, 2006); p. 60-63.

Post-classical words or usages:

(a)generositas (**I**) appears in Collumella and Pliny the Elder, it becomes very common only among the Church Fathers; (b) *dirigere* (**I**) with *epistola* once each in Cicero and Cyprian; very common in the fourth century; (c) *evirare* (**XIII**), very rare in classical Latin (used first by Catullus), appears nine times in Ambrosius' writings; (d) *praevaricare* (**VII**), the active form of the verb is not known before the fourth century; (e) *de proximo* (**IV**), used twice by Cicero, common in Tertullian, and very common in Augustine; a non-classical usage of prepositions that also appears in *de futuro* (**VIII**).

Biblical echoes in the language of the correspondence:

Novum hominem sine corruptela perpetuum animal parit (**XIV**) is reminiscent of 1 Corinthians 15, 42 (in the pre-Vulgate Itala translation of the New Testament): '*seminatur corpus in corruptione, surgit sine corruptela*'. The idiom *sine corruptela* is Christian and post-classical; it is first attested in Tertullian, next in Cyprian and then in Ambrose. Jerome's Vulgate version reads *in corruptione* and differs from our correspondence in this case. Yet, there are also a few interesting parallels between the epistolary and the Vulgate. For example (a) *qui poenitentiam sui gerant* (**VI**) echoes Acts 26, 20 '*ut paenitentiam agerent*' and (b) *Nam qui meus tuus apud te locus, qui tuus velim ut meus* (**XII**) is reminiscent of Ga 4, 12 '*Estote sicut et ego, quia et ego sicut vos*'.

Our analysis of the textual problems in the correspondence could not be complete without a mention of the improbable dates that appear in letters **X-XIV**. The dates – based on consular offices – reveal an unsolvable mismatch between the order of the letters and their purported chronological order. The contents and dates of these letters (presented for convenience in modern notation) are shown below.

Table 1: Dates assigned to letters **X-XIV** in the correspondence between Seneca and Paul

Letter	Sender	Date	Content
X	Paul	06/27/58	Asks question about order of names in letters
XI	*Seneca*	*03/28/64*	*The Great fire in Rome and the martyrdom of Christians*
XII	Seneca	03/23/59	Reply to letter **X**
XIII	Seneca	07/06/58	Speaks of the power of Paul's ideas
XIV	Paul	08/01/58	Expresses admiration for Seneca's learning

Note that the date given for the Great Fire in Rome in Letter **XI** does not agree with Tacitus' date (07/19/64 according to *Ann.* XV, 41, 2). This letter is markedly different from the rest in style and content. It has considerably 'more meat' than the others and deals not with platitudes but with a serious issue; in this letter, Nero is blamed for the fire in Rome (whereas he is mentioned in a rather positive light in the other letters). Many scholars think that Letter **XI** is the work of a second forger who interpolated his letter between **X** and **XII** (the latter is actually a reply to **X**), added the confusing dates to letters **X-XIV** and switched the positions of **XIII** and **XIV**.[32]

The confusion of dates is a recurrent feature in the manuscript tradition which at present numbers over 300 extant manuscripts.[33] Barlow created a very complete *stemma*

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[32] See discussion Bocciolini Palagi, *Epistolario* (n. 24) and Pervo, *Making of Paul* (n. 27). The preferred order of the letters– the one intended by the first forger - should be X, XII, XIV and XIII.

[33] The extant manuscripts have reached us in a jumbled state: (a) oftentimes the letters appear in different order; (b) sometimes letters are missing or titles omitted (c) the correspondence normally occupies one folio in the MSS and is often followed or preceded by writings related to its transmission; such as a dedicatory poem by Alcuin on Seneca, an epitaphium of the stoic moralist and Jerome's notice on Seneca in *De Viris Illustribus*.

codicum in 1938, slightly revised by Bocciolini Palagi in 1985 (the upper portion of her
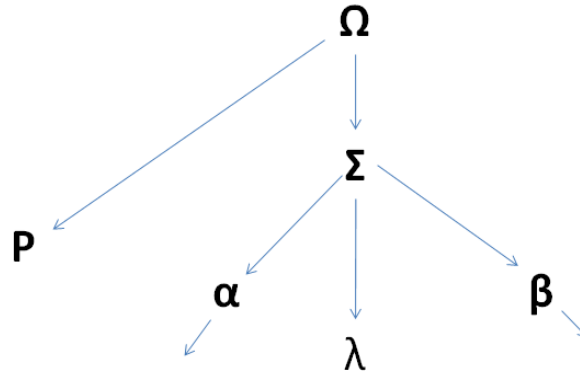
stemma is shown below).

Figure 1: Upper section of the *Stemma codicum* according to Bocciolini Palagi's *Epistolario Apocrifo di Seneca e San Paolo*, (Nardini Editore, 1985). The archetype and exemplars illustrated here are discussed in the text.

The archetype **Ω** is believed to have been written in the 5th cent.; **P** (produced in the

10th cent.) is a direct copy of it. The exemplar **Σ** was almost certainly a manuscript

containing the first 88 letters to Lucilius (*Ep. Mor.*) preceded by our correspondence. Its

descendants **α** and **β** are the sources of most extant manuscripts. Barlow partly attributes the

survival of Letters 1-88 of the *Ep. Mor.* to the fact that these authentic Senecan letters were

accompanied by the forged ones.[34] By far, the key player in the correspondence's survival is

Jerome's notice on Seneca in the *De Viris Illustribus* (DVI), written in 393. C.E. The notice

accompanies many of the extant manuscripts and reads:

> *Lucius Annaeus Seneca Cordubensis, Sotionis Stoici discipulus, et patruus Lucani poetae, continentissimae vitae fuit, quem non ponerem in catalogo Sanctorum, nisi me illae Epistolae provocarent, quae leguntur a plurimis, Pauli ad Senecam, et Senecae ad Paulum. In quibus cum esset Neronis magister, et illius temporis potentissimus, optare se*

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[34] See L.D. Reynolds, *The Medieval Tradition of Seneca's Letters* (Oxford University Press): 81-89. Reynolds also considers that the correspondence greatly contributed to the reputation of Seneca but downplays the importance of Σ of the transmission of Seneca's letters. In his view, it is only from the 11th cent. that the correspondence begins to attach itself to the genuine letters.

dicit, ejus esse loci apud suos, cujus sit Paulus apud Christianos. Hic ante biennium quam Petrus et Paulus coronarentur martyrio, a Nerone interfectus est.

Jerome's notice is the first external reference to the epistolary fiction and hence the *terminus ante quem* of our correspondence.[35] In 413 C.E. we find a second reference by Augustine.[36] The Bishop of Hippo repeats Jerome's guarded qualifier *leguntur*; he acknowledges the existence of the letters but does not speak about its authenticity.

"Merito ait Seneca, qui temporibus apostolorum fuit, cuius etiam quaedam ad Paulum apostolum leguntur epistulae…" Epist. 153, 14

Later witnesses generally refer to the correspondence in order to establish as a fact that Seneca and Paul were pen pals (oftentimes quoting Jerome's notice in DVI as supporting evidence).[37] Here follows a non-exhaustive list of testimonia[38]: (a) Alcuin (c.795) who wrote a short dedicatory poem to his edition of the correspondence. (b) Peter Abelard (12th cent.) in four of his works and John of Salisbury (see above); (c) Freculphus, Honorius of Autun Otto of Freising and Vincent of Beauvais seem to have knowledge only of Jerome's notice;

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[35] Before Jerome's notice, we have these arguments from silence that tell us that Christian authors (while they read and adopted some of Seneca's ideas) show no knowledge about the existence of our correspondence. (a) Around 180 Minucius Felix writes the *Octavius*, a work that owes much to Seneca. Yet he makes no mention of Seneca's ideological proximity to Christianity. (b) Tertullian – c. 200 - calls him "Seneca saepe noster" in *De Anima, 20.1* but does not allude to the correspondence; (c) In 325, Lactantius claims that Seneca "potuit esse Dei cultor, si quis illi monstrasset". Hence 325 is taken as the *terminus post quem*. Yet, as discussed in Liénard, *Sur la Correspondance* (n.26), one could argue that Constantine's silence about Seneca in his *Oration to the Assembly of the Saints* shows that the correspondence was perhaps still unknown a decade later.

[36] Interestingly, Augustine in *De Civitate Dei* (c. 420) says that Seneca never mentioned the Christians: "*Christianos tamen…in neutram partem commemmorare ausus est.*" *De Civ. Dei VII, 11.*

[37] The most notable exception being the *Passio Petri et Pauli* written in the 7th century which uses it for literary purposes (see n. 10, 111). The writer of this apocryphal work borrows from a passage in Letter **VII** in which Seneca reads Paul's letters to Nero: "… (Paul) disputed with the philosophers of the heathens,…many of them declared themselves persuaded by his teaching for a certain tutor of the emperor read his writings aloud in the latter's presence and described him to be admirable in every way."

[38] For a detailed list of authors and passages: up to the 13th cent in Barlow, *Epistolae*:110-112 (see n. 10) and Alfons Fürst, *Der apokryphe Briefwechsel*: 68-79 (see n. 25).

(d) Petrarch[39] in 1359 alludes to Letter XI; (e) two 14th cent**.** authors give credit to the legend of a Christian Seneca; a 'leggenda erudita' - i.e. a literary rather than a popular legend - that might have originated in this era.[40,41] Giovanni Colonna (c. 1330-1338) in his *Vita Senecae* states that *hunc saepe credi Christiani fuisse* and Alberto Mussato (early 14th cent.) in *Ecerinis* calls Seneca *Christianorum fautor tacitus*, a silent activist for the Christians. Decades later, in 1411, John Hus still gives credence to the forgery and refers to Jerome's notice.[42]

Seneca Cordubensis, vir doctissimus, moribus virtutum pre ceteris insignitus. Quem Senecam gloriosus Slawus beatus Ieronimus sanctorum annumerat kathalogo, vel epistolis provocatus, que leguntur Pauli apostoli ad eum et ipsius ad Paulum.... Unde continentissime vite fuit.

Soon after this reference by Hus, humanists start to question the authenticity of the correspondence.[43-44] It is perhaps Erasmus in his *Epist*. 2092, who gives it the final blow.[45]

His epistolis non video quid fingi posit frigidius aut ineptius; et tamen quisquis fuit auctor, hoc egit ut nobis persuaderet Senecam fuisse Christianum.

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[39] *Ad Annaeum Senecam* (*Fam.* 24.5.25).

[40] James Ker, *The Deaths of Seneca* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009): 200.

[41] Bocciolini Palagi, *Epistolario:* 26 (see n. 24).

[42] John Hus, *Quolibet Disputationis de Quolibet Pragae in Facultate Artium mense Ianuario anni 1411 habitae Enchiridion*. To my knowledge, nobody has previously mentioned this important and very late reference. Note that in the same year, Gasparino Barzizza wrote a commentary on the Seneca-Paul correspondence as if it were authentic.

[43] Valla (c. 1440) attacks the authenticity on stylistic grounds. See L.D Reynolds and N.G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars* (Clarendon Press, 1991):142.

[44] Vives (c. 1520) and Curione (1557), the editor of Seneca's genuine letters disputed the authenticity of the correspondence. See n. 24; Bocciolini Palagi, *Epistolario:* 29.

[45] Erasmus is the first to cast doubts on Jerome's intellectual honesty. *Divus Hieronymus non ignarus fuci, abusus est simplicium credulitate, ut Seneca libros lectu cum primis dignos commendaret Christianis.*

During the 17th and 18th centuries, scholars agree on the spuriousness of the letters. In the 19th, Fleury, Kreyher and Harnack rekindle the controversy. Yes – they say - the extant letters were a medieval forgery but perhaps Jerome was quoting from a genuine, no longer extant correspondence (written in Greek according to Harnack).[46] In the last sixty years, after the highly influential works of Liénard and Barlow, scholars have almost unanimously declared that the epistolary – first mentioned by Jerome in DVI - was forged during the second half of the 4th century.

As already discussed, medieval authors seem generally uninterested in the inane platitudes of the forged letters but instead quote from Jerome's notice.[47] They do so to justify their usage of Seneca as an authoritative source. Moreover, because of Jerome's stamp of approval, the authenticity of the letters appears not to have been questioned in the Middle Ages. Given that the Church Father's notice has a crucial role in the longevity of this 'leggenda erudita', unveiling Jerome's role in the transmission of the correspondence is of utmost importance. This will be the subject of the next Chapter.

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[46] Sevenster, *Paul and Seneca* (see n. 13).

[47] Recall that the notice accompanies many MSS. One could argue that the correspondence between Seneca and Paul was copied not for its literary value but to remind scholars about Seneca's proximity to Christianity. We also have to take into account that the epistolary occupies only 1-2 ff of MSS containing 100 to 200 ff of various works with no thematic agreement; hence the transmission of the correspondence was a rather uncomplicated process. True, the existence of more than 300 extant MS can partly be attributed to its popularity but of no lesser importance was the fact that its survival from a mechanical point of view was undemanding.

CHAPTER IV

JEROME: DE VIRIS ILLUSTRIBUS

In this Chapter, I intend to demonstrate that Jerome had direct access to the entire correspondence and that he did not believe in its authenticity but included it in *De Viris Illustribus* (DVI) out of convenience. Jerome wrote DVI in 393 C.E. The book is a collection of one hundred and thirty five short biographies of noteworthy Christian writers. The timing of the publication of this work of propaganda could not have been more appropriate.   Jerome (perhaps in his early sixties)[48] had already translated many books of the New and Old Testament into Latin and was likely one of the most-well read persons in Christendom. The year 393 was a turning point signaling the final and full triumph of Christianity over paganism. It was the year of the last Olympic Games, suppressed by Theodosius as a continuation of his decree in 391 that had ended the last remnant of subsidies for Greco-Roman cult and made Christianity the official state religion of the Roman Empire. In 393, in the Synod of Hippo, a Council of Bishops proclaimed for the first time an official canon of approved sacred scripture.[49]. In writing DVI, Jerome was offering future

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[48] J.N.D Kelly; *Jerome His Life, Writings and Controversies* (Duckworth, London, 1975): 174-178. Kelly discusses the actual date of composition of DVI (probably the second half of 393). He places Jerome's birth at 331 C.E based on the testimony of Prosper of Aquitaine (see full discussion in the Appendix of his book).

[49] Basically Athanasius' canon without *Hebrews*.

generations of Christians a canon of 'approved' Christian authors.[50] That he had posterity in mind can be seen by the insertion of his own autobiography in the last chapter of DVI.

Sadly, among the numerous letters that Jerome bequeathed us, we have none for the years 386 to 393, a primary source material which would have helped us better to understand his manner of research. Yet we know that in 394 C.E. he was already promoting the DVI to people who wrote to him.[51] What motivated Jerome to write DVI? The prologue of this work gives us very useful information. Dexter, the High Chamberlain of Emperor Theodosius had asked the Church Father to write a catalog of Christian authors just as Suetonius and Apolonius had done for the pagan writers. Jerome obliged. He wanted to show pagan enemies who mocked the simplicity of the Christians that the Church had philosophers, orators and men of learning.[52]

In DVI, Jerome included Seneca in his list of *Ecclesiastici Scriptores* based on the fact that he had exchanged letters with Paul. What to think then about Jerome's motives? The standpoints on this issue have been diverse and numerous. The following explanations

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[50] DVI became very popular as a dictionary of short biographies of Christian authors. A certain Sophronius translated it into Greek. A disciple of Jerome, Paterius wrote a continuation. A century later, the Christian priest Gennadius of Marseille published another continuation of Jerome's work in which he added short biographies of Christian writers active after Jerome's publication of the original DVI up to 495 C.E. It became attached to Jerome's original DVI as an 'official' second part. Interestingly, the priest Salvian, whose forgery we mentioned in the introduction of this thesis (see n. 4), is listed as an ecclesiastical writer in Gennadius' work.

[51] See *Epist. 47* where he informs Desiderius about the recent publication of DVI and tells him that if needed he can ask his secretaries to copy the book for him.

[52] *Hortaris me, Dexter, ut Tranquillum sequens, ecclesiasticos Scriptores in ordinem digeram et quod ille (Suetonius) in enumerandis Gentilium litterarum Viris fecit Illustribus, ego in nostris faciam, id est, ut a passione Christi usque ad decimum quartum Theodosii imperatoris annum, omnes qui de Scripturis sanctis memoriae aliquid prodiderunt, tibi breviter exponam. … discant rabidi adversus Christum canes…qui putant Ecclesiam nullos philosophos et eloquentes, nullos habuisse doctores) quanti et quales viri eam fundaverint, exstruxerint et adornaverint; et desinant fidem nostram rusticae tantum simplicitatis arguere, suamque potius imperitiam agnoscant.* Cf. the preface to the four Gospels that Jerome wrote for Pope Damasus c. 377. *Novum opus facere me cogis ex veteri, ut post exemplaria Scripturarum toto orbe dispersa quasi quidam arbiter sedeam: et quia inter se variant, quae sint illa quae cum Graeca consentiant veritate, decernam.* Both the prologue of DVI and the Preface to the Gospels convey a similar sense of solemnity. Jerome tells the reader that he is undertaking an important task at the request of an ecclesiastical (Vulgate) and State (DVI) authority.

have been proposed: (a) Jerome actually thought that the correspondence was real.[53] (b)

Jerome had access to the genuine correspondence, and what we have is a later forgery.[54](c)

Jerome accepted the genuineness of the correspondence reluctantly and "may not have seen

the letters".[55] (d) Jerome may have heard of the correspondence from a friend or had

imperfect second hand information about it.[56] (e) Jerome is neutral, he does not pronounce

himself on the authenticity.[57] The last three scholarly explanations for Jerome's inclusion of

Seneca in the DVI imply that the Church Father did not carefully examine the

correspondence and was indecisive as to its genuineness. Knowing what we know of Jerome

as a scholar and the internal structure of DVI, this seems to me improbable. In his own

letters, Jerome comes off as a bibliophile.[58] He had collected throughout his life a large and

ever-expanding library which he had taken from Rome to Jerusalem when he moved to the

Holy Land in 386 C.E. Jerome also frequented the library of Caesarea and had secretaries

working for him to copy books and letters. Most of his letters are fairly long and so are the

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[53] Corsaro Francesco, *Seneca nel Catalogo dei Santi di Gerolamo (uir. ill. XII)*. (Orpheus 1987) VIII : 264-282.

[54] This nineteenth century theory postulated primarily by Fleury was discussed and discarded in the previous chapter.

[55] L.D. Reynolds, *The Medieval Tradition* (see n. 34). This is a popular and appealing explanation. Perhaps Reynolds was led by the Church Father's words in the prologue of DVI: "*mihi in hoc terrarum angulo (Bethleemi) fuerit ignotum'* which makes one think that Jerome was living isolated from the civilized world.

[56] A variation of the previous explanation subscribed by many scholars: (i) Barlow (see n. 10). (ii) J.N. Sevenster, *Paul and Seneca* (see n. 13); (iii) Jannaccone S*., S. Girolamo e Seneca* (GIF, XVI, 1963): 326-338 ; (iv) Trillitzsch, W. *Hieronymus und Seneca* (Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch, II 1965): 42-54 Notice however that the differences between the passage referred by Jerome in Letter XII of the correspondence and his paraphrase are minor. "*Utinam qui meus, tuus apud te locus, qui tuus, velim ut meus*" versus "*in quibus ...optare se dicit, ejus esse loci apud suos, cujus sit Paulus apud Christianos."*

[57] Bocciolini Palagi, *Epistolario*, (see n. 24) and Lightfoot , *St. Paul's Epistle* (see n. 12).

[58] For a detailed discussion about the circulation and publication of literary works in Jerome's times see Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and readers in the early church: a history of early Christian texts* (Yale University Press, 1997). Gamble discusses Jerome's bibliophilic activities in various parts. Also of notice is Jerome's mention of his collection of Pamphilus' writings in DVI "I have twenty-five volumes of Commentaries of Origen, written in his hand, *On the twelve prophets* which I hug and guard with such joy, that I deem myself to have the wealth of Croesus." See also J.N.D Kelly, *Jerome His Life*: 135

extant letters that he received. The end of the 4th century was characterized by an intense circulation and publication of books and letters. As previously discussed the correspondence occupies only one folio in the extant manuscripts. If a friend wanted to mention a passage of the forgery (for instance the one quoted in DVI) in a letter to Jerome, we may ask why did he not send the whole correspondence which would not have taken much writing space and amounted perhaps to one fifth of 'a moderately long letter'?[59]

Jerome was aware of the similarities between Christian and stoic ethical doctrines.[60] He was familiar with several of the moralist's works and on occasion – as we shall see in the next Chapter – he had borrowed phrases from Seneca's writings; he was one of the most accomplished and knowledgeable Pauline scholars of his generation, having translated Paul's Epistles around 385 C.E. Had Jerome not seen the entire correspondence, it is unlikely that he would have been satisfied with hearsay instead of insisting on seeing all the letters. After all, this was not a minor discovery but a correspondence written in Latin between the apostle Paul and the most important pagan writer of the 1st century. More importantly in two other occasions in DVI (in the notices on Dexter and Ambrose of Alexandria), Jerome acknowledges that he has heard of a book but not read it.[61] Given that Jerome himself states that Seneca's inclusion in DVI is based on the correspondence, it is hard to explain why he would not have requested the entire correspondence and examined it carefully.

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[59] Jerome uses the words 'moderately long letter' to describe *Epist*. 112 (written in 397) which is roughly five times longer than the entire correspondence between Seneca and Paul. '*Tamen conabor quantum facere possum, modum non egredi longioris epistolae…*' Thus, using Jerome's own standards of epistolary length, the entire correspondence occupied as much space as what Christian writers considered a rather 'short letter' in the last decade of the fourth century.

[60] Jerome says of the stoics "*Unde Stoici, qui nostro dogmati plerisque concordant, nihil appellant bonum nisi solam honestatem et virtutem; nihil malum, nisi turpitudinem*" (*In Esaiam*, 4.11, 6-9).

[61] This point is discussed in greater detail later in the thesis.

Now we may ask, is Jerome neutral on his assessment of the correspondence's authenticity or convinced by it? How do we interpret his words in the Notice? "***quem non ponerem in catalogo Sanctorum, nisi me illae Epistolae provocarent, quae leguntur a plurimis, Pauli ad Senecam, et Senecae ad Paulum.***" Do these words show his reluctance to include Seneca in DVI? It seems to me that previous scholarship has not examined Jerome's words in the context of the Church Father's analysis of authorship issues in DVI.[62] In his catalog of Christian writers, Jerome displays a keen interest in matters of authorship and constantly applies his scholarly acumen to identify apocryphal writings, misattributions, homonymity and many other authorship problems. In the first ten notices of the DVI (all of which precede Notice 12 dealing with Seneca), Jerome does not shy away from discussing questions of authenticity regarding the writers of the New Testament (a thorny area of research even among modern Christian scholars). Interestingly, he deals with canonical works attributed to Christian figures of the first order in a rather dispassionate way, resembling more a skeptic biblical scholar than a defender of Christian orthodoxy. In notice after notice, as he lists the writings of early Christian writers, Jerome examines a variety of authorship problems: pseudepygraphy, anonymity, homonymity, misattribution, coauthorship, author's self-identification, author's facility with the language, stylistic features, historical improbabilities, acceptability based on authority or usefulness, basis of rejection and scholarly agreement.

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[62] See Hulley, Karl *Principles of Textual Criticism Known to St. Jerome* (Harvard Studies in Classical Philology), Vol. 55 (1944): 87-109. Hulley did a very good survey of Jerome's analysis of authorship issues (in DVI and other writings). Yet Hulley does not mention at all the notice on Seneca in DVI. Conversely, none of the scholars who studied the correspondence appeared to have focused on Jerome's analysis of authorship issues in the other notices of DVI.

Table 2: Jerome's discussions about authorship for the first ten writers of *DVI*

Writer	Works discussed	Authenticity, authorship and authority issues
Peter	(1)Acts, (2) Gospel of Peter, (3) 'his Preaching', (4) Revelation of Peter, (5) 'his Judgment'	**Pseudepigraphy** "*inter apocryphas scripturas repudiantur*"
James	Letter of James	**Pseudepigraphy / Acceptable based on authority** "*quae et ipsa ab alio quodam sub nomine ejus edita asseritur, licet paulatim tempore procedente obtinuerit auctoritatem*"
Matthew	Gospel of Matthew (uncertainty about the Greek translator of this Gospel)	**Anonymity** *Evangelium Christi Hebraicis litteris verbisque composuit: quod quis postea in Graecum transtulerit, non satis certum est.*
Jude	Letter of Jude	**Rejection based on quotations from the apocryphal book of Enoch / Acceptable based on authority** *…a plerisque rejicitur…. tamen auctoritatem vetustate jam et usu meruit inter sanctas Scripturas computatur.*
Paul	Epistle to the Hebrews	**Discussion of Style, Language and Scholarly Agreement'** *Epistola autem quae fertur ad Hebraeos, non ejus creditur, propter styli sermonisque dissonantiam, sed vel Barnabae, juxta Tertullianum, vel Lucae Evangelistae, juxta quosdam, vel Clementis Romanae postea Ecclesiae Episcopi, quem aiunt ipsi adjunctum sententias Pauli proprio ordinasse et ornasse sermone.*

Paul	Epistle to the Hebrews (CONTINUATION)	**Discussion of author's self-identification and language skills** *Vel certe quia Paulus scribebat ad Hebraeos, et propter invidiam sui apud eos nominis, titulum in principio salutationis amputaverit.* **Scripserat ut Hebraeus Hebraice, id est, suo eloquio disertissime, ut ea quae eloquenter scripta fuerant in Hebraeo, eloquentius verterentur in Graecum, et hanc causam esse, quod a caeteris Pauli Epistolis discrepare videatur.**
Barnabas	Epistle of Barnabas	**Usefulness of a work versus apocryphal nature** *…unam ad aedificationem Ecclesiae pertinentem Epistolam composuit, quae inter apocryphas scripturas legitur.*
Luke	Acts of Paul and Thecla	**Historical Improbability** *Igitur περιόδους Pauli, et Theclae, et totam baptizati Leonis fabulam, inter apocryphas scripturas computamus. Quale enim est, ut individuus comes Apostoli, inter caeteras ejus res hoc solum ignoraverit?*
Mark	Gospel of Mark	**Coauthorship** *Marcus discipulus et interpres Petri, juxta quod Petrum referentem audierat, rogatus Romae a fratribus, breve scripsit Evangelium. Quod cum Petrus audisset, probavit, et Ecclesiis legendum sua auctoritate edidit.* cf. from Notice on Peter: *Sed et Evangelium juxta Marcum, qui auditor ejus et interpres fuit, hujus dicitur.*

John	Johannine Epistles	**Homonymity and Misattribution**

Scripsit autem et unam Epistolam, … Reliquae autem duae, … Joannis presbyteri asseruntur.

Cf. Notice 18 where quoting from Papias' list of writers, Jerome observes that the two Johns are different people and wrote different letters:

Ex quo apparet in [Al. ex] ipso catalogo nominum, alium esse Joannem, qui inter Apostolos ponitur, et alium Seniorem Joannem, quem post Aristionem enumerat. Hoc autem diximus, propter superiorem opinionem, quam a plerisque retulimus traditam, duas posteriores Epistolas Joannis, non Apostoli esse, sed Presbyteri.

Hermas	The Shepherd of Hermas	**Acceptable based on usefulness**

...asserunt auctorem esse libri, qui appellatur Pastor, …. Revera utilis liber, multique de eo Scriptorum veterum usurpavere testimonia.

After Jerome's reflections on the authorship of writings ascribed to these 1st century Christian authors, we find the only four notices in DVI that deal with non Christian writers: Philo, Josephus and Tiberias, (three Jews included because of their usefulness for defending the historicity of early Christianity) and Seneca, the only pagan writer in the *catalogus*. Before examining Seneca' notice, it is worth discussing some additional examples of Jerome's musings on authorial issues in DVI that are not presented in the previous table. Here follows a non exhaustive list.[63] (1) *Pseudepigraphic works / scholarly consensus*: Jerome explicitly discusses which works are considered apocryphal (this Greek word appears four times in DVI), which works appear under someone's name (*sub eius nomine*, used seven

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[63] The word search in DVI was done using the text in the Patrologia Latina database, Vol. 23. See *Patrologia latina*: the full text database. [Ann Arbor, Michigan]: ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

times in DVI) and which writings are rejected by scholarly consensus

(*repudiatur/reprobatur*/etc).[64]   (2) *Discussion of misattributions*: see, for example, notice 70

on Novatianus. (3) *Analysis of style:* Jerome uses in four instances the expression '*mihi*

videtur…convenire/congruere' when he is giving his opinion on stylistic matters. The words

elegans or *inelegans* are used nineteen times. He is also sensitive to differences in ideas and

word order[65] and the agreement between the known character of the author and the style of

the work.[66] He also discusses contradictions in the source material[67] and knows how to use

internal evidence to date writings.[68] Of particular importance to this thesis, in DVI, Jerome

acknowledges that he has heard of a book but not read it or that he has received information

about a new book. In Notice 132, Jerome states that he has heard of Dexter's 'Universal

History' but has not read it.[69] In notice 126 on Ambrose of Alexandria, he states that he has

been recently informed about Ambrose's commentaries on Job.[70]

Given that the forged correspondence is mired with easily recognizable problems and

given that Jerome is eager to discuss authorship issues elsewhere in DVI, it is very difficult

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[64] Interestingly, Jerome does not use the terminology created by Eusebius in the Historia Ecclesiastica (which is one of the sources of DVI). Eusebius had divided Christian writings into λεγόμενοι, ἀντιλεγόμενοι and νόθοι.

[65] In discussing the possible authorship of the Letter to the Hebrews by Clemens (Notice 50) he states: *Sed et multis de eadem Epistola, non solum sensibus, sed juxta verborum quoque ordinem abutitur. Omnino grandis in utraque similitudo est.*

[66] In notice 99 on Serapion, he writes "*Leguntur et sparsim ejus breves epistolae, auctoris sui ασχήσει et vita congruentes.*" Here *congruentes* validates the authenticity of Serapion's letters.

[67] See notice 63 on Julius Africanus.

[68] See notice 76 on Pierius.

[69] *Dexter, Paciani, de quo supra dixi, filius, clarus apud saeculum et Christi fidei deditus, fertur ad me omnimodam historiam texuisse, quam necdum legi.*

[70] *Ambrosius Alexandrinus, auditor Didymi, scripsit adversum Apollinarium volumen multorum versuum de dogmatibus, et ut ad me nuper quodam narrante perlatum est, commentarium in Job, qui usque hodie superest.*

to explain why Jerome - who has read Seneca[71] and translated Saint Paul's epistles – avoids here a discussion of authorship.[72] We are not asking Jerome to use in Seneca's notice all the analytical tools at his disposal; what astonishes us is that he uses none of them. The correspondence is almost an invitation for the Church Father to play 'authorship detective' as he does in the rest of DVI. The most reasonable explanation that I find for Jerome's silence is that he wants to divert attention from his willingness to include Seneca in DVI based on a rather clumsy forgery. Notice these intriguing instances of silence in Jerome's mention of the correspondence: (1) There is no discussion of Jerome's extent of familiarity with the letters. If he had not read them all, why not say it explicitly as he does in the notices on Dexter and Ambrose of Alexandria?   (2) There is no assessment on the literary quality of the letters. Why doesn't Jerome's use his favorite qualifiers *elegans* and *inelegans?* (3) There is no analysis of stylistic features (ideas, order of words, etc). His favorite *tournure de phrase - mihi videtur convenire* - is absent here. (4) There is no discussion of the internal contradictions found in the letters, or their jumbled order, or the erroneous dates, or the possible conflated picture that they present of the two Senecae. (5) There is no discussion of discrepancies between the known character of the authors and the nature of the work. Did Jerome really imagine that Paul could have taken part in an epistolary exchange written in Latin? Why discuss the subject of Paul's familiarity with languages when he discusses the Epistle to the Hebrews in Paul's notice (see Table 2) but not in Seneca's notice where we are purportedly reading six letters by Paul written in Latin? I see no better explanation for this

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[71] See a more detailed discussion of Jerome's knowledge of Seneca in the next chapter.

[72] True, there is a small chance that the text available to Jerome was not exactly the same as the one currently extant, which seems to have undergone revisions. A second forger (see Chapter III) may have introduced two additional letters after the publication of DVI (many of the forgeries that have reached us have short and long versions). But even in that case there would still have been serious historical, stylistic and thematic problems that Jerome should have discussed.

riddle than the following: Jerome was not fooled by this correspondence of doubly

pseudepigraphic nature; yet, as a champion of Christianity, he had very a pragmatic approach

to matters of authorship and found it convenient to co-opt Seneca's writings for the

intellectual defense of Christian doctrine. To do so, he had recourse to forged letters that in

all likelihood he had read for the first time not long before.[73]

In light of the above discussion, it is worth revisiting some key words in Jerome's

notice on the stoic moralist in order to examine to what extent his inclusion in DVI helped to

christianize Seneca in the minds of Jerome's contemporaries.

Lucius Annaeus Seneca … continentissimae vitae fuit, quem non ponerem in catalogo Sanctorum, nisi me illae Epistolae provocarent, quae leguntur a plurimis …Hic ante biennium quam Petrus et Paulus coronarentur martyrio, a Nerone interfectus est.

Notice first how Jerome combines in a sentence a feigned reluctance to list Seneca

among the DVI writers (*quem non ponerem*) with his justification for the inclusion based on

'letters' that are read – passive voice – by many (believers). The conditional clause "*nisi me*

illae Epistolae provocarent" is particularly interesting. The verb *provocare* has a wide range

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[73] The striking differences in the language that Jerome uses to describe Seneca's death in his *Chronicon* (written in 380 C.E.) and the words that he employs in DVI reveal that at the time that he was writing the *Chronicon* he did not know about this correspondence. Seneca's death in the *Chronicon* (year 66 C.E.) is described as follows: *Lucius Annaeus Seneca Cordubensis, praeceptor Neronis, et patruus Lucani poetae, incisione venarum, et veneni haustu periit.* Here, Seneca dies by suicide as a true stoic but in a very unchristian manner. Now, if one examines Jerome's entries about the three Jewish authors who made it in the DVI (Philo, Josephus and Justus of Tiberias), one finds that in both the *Chronicon* and DVI, Jerome provides almost the same information about them. Yet, Seneca dies differently in DVI ; here, he is killed by Nero. The sensible way to account for the differences between the two biographical notes is by inferring that Jerome did not know about the forged correspondence in 380 C.E. Given the rapidity with which books circulated by the end of the 4th century and the appeal that a correspondence between Seneca and Paul would have had among erudites, I would venture that the letters were written no earlier than ten years before the publication of the *Chronicon*. This would place the composition of the correspondence between 370 and 393 C.E. (more likely closer to the end of the *terminus ante quem*). For a discussion similar to the one proposed here about the absence of the correspondence in the *Chronicon* and its implication for its date of composition, see Mastandrea, Paolo *Lettori Cristiani di Seneca Filosofo* (Paideia, 1988): 56-58.

of meanings.[74] In this sentence, the verb can be construed as indicating that the letters

'caused' in Jerome an emotional response and 'incited' him to include Seneca in DVI.[75] The

emotional component of *provocare* in this sentence is reminiscent of other instances in which

Jerome employs this word. In each of the four examples below[76] the agent of *provocare*

elicits a response that moves the object of the verb to an emotional reaction (tears, anger,

contempt or pity) rather than an intellectual one.

- *'in alio euangelio legimus quia post negationem petri et cantum galli respexit saluator petrum et intuitu suo eum ad amaras lacrimas **prouocarit**; nec fieri poterat ut in negationis tenebris permaneret quem lux respexerat mundi'* (*Commentarii in euangelium Matthaei*) Cl. 0590, lib. : 4, linea : 1459

- *'ipsi enim succenderunt ignem et clementissimum dominum in furorem **prouocarunt**, qui ignis furoris eius ardebit in aeternum'* (*In Hieremiam prophetam libri vi*) Cl. 0586, lib. : 3, pag. CSEL : 206, linea : 16

- *'memini me ante hoc ferme quinquennium, cum adhuc romae essem et ecclesiasten sanctae blesillae legerem, ut eam ad contemptum istius saeculi **prouocarem**, et omne quod in mundo cerneret, putaret esse pro nihilo'* (*Commentarius in Ecclesiasten*) Cl. 0583, praef., linea : 1

- *'quia cum plurimis gentibus fornicata es et desolatam te nudam que et captiuitatis squalentem sordibus, amatores pristini contempserunt, assume nunc citharam, congemina carmina, circumi ciuitatem, plange lupanar pristinum et antiqui erroris uestigia lacrimis laua, ut possis dei in te misericordiam **prouocare'*** (*Commentarii in Isaiam*) Cl. 0584, SL 73, lib. : 5, cap. (s.s.) : 23, par. : 16, linea : 3

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[74] A search in two of the dictionaries available on the Brepolis database (Brepols Publishers, Turnhout, 2011) yields: (a) Lewis & Short gives these meanings: To appeal, to incite, excite, to provoke and to call forth. Of interest, it has the extended meaning of 'to cause'. (b) In Blaise Patristic we find 'provoquer, exciter, encourager' and these other meanings that give *provocare* an emotional nuance "séduire, tromper".

[75] In the Preface of DVI, Jerome uses the verb to indicate that Dexter wants to 'incite' him to write this collection of biographies based on the example of Tranquillus: *Apud Latinos autem Varro, Santra, Nepos, Hyginus, et ad cujus nos exemplum provocas, Tranquillus*. The preface and the Notice on Seneca are the only two instances in which Jerome uses the verb *provocare* in DVI.

[76] The examples were found using the Brepolis database (Brepols Publishers, Turnhout, 2011). Sources are copied verbatim.

The next part of the sentence gives a rather upbeat ending to the notice. ***Hic ante biennium quam Petrus et Paulus coronarentur martyrio, a Nerone interfectus est.*** By placing the word *martyrio* (which refers to Peter and Paul) very close to *interfectus est* (which refers to Seneca) Jerome makes Seneca - just as Paul – a martyr of Nero.[77] *Martyrio* echoes **catalogo Sanctorum**, two important words that precede them in the sentence. This is the only time in DVI that Jerome tells us that one of the writers on the list is joining a *catalogus Sanctorum*. We find *catalogus Sanctorum* only here (not in the notices of the three Jewish writers - Philo, Justus Tiberias and Josephus - not in the notices of all the Christian writers). I believe that this is not just a fluke, but Jerome's word choice reveals ulterior motives. Why did he add *catalogo Sanctorum* in Seneca's notice? A good way to answer this question is by examining what it meant to be a saint in late antiquity[78] Jerome's contemporary Egeria, who wrote an account of her pilgrimage in the Holy Land about ten years before the publication of DVI uses *sanctus* one hundred and nineteen times in her travel journal. The word *sanctus* in Egeria is very rich in meanings and used profusely in connection to objects (*in scripturis sanctis*), places (*mons sanctus Sina*) and people (*sanctus Moyses*).[79] Egeria is an excellent example of a devout Christian living in the late fourth century. Thus, it is interesting to examine her usage of *sanctus* to discover its polysemic nature when used in reference to people, so as to better understand what a typical fourth

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[77] See the partial Christianization of Seneca (as a martyr of Nero) in the *Roman de La Rose*. This is discussed briefly in note 119 (below).

[78] In its most general sense, *sanctus* refers to a member of the Christian Church. Egeria (see text below) uses *sanctus* in this broad sense a number of times in her narrative. She talks about her 'tourist guides' as *sancti deductores* and those who accompany her while she is praying are also 'sancti' (*orationibus sanctorum qui comitabantur*). Recall that the Christian Church is a collective body made of many members and whose head is Christ. Hence, Christians 'participate' in the sanctity of Christ. This idea appears with slightly different formulations in the Pauline Epistles. See for instance οὕτως οἱ πολλοὶ ἓν σῶμά ἐσμεν ἐν Χριστῷ, τὸ δὲ καθ' εἷς ἀλλήλων μέλη. (*Romans* 12:5).

[79] In English we can translate Egeria's *sanctus* as saint, saintly or holy but it also has the extended meanings of pious and moral.

century Christian would have thought about Seneca, had he been informed that the

philosopher belonged to a 'catalog of saints'? As a whole, one can say that *sanctus* in Egeria

denotes two concepts that sometimes overlap: (1) *Sanctus* refers to a man of unimpeachable

moral conduct. [80] Egeria for instance meets several *sancti episcopi* and *sancti monachi*.

Needless to say, this type of sainthood is boosted by an ascetic life of self-depravation and

the ability to perform miracle works. At this highest level, *sancti* are seen as models of

Christian life. (2) Sanctus also refers to Christians or Old Testament patriarchs who are

supposed to be in Heaven (*sanctus Iesus*, *sanctus Helias*, etc). Martyrdom –especially

among eastern Christians – helps the saint's cause and grants him a higher status.[81]

   In conclusion, by his mere presence in DVI, Seneca gets membership rights among a

group of writers belonging to a *catalogus Sanctorum* and defined as *scriptores ecclesiastici*.[82]

From the early Middle Ages, the words *sanctus*, *scriptor ecclesiasticus*, ἅγιος[83] and *pater*[84]

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[80] Such as Seneca who is described in Jerome's notice as having led a *continentissima vita.* Note that Jerome's assessment of Seneca's life, *continentissima vita,* is quoted verbatim by John Hus (see n. 42).

[81] In her narrative, Egeria tells us about her visit to the memorial of Saint Thomas in Edessa (*nec non etiam et gratia orationis ad martyrium sancti Thomae apostoli, ubi corpus illius integrum positum est, id est apud Edessam…*).

[82] Shortly after DVI's publication Augustine receives an untitled copy of Jerome's collection of short biographies. A brother in the Church tells him that it is an *Epitaphium*. Augustine correctly observes that it contains living authors, and the title *Epitaphium* is not suitable. In *Epist*. 40. 2, Augustine asks Jerome about the real title of the book while he informs him that the book has his approval: "*Tamen utiliter a te conscriptum eumdem librum satis approbamus*." Jerome replies (*Epist*. 112) that Augustine is correct as to the misnomer given to DVI and states - as he does in the prologue of DVI - that his work should be properly called 'Concerning Ecclesiastical Writers': "*Ergo hic liber de Illustribus Viris, vel proprie de Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis appellandus est*."

[83] Sophronius' translation into Greek of DVI preserves the generic sense of *sanctus* in the notice on Seneca in which *sanctus* is translated as ἅγιος.

[84] Cassiodorus writing c. 545 (*Institutiones* 1.17) calls the authors appearing in DVI *patres*. '*Sed cum te de memoratis rebus, diligens lector, expleveris, ingeniumque tuum divina fuerit luce radiatum, lege librum de Viris illustribus sancti Hieronymi, ubi diversos Patres atque opuscula eorum breviter et honoravit et tetigit: deinde alterum Gennadii Massiliensis, qui idem de scriptoribus legis divinae, quos studiose perquisiverat, certissimus indicavit. Hos in uno corpore sociatos dereliqui, ne per diversos codices cognoscendae rei tarditas afferatur.*'

become associated with the stoic moralist. While those words do not necessarily make Seneca a bona fide Christian, they turn him into something much more important than a pagan author who had a famous Christian friend. After the publication of DVI, in the minds of Jerome's contemporaries and of future generations of Christians, Seneca becomes a philosopher with a strong degree of proximity with Christianity. True, the degree of proximity remains somewhat ambiguous. But this is not bad. We shall see in the next chapter how Jerome uses this ambiguity to his advantage.

CHAPTER V.

SENECA'S *DE MATRIMONIO* IN JEROME'S *ADVERSUS IOVINIANUM*

Soon after finishing DVI, Jerome published *Adversus Iovinianum* one of his most important theological treatises (and his longest one) in which he vigorously defended the preeminence of virginity over marriage. In this treatise, Jerome borrowed copiously from Seneca's *De Matrimonio*. The confluence of Christian and Stoic thought in several philosophical matters - already mentioned in Chapter I – led many Church Fathers to actively borrow concepts and language from Stoic thinkers. Thus, throughout the first five centuries of Christianity, stoic moral ideas appear oftentimes in Christian writings, repackaged for Christian audiences. Not surprisingly Seneca's influence on the writings of Latin Church Fathers was not insignificant.[85, 86] Apart from Tertulian (whose '*Seneca saepe noster*' we addressed before), the 3rd century Christian writers Minucius Felix and Saint Cyprian utilized

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[85] Michel Spanneut, *Le Stoïcisme des Pères de l'Église: De Clément de Rome à Clément d'Alexandrie* (Paris, Seuil, 1957). This is a seminal work on the topic of Christian-Stoic connections.

[86] As previously discussed, the similarities in thought and language between Stoicism and Christianity might mislead us into thinking that there were actually borrowings in cases when most likely there were none. Observe for instance, Severus' portrait of Saint Martin and its emphasis on Martin's self-control which makes him look almost as a 'stoic saint': '*Nemo umquam illum vidit iratum, nemo commotum, nemo maerentem, nemo ridentem'* (*Vita Martini*, 27.1). Cato's monologue in Book 2 of the Pharsalia represents the other side of the coin. Cato's speech makes him sound like a sort of 'Roman Messiah', ready to suffer death to save the Republic and atone for the sins of his fellow citizens. *Sic eat: immites Romana piacula divi / Plena ferant: nullo fraudemus sanguine bellum. /O utinam coelique deis erebique liceret / Hoc caput in cunctas damnatum exponere poenas! /Devotum hostiles Decium pressere catervae: / Me geminae figant acies, me barbara telis / Rheni turba petat: cunctis ego pervius hastis / Excipiam medius totius vulnera belli. /Hic redimat sanguis populos: hac caede luatur /Quidquid Romani meruerunt pendere mores.* Obviously this eerie coincidence does not mean that the stoic Lucan writing c. 60 C.E. was influenced by the Christian doctrine of atonement. Leibniz and Newton developed calculus at the same time and without knowledge of each other's works.

him. For the sake of illustration, consider their borrowings from Seneca's treatise *De Providentia* in the passages shown below.

Table 3: Parallel passages between Seneca's *De Providentia* and works by Minucius Felix and Cyprian (as listed by M. Spanneut; see n. 85, p.264)

<u>**Minucius Felix** *(Octavius)*</u>	<u>**Seneca** (*De Providentia*)</u>
Miser videri potest; non potest inveniri (37.3)	*Potest enim miser dici, non potest esse (II,7-8)*
Nemo tam pauper potest esse quan natus est...Non est paena, militia est...calamitas saepius disciplina virtutis est…Vires…sine labore excercitatione torpescunt (36.6-8)	*Nemo tam pauper vivit quam natus est. Non est saevitia, certamen est, quod quo saepius adierimus, fortiores erimus… Nimia felicítate torpescunt (IV.6-12)*

Saint Cyprian	**Seneca** (*De Providentia*)
Bibat licet gemma, et cum épulis marcidum corpus torus mollior alto sinu condidit, vigilat in pluma (Don, XII)	*Mero se licet sopiat…tam vigilabit in pluma quam ille in cruce…hunc uoluptatibus marcidum…vexat (III, 10)*
Gubernator in tempestate dinoscitur, in acie miles probatus (Mort, XII)	*Gubernatorem in tempestate, in acie militem intellegas (IV, 5)*

What about Jerome? The Church Father himself tells us that he was familiar with Seneca's works and that in some cases he drew his knowledge of Greek philosophers from quotes found in the writings of the Roman moralist. In *Ad Rufinum* 3.39, talking about his knowledge of Pythagoras, Plato and Empedocles, Jerome states that *'de dogmatibus eorum,*

non de libris locutus sum, quae potui in Cicerone, Bruto ac Seneca discere'[87] Interestingly,

the stoic moralist did not influence Jerome's literary style to a great extent (a style formed by

his readings of Cicero and Quintilian during his school years); before Jerome's inclusion of

Seneca in DVI, we find few echoes of the moralist's language in his work.[88] For instance,

Jerome's *Epist.* 22.2.2 '*adulator quippe blandus inimicus est*' is reminiscent of '*venit ad me*

pro amico blando inimicus' in Seneca's *Epist. Mor. 45.7*. Jerome's *Epist*. 60, 19, 1 (*cotidie*

morimur, cotidie commutamur et tamen aeternos esse nos credimus) can be compared with

Seneca's *Epist*. 24, 19 (*cotidie morimur, cotidie enim demitur aliqua pars vitae*). Likewise,

in Jerome's exegesis of Paul's admonishment of bishops 'given to wine' (in Tit. 1, 7) the

words '*vomunt ut bibant, bibunt ut vomant*' reminds us of Seneca's 'vomunt *ut edant, edunt*

ut vomant' in *Consolatio ad Helviam*. Last, we have a very intricate borrowing and

adaptation of a passage Seneca's *Troades* in his *Vita Malchi* written in 391 C.E., i.e. two

years before his publication of DVI and *Adversus Jovinianum*.

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[87] Note also the large number of Jerome's letters in which he provides comfort to friends who have lost loved ones (*Epist*. 24, 39, 60, 66, 77, 79, 108, 118, 124). Many of these letters follow the formal structure of Seneca's *consolationes* (see Jannaccone, n. 56). Jerome himself regularly identifies the genre of these letters as *consolationes*. For instance: '*non est optimus consolator, quem proprii uincunt gemitus, cuius uisceribus emollitis fracta in lacrimis uerba desudant*.' (*Epist*. 39.2) and '*quidquid de scripturis super lamentatione dici potest, in eo libro, quo paulam romae consolati sumus, breuiter explicauimus'* (*Epist*. 60.6).

[88] Jannaccone (see n. 56) and Mastandrea (see n. 73) are the source of the examples given in the text. Mastandrea also covers the use of Seneca by Arnobius (which is beyond the scope of this thesis). Jannaccone reviews previous scholarship on this issue. He also has very useful information on Jerome's direct and/or mediated knowledge of Seneca and how the Church Father used the stoic moralist as a source for Greek authors that he had not himself read or knew superficially (see Jerome's quote about this issue in the text). Also important: (1) Harold Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics* (Stockholm, Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia, 1958) which is covered by Jannaccone and (2) Neil Adkin, *Jerome, Seneca, Juvenal*, (Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire 78:1, 2000):119-128. Adkin skillfully attacks the echoes proposed by Hagendahl. Yet, he is overcritical of previous scholarship, does not address the *Vita Malchi* passage and ends up asserting that Jerome only read *De Matrimonio* and the familiarity that Jerome claims to have with Seneca in *Ad Rufinum* 3.39 is an act of *braggadoccio*.

Table 4: Jerome's borrowing from Seneca's *Troades* (see Mastandrea, n. 73)

Jerome. *Vita Malchi* 9 (391 C.E.)	Seneca. *Troades* 510-512
Malchus in the cave thinks:	Andromache says to Astianax
Si iuvat Dominus miseros	*Fata si miseros iuvant,*
Habemus salutem,	*Habes salutem,*
Si despicit peccatores,	*Fata si vitam negant,*
Habemus sepulchrum.	*Habes sepulchrum*

In his old age[89], as he writes *in Ierimian* (294.8), Jerome borrows from the *Troades* again (*veritas claudi et ligari potest, vinci non potest; in Ierimian* ; cf. *Tro.* 614 *veritas numquam perit*). There is also an additional borrowing from the *Troades* that appears in Book II of *Adversus Jovinianum.* It will be discussed in detail at the end of the Chapter. All in all, it appears as if Seneca's *Troades* was a play that Jerome knew well (perhaps the theme of braveness in the face of suffering was appealing to him).

By far, Jerome's most extended borrowings from Seneca appear in his treatise *Adversus Iovinianum* (*Adv. Iovin.*) in which thirty passages taken from *De Matrimonio* provide Jerome with literary ammunition to defend the preeminence of *pudicitia*, an old Roman virtue. Jerome's treatise was written in response to the thesis of a certain Jovinian, an opponent of ascetism who had argued that virgins were no better than wives.[90] This was seen

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[89] Jannaccone (see n. 56) states that Jerome increased his usage of pagan literature in his works after he wrote *Ad. Jovin.*

[90] Jovinian's works are lost and known to us only through quotes from his theological adversaries. In *Ad. Iovin.* I.3 Jerome recounts Jovinian's four heretical proposition: (1) "virgins, widows, and married women, who have been once passed through the laver of Christ, if they are on a par in other respects, are of equal merit. "(2) those who with full assurance of faith have been born again in baptism, cannot be overthrown by the devil. (3) there is no difference between abstinence from food, and its reception with thanksgiving and (4) there is one reward in the kingdom of heaven for all who have kept their baptismal vow." Translation by W.H. Fremantle, G. Lewis

as an attack on the ecclesiastical hierarchy since for the Church there were distinct grades of

perfection in the Christian life based on the degree of a person's withdrawal from sexual

activity. This was a universal moral scale applicable to both sexes: first came the virgins, the

widows second and the married persons third. Jovinian's followers refused to accept this

system of merit and granted equality to all Christian regardless of their experience with

sexual intercourse. The theological views of this heretical group put its followers in direct

collision with influential church authorities.[91] Jovinian's views were condemned by two

synods held in Rome and Milan (390 C.E.). Jerome was informed about this heresy by

friends in Rome and wrote his response to Jovinian in two books.[92] The work begins and

ends by denouncing Jovinian as a Christian Epicurean (*Epicurus Christianorum*) who

preaches *voluptas* and *luxuria*. In Book I, in which Jerome praises virginity and ranks it

higher than marriage, there are three distinct sections. First Jerome confronts *Epicuri luxuria*

and defends the Church hierarchy of merit: at the top the virgins, followed by widows

(married only once), in third place married women and last those married for a second time

(second marriage is strongly discouraged). Jerome finds theological validation for his thesis

in Paul's remarks in 1 Cor 7. [93] Next, Jerome confronts Jovinian's appeal to divine blessings

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and W.G. Martley. *From Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Vol. 6. Jerome refutes the first proposition in Book I of *Ad Iovin.* and addresses the other three in the second book.

[91] Peter Brown, *The Body and Society* (Columbia University Press 1988): 359-360. Ambrose described the heretical movement as an *agrestis ululatus*, a peasant's cry.

[92] *Ad. Iovin.* is a treatise of great historical significance which had considerable influence in shaping the views of scholars during the Middle Ages. It was read and quoted (among others) by Cassiodorus, Peter Abelard and Thomas Aquinas. Erasmus wrote a commentary on it.

[93] This is the Vulgate text for Cor 1, 1-9. *De quibus autem scripsistis mihi: Bonum est homini mulierem non tangere: propter fornicationem autem unusquisque suam uxorem habeat, et unaquæque suum virum habeat.Uxori vir debitum reddat: similiter autem et uxor viro. Mulier sui corporis potestatem non habet, sed vir. Similiter autem et vir sui corporis potestatem non habet, sed mulier. Nolite fraudare invicem, nisi forte ex consensu ad tempus, ut vacetis orationi: et iterum revertimini in idipsum, ne tentet vos Satanas propter incontinentiam vestram.Hoc autem dico secundum indulgentiam, non secundum imperium. Volo enim omnes*

on marriage found in the Old and New Testament and explains away the polygamy of many

Hebrew Patriarchs.[94] After dealing with scriptural passages, Jerome turns to the Greek and

Roman world to demonstrate the timeless superiority of *pudicitia;* the Church

Father draws examples from the Greek and Roman world in which the virtues of virgins were

extolled and chaste ladies who did not remarry after their husbands' death were admired. Ad

Jovin., I.41 begins as follows:

*Satis abundeque Christianae pudicitiae et virginitatis Angelicae, de divinis Libris exempla praebuimus. Sed quoniam intellexi in commentariis adversarii, provocari nos etiam ad mundi sapientiam, quod numquam hoc genus in saeculo sit probatum, et novum dogma contra naturam religio nostra prodiderit, percurram breviter Graecas et Latinas Barbarasque historias, et **docebo virginitatem semper tenuisse pudicitiae principatum**.*

It is in this section of *Ad Iovin.* that Jerome - for the first time in his literary career -

explicitly acknowledges Seneca as a literary source as he borrows material from Seneca's *De*

Matrimonio. Among Seneca's lost works, this treatise is the one for which the largest

number of fragments have been preserved (30 fragments in Vottero's collection). Of

particular interest to us, they all survive in the last nine chapters of Jerome's *Ad. Iovin*.[95] We

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vos esse sicut meipsum: sed unusquisque proprium donum habet ex Deo: alius quidem sic, alius vero sic. Dico autem non nuptis, et viduis: bonum est illis si sic permaneant, sicut et ego. Quod si non se continent, nubant. Melius est enim nubere, quam uri.

[94] For instance, Jovinian had quoted from Gen 1, 28 ('*benedixitque illis Deus et ait crescite et multiplicamini et replete terram*') and Matt 19.5 ('*et dixit propter hoc dimittet homo patrem et matrem et adherebit uxori suae et erunt duo in carne una*'). Note : These passages are taken from the Vulgate.

[95] Dionigi Vottero, *Lucio Anneo Seneca: I Frammenti* (Bologna: Pàtron Editore, 1998). Vottero's voluminous work is divided into three parts: 1) Introductory discussions 2) the Fragments and Testimonia, with facing Italian translation and 3) Commentary (pp. 219-358). This monumental collection of fragments builds upon the work of his predecessors: (1) Ernst Bickel *Diatribe in Senecae Philosophi Fragmenta* (Leipzig, Teubner, 1915) and (2) Friedrich Haase, *Seneca: Opera quae supersunt*, Teubner (1852). Vottero also includes two concordances of Bickel's and Haase's works and carefully defends the omission and inclusion of certain fragments in his edition. With regard to *De Matrimonio* (fragments 23 to 54 in his edition), his disagreements with Bickel and Haase are occasional and rather small. The important one is F54 (see n. 67), which Bickel thought that came from Porphyry. Vottero demonstrates quite convincingly that it is also based on *De Matrimonio* (see n.100). Interestingly even though he mentions the apocryphal correspondence between Paul

will discuss first these sections of Jerome's work and then examine how the Church Father incorporates *De Matrimonio* into his writing.

In Chps 41-49, Jerome quotes several times from *De Matrimonio* not only to display his unquestionable and superb erudition of pagan literature but also to beat Jovinian at his own game (as the lines quoted above from *Ad Iovin. I.41* indicate, the heretical monk had had recourse to pagan sources to make his case).[96] In Ch. 41-42 he asserts the superiority of sexual abstinence over other sexual activity. In chs 43-46 he justifies his rejection of second marriages with examples taken from the Greek and the Roman world. In chs 47-48 he enumerates the negative aspects of married life and the advantages of celibacy. Ch. 47 is based on Theophrastus's views on marriage (as preserved in Seneca's *De Matrimonio*) in which the Greek philosopher declares that the wise man should not marry.[97] Last, in ch. 49, which consists mostly of quotes from Seneca, Jerome praises *pudicitia*.

Vottero reconstructed the order of *De Matrimonio* based on the fragments found in *Ad. Jovin.* (F23 to F54 in his edition) as follows: (1) At the beginning of his work Seneca asserted that the stoics who advised against marriage were falling into the same error as

and Seneca in other parts of the book that deal with fragments not related to *De Matrimonio*, Vottero doesn't make the connection between the Notice in DVI and the publication of *Ad Jovin*.

[96] Jerome – the most ruthless polemicist in 4th century Christendom – wants to literally destroy his adversary. In the preface of the work, he mocks Jovinian style and belittles his intelligence. Among other niceties, he has this to say: "*I read but could not in the least comprehend them. I began therefore to give them closer attention, and to thoroughly sift not only words and sentences, but almost every single syllable; for I wished first to ascertain his meaning, and then to approve, or refute what he had said. But the style is so barbarous, and the language so vile and such a heap of blunders, that I could neither understand what he was talking about, nor by what arguments he was trying to prove his points.*" (For translation source, see n. 92).

[97] Vottero's (see n. 95) detailed analysis of the language in this Chapter strongly suggests that Jerome is actually reading a section taken from Seneca's *De Matrimonio* (fragment 54 in his edition). Vottero has a table with parallels between the language of this passage and other works by Seneca. Some examples are fairly convincing. For instance, an LLT search of *vilissima mancipia* indicates the phrase appears only in Seneca, Jerome and later Christian authors. While not all examples are equally persuasive, the accumulation of evidence favors Vottero's hypothesis.

Epicurus. The correct stoic standpoint should follow the position of Crisippus who believed that marriage arose from a natural and spiritual necessity. (2) Then Seneca gave the valid reasons to get married as opposed to the irrational or shameful reasons; namely: to follow sensual pleasures, marriage as an act of extravagance or excess, for adulterous motives or to evade the laws (fragments 23-29).[98] (3) Then Seneca gave examples of women known for their infidelity, fickleness or wrath (Terentia, Mucia and Metella, etc; fragments 30-36). (4) In the next section, the stoic moralist listed virtuous women who were considered models of fidelity and abnegation (Lucretia, Bilia Porcia Minor, etc; fragments 37-49). (5) Last Seneca's treatise ended with the praise of chastity (fragment 50).

Thus, it appears as if Jerome in *Ad Iovin.* preserved passages belonging to four sections of *De Matrimonio* but reversing their natural order in three cases – i.e. sections (4), (3), (2) - while keeping (5) the praise of chastity at the end. Except for the rather long fragment F54, most of the thirty fragments have an average length of about 6-7 lines. To get a better idea of the structure of *De Matrimonio,* I present below the attestation of Seneca's work and fragments 23-29 (the beginning of the treatise as reconstructed by Vottero and his predecessors).[99]

Attestation of Title: Seneca's *De Matrimonio*

T22 Vottero, F81 Haase, I, 49 *Ad. Iovin* [= col. 280 C PLM]

Scripserunt Aristoteles et Plutarchus et noster Seneca de matrimonio libros, ex quibus et superiora nonnulla sunt, et ista quae subjicimus

Stoics fall into the same trap as Epicurus when they advice against Marriage

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[98] These themes (adultery and a devotion to personal beauty) are also chastised in Seneca's *De Beneficiis*, I.X.

[99] Vottero uses the text of Patrologia Latina (see n. 63) for *Adversus Iovinianum* as reference.

F23 Vottero, F1 Bickel, F45 Haase I, 48 *Ad. Iovin* [= col. 280 AB PLM]

*Epicurus voluptatis assertor (quamquam Metrodorus discipulus ejus Leontiam [*Al. Leontium*] habuerit uxorem) raro dicit sapienti ineunda conjugia, quia multa incommoda admixta sunt nuptiis. Et quomodo divitiae et honores et corporum sanitates, et caetera quae indifferentia nominamus, nec bona nec mala sunt; sed velut in meditullio posita, usu et eventu vel bona, vel mala fiunt: ita et uxores sitas in bonorum malorumque confinio. Grave autem esse viro sapienti venire in dubium, utrum bonam, an malam ducturus sit.*

The right reasons to get married according to the Stoics (missing in *Ad. Iovin*)

Wrong Reasons to get married are chastised

   (1) Heeding to Popular Superstitions

F24 Vottero, F2 Bickel, F46 Haase, I, 48 *Ad. Iovin*. [=col.280 B-C PLM]

*Ridicule Chrysippus ducendam uxorem sapienti praecipit, ne Jovem Gamelium et Genethlium violet. Isto enim modo apud Latinos ducenda uxor non erit, quia Jovem non habent Nuptialem. Quod si deorum, ut putat [*Al. putant*], nomina, vitae hominum praejudicant, offendet ergo Statorem Jovem, qui libenter sederit.*

   (2) Marriage based on sensuality

F25 Vottero, F3 Bickel, F81-82 Haase, I, 49 *Ad. Iovin* [=coll.280 C - 281 A PLM]

Amor formae, rationis oblivio est, et insaniae proximus: foedum minimeque conveniens animo sospiti vitium. Turbat consilia, altos et generosos spiritus frangit, a magnis cogitationibus ad humillimas detrahit: querulos, iracundos, temerarios, dure imperiosos, serviliter blandos, omnibus inutiles, ipsi novissime amori facit. Nam cum fruendi cupiditate insatiabilis flagrat, plura tempora suspicionibus, lacrymis, conquestionibus perdit: odium sui facit, et ipse novissime sibi odio est. Tota amoris insectatio apud Platonem exposita est; et omnia ejus incommoda Lysias explicat, quod non judicio, sed furore ducatur: et maxime uxorum pulchritudini gravissimus custos accubet.

   (3) Marriage based on eccentricity

F26 Vottero; F4 Bickel; F83-84 Haase; I, 49 *Ad. Iovin*. [=col.281 A PLM]

Refert praeterea Seneca, cognovisse se quemdam ornatum hominem, qui exiturus in publicum, fascia uxoris pectus colligabat, et ne puncto quidem horae praesentia ejus carere poterat: potionemque nullam, nisi alternis tactam labris vir et uxor hauriebant: alia deinceps non minus inepta facientes, in quae improvida vis ardentis affectus erumpebat. Origo quidem amoris honesta erat, sed magnitudo deformis. Nihil autem interest, quam ex honesta causa quis insaniat.

(4) Marriage based on excessive love

F27 Vottero; F5 Bickel; F84-85 Haase; I, 49 *Ad. Iovin*. [=col.281 A-B PLM]

In aliena quippe uxore omnis amor turpis est, in sua nimius. Sapiens vir judicio debet amare conjugem, non affectu. Regat impetus voluptatis, nec praeceps feretur in coitum. Nihil est foedius quam uxorem amare quasi adulteram.

(5) Marriage based on adultery

F28 Vottero; F6 Bickel; F86 Haase; I, 49 *Ad. Iovin* [=col.281 B PLM]

Quorumdam matrimonia adulteriis cohaeserunt: et, o rem improbam, iidem illis pudicitiam praeceperunt, qui abstulerant. Itaque cito ejusmodi nuptias satietas solvit. Cum primum lenocinium libidinis abscessit; quod libebat, eviluit.

(6) Marriage based on evasion of laws promulgated against bachelors[100]

F29 Vottero; F7 Bickel; F87 Haase; I, 49 *Ad. Iovin* [=col.281 B-C PLM]

Nam quid, ait Seneca, de viris pauperibus dicam, quorum in nomen mariti, ad eludendas leges quae contra coelibes latae sunt, pars magna conducitur? Quomodo potest regere mores et praecipere castitatem, et mariti auctoritatem tenere, qui nupsit?

Within the section of his treatise where he uses the moralist as a source, Jerome refers to Seneca a total of five times.[101]

1. *Inquit Lucani poetae patrus* (I.46)[102]

2. *Scripsit…noster Seneca de matrimonio* (I.49)[103]

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[100] Vottero (see n. 95, 249) thinks that Seneca refers here to the Lex Papia Poppea first proposed by Augustus (Suetonius, *Aug*, 34, 2), discussed again under Tiberius in the year 20 C.E. (Tacitus, *Annales*, III, 25, 1) and rendered even more severe under the Senatus Consultum Persicianum.

[101] These are the only references to Seneca in all of Jerome's corpus (apart from Seneca's appearances as a historical figure in the *Chronicon* and DVI and his brief mention of the stoic philosopher in *Ad Rufinum 3,39*).

[102] Cf. Jerome's *Chronicon* and DVI notices on Seneca which contain the same reference to Lucan as the nephew of the stoic philosopher.

[103] This is the passage where we learn about the title of Seneca's treatise. Aristotle and Plutarchus treatises' on marriage fall into the *peri gamou* genre.

3. *Ait Seneca… de viris pauperibus quorum in nomen mariti, ad eludendas leges...* (I.49)

4. *Refert …Seneca cognovisse se quemdam ornatum hominem…* (I.49)

5. **Doctissimi viri vox est pudicitiam in primis esse retinendam, qua amissa, omnis virtus ruit** (I.49)[104]

The fifth quote deserves a detailed analysis. The supremacy of *pudicitia* among virtues that Jerome attributes to Seneca was a long-standing topic of the Stoic philosophical school that in turn influenced Christian thought about sexual abstinence. For the Stoics, flesh was somewhat suspicious because it belonged to the realm of passion. Passion and reason were natural adversaries; the true Stoics goal in life was to become reasonable and without passions (λογικός and ἀπαθής).[105] Obviously, intense sexual desires – given that they generate uncontrollable passions – had to be avoided. Virginity was seen as a way to overcome negative emotions and achieve self-control. Starting in the third century, Christians took this stoic idea to the next level and began to see virginity as a way to transcend nature. The absence of sexual desires was equated to Christian perfection. After the final triumph of Christianity over paganism, Jerome took this idea to the extreme and considered virginity to be man's natural state.[106] While Jerome had been preaching this doctrine since his arrival at Rome in the early 380's, the writing of *Ad. Iovin.* allowed him to flesh out his ideas in a polished theological treatise. On the one hand, Jerome's radicalism in

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[104] This statement appears right after the previous sentence. Jerome is clearly referring to Seneca who reveals the same veneration for *pudicitia* in other passages of his extant work. Cf. for instance *De beneficiis*, 1, 11: *Proxima ab his sunt, sine quibus possumus quidem vivere, sed ut mors potior sit, tamquam libertas et pudicitia et mens bona.*

[105] For a discussion on the influence of these stoic ideas in early Christianity see: (a) Spanneut (n. 85). (b) Elizabeth Castelli *Virginity and Its Meaning for Women's Sexuality in Early Christianity* (Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion, Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring, 1986): 61-88.

[106] Jerome is aware of the uniqueness of his position as he addresses an imaginary objector in *Ad. Jovin*, I.36: 'But you will say: If everybody were a virgin, what would become of the human race? Like shall here beget like. If everyone were a widow, or continent in marriage, how will mortal men be propagated? Upon this principle there will be nothing at all for fear that something else may cease to exist.' For translation, see n. 92.

Ad. Iovin. delighted other militant ascetics; on the other hand, it displeased many of his contemporaries who held positions of power in the Church.[107] Jerome must have been aware of the controversial nature of his views on sexual abstinence and evidently prepared his rebuttal of Jovinian's propositions with great care as shown by his expert handling of New Testament, Old Testament and pagan quotes.[108] Among pagan works, Jerome found Seneca's *De Matrimonio* particularly useful to support his views. The internal structure of *Ad. Jovin.* indicates that Jerome wanted to reserve a place of honor for the moralist's writing. Indeed, the borrowings from Seneca's treatise appear in full force in Chapter 4 (i.e the last chapter of *Ad. Jovin.*). Interestingly, the book itself ends with Jerome's exhortation to his female readers to practice *pudicitia* extolling the virtues not of known female figures in Church History but the virtues of female historical figures taken from Seneca's work.[109]

Multa sunt, quae praeclara ingenia nobilitent. Mulieris virtus proprie pudicitia est. Haec Lucretiam Bruto aequavit, nescias an et praetulerit: quoniam Brutus non posse servire a femina didicit. Haec aequavit Corneliam Graccho: haec Porciam alteri Bruto. Notior est marito suo Tanaquilla. Illum inter multa regum nomina jam abscondit antiquitas. Hanc rara inter feminas virtus, altius saeculorum omnium memoriae, quam ut excidere possit, infixit. Imitentur ergo nuptae Theano, Cleobulinam, Gorgunten, Timocliam, Claudias, atque Cornelias….

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[107] The backslash against *Ad. Jovin.* is addressed below in the Conclusion.

[108] In his biography of Jerome, Kelly says "But the essay itself, with its careful structure, skillfully deployed argument, and stylistic brilliance, betrays none of those signs of haste so obvious in other writings which we know he rushed" (See n. 48, 182-183).

[109] This rhetorical strategy is highly effective if one considers the emotional appeal that it had among part of the *Ad. Iovin.*'s intended audience (the upper-class Roman ladies whom Jerome frequented in Rome). In the section that precedes the borrowings from *De Matrimonio*, Jerome has a harder time refuting Jovinian's observations about the multiple cases of polygamy among the patriarchs of the Old Testament (Solomon for instance had seven hundred wives!). Jerome counters that there were also virgins among these men (Joshua and Elijah) but he doesn't come out as a clear winner. On the contrary, Jerome's defense of sexual abstinence in the pagan world - in which he is using Seneca as a source – is more convincing. Jerome ends the book exhorting his female readers (aristocratic ladies who were Christians but whose sense of national identity was Roman) to emulate Roman women of the past renowned for their *pudicitia*.

While it is difficult to gauge the extent to which Jerome recognized Christian-like elements in Seneca's work (or more precisely, an affinity to 'Jeromian' ideas about marriage and virginity), an analysis of the words in the testimonium may shed some light on Jerome's sympathy for the author of *De Matrimonio.*

Scripserunt Aristoteles et Plutarchus et noster Seneca de matrimonio libros, ex quibus et superiora non nulla sunt.

The wording of this sentence is quite revealing : Seneca appears in third place among a group of pagan philosophers but he is clearly separated from them. He is called *noster Seneca*, a possessive attached to Seneca that in all probability Jerome had seen in Tertullian's *De Anima* where the Christian polemicist in discussing the natural properties of the soul says:

Sicut et Seneca saepe noster: insita sunt nobis omnium artium et aetatum semina…[110]

Notice how with a brilliant toggle of adjective and noun and the suppression of *saepe*, Jerome has magically co-opted Seneca for the cause of Christian *pudicitia*.[111] Tertullian's *Seneca saepe noster* has suddenly become *noster Seneca* in *Adv. Iovin.* The Church Father

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[110] Tertullian, *De Anima*, 20.1.

[111] Jerome's ambivalence with regard to pagan literature is well known. In *Epist.* 22, he famously accused himself of preferring pagan literature to Christianity (*'Ciceronianus es, non Christianus'*). Yet he could never distance himself from pagan works. Rufinus (*Apol. c. Hier.* 2, 8 (2)) rebukes him because in spite of his solemn oath to abandon pagan classics he kept lecturing on them as a schoolmaster in his Jerusalem's monastery. Jerome's ambivalence persisted throughout his life. In *Epist.* 70, a letter written in 398 to Magnus, a Roman orator who has objections about Jerome's borrowings from pagan sources, the Church Father justifies his usage of non-Christian literature by mentioning three instances in which Paul quoted from a pagan writer. (a) From the poet Epimenides in Tit 1.12: εἶπέν τις ἐξ αὐτῶν, ἴδιος αὐτῶν προφήτης, Κρῆτες ἀεὶ ψεῦσται, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί. (b) From Menander in 1 Cor 15,33: μὴ πλανᾶσθε: Φθείρουσιν ἤθη χρηστὰ ὁμιλίαι κακαί. (c) From Aratus in Acts 17, 28: Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν. Jerome ends the letter by stating '*non te ignorare quod semper doctis viris usurpatum est.*'

has *nosterized* Seneca for future generations of Christians. In 1159, John of Salisbury will use the same language as he has recourse to Seneca to state the importance of frugality: [112]

Seneca noster audiatur, qui eam tantis laudibus effert ut quisquis aliquid omnino adicere temptauerit, otiari quam aliquid agere rectius uideatur.

I believe that Jerome himself explains best what he means by 'our Seneca' in the passage below where he explains what he means by 'our Origen'[113]:

Origenes tuus et - ne forte queraris figurata te laude percussum - **origenes noster** *- nostrum uoco ob eruditionem ingenii, non ob dogmatum ueritatem - in omnibus libris suis post septuaginta interpretes iudaeorum translationes explanat et disserit.*

Jerome must have felt the same way about Seneca's *eruditio ingenii*. He secretly rejoiced in the existence of a forged correspondence between Seneca and Paul that gave him an excuse to include Seneca in DVI and to use the moralist's treatise in his defense of *pudicitia*. In the second book of *Ad Jovin.*[114] Jerome went one step farther in his literary appropriation and wrote the following sentence.[115]

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[112] See n. 28.

[113] *Apologia adversus libros Rufini* (2, 34). Understanding what Jerome meant by *Seneca noster* is a complicated issue. *Noster* in reference to a writer usually means that the author wrote in Latin. Note that the other two authors mentioned, *Aristoteles et Plutarchus,* wrote in Greek. Yet in Jerome' testimonium of *De Matrimonio - Scripserunt Aristoteles et Plutarchus et noster Seneca de matrimonio libros - noster* may have an additional meaning. The Church father uses this possessive almost four hundred times in his corpus. Oftentimes it accompanies the words Dominus or Deus (*Dominus noster*, *Deus* noster); in many instances, it serves to qualify important historical figures of the Old Testament (such as in *Salomon noster*, *David noster*, etc). More importantly, Jerome uses the possessive in talking about Christian writers with whom he has some sort of emotional connection based on intellectual respect (e.g: *Pammachius noster*). This particular nuance of meaning appears to be present in both *Origenes noster* and *Seneca noster.*

[114] In the second book of *Ad. Iovin.*, Jerome refutes Jovinian's three other propositions (see n. 90).

[115] See discussion on this passage in Mastandrea, Paolo *Lettori Cristiani* (n. 73).
Note that the context in this passage makes it clear that Jerome is referring to the real Epicurus (not Jovinian). Jerome was quite adept at this type of manipulation of the written word to serve his purposes. Including Seneca in DVI, he was being disingenuous; other times - as the two following examples show - he had been downright malicious (a) In 390, he translated the homilies of Origen on St Luke's Gospel to expose Ambrose's plagiarism of this work in his Exposition of St Luke's Gospel. (b) In *Ad Rufinum*, he defends himself against accusations

Table 5: Jerome's borrowings from Paul and Seneca in *Adv. Iovin*., II.6.

Jerome (*Adv. Iovin*., II.6)	Paul (1 Cor 15,32)	Seneca (*Troades*, 397)
Manducet et bibat,	Manducemus et bibamus,	
Qui post cibos expectat interitum,	cras enim moriemur	
(qui cum Epicuro dicit)		
Post mortem nihil est,		*Post mortem nihil est,*
Ipsaque mors nihil		*Ipsaque mors nihil*

In a single sentence Jerome dares to mingle the writings of Seneca and Paul; in the process he kills three birds with one stone: (1) he borrows material from the moralist's play *Troades*[116] and Paul's letter to the Corinthians[117]; (2) he absolves Seneca of his unchristian teachings concerning the afterlife and (3) he misattributes the stoic's part of the sentence to Epicurus (recall that Jovinian is described as the *Epicurus Christianorum*). To our knowledge, none of the unsuspecting readers of *Ad. Jovin*. detected Jerome's risky marriage of Seneca and Paul .

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that he had composed a letter to Rufinus as if written a long time ago to make it appear that 'he was good and decent'.

[116] Recall that Jerome had already adapted a passage of the *Troades* in *De Vita Malchi* in 391 C.E.

[117] Remember that *1 Corinthians* is Jerome's most important New Testament source to rank sexual abstinence higher than marriage in *Ad Iovin*.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

We are here confronted with two remarkable facts in Jerome's literary career, both occurring in the year 393 and one closely following the other. Namely that: (1) Jerome included Seneca in DVI as the only pagan writer in his *catalogus Sanctorum* based on the epistolary fiction of an unskilled forger, but made no comments about the authenticity of the correspondence; and (2) Jerome - in the first work he wrote after DVI - used Seneca as a main source and called him 'our Seneca'. One doesn't have to be a cynic to suspect that the convergence of these two facts is no mere coincidence. I believe that when Jerome decided to include Seneca in his *catalogus Sanctorum* he already had in mind an immediate job for the only pagan author on his list. Recall that the two synods that condemned Jovinian's views were held in 390 C.E. Jerome already knew about the Jovinian controversy while he was writing DVI. One can assume that at a minimum he had already been asked by his friends at Rome to write a response to the ideas postulated by the heretical monk; possibly, he had already started working on *Ad. Jovin.* Sexual abstinence had a special place in his heart and a request to defend virginity was not something that he would have taken lightly. In *Ad. Jovin.,* Jerome not only intended to refute Jovinian's heretical equalization of virginity

and marriage but also to advance his somewhat idiosyncratic glorification of sexual abstinence.[118]

Notice also the literary advantages that Seneca's inclusion in DVI afforded Jerome. For the earliest readers of *Ad Jovin.* who had also read DVI, *'noster Seneca'* may have had an ambiguous status that helped Jerome to deflect potential criticisms about his usage of pagan sources. Based on his correspondence with Saint Paul and his presence in the *Catologus Sanctorum* of DVI, Seneca could be seen at a minimum as a philo-Christian stoic moralist, with less reservation as a quasi-Christian writer and –with a little bit of imagination – as a well-meaning philosopher who saw the light at the last moment.[119]

In the aftermath of the publication of his *Ad. Jovin.* - while some militant ascetics applauded Jerome's zeal in the exaltation of virginity - his elevation of *pudicitia* at the expense of marriage and his harsh condemnation of second marriages angered many

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[118] Cf. Jerome's famous words in *Epist*.22 in which he says that he praises wedlock and marriage because they give him virgins. Note also Jerome's idealization of the sexless marriage between Malchus and his wife. Malchus is an enslaved monk who would rather die than consummate the marriage forced upon him by his masters. Some of Malchus' outbursts during the night of the wedding are quite revealing of Jerome's fanatic defense of *pudicita* and his disdain for marriage: *' Huccine miser servatus sum? Ad hoc me mea scelera perduxerunt, ut incanescente iam capite **virgo maritus fierem**?... Verte in te gladium! Tua magis mors timenda quam corporis est. **Habet et pudicitia servata martyrium suum.**'* Malchus' equally pious 'wife' replies: *'Ego morerer, si iungi velles. Habeto ergo me **coniugem pudicitiae** et magis animae copulam amato quam corporis. Sperent domini maritum; Christus noverit fratrem. Facile persuadebimus nuptias, cum nos viderint sic amare'* (*Vita Malchi*, 6). Malchus and his wife managed to fool their masters to think that they have consummated their marriage and later escape into the desert.

[119] See discussion about the extent of Seneca's 'sanctity' in Chapter III of this thesis. The entire range of views as to Seneca's relationship with Christianity (a philo-Christian moralist, a quasi-Christian and a last-minute-Christian) reappears in the works of medieval authors who write about Seneca. Dante (ca. 1320) places Seneca in the limbo *'Tulio e Lino e Seneca morale'* Canto IV 141. His contemporary Giovanni Colonna (see p. 14 of this thesis) writing about two decades after Dante goes one step further and says: *Credo Christianum fuisse*. In the famous medieval poem *Roman de La Rose* (ca. 1275), Seneca is explicitly called a martyr (in the Christian sense). In the poem, Nero, having decided to kill Seneca, forces the moralist to choose his manner of death. Seneca replies: 'Let me die in the hot water so that my cheerful soul might return to God his maker'. Seneca's suicide in his bath becomes a symbolic Christian baptism. *Seneques mist-il à martire son bon mestre, et li fist eslire de quel mort morir il vorroit* (6481-6484). *Tant par ert crueus li maufés: Donc soit, dist-il, uns bains chaufés, puis que d'eschaper est néans, Si me faites seignier léans si que ge muire en l'iaue chaude, Et que m'ame joieuse et baude A Diex qui la forma ge rende, Qui d'autres tormens la defende.* (6487-6494).

Christians. A backslash ensued. Even some of his high-ranked friends deemed his positions

too extreme, and there was an unsuccessful effort to suppress the circulation of the treatise.[120]

Jerome had to explain himself to Pammachius in a long letter written in 394, the

Apologeticum ad Pammachium.[121] In this letter Jerome comes close to explicitly stating that

in theological disputes the end justifies one's rhetorical means. Even the Apostle Paul had

been deceitful in his letters, says Jerome.

*Legite Epistolas ejus, et maxime ad Romanos, ad Galatas, ad Ephesios, in quibus totus in certamine positus est; et videbitis eum in testimoniis quae sumit de veteri Testamento, **quam artifex, quam prudens, quam dissimulator fit eius quod agit.** Videntur quidem verba simplicia, et quasi innocentis hominis et rusticani; et qui nec facere nec declinare noverit insidias: sed quocumque respexeris, fulmina sunt. Haeret in causa, capit omne quod tetigerit: tergum vertit, ut superet: fugam simulat, ut occidat. Calumniemur ergo illum, atque dicamus ei: Testimonia quibus contra Judaeos, vel caeteras haereses usus es, aliter in suis locis, aliter in tuis Epistolis sonant.* (*Ad Pammachium*, 14)

Jerome included Seneca in DVI to use him as a creditable source in *Ad Jovin.* and to

draw Seneca closer to Christian history and doctrine.   In letter **XIV** of the apocryphal

correspondence, Paul asks Seneca to use his rhetorical skills to become a sponsor of Jesus

Christ: '*Novum te auctorem feceris Christi Iesu, praeconiis ostendendo rethoricis

inreprehensibilem sophiam*.' In *Ad. Iovin.* Jerome made the forger's wishes come true.

Moreover, the notice on Seneca in DVI became the *prologus* of the correspondence and

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[120] See Peter Brown, *The Body and Society* (n. 91): 377-378. Among those who found Jerome's negative views about marriage too extreme his correspondents Pammachius and St. Augustine had marriage experience. Pammachius was a Roman senator who married Paulina - the second daughter of Saint Paula - in 385 C.E. He later became a monk in 399 C.E. Recall that Augustine had had a concubine and a son before his conversion. The backslash apparently continued for quite a while. In the letter *Ad Domnionem*, written after *the Apologeticum ad Pammachium*, Jerome defends himself against an unnamed monk at Rome (probably Pelagius) who is attacking him by amplifying what Jerome's critics are saying about *Ad. Jovin.*

[121] In this letter Jerome reminds Pammachius that he had not said that marriage was bad but that virginity was better. *In fine quoque comparationis nuptarum et virginum, disputationem nostram hoc sermone conclusimus. "Ubi bonum et melius est, ibi boni et melioris non unum est praemium, et ubi non est unum praemium, ibi utique dona diversa. Tantum igitur interest inter nuptias et virginitatem: quantum inter non peccare et benefacere: immo ut levius dicam, quantum inter bonum et meliu*s." (*Ad Pammachium*, 7).

played a fundamental role both in the survival of the forgery and in the transmission of the

moralist's genuine letters. Thanks to Jerome, the authenticity of the correspondence was

taken for granted by many generations of Christian scholars. Thanks in part to Jerome's

notice, Seneca's genuine epistles may have survived while some of his other works did not.

Thanks to his notice on the stoic philosopher, Seneca's standing among Christians remained

elevated beyond his pagan status more than a thousand years after the publication of DVI and

Ad Jovin.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adkin, Neil, *Jerome, Seneca, Juvenal* **(Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire, 78:1, 2000): 119-128.**

A review of previous scholarship on Jerome's use of Seneca. Adkin casts doubts on many of the reported borrowings. He does not address the borrowing from *Troades* in *Vita Malchi* and affirms that Jerome only read *De Matrimonio.*

Auerbach, Erich, *Literary Language and Its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Age* **(Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993)**

Interesting discussion on how the Church Fathers viewed the simplicity of the language in the sacred scriptures as a sign of their sublime message.

Barlow, Claude, *Epistolae Senecae ad Paulum et Pauli ad Senecam (quae vocantur)* **(Horn, American Academy in Rome, 1938)**

Critical edition of the correspondence with impressive and thorough discussion of manuscript tradition. Detailed description of the differences between extant manuscripts (there are many). Summarizes the scholarly work on the correspondence up to the 1930's. Restrained discussion of motives behind this forgery. Was it a school exercise?

Bischoff, Bernhard. *Anecdota Novissima. Textes des vierten bis sechzehnten Jahrhunderts* **(Stuttgart, Anton Hiersemann Verlag, 1984)**

Presents and discusses the content of a medieval manuscript containing a letter of 'Anna' to Seneca and its relation with the Seneca-Paul correspondence. The letter is actually addressed to a group of *fratres*.

Bocciolini Palagi, Laura, *Epistolario Apocrifo di Seneca e San Paolo* **(Florence, Nardini Editore, 1985)**

New edition of the correspondence with commentary. Interesting insights on the possible sources and motives of the forger. Possible conflation of the two Senecas (Seneca the Elder, the rhetorician and Seneca the Younger, the philosopher) is discussed. Points out relationship to other apocrypha (Acts of Paul) and biblical traits in the forger's language.

Brown, Peter, *The Body and Society* **(New York. Columbia University Press 1988): 359-360**

A standard textbook on the history of sexual practices in early Christianity. Useful information about the Jovinian controversy and the positions taken by Ambrose and Jerome.

Castelli, Elizabeth, *Virginity and Its Meaning for Women's Sexuality in Early Christianity* **(Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion, Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring, 1986): 61-88.**

Interesting discussion about the influence of Stoicism as to sexual abstinence (in particular, female virginity) among early Christians.

Conte, Gian B., *Latin Literature: A History* **(Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994)**

Standard manual on Latin literature from its beginnings to the dawn of the Middle Ages. Useful information on the two Senecae and Jerome; their works and literary Nachleben. Conte thinks that the correspondence between Paul and Seneca contributed to the latter literary success in the Middle Ages.

Costa, C.D.N., *Seneca 17 Letters* **(Wiltshire, Aris & Philips Ltd; 1988)**

Selection of representative letters with commentary. Discusses the historical context of the letters. A passage in Letter 78 has a remarkable resemblance with I Corinthians 9-24-27, its potential inspiration for the forgery is briefly addressed.

Fürst, Alfons, Therese Fuhrer, Folker Siegert and Peter Walter, *Der apokryphe Briefwechsel zwischen Seneca und Paulus* **(Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006)**

Very recent German edition of the apocryphal correspondence with a useful list of *testimonia*. Reasserts Barlow's hypothesis about the origin of the forgery as an exercise in a rhetorical school.

Gamble. Harry Y. ; *Books and readers in the early church: a history of early Christian texts* **(Yale University Press, 1997).**

Very good survey on the importance of books in the early Church. Valuable information on (a) the publication and circulation of books (b) formation of private Christian libraries by bibliophiles such as Jerome.

Grafton, Anthony, *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* **(Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1990)**

A highly readable book on the history of forgery, forgers (their motivations and techniques) and detectors of forgery. Plenty of examples of forgery taken from pagan, Jewish and Christian literary traditions.

Hulley, Karl, *Principles of Textual Criticism Known to St. Jerome* **(Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, Vol. 55, 1944): 87-109.**

Hulley examines Jerome's analysis of manuscripts, errors, interpolations and issues of authorship in several of the Church Father's works.

Jannaccone S., *S. Girolamo e Seneca* **(Giornale italiano di filología, XVI, 1963): 326-338**

Jannaccone is my main source for Jerome's knowledge and usage of Seneca's writings before *Adversus Iovinianum* (for instance, the Church Father's adaptation of the *Consolationes* genre). Also of interest, discussions on how Jerome acquired his literary style.

Kelly, J.N.D, *Jerome His Life, Writings and Controversies* **(Duckworth, London, 1975)**

Kelly presents a very engaging biography of Jerome that helps us situate the Church Father in his proper historical context. Kelly discusses in detail Jerome's date of birth and the dates of publication of *De Viris Illustribus* and *Adversus Iovinianum*.

Ker, James, *The Deaths of Seneca* **(Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009)**

Ker examines the different literary reinterpretations of Seneca's death throughout history. Of interest, Ker explores the various degrees of Christianization that the stoic moralist underwent during the Middle Ages.

Liénard, Edmond, *Sur la Correspondance Apocryphe de Sénèque et de Saint-Paul* **(Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire XI, 1932): 5-23**

Interesting analysis of all the similarities between the epistolary style of Symmachus' the Seneca- Paul correspondence. Liénard also argues (but not very convincingly) that the forger composed this correspondence to promote a *Copia Verborum* that he intended to write.

Lightfoot, J.B., *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians* **(Lynn Hendrickson Publishers, 1881)**

Lightfoot has a long, easy-to-read essay on Seneca and Paul; to-the-point analysis of similarities in moral sentiments encountered in Seneca's philosophical works and Christian writings.

Mastandrea, Paolo *Lettori Cristiani di Seneca Filosofo* **(Paideia, 1988).**

Mastandrea discusses the writing of the Church Fathers Arnobius and Jerome in relationship to Seneca's works.   Mastandrea is my source for Jerome's borrowings from Senecas's *Troades*.

Metzger, Bruce M., *Literary Forgeries and Canonical Pseudepigrapha* **(Journal of Biblical Literature, Vol. 91, No. 1.,Mar., 1972)**

Like Grafton's book (*Forgers and Critics)*, this article delivers a wealth of information about forgery, forgers and their methods. Metzger is my source for a definition of *pseudepigrapha*.

Pervo, R. I., *The Making of Paul, Constructions of the Apostle in Early Christianity* **(Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2010)**

Pervo analyzes the different reactions that Paul – as a historical figure and Christian writer – elicited during the first centuries of Christianity.   Of particular interest to this thesis, Pervo examines the spurious Seneca-Paul correspondence in the context of other Pseudo-Pauline letters.

Reynolds, L.D *Texts and Transmission***:** *A Survey of the Latin Classics* **(Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1983).**

Thorough discussion of the manuscript tradition of Seneca's books. Of interest for the spurious correspondence is Reynolds' discussion on the transmission of Seneca's genuine letters.

Reynolds, L.D. *The Medieval Tradition of Seneca's letters* **(London, Oxford University Press, 1965)**

Reynolds discusses in detail the transmission of the *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium* and its relationship with the Seneca-Paul correspondence. He thinks that Jerome may not have seen the letters and accepted the correspondence reluctantly.

Reynolds, L.D and Wilson, N.G., *Scribes and Scholars* **(Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991)**

> The standard textbook on textual transmission for classicists interested in this field. It mentions all the late medieval scholars who studied the correspondence and asserted that it was not genuine.

Scaglioni, Aldo, *The Classics in the Middle Ages* **(Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1990).**

> Interesting essay on 'The Classics in Medieval Education' with a discussion on how the reading of pagan authors was made subservient to the grammatical and stylistic foundation needed to read Christian Literature.

Schneemelcher, Wilhelm, *New Testament Apocrypha* **(Louisville, James Clarke Company, 1990)**

> Comprehensive review of Christian apocrypha. Useful to situate the correspondence within its proper literary and historical context and compare its influence in comparison to other forgeries.

Sevenster, J.N., Paul and Seneca (E. Leiden, J. Briel; 1961)

> Comparison between the teachings of Seneca and Paul on human nature and the divine. First Chapter ("Personal relationship") addresses their historical points of contact concluding that there is no evidence that they ever met.

Sogno, Cristiana, *Q. A. Symmachus: A Political Biography* **(Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press, 2006)**

> Useful information on Symmachus' career and times which helps one to understand the brevity, obsequiousness and vagueness of his letters. Symmachus writes letters to maintain friendships and to recommend friends, relatives and acquaintances; he does not write letters to communicate substantial information.

Spanneut, Michel *Le Stoïcisme des Pères de l'Église: De Clément de Rome à Clément d'Alexandrie* **(Paris: Seuil, 1957)**

> A comprehensive survey of Christian borrowings and adaptations from stoicicism and stoic writers. Spanneut deals with both Greek and Latin Church Fathers. He is my source for borrowings from Seneca's De Providentia in Minucius Felix and Cyprian.

Vottero, Dionigi, *Lucio Anneo Seneca: I Frammenti* (Bologna, Pàtron, 1998).

A complete collection of Seneca's fragments. Vottero is the main source of information for my discussion about *De Matrimonio* and Jerome's borrowings from Seneca's treatise in *Adversus Jovinianum*.

Trillitzsch W. *Hieronymus und Seneca* (Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch, II 1965): 42-54

Trillitzsch's article provides useful information on Jerome's knowledge of stoicism and Seneca. Trillitzsch remarks the connection between Jerome's notice in *De Viris Illustribus* and Seneca's influence of Seneca in the Middle Ages.