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Chapter 3: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF NIETZSCHE'S REFLECTIONS ON STOICISM

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Having discussed and nuanced the several possible parallels between Nietzsche's *amor fati* and Stoic physics and ethics, I shall now examine Nietzsche's actual engagement with Stoicism. In this chapter I argue that the typical context in which Nietzsche turns to the Stoics is that of the will to truth. To be sure, this does not exclude references to ethics; yet as I will show, most of the references made in this context should also be read in relation to truth, be it the truth based on which a morality is adopted (in naturalism for instance) or the morality motivating the pursuit of the truth (related to the virtue of *Redlichkeit* as well as the management of the passions).³⁵² I therefore distance myself from those mentioned in the Introduction who claim that Nietzsche adheres to Stoicism mainly in the context of therapy as a quest for 'the best way of life'³⁵³, and concur with the main point of Melissa Lane's article 'Honesty as the Best Policy' that 'Nietzsche was engaged in an evolving and contrasting evaluation of the role of honesty in the cognitive and emotional aspects of self-fashioning in the strategies of the ancient Stoics and Epicureans.'³⁵⁴

This chapter also indicates how the explicit references to Stoicism exhibit a development in Nietzsche's thought. Even though the context of will to truth remains a constant factor shaping Nietzsche's engagement, his assessment of the Stoic strategy in this domain becomes increasingly critical from *M* onwards (1880-1881). I argue that it will be necessary to examine this development in more detail, and to include the non-explicit references to Stoicism in the investigation. Chapters 3.4, 3.5 and 4 take up this challenge. In chapter 4 I trace Nietzsche's growing discontent in the years of the writing of *M* and the first four books of *FW*, the final book of which introduces *amor fati*. The impact of this development on our understanding of the early concept of *amor fati* will be discussed in chapter 5.

³⁵² Of course there are exceptions to this rule.

³⁵³ Especially argued for by Ure, M., whose points will be elaborated on in chapter 4. But also Sellars suggests something similar, based on what I believe is a misreading of Nietzsche's early (1874) essay *Schopenhauer als Erzieher* (*UB* III). See Sellars, J. (2006b), 152, in a section that summarizes Nietzsche's points of interest concerning Stoicism: 'In his *SE* Nietzsche outlines a practical conception of philosophy as a way of life that draws an analogy between philosophy and the art of medicine'. The relevance of *UB* III for Nietzsche's relation with Stoicism is not clear however; Nietzsche refers to the Stoics not once, and the account of philosophy he offers in this essay is in no evident way a representation of Stoicism.

³⁵⁴ Lane, M. (2007), 25.

3.2 NIETZSCHE'S REFERENCES TO STOICISM IN GENERAL

The explicit references to Stoicism, the analysis of which forms the foundation for this chapter, are spread out all over Nietzsche's works; from the earliest to the latest, in the *Nachlass* and the published works.³⁵⁵ The Stoics are also mentioned in two of Nietzsche's letters.³⁵⁶ The majority of the references occur in contexts that are not primarily concerned with Stoicism. But even if some of these seem trivial, they are significant, revealing not only patterns of association but also of tone or attitude; as we have seen, a polemical tendency is not unusual. In general, it is possible to discern three different angles from which Nietzsche approaches Stoicism. There are references from a historical perspective, on occasion attempting to grasp the relevance of Stoicism in the age leading up to a world dominated by Christianity.³⁵⁷ Secondly, some references pick up on its spirit or psychological attitude, mainly in order to judge whether it deserves approval or rejection (and, as I will argue, especially in the context of the pursuit of truth).³⁵⁸ The most general introduction to this kind of reference is the following *Nachlass* passage, in which Stoicism is explicitly described as a 'moral school', to be taken as a 'place of experimentation', in which some 'Kunstgriffen der Lebensklugheit' are thoroughly exercised and thought through to the fullest degree; the results are ours to consider, Nietzsche claims.

³⁵⁵ The sum of all references is 126, including his letters and the mentioning of specific Stoics such as Epictetus, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, and Ariston of Chios. As indicated in chapter 2, Nietzsche wrote an important essay on *DL VII* in 1869, and occasionally referred to the Stoics when teaching in Basel. He reversed Seneca's lament 'itaque quae philosophia fuit, facta philologia est' of *Epistles* 108 into a hopeful 'philosophia facta est quae philologia fuit' at the end of his inaugural lecture 'Homer und die klassische Philologie' in 1869. In a letter written on April 15th 1868 to prof. Friedrich Zarncke Nietzsche mentions some of the later authors reflecting on the Stoics as those that are closest to his heart and claims: 'Das Gebiet, in dem ich glaube leidlich bewandert zu sein, ist das einer Quellenkunde und Methodik der griechischen Literaturgeschichte; um außerdem noch einige Namen zu nennen, die mir näher stehen, so mögen hier außer Hesiod noch Plato, Theognis sammt den Elegikern, Demokrit, Epikur, Laertius Diogenes, Stobäus, Suidas, Athenäus eine Stelle finden.' The earliest reference in the *KSA* is to be found in a *Nachlass* note from 1870, one in which a sketch for 'Socrates und der Instinct' is made; *NL* 3[73] 7-79: 'Der Stoicismus als Souveränität des Bewußtseins. Das Sprüchwort'. The latest *Nachlass* note can be found in *NL* 15[29] 13.422 (spring 1888): 'der Stoicismus selbst war eine solche Hemmschuh-Moral'. The final reference in the published works is in *EH* (GT) 3 6.313: 'Zum Mindesten hat die Stoa, die fast alle ihre grundsätzlichen Vorstellungen von Heraklit geerbt hat, Spuren davon'.

³⁵⁶ The first to Franz Overbeck, November 14th 1884: 'Die unausgesetzte schmerzliche Entbehrung an allem Nothdürftigen, Tröstlichen, Stärkenden, lange zusammengedrückt durch meinen üblichen Gedulds-Stoicismus, bricht von Zeit zu Zeit heraus'. *KGB III*/1.554-5; the second to Erwin Rhode, May 19th 1887: 'In der schmerzliche Geschichte der modernen Seele [...], nimmt Taine seinen Platz ein als ein wohlgerathener und ehrwürdiger Typus mehrerer der nobelsten Qualitäten dieser Seele [...], ihres rührenden und bescheidenen Stoicismus inmitten tiefer Entbehrung und Vereinsamung.' *KGB III*/5.76-7. Nietzsche also received at least two letters in which the authors discuss Stoicism; one July 9th 1883 from Heinrich Köselitz (a younger friend and student of Nietzsche's, who is known by the name of 'Peter Gast') on the issue of Seneca and suicide (*KGB III*/2.381-2); the other by the same author, August 28th of the same year, on the resemblance between the Stoics and the church fathers (*KGB III*/2.392-5).

³⁵⁷ See for instance *JGB* 189 5.110, in which the appearance of moral fanaticism is analysed in the context of its age; Stoicism is introduced as an example: 'Von einem höheren Orte aus gesehen, erscheinen ganze Geschlechter und Zeitalter, wenn sie mit irgend einem moralischen Fanatismus behaftet auftreten, als solche eingelegte Zwangs- und Fastenzeiten [...]; auch einzelne philosophische Sekten (zum Beispiel die Stoa inmitten die der hellenistische Cultur und ihrer mit aphrodisischen Düften überladenen und geil gewordenen Luft) erlauben eine derartige Auslegung.'

³⁵⁸ The most explicit examples of which are *NL* 15[55] 9.652-3 and *FW* 306 3.544, which will be discussed in detail in this chapter and the next two.

NL 15[59] Was die Praxis betrifft: so betrachte ich die einzelnen moralischen Schulen als Stätten des Experiments, wo eine Anzahl Kunstgriffen der Lebensklugheit gründlich geübt und zu Ende gedacht wurden: die Resultate aller dieser Schulen und aller ihrer Erfahrungen gehören *uns*, wir nehmen einen stoischen Kunstgriff deshalb nicht weniger gern an, weil wir schon epikureische uns zu eigen gemacht haben.³⁵⁹

Thirdly, there are direct engagements with Stoic philosophy, as part of a dialogue on a particular topic. The most striking example of the third angle concerns the topic of 'pity', which will be discussed in detail in 4.2.6.

In this chapter I will focus mainly on the second perspective, as it is most closely linked with Nietzsche's philosophical interests.³⁶⁰ Nevertheless, examples of the first perspective reveal an important aspect of Nietzsche's approach. It betrays the influence, if only indirectly, of a Hegelian framework. Placing Nietzsche in the broader framework of the 19th Century we can see traces of the influence of the Hegelian historian Johann Gustav Droysen (1808-1884), who developed the concept of 'Hellenism'. Being a Christian scholar he argued that the Hellenistic age should be regarded as a period of decline after Alexander the Great's death (323 BC), which paved the way for the rise of Christianity.³⁶¹ His account influenced Brandis, Ueberweg, Zeller, Erdmann, and Schwegler³⁶², many of whose works Nietzsche knew well.³⁶³ Zeller, for instance, whose work was in Nietzsche's library, explains how Stoicism should be seen as a morality of defence in reaction to political uncertainty.³⁶⁴

In comparison to the generally positive estimation of Stoicism until the 18th Century, philosophers and historians in the 19th Century developed a surprisingly negative outlook along these lines.³⁶⁵ Given the number of Nietzsche's critical remarks on Stoicism it can be argued therefore that Nietzsche was a typical representative of his age. Yet although many of the references to Stoicism betray the influence of this Hegelian approach, Nietzsche's suspicion of

³⁵⁹ 9.654-5.

³⁶⁰ This division follows from the work I have done for the Nietzsche Dictionary.

³⁶¹ Momigliano, A. (1970).

³⁶² Ierodiakonou, K. (1998), 9.

³⁶³ See *Nietzsches persönliche Bibliothek* (2003). His library contains the three parts of *Grundriß der Geschichte der Philosophie von Thales bis auf die Gegenwart* by Friedrich Ueberweg (627-8), and *Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung. Erster Theil. Allgemeine Einleitung. Vorsokratische Philosophie* by Eduard Zeller (661). Brandis is mentioned in the same sentence as Zeller in *UB III* 8 1.417, indicating Nietzsche's familiarity with his work.

³⁶⁴ Ierodiakonou, K. (1998), 11, citing Zeller on 15.

³⁶⁵ Elements of which can still be found, for instance in the analysis of Stoicism in Bertrand Russell (1945). Schofield, M. in *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* (1999), 739, narrows down this negative outlook on Hellenism to its ideas on political philosophy: 'Hellenistic political philosophy has had a bad press.' He refers to lectures by Moses Finley, published in 1983, and the 'eminently serviceable general account of Greek political thought' by T.A. Sinclair 'some thirty years earlier', claiming that 'Finley and Sinclair are only echoing a long entrenched judgement which finds a classic formulation in the third volume of Zeller's great history of Greek philosophy, first published in 1852. For Zeller the Hellenistic period found the Greeks coping with a deterioration in external circumstances, and particularly with a loss of political self-determination [...], by withdrawing into the inner world of self-consciousness.' Schofield acknowledges the difficulty of 'displacing' 'the prevailing climate of opinion about Hellenistic political and social thought'; although 'many of its elements will not stand careful scrutiny', the only hope still is 'to reconstruct a convincing alternative picture', which is difficult due to the 'simple fact that most of what was written is now lost' (740).

Christianity causes him to reconsider the strengths and weaknesses visible in this time frame. Examples can be found especially in the later texts, in which Nietzsche compares Stoicism to Christianity and seems indecisive when it comes to their exact relation. In some texts Nietzsche judges Stoicism negatively as a forbearer of Christianity (cf. *NL* 11[375]: 'die stoische Selbst-Verhärtung, die platonische Sinnen-Verleumdung, die Vorbereitung des Bodens für das Christenthum...' ³⁶⁶), in others he detects a certain strength limiting the growth of Christianity. The following *Nachlass* text is an example, characterising Stoicism as a 'blocking morality' and Christianity as the ultimate sign of decadence (even if Christianity is not named explicitly).

NL 15[29] Zwei Typen der Moral sind nicht zu verwechseln: eine Moral, mit der sich der gesund gebliebene Instinkt gegen die beginnende *décadence* wehrt – und eine andere Moral, mit der eben diese *décadence* sich formuliert, rechtfertigt und selber abwärts führt... Die erstere pflegt stoisch, hart, tyrannisch zu sein – der Stoicismus selbst war eine solche Hemmschuh-Moral – die andere ist schwärmerisch, sentimental, voller Geheimnisse, sie hat die Weiber und die „schönen Gefühle“ für sich. ³⁶⁷

In both textual examples we find Stoicism portrayed as a morality dominating a certain age, more in particular one that approaches one's 'Sinnen' and 'Gefühle' in a specific manner. We can also suspect how, based on these examples: there is an element of 'Selbst-Verhärtung' involved, suggesting the 'tyrannical' rejection of affects. The opposite is the 'sentimental' type of morality, associated with art, mysteries and women. Even if the basic features of this analysis do not change, Nietzsche's evaluation of them does. This does not only happen when Nietzsche approaches Stoicism from this historical perspective; as we will see, it happens even more prominently within the second perspective, assessing the Stoic attitude to dealing with affects mostly in the context of the drive to find truth.

Within all three perspectives of Nietzsche's explicit references to Stoicism some characteristics occur repeatedly. These are (1) a lack of honesty, even dishonesty, theatre, pretension, arrogance, in combination with (2) a sense of hardness, coldness, numbness, even stupidity, which is sometimes referred to as 'masculine', being the consequence of (3) a long and persistent ascetic overpowering of the passions (self-tyranny) ³⁶⁸, out of (4) a desire for clarity, abstraction, systems, 'truth'. For all four of the characteristics many textual examples can be found; I will limit myself here to a minimum of illustrations of each, giving examples from the early as well as the later texts, thereby stressing the continuity of the type of observation at hand. ³⁶⁹ 3.2.1 discusses the first characteristic of hypocrisy; 3.2.2 covers the three others.

³⁶⁶ 13.169.

³⁶⁷ 13.422. Another example of comparison, in which in this case Epictetus is favoured, can be found in an earlier text, namely *M* 546 3.316-7: 'Von dem *Christen* unterscheidet er [Epiktet] sich vor Allem hierin, dass der Christ in Hoffnung lebt, in der Vertröstung auf „unaussprechbare Herrlichkeiten“, dass er sich beschenken lässt und das Beste von der göttlichen Liebe und Gnade, und nicht von sich, erwartet und annimmt: während Epiktet nicht hofft und sein Bestes sich nicht schenken lässt, – er besitzt es, er hält es tapfer in seiner Hand, er macht es der ganze Welt streitig, wenn diese es ihm rauben will.'

³⁶⁸ This aspect of Stoicism is importantly refuted as 'mistaken' in contemporary analyses; see for instance Long, A.A. (2006), 381-2: 'It is a complete mistake to regard Stoicism as advocating repression of emotion in every sense of the word.'

³⁶⁹ More examples can be found in the following footnotes.

3.2.1 HYPOCRISY

Of the first feature we have encountered several examples already. Stoics are described in *JGB* 9 as 'wunderlichen Schauspieler und Selbst-Betrüger'³⁷⁰ and *JGB* 5 suggests that it can be said of the Stoics 'dass es bei ihnen nicht redlich genug zugeht'.³⁷¹

As a possible source of this judgment the influence of Schopenhauer should be mentioned. Nietzsche, whose thinking is inspired by his philosophy to a large degree (see for instance *UB* III, *Schopenhauer als Erzieher*, 1874), distances himself from him from approximately 1878 onward. This distance becomes visible for the first time in *MA* I, but remains of importance throughout Nietzsche's life.³⁷² In both volumes of *Der Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (*WW*; in the second edition published in 1844) Schopenhauer dedicates a whole section to the Stoics. Already in the first volume (first published in 1819) we can see how he judges the Stoic ideal of a life without suffering as an impossibility³⁷³; the 'contradiction' ('Widerspruch') of still striving for it is expressed in the stiffness and lack of liveliness in their model of the sage.³⁷⁴ In the second volume, reflecting on this paragraph, he adds that the Stoics are in fact 'braggarts' ('Maulhelde'), only pretending to be independent from external circumstances, which they call indifferences. They are opposed here to the Cynics, whom Schopenhauer prefers because they at least put their ideal of independence into practice. He concludes that the Stoic turn to mere theory undermines their credibility.

WW II 16 Aus ihnen [die Kyniker] giengen nun die *Stoiker* dadurch hervor, daß sie das Praktische in ein Theoretisches verwandelten. Sie meinten, das *wirkliche* Entbehren alles irgend Entbehrlichen sei nicht erfordert, sondern es reiche hin, daß man Besitz und Genuß beständig als *entbehrlich* und als in der Hand des Zufalls stehend betrachte [...]. So vervollkommneten die *Stoiker* die Theorie des Gleichmuths und der Unabhängigkeit, auf Kosten der Praxis, indem sie Alles auf einen mentalen Proceß zurückführten und durch Argumente [...]. Sie hatten aber dabei außer Acht gelassen, daß alles Gewohnte zum Bedürfniß wird und daher nur mit Schmerz entbehrt werden kann; daß der Wille nicht mit sich spielen läßt, nicht genießen kann, ohne die Genüsse zu lieben [...]. Sie aber glaubten sich dadurch mit ihren Grundsätzen abzufinden, daß sie, an einer luxuriösen Römischen Tafel sitzend, kein Gericht ungekostet ließen, jedoch dabei versicherten, Das wären sammt und sonders bloße *proëgmena*, keine *agatha*; oder, Deutsch zu reden, daß sie aßen, tranken und sich einen guten Tag machten, dabei aber dem lieben Gott keinen Dank dafür wußten, vielmehr fastidiöse Gesichter schnitten und nur immer brav versicherten, sie machten sich den Teufel

³⁷⁰ 5.22.

³⁷¹ 5.18.

³⁷² See Young, J. (2010), 81-95, on Nietzsche's early discovery of Schopenhauer, its deeply felt effect, and the development of an attitude of critique based on the reading of Lange.

³⁷³ Schopenhauer, *WW* I 16: 'Es liegt vielmehr ein vollkommener Widerspruch darin, leben zu wollen ohne zu leiden'.

³⁷⁴ *WW* I 16: 'Der oben erwähnte innere Widerspruch aber, mit welchem die Stoische Ethik, selbst in ihrem Grundgedanken, behaftet ist, zeigt sich ferner auch darin, daß ihr Ideal, der Stoische Weise, in ihrer Darstellung selbst, nie Leben oder innere poetische Wahrheit gewinnen konnte, sondern ein hölzerner, steifer Gliedermann bleibt, mit dem man nichts anfangen kann, der selbst nicht weiß wohin mit seiner Weisheit, dessen vollkommene Ruhe, Zufriedenheit, Glückseligkeit dem Wesen der Menschheit gerade zuwiderspricht und uns zu keiner anschaulichen Vorstellung davon kommen läßt.'

etwas aus der ganzen Fresserei. Dies war das Auskunftsmittel der *Stoiker*: sie waren demnach bloße Maulhelden³⁷⁵

Schopenhauer's depiction of Stoicism as a philosophy that only theoretically preaches independence while at the same time allowing the enjoyment of earthly pleasures may well have inspired Nietzsche's judgement that Stoics are untruthful, using their morality only as a facade.

Besides *JGB* 9 and 5, aphorism 359 of *FW*'s Book V (written after *JGB*) provides a good example. It opens with the question 'Die Moral – wo glaubt ihr wohl, dass sie ihre gefährlichsten und tückischsten Anwälte hat?'³⁷⁶; 'Morality, where do you suppose that it finds its most dangerous and insidious advocates?' Offering an answer to this question, Nietzsche gives a description of a failed man ('ein missrathener Mensch') who is bored ('gelangweilt'), weary ('überdrüssig'), self-despising ('ein Selbstverächter'), ashamed of his own existence ('der sich seines Daseins im Grunde schämt'), and in this position makes the mistake of turning to books that are unfit for him ('Bücher auf die er kein Recht hat'; 'geistigere Gesellschaft als er verdauen kann'). This cocktail of circumstances leads to the poisonous situation of a man longing for revenge ('ein solcher durch und durch vergifteter Mensch [...] geräth schliesslich in einen habituellen Zustand der Rache, des Willens zur Rache'). A second question, making the connection between such a man and morality, follows:

FW 359 [...] was glaubt ihr wohl, dass er nöthig, unbedingt nöthig hat, um sich bei sich selbst den Anschein von Ueberlegenheit über geistigere Menschen, um sich die Lust der vollzogenen Rache, wenigstens für seine Einbildung, zu schaffen? Immer die Moralität, darauf darf man wetten, immer die grossen Moral-Worte, immer das Bumbum von Gerechtigkeit, Weisheit, Heiligkeit, Tugend, immer den Stoicismus der Gebärde (– wie gut versteckt der Stoicismus was Einer nicht hat!...), immer den Mantel des klugen Schweigens, der Leutseligkeit, der Milde, und wie alle die Idealisten-Mäntel heissen, unter denen die unheilbaren Selbstverächter, auch die unheilbar Eiteln, herum gehen.³⁷⁷

To be sure, Nietzsche does not immediately equate the miserable man described in the opening sentences of this aphorism with a Stoic. Yet in the list of things which this kind of man 'unbedingt' needs is Stoicism, portrayed as merely superficial 'moral' behaviour, a show resulting from vanity, bringing to mind the theatrical element we encountered in *JGB* 7, 8 and 9. In the sentence between brackets Nietzsche mocks Stoicism for perfectly hiding what it lacks; what exactly is left unidentified, but one may suspect it to be precisely the justice, wisdom, holiness, and virtue of the preceding sentence. Moreover, in what follows it becomes

³⁷⁵ Whether the origin of this standpoint might be traceable to Hegel (or perhaps even Kant) deserves further investigation. In any case, both *WW* I 16 and *WW* II 16 reveal how Schopenhauer's judgement of Stoicism is more than just dismissive. *WW* II 16 finishes with the following observation: 'Doch liegt Geistesgröße und Würde darin, daß man schweigend und gelassen das Unvermeidliche trägt, in melancholischer Ruhe, sich gleich bleibend, während Andere vom Jubel zur Verzweiflung und von dieser zu jenem übergehn.'

³⁷⁶ *FW* 359 3.605.

³⁷⁷ 3.606.

even clearer how Stoicism lacks 'spirit', and only hides this behind a mask or a cloak of 'wisdom'.

Man verstehe mich nicht falsch: aus solchen geborenen *Feinden des Geistes* entsteht mitunter jenes seltene Stück Menschthum, das vom Volke unter dem Namen des Heiligen, des Weisen verehrt wird; aus solchen Menschen kommen jene Unthiere der Moral her, welche Lärm machen, Geschichte machen, – der heilige Augustin gehört zu ihnen. Die Furcht vor dem Geist, die Rache am Geist – oh wie oft wurden diese triebkräftigen Laster schon zur Wurzel von Tugenden! Ja zur Tugend!³⁷⁸

Although this passage goes back to the 'missrathener Mensch' and thus appears to abandon the subject of Stoicism, there are still conclusions regarding Stoicism to be drawn. For the claim is not only that a man like him has a chance to end up being a 'Weise[n]' in the eyes of history, which is a clear reference to the Stoic 'σοφολ' (also coming back to the opposition between the 'noise' of being so and the question of its origin); it is also interesting to note how this type is reintroduced as the enemy of the spirit ('solchen geborenen *Feinden des Geistes*'): it is the fear of the spirit ('Furcht vor dem Geist') and revenge against the spirit ('Rache am Geist') that have become the roots of virtue if not virtue itself. In the final part of this aphorism the opposition between the virtue of 'wisdom' and 'Geist' is made even more explicit, as well as its strangeness in the light of the history of philosophy.

Und, unter uns gefragt, selbst jener Philosophen-Anspruch auf *Weisheit*, der hier und da einmal auf Erden gemacht worden ist, der tollste und unbescheidenste aller Ansprüche, – war er nicht immer bisher, in Indien, wie in Griechenland, *vor Allem ein Versteck?* [...] In den häufigeren Fällen aber ein Versteck des Philosophen, hinter welches er sich aus Ermüdung, Alter, Erkaltung, Verhärtung rettet, als Gefühl vom nahen Ende, als Klugheit jenes Instinkts, den die Thiere vor dem Tode haben, – sie gehen bei Seite, werden still, wählen die Einsamkeit, verkriechen sich in Höhlen, werden *weise*... Wie? Weisheit ein Versteck des Philosophen vor – dem Geiste? –³⁷⁹

Although it is not spelled out that it is the wisdom of a *Stoic* that forms his hiding place, there are plenty of hints that the Stoic is at least included in this analysis. The instincts that make the philosopher hide behind the cloak of wisdom bring to mind similar phrases related to Stoicism made in other contexts. In 2.2.3 we have seen, for instance, how the Stoics are regarded an important part of 'das müde Alterthum'³⁸⁰; and in a late *Nachlass* passage we find the explicit connection between fatigue and the wisdom of a Stoic.³⁸¹ 'Erkaltung' can be

³⁷⁸ 3.606.

³⁷⁹ 3.606-7.

³⁸⁰ *NL* 6[396] 9.299. This consideration might also betray the influence of Droysen's account of Hellenism.

³⁸¹ *NL* 7[12-3] 12.298-9: 'Die volksthümlichen Ideale, der gute Mensch, der Selbstlose, der Heilige, der Weise, der Gerechte. Oh Mark Aurel! Man muß die Augen auf haben: wenn irgend ein von Anbeginn altersschwacher Gesell immer seine Müdigkeit als Weisheit Pessimismus und Verklärung zur Schau trägt.' That the loneliness of a Stoic goes hand in hand with a lack of power moreover is shown in the following short observation: *NL* 29[17] 11.341: '2. Die Einsiedler zerfallen in Cyniker und Stoiker – worin ihr Verbrauch an Kraft – ihr Mangel an Kraft'.

recognized in the long and critical *Nachlass* fragment of *NL* 15[55], quoted at the end of 2.2.3³⁸², the reference to 'Verhärtung' we have encountered in the introduction to this chapter.³⁸³ From the references to these motivations it must be concluded that the Stoic is at least a perfect candidate for being one of those who hide their lack of spirit under the cloak of wisdom. What is more, the narrative of a Stoic concealing something sits perfectly with Nietzsche's criticism in *JGB* 9 and the preceding aphorisms: it is the 'Überzeugung' that is staged, but in spite of the bombastic impression it leaves, it cannot be anything but a covering 'Dummheit'.

The theatrical dishonesty of the Stoics is, however, not a feature occurring only in Nietzsche's post-Zarathustra texts. In the preceding book of *FW* (IV) we find in the aphorism entitled 'Stoiker und Epikureer' another reference to the Stoic need for an audience: the Stoic 'likes to act out his insensitivity before an invited audience'.³⁸⁴ But also as early as 1876 we encounter a similar judgement, although it must be conceded that the ferocity and depth of the later texts is missing.

UB IV 11 Oder wie klingen diese Sätze an unser Ohr: dass die Leidenschaft besser ist, als der Stoicismus und die Heuchelei, dass Ehrlich-sein, selbst im Bösen, besser ist, als sich selber an die Sittlichkeit des Herkommens verlieren³⁸⁵

Here, in a 1876 text entitled *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth*, we find the two words 'Stoicismus' and 'Heuchelei' side by side in one sentence, its implication being that it is better to feel something and be honest about it than pretending to be unaffected, holding on to the 'Sittlichkeit des Herkommens', a reference to the pride of belonging to a class. Although this passage appears in a completely different context compared to those mentioned above (one, namely, in which Wagner's ideas on the individual of the future are approvingly discussed), it does show how closely connected Stoicism and dishonesty are from the early texts on (a possible inheritance of Schopenhauer as explained above). Moreover, the fact that it is taken up again in *FW* 99, in an aphorism that again reflects upon Wagner, may be taken as another argument designating its significance (at least accounting for the fact that Nietzsche does not change his mind).³⁸⁶

³⁸² *NL* 15[55] 9.653: 'Was ist es, eine Statue im Winter umarmen, wenn man gegen Kälte stumpf geworden ist?'

³⁸³ *NL* 11[375] 13.169: 'die stoische Selbst-Verhärtung'.

³⁸⁴ *FW* 306 3.544: 'Der Stoiker [...] hat [...] gerne ein eingeladenes Publicum bei der Schaustellung seiner Unempfindlichkeit'.

³⁸⁵ 1.506.

³⁸⁶ *FW* 99 3.457. Other (later) interesting aphorisms and *Nachlass* passages revealing the association between Stoicism and dishonesty are, first, *Der Antichrist* (*AC*) 42, in which it is suggested that Paul's birthplace, being the capital of Stoicism (which is historically correct, since Paul, Chrysippus and Antipater were all from Tarsus), should warn us not to believe everything Paul says. *AC* 42 6.216: 'Nichts blieb unangetastet, Nichts blieb auch nur ähnlich der Wirklichkeit. Paulus verlegte einfach das Schwergewicht jenes ganzen Daseins hinter dies Dasein, – in die Lüge vom „wiederauferstandenen“ Jesus. [...] Einen Paulus, der seine Heimath an dem Hauptsitz der stoischen Aufklärung hatte, für ehrlich halten [...], wäre eine wahre niaiserie seitens eines Psychologen: Paulus wollte den Zweck, folglich wollte er auch die Mittel ... Was er selbst nicht glaubte, die Idioten, unter die er seine Lehre warf, glaubten es.' Second, *NL* 4[204] 9.151: 'Die Asketen erlangen ein ungeheures Gefühl von Macht; die Stoiker ebenfalls, weil sie sich immer siegreich, unerschüttert zeigen müssen.' Third, on just Seneca: *NL* 25[347] 11.103: 'Seneca als eine Culmination der antiken moralischen Verlogenheit'.

3.2.2 HARDNESS, AND THE SUPPRESSION OF EMOTIONS FOR TRUTH

Secondly, Nietzsche regularly discusses a sense of hardness (2) in the attitude defended by the Stoics. Of this element we have seen several examples too (in particular *NL* 15[55], the 'Selbst-Verhärtung' of *NL* 11[375] and the characterisation of Stoicism as a 'Hemmschuh-Moral', 'stoisch, hart, tyrannisch', in *NL* 15[29]). One important passage that connects this characteristic explicitly with the search for truth (4), and, indirectly, with the suppression of emotions (3), is the following, written in 1885 when Nietzsche was working on *JGB*.³⁸⁷

NL 40[56] Und wenn sich Einer tausend Male widerspricht und viele Wege geht und viele Masken trägt und in sich selber kein Ende und keine letzte Horizontlinie findet: ist es wahrscheinlich, daß ein Solcher weniger von der „Wahrheit“ erfährt als ein tugendhafter Stoiker, welcher sich ein für alle Mal wie eine Säule und mit der harten Haut einer Säule an seine Stelle gestellt hat?³⁸⁸

We find a clear example here of the inflexibility of Stoic hardness (2) adopted for the sake of the truth (4), symbolised by the hard skin of a 'Säule', a pillar, which reminds us of the reference to the cold stone of a statue encountered in *NL* 15[55].³⁸⁹ What is significant in this aphorism is that the wearing of masks, rejected in the previous section, is taken up here as exemplary for Nietzsche's own attitude. We have seen in the analysis of *JGB* 9 how the use of masks is an important feature of Nietzsche's own way of writing, and how he distinguishes his multi-layered game from the stiff 'Dummheit' of the single Stoic mask of wisdom.

In *FW* 306 we find a similar description of a Stoic in terms of inflexibility, in which his hard skin is compared to that of a porcupine.³⁹⁰ A comparable case is the characterisation of Stoicism in terms of 'Bildsäulenkälte' referred to in the Introduction. This reference can be found in *JGB* as well, namely in 198, its aim being to show how Stoic hardness is directly associated with the 'Dummheit' of a tyrannical suppression of the affects (3): 'jene Gleichgültigkeit und Bildsäulenkälte gegen die hitzige Narrheit der Affekte, welche die Stoiker anriethen und ankurirten.'³⁹¹

³⁸⁷ Another example is *GM* III 24 5,399-400: 'Ich kenne dies Alles vielleicht zu sehr aus der Nähe: jene verehrenswürdige Philosophen-Enthaltbarkeit, zu der ein solcher Glaube verpflichtet, jener Stoicismus des Intellekts, der sich das Nein zuletzt eben so streng verbietet wie das Ja, jenes Stehenbleiben-Wollen vor dem Thatsächlichen, dem factum *brutum*, jener Fatalismus der „petits faits“ (ce petit fatalisme, wie ich ihn nenne) [...] – das drückt, in's Grosse gerechnet, ebensogut Ascetismus der Tugend aus, wie irgend eine Verneinung der Sinnlichkeit (es ist im Grunde nur ein modus dieser Verneinung).'

³⁸⁸ 11.656.

³⁸⁹ This might also be a parody of the etymological background of the Stoa, in Greek denoting a 'portico'. Another reference to Stoicism in this year associated with a statue, is *NL* 7[101] 9,338: 'Die Menschen welche dieses Ideal verwirklichen (Epictet) sind *nicht* in ihren Göttern vorgebildet, vielmehr *deren Gegensatz!* Die griechische Tugend wurde ein Sache des ἀγών's, man war neidisch auf einander. Die *Unbeweglichkeit* als Ideal: in der Zeit, wo man schon zu *empfindsam* geworden war und die Leiden und Umschwünge zu *groß* (Zeit des Thukyrides) Zur Statue werden: während die Tragiker die Statue (des Gottes oder Heros) hatten zu Menschen werden lassen.'

³⁹⁰ *FW* 306 3,544: 'die stoische harte Haut mit Igelstacheln'. See for a more elaborate discussion of that aphorism chapter 4.3.1.

³⁹¹ 5,118; 'nochmals gesagt und dreimal gesagt, Klugheit, Klugheit, Klugheit, gemischt mit Dummheit, Dummheit, Dummheit'.

There are comparable remarks in earlier works. The Stoic ideal of ἀπάθεια³⁹² can be recognized for instance in the introduction of the 'vernünftige' man, who is contrasted to the 'intuitive' man, in the final sentences of the 1873 essay *Ueber Wahrheit und Lüge im aussermoralische Sinne* (WL). After stating that there are ages in which these two figures live together, both desiring 'über das Leben zu herrschen'³⁹³, Nietzsche asserts that in the age of the Greeks the 'intuitive' man was dominant, and so capable of creating a culture in which art controlled life.³⁹⁴ Importantly, both figures suffer from fear and pain; yet, the 'intuitive' man knows how to hide these sentiments in the appearance of 'ein erhabenes Glück und eine olympische Wolkenlosigkeit'.³⁹⁵ The fearful 'vernünftige' man deals with pain in a different way.

WL 2 Wie anders steht unter dem gleichen Missgeschick der stoische, an der Erfahrung belehrte, durch Begriffen sich beherrschende Mensch da! Er, der sonst nur Aufrichtigkeit, Wahrheit, Freiheit von Täuschungen und Schutz vor berückenden Ueberfällen sucht, legt jetzt, im Unglück, das Meisterstück der Verstellung ab, wie jener im Glück; er trägt kein zuckendes und bewegliches Menschengesicht, sondern gleichsam eine Maske mit würdigem Gleichmaasse der Züge, er schreit nicht und verändert nicht einmal seine Stimme. Wenn eine rechte Wetterwolke sich über ihn ausgiesst, so hüllt er sich in seinen Mantel und geht langsamen Schrittes unter ihr davon.³⁹⁶

The 'vernünftige' man, introduced explicitly as a Stoic, delivers his 'masterpiece of hypocrisy' not in happiness – as the 'intuitive' man does – but in unhappiness. This passage therefore provides not only another example of hypocrisy (1), but also the suggestion of a suppression of the passions through self-restraint (the 'sich beherrschende Mensch') (3). We find, moreover, the confirmation of an association between Stoicism and truth (4): the 'vernünftige' Mensch looks not only for 'Schutz vor berückenden Ueberfällen', but also for 'Aufrichtigkeit', 'Wahrheit', and 'Freiheit von Täuschungen'. Yet, already in this essay it is made clear that the 'Begriffe' searched for in order to find support are nothing but illusory (which can be seen,

³⁹² For more on the contemporary understanding of ἀπάθεια in relation to correct judgments, happiness and the absence of emotions (that is, those falling traditionally under the four headings of longing (ἐπιθυμία), fear (φόβος), intense pleasure (ἡδονή) and grief (λύπη), as stated by Cicero, *Tusculanae disputationes* 4.14, and *DL VII 110*) Long, A.A. (2006), 380-2; Long, A.A., Sedley, D.N. (1987) Vol. I, 410-23; Brennan, T. (2006), 82-113.

³⁹³ 1.889.

³⁹⁴ WL 2 1.889: 'Wo einmal der intuitive Mensch, etwa wie im älteren Griechenland seine Waffen gewaltiger und siegreicher führt, als sein Widerspiel, kann sich günstigen Falls eine Kultur gestalten, und die Herrschaft der Kunst über das Leben sich gründen'.

³⁹⁵ WL 2 1.889: 'Weder das Haus, noch der Schritt, noch der thönerne Krug verrathen, dass die Nothdurft sie erfand; es scheint, als ob in ihnen allen ein erhabenes Glück und eine olympische Wolkenlosigkeit und gleichsam ein Spielen mit dem Ernste ausgesprochen werden sollte.' This observation is repeated throughout Nietzsche's work, most notably in *Vorrede* 5 of *FW*, where it is remarked that the Greeks are superficial out of depth. *FW Vorrede* 5 3.352: 'Oh diese Griechen! Sie verstanden sich darauf, zu leben: dazu thut Noth, tapfer bei der Oberfläche, der Falte, der Haut stehen zu bleiben, den Schein anzubeten, an Formen, an Töne, an Worte, an den ganzen Olymp des Scheins zu glauben! Diese Griechen waren oberflächlich – aus Tiefe!'

³⁹⁶ 1.890. According to Neymeyr, B. (2009), the reference to a man walking stoically in the rain is an 'offenbar autobiographisch gefärbten Schlusspartie', referring to 'eine bekannte „charakteristische Anekdote“ über den Musterknaben Nietzsche' to be found in Thomas Mann's 1947 essay 'Nietzsche's Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung'. Neymeyr, B. (2009), 68, ft. 5.

thus, as belonging to the same context as Nietzsche's dismissal of Stoic 'optimism'; see *PHG* 7, in 2.2.2).³⁹⁷ 'What is truth?', Nietzsche asks himself a few pages before, and his answer is, famously:

WL 1 Was ist also Wahrheit? Ein bewegliches Heer von Metaphern, Metonymien, Anthropomorphismen kurz eine Summe von menschlichen Relation, die, poetisch und rhetorisch gesteigert, übertragen, geschmückt wurden [...]: die Wahrheit sind Illusionen, von denen man vergessen hat, dass sie welche sind³⁹⁸

This is, therefore, an early occurrence of the argument made in *JGB* 9 (and provides a deeper understanding of the reason why the Stoic maxim is a 'Betrügerei der Worte', emphasis mine). Crick aptly formulates the main point regarding the relation between the Stoic 'hardness' (2) and its desire for a truth that cannot but be illusory (4) as follows: 'The problem of "petrification" arises only when we are not honest enough with ourselves about the illusory nature of our web of concepts. In the case of the Stoics, instead of treating their constructions artistically, as a complex fabrication of their own making, they viewed them as reflections of an underlying order.'³⁹⁹

Yet what is missing in the early references to Stoicism is precisely the complaint of 'petrification' we have encountered in the later texts. Is there no sign of what Nietzsche later dismisses as 'Bilsäulenälte', 'Selbst-Verhärtung', and 'Versteinerung'?⁴⁰⁰ Interestingly, the only allusions to a kind of 'hardness' in the early works are those that imply a sense of admiration of Stoic 'masculinity'. Two examples; one from the second of the *UnzeitgemäÙe Betrachtungen* (1874) entitled 'Vom Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie für das Leben'; the other from *M*.

UB II 5 Niemand darf es wagen, das Gesetz der Philosophie an sich zu erfüllen, Niemand lebt philosophisch, mit jener einfachen Mannestreue, die einen Alten zwang, wo er auch war, was er auch trieb, sich als Stoiker zu gebärden, falls er den Stoa einmal Treue zugesagt hatte.⁴⁰¹

M 133 Zuletzt ist ihnen [i.e. die Menschen ohne Mitleid] der Zustand der Weichherzigkeit peinlich, wie den Mitleidigen der Zustand des stoischen Gleichmüthes; sie [i.e. die Menschen ohne Mitleid] belegen ihn mit herabsetzenden Worten und meinen, dass ihre Männlichkeit und kalte Tapferkeit dabei in Gefahr sei, -

³⁹⁷ Another early reference to the Stoic passion for 'Begriffe' and 'Systeme' is the following; *NL* 8[13] 7.224: 'Worin liegt jener magische Heiterkeitszauber, den die Systeme der Philosophen, Stoiker und Epikureer durch Begriffe zu erreichen suchten?'

³⁹⁸ 1.880-1.

³⁹⁹ Crick, N. (2011), 109. As we have seen in 2.2.4.2, though, the idea that we just need to be 'more honest' is a simplification of the matter.

⁴⁰⁰ 'Bilsäulenälte'; see *JGB* 198 5.118; 'Selbst-Verhärtung'; see *NL* 11[375] 13.169: 'die stoisch Selbst-Verhärtung'; 'Versteinerung'; see *NL* 15[55] 9.653.

⁴⁰¹ 1.282. This very same sentence, in the same context, is taken up in *PHG* 2 1.812; both texts were written in 1873-4.

sie verheimlichen die Thräne vor Anderen und wischen sie ab, unwillig über sich selber.⁴⁰²

Although it may seem as if neither of the two quotes are directly concerned with the quest for truth, this is only superficially so. The first quote occurs in a context in which modernity is diagnosed as a weak age of universalism, in which philosophy, 'the most truthful of all sciences', can hardly flourish – nobody, that is, except someone resembling a Stoic, dares to 'fulfil the law of philosophy'; it is implicitly acknowledged therefore that it takes the courage and loyalty of a Stoic to hold on to the attitude of truthfulness required in philosophy.⁴⁰³ The second quote mentions courage as well. It is obvious that the danger of losing the 'masculinity' associated with 'cold audacity' and contrasted to 'softness of heart' ('Weichherzigkeit') is related to the emotion of pity ('Mitleid'), but, as I will develop in more detail in chapter 4.2.6, the way in which Nietzsche reflects on pity in *M* is not separated from thoughts on truth.

So even though there is a continuum in references to Stoic hypocrisy (1) (of which the quote from *M* above can be seen as an additional example), as well as to their suppressive self-restraint (3) for the pursuit of truth (4) (or, as Crick formulates it, as its consequence), there is some variety in the way in which their 'hardness' (2) is appreciated. The suspicion that the early texts betray a more sympathetic approach than the later texts will be confirmed in more detail in the next sections.

3.3 EARLY APPRECIATIVE REFERENCES TO STOICISM

Two more early passages deserve to be discussed that endorse Nietzsche's appreciation of the Stoic 'hardness' related to truth. The first is a casual reference that mentions Stoicism in passing, but in a less critical way than what we have seen so far. It can be found in an essay on the future of the educational institutions (*Ueber die Zukunft unserer Bildungsanstalten (ZB)*), written in 1872, in a passage in which Nietzsche distinguishes between the sphere of things needed for existence, and that of 'Bildung', 'die hoch über jener Welt der Noth, der Existenzkampfes, der Bedürftigkeit lagert.'⁴⁰⁴ This last perspective can be attained, it is suggested, through a 'stoisch-engen Umschränkung' of one's needs.

ZB IV Mancher wird, bei einer stoisch-engen Umschränkung seiner Bedürfnisse, sehr bald und leicht in jene Sphäre sich erheben, in der er sein Subjekt vergessen und gleichsam abschütteln darf, um nun in einem Sonnensystem zeitloser und unpersönlicher Angelegenheiten sich ewiger Jugend zu erfreuen.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰² 3.127.

⁴⁰³ The sentences preceding the remark on Stoicism read as follows; *UB* II 5 1.282: 'In welche unnatürlichen, künstlichen und jedenfalls unwürdigen Lagen muss in einer Zeit, die an der allgemeinen Bildung leidet, die wahrhaftigste aller Wissenschaften, die ehrliche nackte Göttin Philosophie gerathen! Sie bleibt in einer solchen Welt der erzwungenen äusserlichen Uniformität gelehrter Monolog des einsamen Spaziergängers, zufällige Jagdbeute des Einzelnen, verborgenes Stubengeheimniss oder ungefährliches Geschwätz zwischen akademischen Greisen und Kindern.'

⁴⁰⁴ 1.714.

⁴⁰⁵ 1.714.

The 'restriction of one's needs' (3) is, in other words, not only straightforwardly associated with Stoicism (the restriction should be 'Stoically narrow'), it is also and importantly a strategy approved of when it comes to the achievement of the sphere of 'Bildung', related in this sentence to 'solar systems' of 'timeless and impersonal matters', which remind us of Platonic ideas and mathematical issues (4).

Secondly, in a long passage in the *Nachlass* of the summer of 1875 Nietzsche reflects on Dühring's book *Der Werth des Lebens*. Although he does not object to his negative analysis of Stoicism (nor of that of Epicureanism, for both of which it is claimed that only one kind of conscious affect is taken as the principle for judgement), he does to the conclusions drawn from it.

NL 9[1] Die Systeme der Alten nahmen nur eine Art [Erregungen die in's Bewusstseins treten] heraus und machten sie zum ausschließlichen Maaß der Beurtheilung: die Epikureer die Empfindung, die Stoiker das abstrakte Bewusstsein. So gelangten sie in der Praxis zu falschen Maximen. [...] [Die Stoiker] erkünstelten einen Triumph über Empfindung und Affekt, geriethen in Affektation und richteten sich so äußerlich nach der Schablone der Katechismus, ohne innerlich gesiegt zu haben: Grimasse und Schauspielerei⁴⁰⁶

We recognize once again the theme of Stoic theatre and dishonesty (1) (like the Epicureans, the Stoics arrived at a practice of 'falschen Maximen'; but only the Stoics feigned ('erkünstelten') a triumph over affects, lapsed into hypocrisy ('geriethen in Affektation') resulting in grimaces and acting ('Grimasse und Schauspielerei')). It may well be the case that Schopenhauer has been the source for this judgement, as Dühring was known for his teachings on Schopenhauer and his disagreement with him later.⁴⁰⁷ On the following page Dühring explicitly connects this attitude to asceticism, after which it is dismissed as an attitude destroying everything of value for life (referring back to the title of the book).⁴⁰⁸ Yet Nietzsche raises several points of disagreement to this analysis, two of which I will quote. One reveals a more appreciative understanding of asceticism; the other makes clear how Nietzsche favours rather than dismisses a degree of abstraction from affects.

Zweitens fühlt [Dühring] nichts von dem allgemein helfenden und für Alle wirksamen Pathos des Asketenthums.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁶ 8.137. This is a direct quote from Dühring's *Der Werth des Lebens*; Drittes Capitel, 1.

⁴⁰⁷ See Venturelli, A. (1986), 107-39. Already in 1868 Nietzsche showed interest in Dühring, as a letter to Gersdorff reveals in which Nietzsche refers to Dühring as the man 'der immer schöne Collegien hat zB über Schopenhauer und Byron, über Pessimismus etc.' (KGB I/2.258)

⁴⁰⁸ 8.138: 'Von den Leidenschaften abstrahiren führt einerseits zur Askese, andererseits zum wohlberechneten matten Sinnengenuß; da wird alles, was dem Leben Werth ertheilt, vernichtet. Der Mensch sinkt im zweiten Falle unter das Thier, im ersten wird er zum widerwärtigen Ungeheuer'.

⁴⁰⁹ 8.139. This is the second of a list of three objections against Dühring's analysis that an individual ascetic is a danger to the common fate of humanity. Nietzsche's more complete reaction is: 'Da ist nun alles verkehrt! Erstens nimmt er überall an, daß die Asketen gerade als Egoisten Asketen sind, daß nur das individuelle Loos sie zum Haß gegen das Dasein bringt. Zweitens fühlt er nichts von dem allgemein helfenden und für Alle wirksamen Pathos des Asketenthums; in seiner höchsten Gestalt ist es ja gerade der Tod und das Leiden für Alle. Drittens verwechselt er Blasirtheit und Ekel mit jener Abwendung vom Leben.' NL 9[1] 8.139.

Dühring ist besonders über die erwähnte Affektlosigkeit wüthend; wenn nun aber jemand dem Pathos entsagt und ganz ἦθος zu werden versteht, so gilt das *uns* viel höher und die Möglichkeit eines solchen Verhaltens ist gerade für uns ein Objekt der Sehnsucht.⁴¹⁰

In both statements we must conclude that Nietzsche, rather than concurring with Dühring's rejection of asceticism and the suppression of affects, defends the 'Pathos des Asketenthums', even if the second comment explicitly prefers the achievement of 'ἦθος', 'moral character', over 'πάθος' (whereby the distinction in this case seems to boil down to the presence or absence of some form of rational reflection⁴¹¹).

At the same time it is well known that Nietzsche's thoughts on asceticism cannot be reduced to a simple appreciation of its use.⁴¹² It can be argued that the complexity of his account finds its origin in his engagement with Dühring in this period. In the final survey ('Schluss-Betrachtung') of *Der Werth des Lebens* we find Nietzsche to a certain degree even agreeing with Dühring's position against asceticism, connecting it to what will be one of his central themes in the later works: 'Rache' (as for instance in Book V of *FW*; see *FW* 359 in section 3.2.1).

NL 9[1] Hat jemand genug an sich gelitten, sich selbst genug verletzt, in Sündhaftigkeit – so beginnt er gegen sich das Gefühl der Rache zu spüren: seine eindringende Selbstbetrachtung und deren Resultat Selbstverachtung ist das Resultat. Bei manchen Menschen selbst *Askese*⁴¹³

This connection clearly contradicts the appreciative tone we have just encountered. Yet it would be wrong to conclude that the solution to the problem of 'Rache', which finds its origin in 'Selbstverachtung' ('self-contempt'), should be sought in the rejection of asceticism. Quite the opposite seems to be the case, as Aldo Venturelli rightly points out.⁴¹⁴

Der Asket hat nämlich den Geist der Rache nur überwunden, weil er ihn bis in seine Tiefen gekannt und erlebt hat als die geheimste Erfahrung seiner Seele [...]. [D]er Asket – und jeder wahre Philosoph war für Nietzsche ein Asket – [muß] mit immer größerer

⁴¹⁰ 8.140.

⁴¹¹ The classical distinction in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* between three kinds of persuasion (pathos, ethos, logos) seems not to be what Nietzsche has in mind here. Rather, the opposition between reason and affect is staged.

⁴¹² See for the most extensive reflection on asceticism *GM* III: 'Was bedeuten asketische Ideale?'; and for an elaborate reflection on Nietzsche's general approach to asceticism the *Nietzsche-Wörterbuch* (2004) article 'Askese'; 155-73. See also section 5.4.

⁴¹³ The more complete text is as follows. NL 9[1] 8.180: 'Selbsterkenntniß entspringt aus Gerechtigkeit gegen sich; und Gerechtigkeit ist im Grunde Rachegefühl. Hat jemand genug an sich gelitten, sich selbst genug verletzt, in Sündhaftigkeit – so beginnt er gegen sich das Gefühl der Rache zu spüren: seine eindringende Selbstbetrachtung und deren Resultat Selbstverachtung ist das Resultat. Bei manchen Menschen selbst *Askese*, das heißt *Rache an sich* in Thätlichkeit des Widerwillens und Hasses.'

⁴¹⁴ The implication of a possible differentiation between a 'healthy' and a 'sick' kind of asceticism is confirmed in the *Nietzsche-Wörterbuch* (2004) article on 'Askese'; 156.

Klarheit den Abgrund der Erkenntnis und der Moral wahrnehmen, die disharmonische Grundlage jeder Existenz.⁴¹⁵

The ascetic man, in other words, can only overcome the 'Geist der Rache', which is connected to asceticism, by getting to know the nature of his asceticism 'in seine Tiefen' and living it as the most secret experience of his soul.

This double aspect of asceticism can be recognized in the first book of *MA I* ('Von den ersten und letzten Dingen').⁴¹⁶ Examining this book not only provides an explanation for Venturelli's remark that the ascetic man has to see through 'den Abgrund der Erkenntnis und der Moral'; it also reveals how Nietzsche assesses the philosophical positions of both Dühring and Schopenhauer in this context. Moreover, and importantly for the purpose of this chapter, *MA I* book 1 must be seen as a significant text for the analysis of Nietzsche's early engagement with Stoicism. It is rejected as a philosophy putting forward mistaken metaphysical assumptions concerning 'Erkenntnis und Moral', but at the same time embraced when it comes to finding the appropriate attitude of 'Affektlosigkeit', in line with the early appreciative references to Stoic masculinity. Nietzsche's double standpoint concerning asceticism is comparable, then, to his assessment of Stoicism. Chapter 4 will examine Nietzsche's changing evaluation of Stoicism from *M* onwards.

3.4 A STOIC REJECTION OF STOICISM; THE REMARKABLE CASE OF *MA I* BOOK 1

As Venturelli explains, Nietzsche's early engagement with Dühring should be understood in the context of his growing dissatisfaction with Schopenhauer. Nietzsche makes it explicit in a remark immediately preceding the 'Dühring-Exzerpt' that he is interested in Dühring as a possible antithesis of Schopenhauer; Dühring's 'optimism' and 'Wirklichkeitsphilosophie' enable him 'zu sehen, was ich an Schopenhauer habe, was nicht.'⁴¹⁷ In *MA I* 26 Schopenhauer's metaphysical philosophy is explicitly opposed to the new age of science and 'Aufklärung'.

MA I 26 auch in unserem Jahrhundert bewies Schopenhauer's Metaphysik, dass auch jetzt der wissenschaftliche Geist noch nicht kräftig genug ist [...]. Viel Wissenschaft klinget in seine Lehre hinein, aber sie beherrscht dieselbe nicht, sondern das alte, wohlbekanntes „metaphysische Bedürfniss“.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁵ Venturelli, A. (1986), 28.

⁴¹⁶ Admittedly, the final few aphorisms of Book 3 of *MA I* ('das religiöse Leben') are explicitly dedicated to asceticism, in the context of religion, whereas Book I does not have one reference. Yet for our purposes Book I is of more interest, since it embraces an implicit kind of asceticism, in the form of a Stoic kind of ἀπάθεια.

⁴¹⁷ *NL* 8[4] 8.129 'Pläne aller Art: [...] 3) Dühring, als den Versuch einer Beseitigung Schopenhauer's durchzustudieren und zu sehen, was ich an Schopenhauer habe, was nicht. Hinterdrein noch einmal Schopenhauer zu lesen.'

⁴¹⁸ 2.47. Its final sentences make explicit Nietzsche's affinity with 'Aufklärung': 'erst nachdem wir die historische Betrachtungsart, welche die Zeit der Aufklärung mit sich brachte, in einem so wesentlichen Punkte corrigirt haben, dürfen wir die Fahne der Aufklärung – die Fahne mit den drei Namen: Petrarca, Erasmus, Voltaire – von Neuem weiter tragen.'

Yet, Venturelli also correctly points out that the same strategy is used in the opposite direction.⁴¹⁹ Nietzsche's observation in the Dühring-Exzerpt that the scientific method defended by Dühring lacks logical rigour is made explicit in *MA I 32*; its opening sentence contains an explicit reference to *Der Werth des Lebens*. As a result, the 'Vollendung' of the Schopenhauerian metaphysics appears to be a more complex and even tragic⁴²⁰ process than Dühring is able to acknowledge, as will be explained in more detail in the next section.

MA I 32 Alle Urtheile über den Werth des Lebens sind unlogisch entwickelt und desshalb ungerecht. Die Unreinheit des Urtheils liegt erstens in der Art, wie das Material vorliegt, nämlich sehr unvollständig, zweitens in der Art, wie daraus die Summe gebildet wird, und drittens darin, dass jedes einzelne Stück des Materials wieder das Resultat unreinen Erkennens ist und zwar diess mit voller Nothwendigkeit.⁴²¹

Nietzsche's statement that any judgement concerning the value of life is 'unlogisch entwickelt' must be seen as part of his project of examining the possibilities of human judgement in general, executed in this book with respect to 'the first and last things'. In the above text it is claimed that any judgement of the value of life is necessarily unjust because (1) we simply do not have a complete overview of the totality we wish to judge; (2) our method of summing up the pieces in order to gain an idea of the totality cannot be appropriate; (3) even the knowledge we think we possess of the pieces is insufficient. Nietzsche goes on suggesting that the solution is to refrain from judgements altogether ('Vielleicht wird aus alledem folgen, dass man gar nicht urtheilen sollte'); yet, as he infers immediately: 'wenn man aber nur *leben* könnte, ohne abzuschätzen, ohne Abneigung und Zuneigung zu haben!⁴²²

The core of *MA I*'s project forms precisely this disharmony between the human necessity to judge, as it is essential to life, and the acknowledgement of the impossibility to make correct judgements ('Wir sind von vornherein unlogische und daher ungerechte Wesen *und können* diess erkennen'⁴²³). The appearance of this disharmony is inevitable after the strict and consistent application of the scientific method, which surpasses Dühring's superficial use of it. This method, which is referred to in the very first aphorism of *MA I* as a kind of philosophy that 'gar nicht mehr getrennt von der Naturwissenschaft zu denken ist'⁴²⁴, is applied not only to the judgement of the value of life, but to all metaphysical assumptions. Being a atypically

⁴¹⁹ Venturelli, A. (1986), 113: 'Nietzsche [ist] einerseits mit Dühring über die Nothwendigkeit einer wissenschaftlichen Grundlage der Philosophie einig [...], andererseits aber neigt [er dazu], gerade in diesem Bereich Schopenhauers Lehre wieder aufzunehmen. Wenn Schopenhauers Metaphysik jeden Wert verloren hat, wenn die Erkenntnis nur allein Triebe und Gemütsbewegungen als Grundlage der logischen Urtheile und der moralischen Werte anerkennt, dann kann Schopenhauer doch noch gegen Dühring verwendet werden, um hervorzuheben, daß die „Vollendung der Metaphysik“ ein viel komplexerer Prozeß ist als die Wirklichkeitsphilosophie vermuten läßt.'

⁴²⁰ See *MA I 34* 2.53-5: 'Aber wird so unsere Philosophie nicht zur Tragödie?'

⁴²¹ 2.51.

⁴²² *MA I 32* 2.52.

⁴²³ *MA I 32* 2.52.

⁴²⁴ *MA I 1* 2.23.

modern project, it unmask metaphysical truths as human, all too human fictions, including all presuppositions made in language, logic, and mathematics.⁴²⁵

Some of the metaphysical assumptions uncovered by this method are typically Stoic. The loss of faith in a God governing the cosmos, brought forward in *MA I 25*, was discussed already in section 2.2.⁴²⁶ Also the belief in the laws of nature is dismissed in *Vermischte Meinungen und Sprüche 9 (VM, MA II)*; it is a word denoting superstition (‘„Naturgesetz“ ein Wort des Aberglaubens’) and unmasked as a final shelter of mythological reverie (‘ein letzter Zufluchtswinkel der mythologischen Träumerei’).⁴²⁷ In *MA I* the same point is made, here explicitly considering our faith in laws a long-standing human characteristic.

MA I 19 der Glaube an Dinge [ist] mit unserem Wesen von Alters her verknotet [...]. – Wenn Kant sagt „der Verstand schöpft seine Gesetze nicht aus der Natur, sondern schreibt sie dieser vor“, so ist diess in Hinsicht auf den *Begriff der Natur* völlig wahr⁴²⁸

Although the Stoics are not mentioned explicitly in this analysis, it can be argued that the argument made in *JGB 9* – that the Stoics misinterpreted nature by forcing their Stoic view upon it – finds its origin in these texts. In *MA I 8* a comparison is made between the reading of nature and the reading of the bible. The conclusion is that the reading of nature is in a state even worse than that of the bible.

MA I 8 Pneumatische Erklärung der Natur. – Die Metaphysik erklärt die Schrift der Natur gleichsam *pneumatisch*, wie die Kirche und ihre Gelehrten es ehemals mit der Bibel thaten. Es gehört sehr viel Verstand dazu, um auf die Natur die selbe Art der strengeren Erklärungskunst anzuwenden, wie jetzt die Philologen sie für alle Bücher geschaffen haben [...]. Wie aber selbst in Betreff der Bücher die schlechte Erklärungskunst keineswegs völlig überwunden ist und man in der besten gebildeten Gesellschaft noch fortwährend auf Ueberreste allegorischer und mystischer Ausdeutung stösst: so steht es auch in Betreff der Natur – ja noch viel schlimmer.⁴²⁹

⁴²⁵ The most explicit example is probably *MA I 11 2.31*: ‘Auch die *Logik* beruht auf Voraussetzungen, denen Nichts in der wirklichen Welt entspricht, z.B. auf der Voraussetzung der Gleichheit von Dingen, der Identität des selben Dinges in verschiedenen Punkten der Zeit: aber jene Wissenschaft entstand durch den entgegengesetzten Glauben (dass es dergleichen in der wirklichen Welt allerdings gebe). Ebenso steht es mit der *Mathematik*’. On the deceptiveness of language the most famous passage is *WL*, as discussed in section 3.2.2. *WL 1 1.878*: ‘Was ist ein Wort? Die Abbildung eines Nervenreizes in Lauten.’

⁴²⁶ *MA I 25 2.46*: ‘Seitdem der Glaube aufgehört hat, dass ein Gott die Schicksale der Welt im Grossen leite und, trotz aller anscheinenden Krümmungen im Pfade der Menschheit, sie doch herrlich hinausführe, müssen die Menschen selber sich ökumenische, die ganze Erde umspannende Ziele stellen.’

⁴²⁷ *VM 9 2.384*: ‘„Naturgesetz“ ein Wort des Aberglaubens. – Wenn ihr so entzückt von der Gesetzmässigkeit in der Natur redet, so müsst ihr doch entweder annehmen, dass aus freiem, sich selbst unterwerfendem Gehorsam alle natürlichen Dinge ihrem Gesetze folgen – in welchem Falle ihr also die Moralität der Natur bewundert –; oder euch entzückt die Vorstellung eines schaffenden Mechanikers, der die kunstvollste Uhr, mit lebenden Wesen als Zierrath daran, gemacht hat. – Die Nothwendigkeit in der Natur wird durch den Ausdruck „Gesetzmässigkeit“ menschlicher und ein letzter Zufluchtswinkel der mythologischen Träumerei.’

⁴²⁸ 2.41.

⁴²⁹ 2.28-9. This text is strongly reminiscent of a text in *JGB*, in the same book as *JGB 9*. *JGB 22 5.37*: ‘Man verberge es mir als einem alten Philologen, der von der Bosheit nicht lassen kann, auf schlechte

It is not difficult to imagine how the Stoics must be included in the complaint in this text against bad interpretations, given their doctrine of a cosmos governed by a living and actively shaping principle which is sometimes referred to as 'πνεῦμα'.⁴³⁰

An even more explicit case is *MA I 31*. This aphorism also discusses 'nature', yet this time not only on a cosmic level but also in relation to humanity. Nietzsche's project of uncovering all metaphysical presuppositions as mere fictions also applies to some of the presuppositions in the domain of ethics. The idea that human nature might become fully rational one day, which is the main focus of this aphorism, cannot but be an implicit reference to the Stoics; as we know, their philosophy distinctively defends the idea of a rationally governed cosmos and suggests that obeying reason will bring us closer to divine Reason.

MA I 31 Es sind nur die allzu naiven Menschen, welche glauben können, dass die Natur des Menschen in eine rein logische verwandelt werden könne; wenn es aber Grade der Annäherung an dieses Ziel geben sollte, was würde da nicht Alles auf diesem Wege verloren gehen müssen! auch der vernünftigste Mensch bedarf von Zeit zu Zeit wieder der Natur, das heisst seiner *unlogischen Grundstellung zu allen Dingen*.⁴³¹

Those who believe, like the Stoics, that human nature might become fully rational one day, are claimed to be 'allzu naiven Menschen'. Again, the underlying argument is that human nature is completely misunderstood. The misinterpretation is founded on the metaphysical standpoint that all of nature, including that of humanity, is essentially rational. And apart from the fact that the assumption is wrong, it is not even desirable to have only rational people according to Nietzsche; what losses would we see! Losses, it might be argued, that concern the multiplicity of possible interpretations.

In short, Stoicism does not escape from the scientifically inspired method of unmasking metaphysical assumptions as human, all too human fictions – both when it comes to their physics and ethics. And yet, there is a surprising element of Stoicism that appeals to Nietzsche in this very process. In *MA I 3* we find the first example of a subtle sign of admiration. We have seen in section 3.2.2 how Stoicism is associated with masculinity. As I will argue shortly, it is precisely the attitude of endurance, rational restraint and self-control, associated with asceticism and Stoicism, that Nietzsche deems necessary for his project.

MA I 3 Schätzung der unscheinbaren Wahrheiten. – Es ist das Merkmal einer höhern Cultur, die kleinen unscheinbaren Wahrheiten, welche mit strenger Methode gefunden wurden, höher zu schätzen, als die beglückenden und blendenden Irrthümer, welche metaphysischen und künstlerischen Zeitaltern und Menschen entstammen. [...] [D]as mühsam Errungene, Gewisse, Dauernde und deshalb für jede weitere Erkenntniss noch Folgenreiche ist doch das Höhere, zu ihm sich zu halten ist männlich und zeigt

Interpretations-Künste den Finger zu legen: aber jene „Gesetzmässigkeit der Natur“, von der ihr Physiker so stolz redet, wie als ob – besteht nur Dank eurer Ausdeutung und schlechten „Philologie“.

⁴³⁰ For more on the Stoic cosmology see section 2.2. The understanding of the active principle in terms of πνεῦμα can be found, for instance, in *DL VII* 156, but also in Aetius 1.7.33, and Alexander, *De Mixtione*, 225,3-10. For more on this subject see *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* (1999). In particular chapter 17 on Stoic psychology (by A. A. Long) is insightful; 560-83.

⁴³¹ 2.51. The implicit reference to the maxim of living in accordance with nature is picked up again in *MA I 34*, to be discussed in the next section.

Tapferkeit, Schlichtheit, Enthaltbarkeit an. Allmählich wird nicht nur der Einzelne, sondern die gesammte Menschheit zu dieser Männlichkeit emporgehoben werden⁴³²

Again the truths which are gained using a demanding and strict epistemic method are opposed to the 'Irrthümer' of metaphysics. But if we were to situate Stoicism in this context it would be possible to relate it to both sides of the coin: on the one hand, as we saw, Stoicism wrongly defends many of the metaphysical presuppositions that should be replaced by 'little, simple truths' ('kleinen unscheinbaren Wahrheiten'); on the other hand, the Stoic attitude of ascetic and masculine perseverance is helpful precisely for the process of overcoming metaphysics. What we find is, therefore, an example of a rejection of Stoicism from a point of view that may be inspired by Stoicism.

3.5 THE ADOPTION OF A STOIC ATTITUDE IN RESPONSE TO THE TRAGEDY OF PHILOSOPHY

For a closer examination of this phenomenon it is necessary to have a closer look at *MA I 34*, the final aphorism of Book 1 of *MA I*, in which many more appreciative remarks are found on Stoicism (even if all of these are implicit). As we will see, the Stoic attitude of calm endurance is useful not only for the execution of the philosophical task; Nietzsche also considers the benefit of this attitude in the tragic aftermath of the process. *MA I 34* opens with the suggestion alluded to above that the 'Vollendung' of metaphysics appears to be a more complex and tragic process than Dühring can acknowledge.

MA I 34 Aber wird so unsere Philosophie nicht zur Tragödie? Wird die Wahrheit nicht dem Leben, dem Besseren feindlich?⁴³³

The tragedy of truth becoming inimical to life is the consequence of the philosophical critique executed in this book against 'den ersten und letzten Dingen'. For the result of this process – which, as we have just seen, prefers 'little, simple truths' to great metaphysical 'Irrthümer' – is that our human constitution is not suited for truth at all. As stated clearly in *MA I 32*: 'Wir sind von vornherein unlogische und daher ungerechte Wesen und können diess erkennen'.⁴³⁴ This contradictory and appalling outcome is also implied in Venturelli's remark that an ascetic philosopher '[muß] mit immer größerer Klarheit den Abgrund der Erkenntnis und der Moral wahrnehmen, die disharmonische Grundlage jeder Existenz'.⁴³⁵

The last four aphorisms of Book 1 prove Nietzsche's awareness that leaving behind metaphysical truths is inimical to our human needs; this insight will be further examined in *M* and *FW*. Three of these four aphorisms have the term 'nothwendig' in their titles, connected to our human, all too human needs: the illogical is 'nothwendig' (*MA I 31*; 'der vernünftigste Mensch bedarf von Zeit zu Zeit wieder der Natur, das heisst seiner *unlogischen Grundstellung zu allen Dingen*'); it is 'nothwendig' to be unjust in ascribing value to life (*MA I 32*); and it is

⁴³² 2.25.

⁴³³ 2.53.

⁴³⁴ *MA I 32* 2.52.

⁴³⁵ Venturelli, A. (1986), 28.

'nothwendig' to have mistaken perspectives on life (*MA I 33*; '*Der Irrthum über das Leben zum Leben nothwendig*'⁴³⁶). Hence Nietzsche's ultimate question posed in *MA I 34*:

MA I 34 Eine Frage scheint uns die Zunge zu beschweren und doch nicht laut werden zu wollen: ob man bewusst in der Unwahrheit bleiben könne? oder, wenn man diess müsse, ob da nicht der Tod vorzuziehen sei?⁴³⁷

The anti-metaphysical process comes down to an impossible dilemma: living with the knowledge that all our knowledge is founded on untruth, and necessarily so – or death.

This is not to say that Nietzsche is not also optimistic regarding the outcome of his project, albeit tentatively at this stage. The Stoic attitude of calm and rational acceptance plays a significant part in the search for a proper response to this dilemma. Already in *MA I 27* the whole process is labelled a 'wirklich befreiende philosophische Wissenschaft'⁴³⁸; and more signs of confidence can be found in *MA*'s second Book, called '*Zur Geschichte der moralischen Empfindungen*'. It is concerned with the same project of revealing metaphysical 'Irrthümer', but focused now on the history of morality. The scientific method introduced in Book 1 receives the connotation of a 'psychological observation' in Book 2; its first aphorisms address the question of the effect of this kind of examination: will it reduce one's suffering?⁴³⁹ In the first aphorism the answer is a straightforward 'yes'.

MA I 35 *Vortheile der psychologischen Beobachtung.* – Dass das Nachdenken über Menschliches, Allzumenschliches – oder wie der gelehrtere Ausdruck lautet: die psychologische Beobachtung – zu den Mitteln gehöre, vermöge deren man sich die Last des Lebens erleichtern könne [...] und sich dabei ein Wenig wohler fühlen könne: das glaubte man, wusste man – in früheren Jahrhunderten.⁴⁴⁰

The addition of 'wusste man' makes it explicit that Nietzsche agrees with those who used to believe that psychological inspection leads to a relief of the burdens of life – a belief that is

⁴³⁶ *MA I 33* 2.52.

⁴³⁷ 2.53-4. The weight of this dilemma is further clarified in *MA I 34* 2.54: 'Das ganze menschliche Leben ist tief in die Unwahrheit eingesenkt; der Einzelne kann es nicht aus diesem Brunnen herausziehen, ohne dabei seiner Vergangenheit aus tiefstem Grunde gram zu werden, ohne seine gegenwärtigen Motive, wie die der Ehre, ungereimt zu finden und den Leidenschaften, welche zur Zukunft und zu einem Glück in derselben hindrängen, Hohn und Verachtung entgegenzustellen.'

⁴³⁸ *MA I 27* 2.48.

⁴³⁹ This question is wrongly taken to be the main question addressed in *MA* by Michael Ure, who attempts to explain Nietzsche's interest in the Stoics in this book in psycho-analytical terms only, disregarding the difficulty of knowledge as inimical to life informing it. Ure, M. (2008), 131: 'Nietzsche aims to incorporate his insights about the complex psycho-dynamics that ensue from the loss of narcissistic plenitude into a therapeutic philosophy. He thus sets the parameters of his morality of insight by combining Stoicism's therapeutic model of practical reason with his grasp of the narcissistic pathologies that afflict human beings.' This mistaken assumption is based on a (mis)reading of *MA I 33* and 34. In Ure's analysis of Nietzsche's reflection on Stoicism in Sellars, J. (2016) we still find a lack of attention to Nietzsche's awareness of a disharmony between philosophy as 'eliminating metaphysics' and the human condition. 292: 'Nietzsche clearly believes that by using philosophy to eliminate such metaphysical "opinions" he might free mankind from emotional disturbances'. Ure refers in this context to *MA I 27* only.

⁴⁴⁰ 2.57.

defended by the Stoics.⁴⁴¹ Yet the next aphorism immediately nuances this statement, recalling the insight into the appeal of errors against painful truths; 'überhaupt die Dumpfheit auf diesem Gebiete hilft der Menschlichkeit vorwärts.'⁴⁴² Anyone suggesting that there is a truth which is conveniently beneficent for humanity must be regarded with suspicion. In the next two aphorisms Nietzsche seems to settle the question therefore; not by deciding whether or not psychology will have a therapeutic effect, but by claiming that it is necessary to continue making psychological observations for the sake of science itself.⁴⁴³

Book 2 still ends with some hopeful thoughts, again invoking the Stoic faith in the liberating power of reason. It may be painful at first to acknowledge the truths uncovered ('Diess Alles einzusehen, kann tiefe Schmerzen machen'), but the few individuals who will be able to persevere might stand at the beginning of an important change in humanity.

MA I 107 In solchen Menschen, welche jener Traurigkeit *fähig* sind – wie wenige werden es sein! – wird der erste Versuch gemacht, ob die Menschheit aus einer *moralischen* sich in eine *weise Menschheit umwandeln könne*.⁴⁴⁴

The stress on the importance of wisdom may already bring to mind the possibility of a Stoic influence. The suggestion is even stronger in the following sentence, in which emotions like hatred and love are promised to grow weaker (or 'cool down', as it is phrased in *MA I 38*⁴⁴⁵) under the influence of this knowledge. The effect of knowledge, planting the seeds of the new habit of understanding ('des Begreifens'), will weaken the inherited habits of mistaken

⁴⁴¹ Most clearly in their assertion that forming correct judgements is the only action within our power; the more attention we pay to our own reasoning the closer we will get to the ideal of the happy sage. It should be mentioned, though, that further in this aphorism it is La Rochefoucauld who is mentioned; Nietzsche praises his 'Kunst der Sentenzen-Schleiferei'; 2.58. Although it can be argued that La Rochefoucauld opposes many of the Stoic doctrines, especially those of Seneca (see Sellars, J. (2016), 213-5), not only his style of writing maxims about the human psychology clearly belongs in the tradition of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, La Rochefoucauld is also heavily influenced by Stoicism, as it was very fashionable in 17th Century France. See La Rochefoucauld, F. (2007), xvi-xvii.

⁴⁴² *MA I 36* 2.58-9: 'Einwand. – Oder sollte es gegen jenen Satz, dass die psychologische Beobachtung zu den Reiz-, Heil-, und Erleichterungsmittel des Daseins gehöre, eine Gegenrechnung geben? [...] Wenn man [...] einen Abscheu davor empfindet, den Motiven ihres Handelns anzweifelnd nachzuspüren, so hat zwar nicht die Wahrheit, aber die Wohlfahrt der menschlichen Gesellschaft ihren Nutzen dabei: der psychologische Irrthum und überhaupt die Dumpfheit auf diesem Gebiete hilft der Menschlichkeit vorwärts'.

⁴⁴³ *MA I 38* 2.61: 'Inwiefern nützlich. – Also: ob die psychologische Beobachtung mehr Nutzen oder Nachtheil über die Menschen bringe, das bleibe immerhin unentschieden; aber fest steht, dass sie nothwendig ist, weil die Wissenschaft ihrer nicht entrathen kann.'

⁴⁴⁴ 2.105.

⁴⁴⁵ *MA I 38* 2.62: '[S]ollten wir, die *geistigeren* Menschen eines Zeitalters, welches ersichtlich immer mehr in Brand geräth, nicht nach allen löschenden und kühlenden Mitteln, die es giebt, greifen müssen [...]?' The idea that the scientific approach is seen by Nietzsche as having a 'cooling' effect on the 'hot' emotions present in society is repeated and confirmed in *MA I 244* 2.204: 'Man hat dem Christenthum, den Philosophen, Dichtern, Musikern eine Ueberfülle tief erregter Empfindungen zu danken: damit diese uns nicht überwuchern, müssen wir den Geist der Wissenschaft beschwören, welcher im Ganzen etwas kälter und skeptischer macht und namentlich den Gluthstrom des Glaubens an letzte endgültige Wahrheiten abkühlt'.

estimations based on (and feeding into) passions such as love and hatred; read together with the sentence quoted above we must see this growth of knowledge as a form of 'wisdom'.⁴⁴⁶

Mag in uns die vererbte Gewohnheit des irrthümlichen Schätzens, Liebens, Hassens immerhin fortwalten, aber unter dem Einfluss der wachsenden Erkenntnis wird sie schwächer werden: eine neue Gewohnheit, die des Begreifens, Nicht-Liebens, Nicht-Hassens, Ueberschauens, pflanzt sich allmählich in uns auf dem selben Boden an⁴⁴⁷

This hopeful insight reached at the end of Book 2 mirrors some of the conclusions drawn in *MA I 34*, the final aphorism of Book 1. In this aphorism more quiet allusions to Stoicism can be traced, the first of which concerns the hope of developing a more composed and rational attitude as well. In addition to the suggestion of *MA I 107* we read here how the growth of knowledge can only be made possible by adopting a Stoic attitude. It reflects on the devastating insight that philosophy might turn into a 'tragedy'; instead of being seized by despair on a personal level and persuaded to destruction theoretically ('Ist es wahr, bliebe einzig noch eine Denkweise übrig, welche als persönliches Ergebniss die Verzweiflung, als theoretisches eine Philosophie der Zerstörung nach sich zöge?'⁴⁴⁸), a Stoic temperament is advisable.

MA I 34 Ich glaube, die Entscheidung über die Nachwirkung der Erkenntnis wird durch das *Temperament* eines Menschen gegeben: ich könnte mir eben so gut, wie jene geschilderte und bei einzelnen Naturen mögliche Nachwirkung, eine andere denken, vermöge deren ein viel einfacheres, von Affecten reineres Leben entstünde, als das jetzige ist: so dass zuerst zwar die alten Motive des heftigeren Begehrens noch Kraft hätten, aus alter vererbter Gewöhnung her, allmählich aber unter dem Einflusse der reinigenden Erkenntnis schwächer würden.⁴⁴⁹

Nietzsche acknowledges a variety of possible reactions to the insight that knowledge is inimical to our human constitution, depending on 'temperament'. It is suggested that a nature whose life is 'much more modest, purified from affects'⁴⁵⁰ might react more calmly and rationally, implying that this is the only possible way of continuing the project. In line with this, the title of this aphorism is '*Zur Beruhigung*' – reminiscent of the Stoic ideal of *ἀπάθεια*. But it is also *because* of the purifying ('reinigenden') effects of knowledge that the passions ('die alten Motive des heftigeren Begehrens') lose their strength and weaken, as we also saw in *MA I 107*; it must be concluded that Stoic calmness is adhered to both as the condition for and the effect of a painful yet purifying knowledge.

⁴⁴⁶ I agree therefore with the remark made by Ure, M. (2008), 126: 'In his reference to a future simpler life in which our cravings or greed will be weaker than they are at present, Nietzsche unmistakably describes as the aim of *Bildung* the realization of a cheerful Stoicism.'

⁴⁴⁷ 2.105.

⁴⁴⁸ 2.54.

⁴⁴⁹ 2.54.

⁴⁵⁰ In *WS 88*, 2.593 Nietzsche even seems to commit himself to the ideal of 'overcoming' passions: 'die Stimmung des von Herzensgrund bewegten, geistig freudigen, hellen und aufrichtigen Menschen, der die Leidenschaften überwunden hat. Diess wird die Lehre vom besten Stile sein: er entspricht dem guten Menschen.' See also *WS 53*, 2.576 '*Ueberwindung der Leidenschaften*. – Der Mensch, der seine Leidenschaften überwunden hat, ist in den Besitz des fruchtbarsten Erdreiches getreten'.

Clearly, the Stoic doctrine that not the things themselves but our opinions or reactions are threatening or disturbing shapes this argument.⁴⁵¹ The characteristics of a 'good temperament', which is one of balance, calmness, and cheerfulness or 'Heiterkeit' (consisting of what the Stoics call 'εὐπάθεια'⁴⁵²) bring to mind even more Stoic features touched upon in *MA I* 34.

Freilich gehörte hierzu, wie gesagt, ein gutes Temperament, eine gefestete, milde und im Grunde frohsinnige Seele, eine Stimmung, welche nicht vor Tücken und plötzlichen Ausbrüchen auf der Hut zu sein brauchte und in ihren Aeusserungen Nichts von dem knurrenden Tone und der Verbissenheit an sich trüge, – jenen bekannten lästigen Eigenschaften alter Hunde und Menschen, die lange an der Kette gelegen haben.⁴⁵³

Instead of being afraid of one's own eccentricities, or of sudden outbursts, betraying a tone of sullenness and bottled-up anger, the person with the desired temperament possesses a steady and constantly cheerful character. Nietzsche opposes this kind of attitude to people who 'have been chained up for a long time.' This lack of freedom reminds us of the Stoic concept of 'freedom' in the normative sense, referred to as 'ἐλευθερία'.⁴⁵⁴ The state of all human beings is famously compared by the Stoics to that of a dog chained to a cart; only the free man is capable of turning this situation to his advantage by adopting a calm attitude of acceptance.⁴⁵⁵ It could be argued that this argument concerning freedom also lingers in Nietzsche's mind in the following sentences: 'ein Mensch, von dem in solchen Maasse die gewöhnlichen Fesseln

⁴⁵¹ See also further in *MA I* 141, 2.136 'Und doch ist dieses Leiden am Natürlichen in der Realität der Dinge völlig unbegründet: es ist nur die Folge von Meinungen über die Dinge.' This famous Stoic doctrine can be found in Epictetus' *Encheiridion* ch. 5a: 'People get upset not by what happens but by their opinions on what happens.' Boter, G. (1999), 282; and in Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* 8.47: 'If you suffer distress because of some external cause, it is not the thing itself that troubles you but the judgement about it'.

⁴⁵² See *DL VII* 116; see Brennan, T. (2006), 97-100; 110-11 for more on the 'εὐπάθεια'; there are three kinds, volition, caution and joy, all being impulses that are 'true, knowledgeable, attributions of goodness and badness to the only things that are truly good and bad'. See also *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* (1999), 701; 723.

⁴⁵³ 2.54-5. The image of the aggressive chained dog is later used by Nietzsche to depict Dühring. *NL* 18[55] 10.581: 'Dühring – ein Mensch der durch sich selber von seiner Denkweise abschreckt und als ewig kläffender und beißlustiger Kettenhund vor seine Philosophie sich hingelegt hat.'

⁴⁵⁴ The distinction made in Rutherford, D. (2011) might be useful in this respect; 514: 'The surviving texts of the ancient Stoics offer evidence of two distinct notions of freedom. One is part of a general theory of agency, which defends the will's freedom as a necessary condition for moral responsibility. The other is a normative ideal that plays a prominent role in later representations of Stoic ethics, particularly that of Epictetus.'

⁴⁵⁵ Hippolytus, *Refutation of all heresies* 1.21 (*SVF* 2.975): 'They too [Zeno and Chrysippus] affirmed that everything is fated, with the following model. When a dog is tied to a cart, if it wants to follow it is pulled and follows, making its spontaneous act coincide with necessity, but if it does not want to follow it will be compelled in any case. So it is with men too: even if they do not want to, they will be compelled in any case to follow what is destined.' Long, A.A., Sedley, D.N. (1987), Vol. I, 386. See also Seneca (1917-1925), *Epistle* 107: 'Ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt'; the wise man knows that he is fated and is capable of allowing fate to govern him; the vicious man refuses to accept that he is fated, and precisely this resistance makes him unfree. The poems 'Scherz, List und Rache' in *FW* confirm the thought that Nietzsche at least on some occasions associates the unfreedom of chains with Seneca. 34 reads 'Seneca et hoc genus omne. Das schreibt und schreibt sein unsausstehlich weises Larifari, Als gält es primum scribere, deinde philosophari.' 32 reads: 'A. Er steht und horcht: was konnt ihn irren? Was hört er vor den Ohren schwirren? Was war's, das ihn niederschlug? B. Wie Jeder, der einst Ketten trug, Hört überall er – Kettenklirren.' 3.360-1.

des Lebens abgefallen sind, [...] [muss] auf Vieles, ja fast auf Alles, was bei den anderen Menschen Werth hat, ohne Neid und Verdruss verzichten können⁴⁵⁶; the liberation from the 'Fesseln des Lebens', thus, may go hand in hand with the liberating judgement that all things that are valuable to others are in fact without value. This insight is at least for the Stoics the foundation for a 'gefestete, milde und im Grunde frohsinnige Seele' who has averted the danger of 'Tücken und plötzlichen Ausbrüchen' or of 'knurrenden Tone' and 'Verbissenheit'; it may be presumed that Nietzsche implicitly expresses his agreement with this connection here.

Also the conclusion of *MA I 34* picks up on elements reminiscent of a Stoic account of freedom. The final sentences of *MA I 34* describe how the person with the desired temperament happily communicates the joy of his condition ('Die Freude an diesem Zustande theilt er gerne mit'), even if he has nothing more to convey ('er *hat* vielleicht nichts Anderes mitzutheilen') – which lends itself to another case of 'Entbehrung' and 'Entsagung' ('worin freilich eine Entbehrung, eine Entsagung mehr liegt'), both terms immediately calling to mind Stoic self-restraint, as we saw earlier. The final sentence of *MA I 34* reads:

Will man aber trotzdem mehr von ihm, so wird er mit wohlwollendem Kopfschütteln auf seinen Bruder hinweisen, den freien Menschen der That, und vielleicht ein Wenig Spott nicht verhehlen: denn mit dessen „Freiheit“ hat es eine eigene Bewandtniss.⁴⁵⁷

The 'free man of action' referred to in this sentence may be seen as opposed to the 'Stoic' man, who shakes his head in disagreement, superior in his insight in the real state of affairs concerning freedom. Even if we saw how in *MA I 31* the Stoic doctrine of the importance of reason was dismissed, this sentence may well be seen as a gesture of sympathy towards the Stoic account of freedom: instead of defending an idea of freedom as 'choice' they regard it mainly as the liberating result of self-restraint concerning the valuing of things.

Two more textual arguments can be given for the presence of Stoicism *MA I 34*, both confirming Nietzsche's hopeful turn to Stoicism in order to face the devastating conflict between knowledge and life. The first concerns the expectation of another effect of knowledge's purification: one finally 'lives with others and with oneself as if 'in nature', 'being as a witness to what was threatening before'. This remark obviously brings to mind the Stoic maxim to 'live in accordance with nature'. The effect of this kind of knowledge is that the desire to interpret ourselves as 'more than nature' will no longer stand in the way of acknowledging that, indeed, we *are* nature and nothing more.

Man lebte zuletzt unter den Menschen und mit sich wie in der *Natur*, ohne Lob, Vorwürfe, Ereiferung, an Vielem sich wie an einem Schauspiel weidend, vor dem man sich bisher nur zu fürchten hatte. Man wäre die Emphasis los und würde die Anstachelung des Gedankens, dass man nicht nur *Natur* oder mehr als *Natur* sei, nicht weiter empfinden.⁴⁵⁸

Even if this statement must be read together with *MA I 31*, the aphorism that explicitly goes against the Stoic idea that nature is rational, it still conveys an appreciative view of the Stoic

⁴⁵⁶ *MA I 34* 2.55.

⁴⁵⁷ 2.55.

⁴⁵⁸ 2.54.

maxim. What is more, we could see traces of it returning in Nietzsche's account of naturalism discussed in chapter 2.5. The remark we have come across in *FW* 109 ('Wann werden wir anfangen dürfen, uns Menschen mit der reinen, neu gefundenen, neu erlösten Natur zu vernatürlichen!'⁴⁵⁹) has a precedent in the *Nachlass* of the summer of 1881, quoted below; but may actually originate in *MA* I.

NL 11[21] Meine Aufgabe: die Entmenschung der Natur und dann die Vernatürlichung des Menschen, nachdem er den reinen Begriff „Natur“ gewonnen hat.⁴⁶⁰

Clearly Nietzsche sees parts of the Stoic doctrine of nature as belonging to the metaphysics that needs to be overthrown; yet the basic idea of regarding humanity as immanently belonging to nature continuously appeals to Nietzsche, and might even be seen as the outcome of the anti-metaphysical process.

The second aspect of Stoicism to be pointed out in this text is the 'fearless' standpoint of looking at humankind from 'above', or from a distance as a mere 'observer' ('an Vielem sich wie an einem Schauspiel weidend'). This aspect, different from Stoic naturalism, will not continue to be of interest to Nietzsche; more details will follow in the next chapter. In this text it is still positively connected to the overcoming of a certain fear, in combination with the Stoic logic of ascetic abstinence.

Vielmehr muss ein Mensch, von dem in solchem Maasse die gewöhnlichen Fesseln des Lebens abgefallen sind, dass er nur deshalb weiter lebt, um immer besser zu erkennen, auf Vieles, ja fast auf Alles, was bei den anderen Menschen Werth hat, ohne Neid und Verdruss verzichten können, ihm muss als der wünschenswertheste Zustand jenes freie, furchtlose Schweben über Menschen, Sitten, Gesetzen und den herkömmlichen Schätzungen der Dinge *genügen*.⁴⁶¹

The first sentence again stages the 'Stoic' man with the constant and cheerful character; it is stated that this man continues to live only so as to know better. For that he must 'without envy or vexation be able to forego much'; the most desirable condition to him should be 'that free, fearless hovering over men, customs, laws and the traditional evaluations of things'. This expression is strongly reminiscent of Marcus Aurelius' following observation.

7.48 One who would converse about human beings should look on all things earthly as though from some point far above, upon herds, armies, and agriculture, marriages and divorces, births and deaths, the clamour of law courts, deserted wastes, alien people of every kind, festivals, lamentations, and markets, this intermixture of everything and ordered combination of opposites.⁴⁶²

A fearlessly detached outlook on human affairs cannot be achieved without a certain amount of 'Gleichgültigkeit': it is of vital importance, so both Nietzsche and Marcus Aurelius suggest, to stop thinking of things, or other people (or other people's opinions) as valuable if we wish to

⁴⁵⁹ 3.469.

⁴⁶⁰ 9.525.

⁴⁶¹ 2.55.

⁴⁶² Marcus Aurelius (2011), 64-5.

learn.⁴⁶³ In the *Nachlass* one can find several places in which this idea is prominent: the less we are emotionally attached to things, the more knowledge we will gain. More on this Stoic connection between knowledge and emotional detachment will follow in chapter 4.

3.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the first steps have been taken to analyse Nietzsche's reflection on Stoicism. Starting with a broad overview of the contexts in which Nietzsche habitually turns to the Stoics (a distinction was made between a Hegel-inspired historical perspective, one that assesses Stoicism psychologically, and finally one that enters into a dialogue with Stoicism on a particular topic), the next step involved an analysis of the four most distinctive characteristics of Stoicism emerging from Nietzsche's comments. We observed how the Stoics are continuously depicted as (1) 'Schauspieler', 'Selbst-Betrüger', proposing a philosophy of 'Heuchelei' (possibly inspired by Schopenhauer); (2) defending an attitude of stone-like 'hardness', (3) by suppressing one's emotions through 'self-tyranny' especially (4) in the context of pursuing knowledge.

Yet we also saw how Nietzsche's assessment of these typically Stoic features is not consistent throughout his texts. Especially the characteristic of 'hardness' is in earlier texts still appreciatively framed in terms of 'masculinity', while it receives in later texts connotations of 'petrification'. In the final part of this chapter the remarkable case of *MA I* has been discussed in this context. Although there are no explicit references, the presence of Stoicism is undeniable – both as subject of critique and a source of inspiration. The project of unmasking all metaphysical claims as human, all too human fictions (in which Nietzsche dismantles Schopenhauer's metaphysics using Dühring's scientific method) includes a radical critique of Stoic metaphysics. On the other hand Stoicism is adhered to in the face of the devastating effects of this project. Its outcome, the fearful dilemma between knowledge and life, pushes Nietzsche in the direction of a calming philosophy such as Stoicism. Not only is the Stoic attitude of ascetic calmness deemed necessary in order to fulfil the difficult task at hand; Nietzsche also maintains that its ultimate effect will be the development of the Stoic lifestyle of wisdom: those who succeed will end up living cheerfully with themselves as in nature, hovering fearlessly above humankind, and maintaining a certain distance from rumours surrounding them. Stoicism appears in *MA I* to be the perfect kind of philosophy in the difficult situation of a scientific philosophy exposing itself to be hostile to life.

⁴⁶³ The suggested attitude is recollected in *MA I*'s 1886 Vorrede, and explicitly connected to 'freie Geister' as well. *MA I* Vorrede 4 2.18: 'Man lebt, nicht mehr in den Fesseln von Liebe und Hass, ohne Ja, ohne Nein, freiwillig nahe, freiwillig ferne, am liebsten entschlüpfend, ausweichend, fortflatternd, wieder weg, wieder empor fliegend; man ist verwöhnt, wie jeder, der einmal ein ungeheures Vielerlei *unter* sich gesehen hat, – und man ward zum Gegenstück Derer, welche sich um Dinge bekümmern, die sie nichts angehn. In der That, den freien Geist gehen nunmehr lauter Dinge an – und wie viele Dinge! – welche ihn nicht mehr *bekümmern*...' A passage in *GM* confirms that an attitude of refraining from a yes or no is related to Stoicism. *GM* III 24 5.399-400: 'Ich kenne dies Alles vielleicht zu sehr aus der Nähe: jene verehrenswürdige Philosophen-Enthaltbarkeit, zu der ein solcher Glaube verpflichtet, jener Stoicismus des Intellekts, der sich das Nein zuletzt eben so streng verbietet wie das Ja, jenes Stehenbleiben-*Wollen* vor dem Thatsächlichen, dem factum brutum, jener Fatalismus der „petits-faits“.'

