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STRATEGIES FOR ADULT MORAL EDUCATION FROM SENECA'S LETTERS ON ETHICS

***Abstract:** this article attempts to analyze Seneca's great epistolary work, *Letters on Ethics*, which guided and inspired adults to achieve the "higher good" of virtue through reason through correspondence with his friend Lucilius. The letter, written in this book, discusses some of the moral problems of everyday life in a peaceful, non-didactic way, and demonstrates the unique and excellent educational methods of the ancient Roman philosophers and educators.*

***Keywords:** Seneca, epistolary genre, ethical problems.*

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СТРАТЕГИИ НРАВСТВЕННОГО ВОСПИТАНИЯ ВЗРОСЛЫХ ИЗ ПИСЕМ СЕНЕКИ ОБ ЭТИКЕ

***Аннотация:** в статье предпринята попытка проанализировать великое эпистолярное произведение Сенеки «Письма об этике», которое направляло и вдохновляло взрослых на достижение «высшего блага» добродетели посредством разума посредством переписки с его другом Луцилием. В письме, написанном в этой книге, обсуждаются некоторые моральные проблемы повседневной жизни в мирной, недидактической форме, а также демонстрируются уникальные и превосходные образовательные методы древнеримских философов и педагогов.*

***Ключевые слова:** Сенека, эпистолярный жанр, этические проблемы.*

Lucius Annaeus Seneca (c. 4 BC – 65 AD) was one of the most famous Stoic philosophers of the Roman Empire, who served under several emperors of the Claudius dynasty, experienced the tragicomedy of life. In his later years, Seneca became one of the important representatives of the Stoic school. Seneca's writings are vivid and delicate, interspersed with aphorisms and philosophers, and have a great influence on future generations of writers and philosophers.

Among them, «Letters on Ethics» is a famous and immortal work of Seneca in his later years. The greatest feature of Seneca's ideas is the concentration of Seneca's thoughts, in which the form of letters to convey his philosophical ideas is the greatest feature. Why is the epistolary style adopted to convey the most important philosophical ideas? Is the epistolary style deliberate, or is it a chance to entertain yourself with friends? The most important question is whether there are any special advantages of epistolary style? The answer is yes. We can refer to the ancient people who borrowed letters to express philosophical views, such as Plato, Aristotle, Confucius, these philosophers used letters or dialogues to convey philosophical ideas. Seneca uses the most intuitive, amiable and approachable form of communication, which is the letter.

The epistolary body not only allows the author and recipient to form a private space, but also transmits this intimate relationship to every reader who reads the letter, allowing people to feel that they are prying into their private conversations, private

emotional expressions, private life and inner feelings, and their surroundings. When people see these letters, they feel that they have been given a special right, and they have spied into the author's thoughts, and thus brought into their own ideas because of the author's actions. This is also the effect that the epistolary writer hopes to achieve.

Another edifying advantage of epistolary style is «everyday», many epistolary styles teach people to cherish time, cherish life, teach people virtues, teach people how to learn, teach people how to heal, or criticize and deny some things, and give suggestions, advice and encouragement to the disciples who see these letters[1, p.94]. Philosophers are often not always right, but also make mistakes and mistakes, and therefore improve themselves through letters, as Seneca once said in letter 27: «Listen to me, therefore, as if I were talking to myself. I admit that deep down in my heart, I am talking to myself, just using you as an excuse »(Ep. Mor. XXVII.1)[2, p.99]. In this way, the identity of the mentor is not so unattainable and perfect, and from the status of the teacher, it becomes a friendly relationship of mutual understanding, mutual help, and mutual supervision. And external readers, who also have a perfect image of the condescending mentor, have become an approachable friend. This makes any part of the preaching part into the advice and opinions of friends, which are more receptive and even willing to listen to this teaching and advice. At the same time, the form of the epistolary, the length is very small, the language is not profound, and even often approachable to call the student's name, such a length is easy to reduce the reader's time cost, readers can use the time before going to bed or the fragmented time after tea to read a letter, the next time to read a letter, through this daily short time, to achieve the effect of daily learning, to achieve the effect of other stylistic forms difficult to achieve. Straightforward conversations and chats also lower the threshold for readers, and anyone who enters a corner of a bookstore in today's society opens the book, reads a personal letter, and even wants to read the next. The lowering of the time threshold and reader threshold is bound to affect the widespread education of more ordinary people, which has reached the universal education and lifelong education called for today. Readers can quickly enter the epistolary body or use

fragmented timeto learn. This form, much like the weekly moral lessons during the reading period, although not very profound, must have a subtle, moisturizing and silent effect. This shows Seneca's ingenuity and ingenuity. Thus, the everyday nature of epistolary style is better suited to moral education than any form of indoctrination.

There are 124 extant texts in the Compendium of Morals, addressed to Lucilius, the financial official in Sicily, Italy, and a collection of Seneca's last correspondence with close friends. Since it is a private message from the unloading of the armor and returning to the field, then its content is to talk about everything, talk about travel, talk about Roman style, talk about the views of Plato and Aristotle, talk about reading, talk about education, talk about virtue. In short, like essays, like travelogues, future generations can open this book and find in it all the spiritual encyclopedias they need. His styles and concepts are bold and avant-garde, and these letters are also of profound significance to modern education today.

The themes of moral books vary, but there are also traces of structure. At the beginning, more talk is about the philosophical categories of the public, time, reading, death, knowledge, etc., which can allow the public to have a general acceptance process, the middle period begins to discuss virtue, wisdom, learning difficulty deepens, and at the end of the article is more free, larger in length, from the relationship of guidance to the relationship of equal discussion and thinking with the recipient. This article intends to gradually move from the shallow to the deep, through the moral level, to carry out the «onion style» of Seneca's educational ideological strategy.

Seneca insists on the need for friendly help in the matter of moral self-improvement: «If the conditions for acquiring wisdom are secret and cannot be expressed to others, then I will refuse to accept wisdom. Nothing good can be pleasant without sharing it with friends» (Ep. Mor.VI. 4) [2, p.14]. In the sixth book, Seneca focuses on the relationship between «fraternity» and progress. Desperate for Lucilius to participate in his desire for moral upliftment. For him, true progress and moral perfection need to promote each other, make common progress, and support each other. We need to teach each other, and common progress is real progress. This is also

consistently advocated in China's teaching system, «Learning records» put forward «teaching and learning» is this meaning [3, p. 46].

Seneca believed that the learning of virtue is a matter of constant refinement: «In addition, in order to perfect virtue, you should have the quality of perseverance throughout life. Unless you understand the nature of things, unless you use philosophy to understand human things and sacred things» (Ep. Mor. XXXI. 8) [2, p. 115]. In the thirty-first letter, Seneca talks about how to perfect virtue, that is, perseverance and continuous improvement, and the attitude and quality that carry out throughout life. Seneca thinks, the cultivation and improvement of morality is constant, it is necessary to persist and need to exert subjective initiative.

Seneca also came up with, at that time, the preconceived concept of lifelong learning: «As long as you live, keep learning how to live... Even the elderly should continue to learn» (Ep. Mor. LXXVI. 3) [2, p. 297]. In the seventy-sixth letter, as long as you are alive, you must learn, and when you are old, you must continue to learn, that is, the concept of lifelong learning put forward by modern pedagogy. It can be seen that Seneca's educational thinking and strategy in the ancient Roman period is still very advanced today.

Seneca believed that wisdom and virtue are learned, not innate.»Wisdom does not come to a person for no reason...but virtue will not come to you for no reason. Knowledge is not something that can be gained with a little effort or suffering» (Ep. Mor. LXXVI. 6) [2, p. 298]. The learning and perfection of virtues takes time to accumulate, and in the long river of life, wisdom, knowledge, and virtues should not wait, but should actively learn, accumulate, study hard, and exert the subjective initiative of the subject to ingest knowledge, rather than passively waiting and accepting.

Seneca's view of the purpose of education is that the purpose of education is to cultivate and improve human reason and virtue, to enable man to be in harmony with nature, to achieve happiness and freedom, to face death and difficulties, education is not to cater to the needs and interests of society, nor to demonstrate knowledge and skills, but to improve human morality and intelligence Intelligent. His view of the

method of education is that the method of education is to guide and motivate students' intrinsic motivation, so that students can learn and think autonomously and actively, education is not to impose and instill external rules and information, nor to follow and imitate the views and behaviors of others, but to cultivate and develop students' judgment and choices.

In the «letters on Ethics» Seneca shows his philosophical and moral brilliance and level, his ability to express his thoughts and opinions in simple and powerful language, his ability to teach morality effectively in different ways and for different audiences, his ability to prove his moral character by his actions, and his ability to demonstrate his moral courage by his death [4, p. 65]. His writings are more about quoting the dialogues and doctrines of the philosophers, and even quoting the maxims of Epicurus to expound the main points of the Porch School, which seemed to be two schools of thought at that time, but indeed in Seneca's case, they can cross, fuse, and even complement each other. The above strategies that Seneca talks about in his book are familiar strategies in modern pedagogy, such as rationality, accumulation, accumulation, persistence, and lifelong learning, which are widely used today. In modern pedagogy, the Chinese proverb is «to learn from the best, to take the best and to remove the worst» [5, p. 46]. Seneca does not disapprove and accept these excellent theories because of different schools of thought or different positions. This shows how active and adaptable Seneca's thinking is. Although there are some theological parts in the examples of moral character education, which are a bit limited, this limitation is not enough to overwhelm his wisdom and strategy and the greatness of this Moral Book.

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