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## THE CONTINUITY AND EXPANSION OF SENECA'S PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT IN MODERN EDUCATION

***Abstract:** in history, the study of Seneca is more about the philosophical thoughts of his Stoians and Seneca, and rarely mentions Seneca's educational thought. However, through the research of Seneca's works, the author found that his philosophical thoughts deeply influenced the whole educational thought, including playing an enlightening role in the continuation and expansion of modern education. His philosophical views on nature, virtue, rationality, parents and other fields played a role in the expansion and continuation of modern education. Seneca's philosophy has played a positive role in modern education.*

***Keywords:** philosophical thought, Seneca, Herbart, modern pedagogy.*

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## ПРЕЕМСТВЕННОСТЬ И РАСШИРЕНИЕ ФИЛОСОФСКОЙ МЫСЛИ СЕНЕКИ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ ОБРАЗОВАНИИ

***Аннотация:** в истории изучение Сенеки больше сосредоточено на философских мыслях его последователей и самого Сенеки, и редко упоминается просветительская мысль Сенеки. Однако, изучая труды Сенеки, автор обнаружил, что его философские мысли оказали глубокое влияние на всю образовательную мысль, в том числе сыграли важную роль в продолжении и расширении совре-*

*менного образования. Его философские взгляды на природу, добродетель, рациональность, родителей и другие области сыграли важную роль в расширении и продолжении современного образования. Философия Сенеки сыграла позитивную роль в современном образовании.*

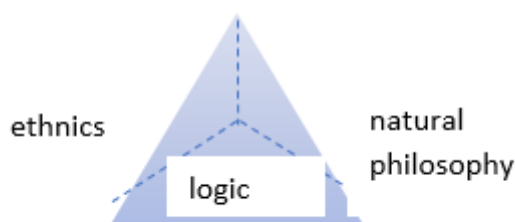
**Ключевые слова:** философская мысль, Сенека, Гербарт, современная педагогика.

At present, the scholars mainly engaged in the study of Seneca educational philosophy and moral education thought are mainly philosophy researchers and historical researchers, while they are rarely involved in other subjects. In terms of research content, the two aspects are mostly crossed and integrated, and there are also some differences. Specifically, in the study of Seneca education philosophy, some scholars from Seneca as a philosopher, Seneca all the education thought with its education philosophy, thus reflects the Seneca education philosophy of the enlightenment self-discipline principle and education in the concrete implementation of the process of heteronomy, finally by resort to moral historical rational eliminate the opposition, in this sense, as the enlightenment art education is only as a practical skill education is possible. Therefore, starting from Seneca's theory of human nature, it is believed that Seneca's educational philosophy is an important component of his critical philosophy, human particularity is the logical starting point of analyzing Seneca's educational philosophy, moral field is the focus of his educational philosophy, and its practical implication lies in emphasizing the freedom of will and the cultivation of moral obligation. And the author found in the study of Seneca education philosophy of ancient Roman education theory and modern pedagogy has relevance and expand extensibility, his education philosophy on the whole is a focus on the subject initiative of education philosophy, the argument mainly reflected in his nature of education, education content, education mode and method and the purpose of education and modern teaching theory similarity, also extends the regression of modern human nature and free rational human cultivation. I mentioned in my paper «on Seneca's Philosophy of Education» that the theoretical basis of Seneca's philosophy depends on the duality of

people and human freedom and rationality, and its philosophical thoughts specifically include epistemology, moral decline, methodology and aesthetic education, which coincides with modern teaching theory and is an extension and expansion.

### The philosophy of the Stoian School

After various debates, the Stoian school gradually reached a consensus, recognizing that philosophy was divided into natural philosophy, ethics and logic. The three parts were harmonious and unified, all studying all aspects of «nature» of the same object. Although the Stoian school is divided into early, middle and late periods, its ideology is consistent. As one of the important representatives of the late Stoian school, Seneca's main philosophy consists of two parts, one is natural pantheism and the other is ethical-therapeutic philosophy, both of which are closely related to or even similar to today's educational theory.



Pic. 1

There is more pantheism in Seneca's philosophy. Scholars generally believe that «the natural philosophy of the Stoian school is actually its theology» [3, p. 563]. In both the whole universe and for its ultimate reason, «nature» is understood as «god»: on the one hand, god penetrates in every corner of the world, making the world into an orderly universe; on the other hand, all the unity, especially the advanced organic unity of life, needs a dominant part or «form» to lead. In man, it is the soul of reason. Seneca said, «There is a god in us that protects us and watches us» (Ep. Mor. XVII) [2, p. 83]. The power of divinity falls to the individual, and the noble and perfect soul is inspired by the power of heaven. Although the Stoian school has constructed a huge philosophical system, it is not concerned with theoretical problems but with practical problems. In the psychological maturity of adults, people will naturally develop from the stage of «self-preservation impulse» to the stage of taking morality as

happiness. These propositions reflect a noble spirit of humanism». And this educational thought is highly organically integrated with today's natural sciences and the humanities.

### Herbart's educational ideas

The most famous modern educational theory is Herbart, an educational expert who makes pedagogy into an independent subject. Herbart's educational thoughts are extremely rich, with pioneering significance in many aspects, and also has many similarities with Seneca's educational philosophy.

### Make pedagogy a scientific subject

Herbart was the first to clearly put forward the scientific nature of education. In his opinion, pedagogy should be scientific, and to make pedagogy scientific, it should be based on philosophy and psychology. He said: «Education, as a science, is based on practical philosophy and psychology. The former shows the purpose of education; the latter shows the ways, means and obstacles of education». In addition to philosophy and psychology, ethics also plays an important role in the construction of his educational science. The main contents of his General Education have three main aspects: the purpose of education, teaching and moral education. The purpose of education is based on philosophy, teaching theory is based on psychology, and moral education is based on ethics. Therefore, his «General Education» is recognized as the first work of pedagogy with a scientific system, and he himself was known as the «founder of science education» and «the father of modern pedagogy».



Pic. 2

### Put forward the educational teleology

Man is not only a member of the society, but also an individual, which is the duality of human attributes, determined by the duality of man. People's understanding of the purpose of education also has two perspectives: one is the perspective of social needs, that the purpose of education is to educate people to understand and abide by social norms. That is, through education to make a person grow from a natural person to a social person. In China, this purpose of education is interpreted as «human people». In the West, such as Plato, the thought is taught

Education is a tool for establishing and consolidating the Republic, designed to train philosophers and soldiers; Aristotle believes that it aims to train all men into citizens needed for democracy; and Comenius seems to say more precisely: «Only after proper education can one man». The former «person «is a natural person, and the latter» person» is a social person.

One is the perspective of individual development, that the purpose of education is to promote human self-development. For example, Rousseau argued that the purpose of education is to adapt to the nature of children and to fully develop them physically and mentally; Pestellozzi argued that the purpose of education is to fully develop human talents and Herbat argued that the purpose of education has two kinds, he said: «The scope of the future purpose of students... can be divided into a purely possible purpose field, a necessary purpose field completely separated from this. «The so-called possible purpose is the purpose of individual activities within a certain occupational scope, that is, a certain social need, and this purpose is recent. The so-called necessary purpose, also called moral purpose, is long term, but also the highest purpose. Herbart's so-called morality is very different from what we understand as morality, and it is closely related to interests and character. The second question of chapter 2, «True Education», is «many aspects of interest – the power of moral character». In the seventh question, «briefly on the measures of real education», Herbart said: «People should first change their personality through extended interest... and then they can imagine that personality has the possibility of responding to the universally applicable moral law...» Therefore, it is reasonable to say that Herbart's «moral

purpose» includes at least what we call the educational purpose of developing personality.

A complete curriculum system was proposed, which laid a foundation for the establishment of modern curriculum theory. Herbat believed that people have many interests, and the curriculum should be set up according to people's interests. He first divided people's interests into two main categories: natural and social. He also divided each category of interests into three categories, and each interest was set up with courses corresponding to the interest.

The only natural interests are:

The interest of experience, that is, the interest of understanding the «what is» of things, and the corresponding disciplines are physics, chemistry, geography, etc.

The interest of speculation, that is, the interest of thinking about the «why» of things, and the corresponding subjects are mathematics, logic, grammar and so on.

Aesthetic interest, that is, the interest in evaluating the beauty, ugliness, good and evil, and the corresponding disciplines are literature, singing, drawing and so on.

The following social interests are:

Compassionate interest, i. e., the interest in human communication knowledge, is adapted to foreign languages (including classical and modern languages) and native languages.

Social interest, i. e., the interest in national and social knowledge, is adapted to history, politics, law, etc.

The religious interest, about the study of man and God, and the subject is theology.

In this way, according to his theory of «various interests», Herbart put forward a relatively complete curriculum system, which later became the basic framework of the modern capitalist education curriculum system, and even the modern curriculum system was still deeply influenced by it.

In order to clarify Herbart's curriculum, we list it below

category	Name of interest	Course title
Natural interest	Empirical interest	Nature, geography, physics, chemistry
	Speculative interest	Logic, mathematics, grammar

	Aesthetic interest	Singing, pictures, literature
Social interest	Sympathetic interest	Mandarin, Foreign Languages
	Social interest	Citizenship, history, politics, law
	Religious interest	theology

Setting up courses, not according to the needs of society but according to the interests, is definitely a creation for Herbart. The educational thought of ancient Rome contains the origin of the educational ideal of western gentlemen. Like Cicero, Seneca also emphasized that the emotional impulse must be subject to reason, advocating etiquette education and exercise for young people. Cicero, Seneca and many other good training and ideas from the literary tradition, their education is poetry, comedy, history and rhetoric (speech) – these are called the humanities education, namely the Renaissance humanists committed to the recovery of humanistic culture (Humanistic Culture), and make literature become the core curriculum. In the 20th century, humanistic culture flourished in the Western world, and humanists created strong mechanisms of enlightenment and propaganda, namely, liberal arts middle schools, public schools, grammar schools, Latin schools and girls' colleges [1, p.126]

Herbart said: «Children are not born to the world with their will, so there can be no moral relationship». Meaning that children lack correct value judgment and can not consciously restrain their own behavior». All they have is just a kind of disobedience that is shown everywhere

The intensity of. This intensity is the root of disorder, which disturbs the arrangement of adults and puts the child's future personality itself in danger. «These should be factual, because he sees too many things: «Adults and sensible educated people accept their own tasks over time. But some people are never able to reach this situation. The society always put them in the state of guardianship, a part of them called idiot and ruffian (I press: we today the so-called ruffian, street flow). There are also some people who do develop a countersocial will, and society inevitably struggles with them, and in the end, they are often given what they deserve. But this struggle is also a moral evil to the society itself (it can also be understood as a failure of the society)...»

What about the consequences? Herbart argued that only through administration. «This intensity must be overcome», he said... «Without the REINS of management, no class is possible. «The consequences of intensity «should be avoided, and child management is one of many necessary preventive measures». Herbart acknowledged that the management of students is mandatory, «before the intensity of the child shows signs of real will, and in order to be fully successful, the coercion must be strong and must be used frequently». How do you manage it? Herbart proposed threats, supervision, orders, prohibition, punishment and other methods, which are well known and will not be repeated.

Seneca puts forward in The Moral Book, «We will define the beauty of musical art in two ways, the beauty in the instrument when the musician plays, and the beauty in the musician's musical art. Seneca regarded the life of virtue based on reason as a happy life, that is, the life of the sage. Even if you can't become a «virtuous sage», but also try to be a good person. This requires people to learn philosophy under the guidance of philosophy teachers, which also requires individuals to play their subjective initiative to optimize in addition to personalization and socialization.

The Stoian school emphasized Socrates' idealism, believing that the dominant part of the human soul is rational, there is no irrational part, and the absolute freedom of subjectivity can contend with all external pressures. Passion is essentially a problem of cognition, so passion can not be treated in an irrational way, only by knowledge, that is, a complete revaluation of values. This is linked to the problem of modern education.

The Stoian school did not understand virtue as an emotional reaction as the general Greeks, but completely understood as intellectual character refers to the person of virtue is called the man of wisdom. This also hides a basic contradiction: " On the one hand, his philosophy opposes skepticism in its epistemology, arguing that knowledge is possible for most people; on the other hand, his philosophy in its ethics basically denies that any one has achieved the moral ideal is a virtuous philosophy."

[3, p. 669]. The first meaning of the sage (Sage) is the intelligent person (wise man), which is a state of intellectual perfection.



On the question of education and learning, Seneca was clearly focused on the education of the soul. This may be the only aspect of his practical and theoretical work, where he never disagreed with himself, and only philosophy can be a tool of soul education (Ep. Mor. LXIV. 8–9, LXXI. 7. LXXXVIII. 28). However, in order to be able to grasp the truth of morality and philosophy, one must receive proper education. The traditional set of so-called Seneca recognizes that «liberal art» (grammar, geometry, astronomy, music) is useful, but only as an initial stage of education and should never be delayed for long periods, because it will lead to an empty universe. Therefore, it is only useful if it «prepares the mind without keeping it longer» (EP.LXXXVIII,1). The Roman philosopher was largely negative about multiple cognition: in his view, the excessive «subtlety» of scientific reasoning is full of evil, «an enemy of truth» (ibid., 43).

Seneca said, «Virtue can only be achieved by fully educated people who are trained and raised to perfection through constant practice» (Ep. Mor. LXXXVIII) [2, p. 214]. In his eighty-eighth letter, On the Seven Arts, Seneca argued that the seven arts do not seek to teach people how to get better, but to make money. «I don't think any of these subjects are worth learning» (Ep. Mor. LXXXVIII) [2, p. 180]. In Seneca's view, the key is whether the scholars who teach these subjects also teach virtue.»So why do we let our children learn the seven skills? This is not because these subjects make them good quality, but because this education can train their minds and prepare them for virtue» (Ep. Mor. LXXXVIII) [2, p. 188]. Virtue is learned, and wisdom can be gained without learning the seven arts» And why should I think that a man who does not deal with books will never be a wise man? You know, wisdom is not meant to lie in the books. Wisdom triggers truth, not words» (Ep. Mor. LXXXVIII) [2, p. 189–190].

Seneca believes that the first task of treating anger after the end of the education period is to suppress the impulse, and the key is not to feel hurt. Reason should control the reins of strength, and it is possible to overcome passion through training. Three times a day, the anger will stop. In order to prevent anger, one must examine

whether their nature is more suitable for positive affairs or more suitable for leisurely research and meditation, and must turn to the direction guided by their natural tendencies. They should read the works of mature writers and learn something about misfortune; understanding, memory is one thing, understanding is another; conversation helps to inspire active learning, not forced learning, and what cannot be accepted for them. «As a defender of the law, the administrator of the state will treat human nature with words, try to use more gentle treatments, persuade the other party to do what he should do, win his inner desire for honor and justice, and enter in his mind a hatred of evil and respect for good. If it fails, turn him back to more harsh words; here he will still speak for the purpose of exhortation. If it doesn't work, let him resort to punishment» [4, p. 9].

In terms of educational content, Stoian educational thought pays more attention to the study of «liberal arts subjects», in order to shape the character of boys and create honest and caring people in society. Moral good and evil depend entirely on the lack of knowledge. The so-called good man are knowledgeable people, and the greatest evil is the ignorance of the soul. His idea of «therapeutic philosophy» is to promote its distinctive strong rationalism to the end. Seneca believes that everyone has their own value and importance, regardless of racial status or gender. He emphasized the perfection of personality through education, and believed that only fully educated people through continuous practical training and training can achieve perfection. Influenced by the Stoian idea of «living by nature», Seneca advocated the education of nature. He studied the characteristics of human nature in detail, noticed that human character are different, and advocated education according to human nature, and only by using the situation can we achieve the results of education.

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