The relative value of the recentiores for the text of Seneca's so-called Dialogi has been a bone of contention for decades, for the simple reason that, so far, the interrelationships of these manuscripts have not been fully investigated. Indeed, the existence of many of them has never been noted beyond the library lists, whether printed or handwritten.

In the present note it is my aim to report on two 15th century codices, to place them, in so far as possible, in their proper groups and to add some remarks on the marginal commentary they contain.

1. The manuscripts and their place in the tradition

The first manuscript, known for a long time under the symbol H, is a paper codex of 201 leaves in the Kongelige Bibliotek at Copenhagen (57b folio, Ny kgl. Samling) which still figures somewhat too prominently in Viansino's recent edition of the Consolationes. It is written in a fairly clear cursive, bristling with ligatures. There is no doubt that it belongs to the 15th century, but nothing is known about the antecedents of the ms., except that it was bought in the 19th century from a German private collection. It contains the Naturales Quaestiones (ff. 1r-67v), Proverbia and Liber Proverbiorum (67v-78r), the Dialogi (78r-193v) in the following order: Prov., Const. (here De providentia I and II), Vita be. with ot., tr. an., brev. vit. with Ad Pol., De ira, Ad Marc., Ad Helv., followed by De cura et modo fam. (193v-195r), De moribus (195r-197v) and an alphabetical index rerum notabilium (198r-200v). This last item is closely connected with the ca. one thousand marginal comments

1) T in Fickert's edition.
2) Cf. E. Jørgensen, Catalogus Codicum Latinorum medii aevi bibliothecae egiæ Hafniensis (Hafniae 1926), 327 f. The author does not mention the marginal notes.
that are scattered throughout the ms. They are written in what seem to be three hands, one of which may be the same as that of the text: the copyist occasionally gives a variant; the second confines itself to noting various notabilia and may be responsible for the index mentioned above, but the third writes explanatory notes.

The other manuscript was mentioned by Fickert in his Prolegomena of 1839, but never since, until Viansino mistakenly honoured it by saying that it is one of the Palatini Gruteri. Gruterus may have seen Palatinus Latinus 1541 but he did not enter his name on the flyleaf, as he did in the case of 1538, 1539, 1540 and 1545. Palat. Lat. 1541 is again written on paper in a cursive full of ligatures. The flyleaf at the end (f. 415v) shows the inscription Liber mgfï Johïs de Steinbach in a hand very similar to that of the body of the text and the marginalia 1).

Though W contains almost the entire body of writings known under Seneca’s name at the time 2), I shall confine my remarks to

1) In a previous article (Mnemosyne IV 13, 1960, 43) I have referred to this manuscript as W and I shall continue to do so here for the sake of easy reference. There are, however, far too many recentiores to continue with these symbols. In the course of the present note it will become clear that, as far as the text of the dialogi is concerned, Pal. Lat. 1541 is not worth its W, nor the Hafniensis its H.

2) Pace Trithemii, who noting the absent books wrote f. 405v (thereby defacing the ms.): “Ex Trithemj sententia desideratur ad hoc unus Tomus / De beneficijs ad Brutum (sic!) libri 7 Inter multos ac varios / Quod in sapientem non cadit iuria liber 1 Tantum inter Stoicos / Susariosiam sententiarum liber 1. Honesta inquit / Ad Polybium consolationis liber 1 Nostra comparës firma / De uerorum copia liber 1 / De matrimonio liber 1 / Tragediarum liber 1 / De morte Claudij liber 1”. In fact his inspection must have been very cursory: Dial. II (Nec iniuriam nec contumeliam accipere sapientem) is found ff. 309v-316v under the title De providentia II (as in about half the mss. I have seen) and Dial. XI (Ad Polybium) is joined to X (De brev. vit.), something which also happens regularly. The De verb. copia is at best an extended version of the Formula honestae vitae which occurs 178r-181r under the alternative title De IV virtutibus cardinalibus.

The exact order of treatises in W is as follows: ff. 1-3v blank, 4r-9v Prologus and Indices on the Letters, 10r-11v Life (Jerome) and Correspondence with St. Paul, 12r-17v another Index, 18r-162v Letters, 163r-172v De clem., 172r-175v De remedios for., 175r-178v De septem art. lib. (ep. 88), 178r-181v De IV virt. card., 181r-203v De virtutibus, 203r-238v De virtutibus, 238r-240r In Indices contra Oracium, 240r-295v De Qu. Nat., 296r-304v Proverbia

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