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**Nietzsche's rejection of stoicism. A reinterpretation of Amor fati**  
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## Chapter 4: *INCREASING DISSATISFACTION WITH STOICISM*

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 has provided a general analysis of the way in which Stoicism is addressed by Nietzsche throughout his philosophical life. Its final part has dedicated some special attention to *MA I* as a remarkable text showing how Nietzsche criticises Stoicism yet also adopts elements of it. We also saw that the feature of ‘masculinity’ approved of in the early works slowly turns into the criticism of ‘petrification’ in later texts. This chapter will investigate the process behind this shift. What development in Nietzsche’s thought leads him to change his judgement of Stoicism? I will argue that the main change takes place in the years between the writing of *MA* and *FW*, that is roughly between 1876 and 1882. The account presented in this chapter is also of importance for our understanding of *amor fati* in *FW* Book IV. Its impact on our interpretation of this notion will be elaborated on in chapter 5.

In opposition to most other commentators, who tend to neglect any change in Nietzsche’s thought on Stoicism<sup>464</sup>, I argue that Nietzsche’s moral-psychological engagement with Stoicism in this period is shaped by one main question: what role should be given to emotions in the pursuit of knowledge (in the broadest sense of ‘Wissenschaft’, not just limited to the ‘natural sciences’) and in the striving for health? Already in *MA I* we observed Nietzsche realising that knowledge might be inimical to life. How far can and should we go in the pursuit of knowledge and truth? What is to be sacrificed – should we go so far as to sacrifice our lives? Some passages suggest an affirmative answer to this.<sup>465</sup> In those passages, health is treated as secondary, even only instrumental, to knowledge. Other texts show how Nietzsche’s interest in health is genuine and prioritized (obsessed as he is in that time with his own sickness<sup>466</sup>). Nietzsche’s interest in different diets, and the exercises he finds in late antiquity, Stoicism included, underscores this preoccupation.<sup>467</sup>

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<sup>464</sup> Especially Ure, M. (2008); but also Ure, M. (2009), 60-84 (although in this article, as has been noticed in 1.2.3, he does recognize Nietzsche’s growing hostility toward the Stoics in *FW*). Also, Nymeyr, B. (2009) does not differentiate within Nietzsche’s oeuvre. It mainly discusses Nietzsche’s explicitly negative remarks on Stoicism. An exception has to be made for Marco Brusotti, whose 1997 work *Die Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis* works out in great detail what I merely indicate in this chapter: a shift from *MA I* to *FW* regarding the role of emotions in the pursuit of knowledge. Brusotti, M. (1997), 453: ‘Den Ernst, der noch in *Morgenröthe* zur Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis wesentlich gehörte, lehnt Nietzsches fröhliche Wissenschaft eindeutig ab. Als fröhliche Wissenschaft ist die Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis keine Leidenschaft der Redlichkeit mehr.’

<sup>465</sup> See section 4.2.3 on the expression ‘was liegt an mir?’; especially *M* 494 3.291 is a good example of Nietzsche showing his willingness to sacrifice himself for science.

<sup>466</sup> See Young, J. (2010), 277-81.

<sup>467</sup> More on this will be said in section 4.2.4 on ‘the nearest things and emotional openness’.

Nietzsche's approach to passions and emotions, for both health and knowledge, shifts in these years. The change is indicated by Nietzsche himself as he reflects on his development in the new *Vorreden* of 1886. The differences between *MA I* and *FW* are presented in a language that suggests an implicit allusion to the Stoic attitude. We have seen how Stoicism is associated with emotional calmness and stability, distanced rationality, and a form of cold, stone-like inflexibility, especially in the later years. In analysing the years of writing *MA* and *M* similar characterisations are used; yet this distanced attitude is said to develop into one that is 'warmer', more emotional – and less Stoic therefore.

The 1886 *Vorrede* of *FW*, for instance, describes the early phase as a first reaction to sickness. The stiffness and detachment indicate a necessary yet passing phase, indispensable as a means to gain health. By the time Nietzsche starts writing *FW*, a new, more hopeful stage begins.

*FW Vorrede 1* [...] Dies ganze Buch ist eben Nichts als eine Lustbarkeit nach langer Entbehrung und Ohnmacht, das Frohlocken der wiederkehrenden Kraft, des neu erwachten Glaubens an ein Morgen und Uebermorgen, des plötzlichen Gefühls und Vorgefühls von Zukunft, von nahen Abenteuern, von wieder offenen Meeren, von wieder erlaubten, wieder geglaubten Zielen. Und was lag nunmehr Alles hinter mir! Dieses Stück Wüste, Erschöpfung, Unglaube, Vereisung mitten in der Jugend, dieses eingeschaltete Greisenthum an unrechter Stelle, diese Tyrannei des Schmerzes überboten noch durch die Tyrannei des Stolzes, der die *Folgerungen* des Schmerzes ablehnte – und Folgerungen sind Tröstungen –, diese radikale Vereinsamung als Nothwehr gegen eine krankhaft hellseherisch gewordene Menschenverachtung, diese grundsätzliche Einschränkung auf das Bittere, Herbe, Wehethuende der Erkenntniss [...]!<sup>468</sup>

We read how a 'radical isolation' was adopted by Nietzsche as a kind of 'self-defence' against a sickness described as 'contempt for people that had become pathologically clairvoyant'. As we will see in this chapter, both 'isolation' and 'self-defence' are used in *M* to indicate a Stoic attitude; also Stoicism as a form of 'therapy' will turn out not to be unusual.<sup>469</sup> The phase is described further as a cooling down characterised as 'Vereisung', again a possible allusion to the 'cooling' effect of Stoicism.<sup>470</sup> Moreover, the use of the word 'tyranny' reminds us of Nietzsche's remark in *JGB* 9 and 188 that Stoicism is (self-)tyranny (see section 2.5.1); also the addition of 'des Stolzes' seems to be an implicit reference to the Stoic pride alluded to in *JGB* 9. The fact that this new *Vorrede* was written not long after finishing *JGB* makes this suggestion even more plausible. In the last sentence we find, finally, the addition of a 'limitation in principle to what was bitter, harsh, painful to know', which is a clear reference to the painful process executed in *MA*, for which a Stoic attitude was welcomed as we have seen.

Another element of Stoicism can be added, one that has not been mentioned yet: the standpoint regarding hope.

<sup>468</sup> 3.346.

<sup>469</sup> As stressed in the titles of Ure's publications. However, Ure works out Nietzsche's references to Stoicism as a cure only, whereas this text suggests that the Stoic attitude can be seen as the symptom of a sickness as well. An exception has to be made for his newest publication in Sellars, J. (2016), 296: '[Nietzsche] comes to view [Stoicism] as a pathology disguised in a philosophical cure.' See also 300.

<sup>470</sup> See section 3.5, in which *MA I* 38 and *MA I* 244 are mentioned as examples.

*FW* Vorrede 1 [...] „Fröhliche Wissenschaft“: das bedeutet die Saturnalien eines Geistes, der einem furchtbaren langen Drucke geduldig widerstanden hat – geduldig, streng, kalt, ohne sich zu unterwerfen, aber ohne Hoffnung –, und der jetzt mit Einem Male von der Hoffnung angefallen wird, von der Hoffnung auf Gesundheit, von der *Trunkenheit* der Genesung.<sup>471</sup>

Clearly, the writing of *FW* marks the beginning of a new, hopeful time, in which new futures become visible, with newly permitted goals (as stated in the previous quote). Nietzsche changes his mind on hope in the years between *MA* and *FW*. This becomes visible not only from Nietzsche's own remark in the above quote (in which the characteristics of the past attitude are again reminiscent of Stoicism: 'patiently, severely, coldly, without yielding'), but also in *MA* I and *FW* themselves.<sup>472</sup> It can be argued that Nietzsche's evaluation runs parallel yet opposed to his evaluation of Stoicism. That is, in the early stages, in *MA* and *M*, Nietzsche shows signs of admiration for Stoicism and considers hope dangerous, whereas in the new *Vorrede* of *FW* (and in other passages in *FW* as well<sup>473</sup>), Nietzsche explicitly rejects the Stoic attitude, shows a more refined and benign attitude towards the passions, and revokes his earlier rejection of hope. In *MA* I we read:

*MA* I 71 [...] die Hoffnung: sie ist in Wahrheit das übelste der Uebel, weil sie die Qual der Menschen verlängert.<sup>474</sup>

In *M* we find how the rejection of hope is considered typical for a Stoic, who is, as is suggested in the previous aphorism, mainly interested in diminishing suffering ('Qual').

*M* 546 [...] Von dem *Christen* unterscheidet er [Epiktet's idealer Mensch] 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 ganzen Welt streitig, wenn diese es ihm rauben will.<sup>475</sup>

Epictetus is contrasted to the Christian, who lives in the hope of divine love and mercy, and who regards the best things in life as a gift received from an external God. Epictetus does not accept the thought of 'his best' being offered to him from outside. He already possesses it and holds on to it in an attitude of brave defensiveness. Epictetus is thus associated with a denunciation of hope; it is this characteristic that marks 'vor Allem' the difference between him and a Christian. The renunciation of Nietzsche's aversion towards hope in the *Vorrede* of *FW* implies therefore that he may likewise renounce his admiration for Stoicism.

<sup>471</sup> 3.345.

<sup>472</sup> See Brusotti, M. (1997), 449, ft. 128.

<sup>473</sup> E.g. at the end of Book III, *FW* 268 3.519: 'Was macht heroisch? – Zugleich seinem höchsten Leide und seiner höchsten Hoffnung entgegengeh'n'; or at the beginning of Book IV, its Motto 3.521: 'Der du mit dem Flammenspeere/Meiner Seele Eis zertheilt,/Dass sie brausend nun zum Meere/Ihrer höchsten Hoffnung eilt'. According to Brusotti, M. (1997), 127, *amor fati* belongs 'zur höchsten Hoffnung seiner [Nietzsches] Seele.'

<sup>474</sup> 2.82.

<sup>475</sup> 3.317.

Importantly, it might be added that the above equation of *FW* with ‘saturnalia’ already suggests that *amor fati* is not Stoic. ‘Saturnalia’ refers to the old Roman festival of light, leading to the winter solstice – but also to king Saturn, who was allegedly regarded by the Romans as the original ruler of the Capitulum, and the first king of Latium. This is interesting because king Saturn is said to have been received in Rome by another king, Janus, after whom the fourth book of *FW* is named ‘St. Januarius’: the celebration of a new year. There is, therefore, an interesting link between the saturnalia and January. *FW*, and Book IV in particular, clearly demarcates something new: a new year, the return of light, the coming of spring, the sense of a new future, and the presence of hope. Since it is in the opening aphorism of Book IV that *amor fati* is introduced, and since Stoicism is associated rather with a lack of hope, we may suspect this to be an important indication that *amor fati* is not Stoic, but rather anti-Stoic.

The case of hope is only one of many designating a transition from 1876 to 1882, described in terms of a shift from a Stoic-like cold attitude of restraint and emotional calmness to one that is warmer, more emotional, more hopeful, more ‘open’. In the following sections I will reveal in more detail how this shift occurs, focusing on ‘openness/closedness’ and the question of the role of emotions in connection with the concerns for knowledge and health.

#### 4.2 MORGENRÖTHE

*M*, written between January 1880 and March 1881, is known as one of Nietzsche’s most neglected works. Possibly because it is, as Keith Ansell-Pearson argues, a book in which a ‘philosophy of modesty’ is presented.<sup>476</sup> This emphasis on modesty seems to be rather un-Nietzschean, especially if compared to the fierce and often aggressive tone of his later works, which have received considerably more attention than *M*. Ansell-Pearson argues moreover that the book is ‘best to be read’ as an ‘Epicurean-inspired critique of the present and an exercise in moral therapy.’<sup>477</sup> He thereby starts the tradition to which Michael Ure also belongs, defending a reading of Nietzsche’s Middle Period that emphasises its ‘therapeutic’ aspects aiming at ‘self-cultivation’; although his focus is on the Epicurean rather than the Stoic type of exercise.

*M*’s subtitle ‘Gedanken über die moralischen Vorurtheile’ indicates that Ansell-Pearson is right in his analysis of *M* as a book focusing on morality; Nietzsche does indeed set himself the task of reflecting upon ‘moral prejudices’.<sup>478</sup> *EH* indicates further that *M* is the work that started Nietzsche’s campaign against morality. The section on *M* opens with the remark: ‘Mit diesem Buche beginnt mein Feldzug gegen die Moral’<sup>479</sup> and ends as follows: ‘Mit der „Morgenröthe“ nahm ich zuerst den Kampf gegen die Entselbstungs-Moral auf’.<sup>480</sup> However, even if *M* is a work concerned with morality and moral prejudices, mainly of ‘Entselbung’, this does not mean that the historical-physiological project started in *MA*, the unmasking of all kinds of

<sup>476</sup> Ansell-Pearson, K. (2011), 180. That *Morgenröthe* is one of Nietzsche’s most neglected works is also emphasised in the Introduction to the translation by Hollingdale (1997), vii.

<sup>477</sup> Ansell-Pearson, K. (2011), 179.

<sup>478</sup> See for a more substantial analysis of the role of morality in *Morgenröthe*: Hollingdale (1997), xxvi – xxxiv.

<sup>479</sup> *EH* (M) 1 6.329.

<sup>480</sup> *EH* (M) 2 6.332.

metaphysical (and moral) truths, ends here – on the contrary. Although I agree with much of what Ansell-Pearson has to say about *M*, I will nuance the presupposition that Nietzsche is *only* concerned with a therapy aimed at human flourishing. Truth and the desire to pursue knowledge continue to be of great importance and even gain more importance, as also Marco Brusotti insists.<sup>481</sup>

Moreover, I take *M* to be a work in which a *transition* becomes visible. As Nietzsche himself remarks, spirits who do not change their minds will pass away; in his words, a ‘snake that cannot cast its skin perishes’.<sup>482</sup> Another passage of the late (1886) *Vorreden*, this time of *MA*, describes Nietzsche’s transition in a way that is comparable to what we saw in the *FW Vorrede* of the introduction.

*MA I Vorrede* 5 [...] Ein Schritt weiter in der Genesung: und der freie Geist nähert sich wieder dem Leben, langsam freilich, fast widerspänstig, fast misstrauisch. Es wird wieder wärmer um ihn, gelber gleichsam; Gefühl und Mitgefühl bekommen Tiefe, Thauwinde aller Art gehen über ihn weg. Fast ist ihm zu Muthe, als ob ihm jetzt erst die Augen für das *Nahe* aufgingen. Er ist verwundert und sitzt stille: wo *war* er doch? Diese nahen und nächsten Dinge: wie scheinen sie ihm verwandelt! welchen Flaum und Zauber haben sie inzwischen bekommen! Er blickt dankbar zurück, – dankbar seiner Wanderschaft, seiner Härte und Selbstentfremdung, seinen Fernblicken und Vogelflügen in kalte Höhen. Wie gut, dass er nicht wie ein zärtlicher dumper Eckensteher immer „zu Hause“, immer „bei sich“ geblieben ist! er war *ausser* sich: es ist kein Zweifel. Jetzt erst sieht er sich selbst –, und welche Ueberraschungen findet er dabei!<sup>483</sup>

This passage describes a step further in the process of healing already introduced in the *FW Vorrede*; slowly and mistrustfully at first the free spirit approaches life again. The transition from sickness to health is described in terms of temperature, colour and feeling: it gets warmer, winds of dew chase away the frost, colours brighten, feelings, also of sympathy, deepen – hinting at the shift concerning the importance of passions introduced earlier. Whereas *MA*, as we have seen, takes the ‘cooling down’ of emotions as its main concern, *M* adopts a far more subtle position towards the passions. As Brusotti rightly claims: ‘In *Morgenröthe* [...] erscheint diese Überwindung der Leidenschaften nicht mehr als die wünschenswerteste Stimmung. Als Nietzsche die Leidenschaftlichkeit des Erkennenden aufwertet, beginnt er im Grunde seine Hochschätzung der späteren griechischen Philosophien zu relativieren.’<sup>484</sup> I fully endorse the connection in Nietzsche’s texts between the changed evaluation of emotions and of the late Greeks philosophers, including the Stoics. I moreover

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<sup>481</sup> Brusotti, M. (1997).

<sup>482</sup> *M* 573 3.330: ‘*Sich häuten*. – Die Schlange, welche sich nicht häuten kann, geht zu Grunde. Ebenso die Geister, welche man verhindert, ihre Meinungen zu wechseln; sie hören auf, Geist zu sein.’

<sup>483</sup> 2.19.

<sup>484</sup> Brusotti, M. (1997), 138. Brusotti cites an aphorism in *MA II* that we have come across already in section 3.5; in *WS* 88, 2.593 Nietzsche explicitly seems to commit himself to the ideal of ‘overcoming’ emotions: ‘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.’

think Brusotti is right in pointing out that this shift should be seen in connection with Nietzsche's shift in understanding the drive for knowledge, the 'Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis'.

Another element of the transition that takes place in *M* is a new discovery of the 'nearest things': 'Fast ist ihm zu Muthe, als ob ihm jetzt erst die Augen für das *Nahe* aufgingen.' This discovery will prove to be of great importance for the understanding of *amor fati*. As I will argue in chapter 5, the *fatum* to be loved is intimately connected to the nearest things and the discovery of the 'self' that is introduced in this *Vorrede* passage: 'Jetzt erst sieht er sich selbst'. The analysis of *M* reveals that Nietzsche both picks up on the theme of the nearest things, and continues what he started in *MA I*: a 'hovering above' humanity in order to adopt a more or less 'objective', i.e. detached, point of view. The *Vorrede* passage does not seem to allow for these two points of view to be adopted at the same time, which indicates again that *M* should be seen as a book of transition. Nietzsche seems to go back and forth, like a 'wanderer'. The *Vorrede* passage touches upon this theme of 'wandering' as well: the free spirit, looking back, is 'dankbar seiner Wanderschaft, seiner Härte und Selbstentfremdung, seinen Fernblicken und Vogelflügen in kalte Höhen.' As I will argue below, *M* is the work in which Nietzsche (modestly as Ansell-Pearson suggests) is taking all kinds of detours in order to investigate the matters of morality. These detours imply 'Selbstentfremdung', 'Härte', 'Fernblicken und Vogelflügen in kalte Höhen', all invoking Stoicism, but slowly developing into an attitude in which the 'nächste Dinge' appear changed.

In what follows I will highlight two main shifts therefore. The first concerns the passions. Like Brusotti, I will argue that *M* is different from *MA I* in its attitude to emotions, although the main difference is only small: *M* no longer considers the effects of the scientific endeavour as 'cooling' and 'liberating', but the need for a certain calmness remains. Following Brusotti, I will argue that Nietzsche comes to understand the drive for knowledge more and more as a 'Leidenschaft' that we cannot dispense with, problematic as it is. This analysis will also put in perspective the accounts of Ure and Ansell-Pearson, who insist that Nietzsche is mainly involved with a therapy of self-cultivation. Secondly, I will deal with the two seemingly opposite attitudes just mentioned: the one 'flying above' humanity, looking at the things below from a cold distance, detached from one's closest surroundings, the other warmly rediscovering the 'nearest' things. I will argue for a connection between the first attitude and Stoicism, as well as for one between non-Stoic emotional 'openness' and the new appreciation of oneself and the nearest things.

Thirdly, then, I will focus on one aspect of Nietzsche's analysis of morality prominent in *M*: pity. I will argue that the way in which Nietzsche turns to Epictetus in this regard throws into relief the development sketched above. Many authors have dealt with this topic, but I will take as my main source of inspiration the analyses by Martha Nussbaum, Keith Ansell-Pearson and Michael Ure, all of which I will critically evaluate.

#### 4.2.1 EMOTIONS AND SCIENCE

Whereas in *MA I* we have seen a double movement concerning the relation between the emotions and knowledge (Stoic calmness as a kind of preparation for facing a devastating



truth, and knowledge itself as having a ‘cooling’ and ‘liberating’ effect), in *M* the second of these options disappears. Instead, we find in the following aphorism how the drive for knowledge is presented as a ‘new passion’, one that has become so dominant that happiness without it is no longer conceivable.

*M* 429 *Die neue Leidenschaft*. – [...] unser *Trieb zur Erkenntniss* ist zu stark, als dass wir noch das Glück ohne Erkenntniss oder das Glück eines starken festen Wahnes zu schätzen vermöchten; es macht Pein, uns solche Zustände auch nur vorzustellen! Die Unruhe des Entdeckens und Errathens ist uns so reizvoll und unentbehrlich geworden, wie die unglückliche Liebe dem Liebenden wird: welche er um keinen Preis gegen den Zustand der Gleichgültigkeit hergeben würde; – ja, vielleicht sind wir auch *unglücklich Liebende!*<sup>485</sup>

Of great interest in this fragment is the term ‘Unruhe’; it is clear that the practice of discovering and hypothesising (‘Entdeckens und Errathens’) is no longer understood as calming and liberating.<sup>486</sup> A comparison with unhappy love seems more in place: like an unfortunate lover the searcher for knowledge cannot live without the thrill of his passion anymore<sup>487</sup> – what is more, humanity might perish because of it, and even that thought does not scare him:

Vielleicht selbst, dass die Menschheit an dieser Leidenschaft der Erkenntniss zu Grunde geht! – auch dieser Gedanke vermag Nichts über uns!<sup>488</sup>

Interestingly though, Nietzsche turns to Marcus Aurelius as one of those who has contributed to the seductive promise of knowledge as the remedy for suffering (a thought that he has clearly come to disbelieve at this point), *and* he turns to him in order to take away the unnecessary elements of suffering that stand in the way of pursuing knowledge.<sup>489</sup> *M* 450 mentions Marcus Aurelius as an example of the first instance. The description is of ‘leidenschaftliche Geister’, who are seduced by the promise of knowledge reducing suffering

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<sup>485</sup> 3.264.

<sup>486</sup> Brusotti, M. (1997) concludes similarly, 228: ‘Nietzsches Einstellung zu den Leidenschaften hat sich in *Morgenröthe* geändert: Die *Apatheia* gegen Schmerz und Leidenschaften betrachtet er als eine Illusion. Der leidenschaftlich Erkennende strebt keine allgemeine Seelenruhe an, seine Leidenschaft ist als solche unruhig, und er bejaht diese Unruhe.’

<sup>487</sup> See for a comparable thought *M* 327 3.232: ‘*Eine Fabel*. – Der Don Juan der Erkenntniss [...] hat Geist, Kitzel und Genuss an Jagd und Intriguen der Erkenntniss – bis an die höchsten und fernsten Sterne der Erkenntniss hinauf! – bis ihm zuletzt Nichts mehr zu erjagen übrig bleibt, als das absolut *Wehethuende* der Erkenntniss, gleich dem Trinker, der am Ende Absinth und Scheidewasser trinkt.’ To be further discussed in section 4.2.3.

<sup>488</sup> 3.265. See also *M* 459 3.276: ‘*Die Grossmüthigkeit des Denkers*. – [...] Gerade darin glänzt die schönste Tugend des grossen Denkers: die Grossmüthigkeit, dass er als Erkennender sich selber und sein Leben unverzagt, oftmals beschämt, oftmals mit erhabenem Spotte und lächelnd – zum Opfer bringt.’

<sup>489</sup> That Nietzsche’s attitude towards Marcus Aurelius is one of admiration more than of criticism is confirmed by the following fragment of a letter to Ferdinand Laban, written the 19<sup>th</sup> of July 1881; *KGB* III/1.106-7: ‘Denn zuletzt, lieber Herr, sind wir Beide doch wohl Einer Meinung, über diesen Einen Punkt: daß [...] wir *auch jetzt noch* so stolz und darüber-hinsehend leben können, wie jener herrliche römische Kaiser, in dessen Verehrung wir Beide *einmüthig* sind (lesen Sie doch zum Beweise dafür meine jüngst erschienene ‚*Morgenröthe*‘ [...]).’

and are therefore doomed: they will end up being fantasists or, in the most fortunate case, poets, while knowledge itself will never be attained.

*M 450 Die Lockung der Erkenntniss.* – Auf leidenschaftliche Geister wirkt der Blick durch das Thor der Wissenschaft wie der Zauber aller Zauber; und vermuthlich werden sie dabei zu Phantasten und im günstigen Falle zu Dichtern: so heftig ist ihre Begierde nach dem Glück der Erkennenden. Geht es euch nicht durch alle Sinne, – dieser Ton der süßen Lockung, mit dem die Wissenschaft ihre frohe Botschaft verkündet hat, in hundert Worten und im hundert-ersten und schönsten: „Lass den Wahn schwinden! Dann ist auch das ‚Wehe mir!‘ verschwunden; und mit dem ‚Wehe mir!‘ ist auch das Wehe dahin.“ (Marc Aurel.)<sup>490</sup>

Yet *M 424* shows how it remains of importance for Nietzsche to be calm, strong and balanced (the opposite of the ‘leidenschaftliche Geister’ in the above passage) in order to be a scientist: looking for truth should not entail looking for cures. Again the point is made that knowledge does not have the calming and therapeutic effect it was still considered to have in *MA*, but the opposite analysis, that we have to be calm and composed to successfully search for truth, still stands.

*M 424 Für wen die Wahrheit da ist.* – Bis jetzt sind die Irrthümer die *trostreichen* Mächte gewesen: nun erwartet man von den erkannten Wahrheiten die selbe Wirkung und wartet ein Wenig lange schon. Wie, wenn die Wahrheiten gerade diess – zu trösten – nicht zu leisten vermöchten? – Wäre diess denn ein Einwand gegen die Wahrheiten? [...] Vielleicht folgt aus alledem der Satz, dass die Wahrheit *als Ganzes* und Zusammenhängendes nur für die zugleich mächtigen und harmlosen, freud- und friedenvollen Seelen (wie es die des Aristoteles war) da ist, ebenso wie diese wohl auch nur im Stande sein werden, *sie zu suchen*: denn die anderen suchen *Heilmittel* für sich, mögen sie noch so stolz über ihren Intellect und dessen Freiheit denken, – sie suchen *nicht* die Wahrheit.

In this aphorism Nietzsche takes Aristotle as an example; but when it comes to the strategies we should adopt for becoming like Aristotle (that is: a ‘zugleich mächtigen und harmlosen, freud- und friedenvollen Seelen’), Nietzsche turns to Marcus Aurelius (and other Stoics, Epictetus in particular). The expression distinctive of Marcus Aurelius ‘let delusion vanish!’ returns prominently in the following aphorism, for instance.

*M 54 Die Gedanken über die Krankheit!* – Die Phantasie des Kranken beruhigen, dass er wenigstens nicht, wie bisher, *mehr* von seinen Gedanken über seine Krankheit zu leiden hat, als von der Krankheit selber, – ich denke, das ist Etwas! Und es ist nicht Wenig! Versteht ihr nun unsere Aufgabe?<sup>491</sup>

Nietzsche famously claims, much later, in *GM III*: ‘Die Sinnlosigkeit des Leidens, *nicht* das Leiden, war der Fluch, der bisher über der Menschheit ausgebreitet lag’, again invoking Marcus

<sup>490</sup> 3.273. Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* 6.7: ‘Do away with the judgment, and the notion ‘I have been harmed’ is done away with; do away with that notion, and the harm itself is gone.’ Brusotti, M. (1997), 225 ft 23: ‘Die Sentenz ist in Nietzsches Handexemplar zweimal angestrichen.’

<sup>491</sup> 3.57.

Aurelius' insight.<sup>492</sup> Already in *M* and *WS* we find Nietzsche analysing Christianity as a form of therapy that only temporarily eases the pain, by offering an interpretation of suffering as *punishment*<sup>493</sup>, but that in the long run creates a suffering that is even worse, as Nietzsche observes in his age.

*M* 52 *Wo sind die neuen Ärzte der Seele?* – Die Mittel des Trostes sind es gewesen, durch welche das Leben erst jenen leidvollen Grundcharakter, an den man jetzt glaubt, bekommen hat; die grösste Krankheit der Menschen ist aus der Bekämpfung ihrer Krankheiten entstanden, und die anscheinenden Heilmittel haben auf die Dauer Schlimmeres erzeugt, als Das war, was mit ihnen beseitigt werden sollte. Aus Unkenntniss hielt man die augenblicklich wirkenden, betäubenden und berausenden Mittel, die sogenannten Tröstungen, für die eigentlichen Heilkräfte [...]. [W]o ist Der, welcher endlich auch einmal die Gegenmittel gegen diese Leiden ernst nimmt und die unerhörte Quacksalberei an den Pranger stellt [...]?<sup>494</sup>

The 'new physicians of the soul' in this aphorism are presented with the task to 'take seriously the antidotes to these sufferings and put in the pillory the unheard-of quack-doctoring'. As Nietzsche makes clear, the reason why this dangerously unhealthy type of Christian remedy has grown so dominant is *ignorance* ('Unkenntnis'). It is about time, he suggests, to investigate the historical and psychological processes underlying this major medical error. Unmasking the Christian interpretation of suffering in terms of punishment seems to amount to doing exactly what he proposes in *M* 54: the taking away of the painful *thoughts* on the suffering, the thoughts that have increased the suffering to a great extent, so that only the original suffering remains. Taking away the thoughts on suffering, then, comes down to the calming down of a *phantasy*.

The main aim of this text is the unmasking of certain phantasies, therefore; a project that must be seen as in continuity with the historical-physiological endeavour executed in *MA*.<sup>495</sup> Admittedly, the difference between *MA* I and *M* on the relation between knowledge and the calming down of emotions is remarkably small. I believe that Brusotti's analysis, 'Die Therapie des Gefühlslebens koexistiert mit der Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis'<sup>496</sup>, hits the mark more closely than Ansell-Pearson's suggestion that *M* is merely an 'exercise in moral therapy', or Ure's idea that Nietzsche 'understood himself as developing a *new philosophical therapy*'.<sup>497</sup> Rather, it is clear that Nietzsche increasingly comes to understand the drive for knowledge as a 'Leidenschaft' that brings with it a certain amount of 'Unruhe'. Therefore, in order to prevent himself from ending up as one of the 'leidenschaftliche Geister', who instead of looking for knowledge attempt to discover cures, Nietzsche emphasises that for all the other

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<sup>492</sup> *GM* III 28 5-411.

<sup>493</sup> *M* 78 3-76-7: 'Sodann gab es in im Alterthum wirklich noch Unglück, reines, unschuldiges Unglück; erst im Christenthum wird alles Strafe, wohlverdiente Strafe'.

<sup>494</sup> 3-56. See also *WS* 78 2-587: '*Der Glaube an die Krankheit, als Krankheit*'.

<sup>495</sup> Moreover, this project is not just Nietzsche's; it carries the mark of modernity. See *M* 429 quoted above and section 3.4 and 3.5 on the influence of Dühring's positivism.

<sup>496</sup> Brusotti, M. (1997), 229.

<sup>497</sup> Ure, M. (2009), 60.

‘Leidenschaften’ a certain calmness must be attained.<sup>498</sup> Let’s not forget that it is Aristotle, a philosopher known for his scientific approach, and not, as one may have expected, one of the Stoics, who is chosen as the example in *M* 424.

There are more references in *M* containing typically Stoic strategies to calm down. They can all be seen as merely different formulations of the idea that it is our phantasies, our opinions, that bring about unwelcome restlessness.<sup>499</sup> *M* 82 is one example. Nietzsche opposes Luther, who attempts to force us to take up a certain opinion regarding our life, to an anonymous ‘Höheren und Bedachtsamen’ who claims instead:

*M* 82 [...] „Es steht bei uns, über Diess und Das keine Meinung zu bilden und so unsrer Seele die Unruhe zu ersparen. Denn die Dinge selbst können ihrer Natur nach uns keine Urtheile *abnöthigen*.“<sup>500</sup>

That this anonymous person is in fact Marcus Aurelius is confirmed in the following quote from his *Meditations*.

6.52 It is possible to form no opinion on this matter and not be troubled in one’s mind; for things themselves are not of such a nature that they can create judgments within us.

But not only Marcus Aurelius is seen as the exemplary philosopher to help us adopt a more ‘objective’ standpoint, undisturbed by opinions. Also Epictetus’ advice is worth adhering to. In the following aphorism Nietzsche encourages the reader (‘du’) to always remain a spectator, adopting a third-person perspective concerning all our inner movements, be they comic or tragic; if we succeed in creating a ‘third eye’, we will always have a little portal to joy and a refuge.

*M* 509 *Das dritte Auge*. – [...] Werde klug und suche die Tragödie und Komödie dort, wo sie besser gespielt wird! Wo es interessanter und interessirter zugeht! Ja, es ist nicht ganz leicht, dabei eben nur Zuschauer zu bleiben, – aber lerne es! Und fast in allen Lagen, die dir schwer und peinlich fallen, hast du dann ein Pfortchen zur Freude und eine Zuflucht, selbst noch, wenn deine eigenen Leidenschaften über dich herfallen. Mache dein Theater-Auge auf, das grosse dritte Auge, welches durch die zwei anderen in die Welt schaut!<sup>501</sup>

<sup>498</sup> Brusotti, M. (1997), 273. As the analysis of *FW* will show, this way of approaching suffering will be dropped not long after the moment of these writings.

<sup>499</sup> See also *M* 449 3.272: ‘Dem und Jenen, dessen Kopf *durch Meinungen verstört ist*, helfen’, and *M* 563 3.328: ‘Nicht *die Dinge*, sondern die Meinungen *über die Dinge, die es gar nicht giebt*, haben die Menschen so verstört!’

<sup>500</sup> 3.78.

<sup>501</sup> 3.297. See also *NL* 7[291] 9.379: ‘Wie ein Drama sein Inneres leiden sehen ist ein höherer Grad als nur leiden.’ And *M* 497 3.293: ‘das *reine, reinmachende Auge*, das [...] auf die Welt wie auf einen Gott blickt’. Epictetus, *Encheiridion* ch. 17: ‘Remember that you are an actor in a play the character of which is determined by the playwright: a short play, if he wants it to be short; a long play, if he wants it to be long; if he wants you to play a beggar’s role, remember to play this role properly too; and in the same way if he wants you to play a cripple, an official, a private person. For this is yours to do: to play well the role that is assigned to you; but picking it out is the task of someone else.’ Boter, G. (1999), 294.

The next aphorism, also acquired from Epictetus, takes the idea of a distanced position towards our own sufferings even more seriously. Here the ‘third eye’ is connected to the more objective standpoint of those who view their suffering as if it belongs to others, thereby reaching a more detached, calmer and rational perspective.

*M 137 Warum das „Ich“ verdoppeln! – Unsere eigenen Erlebnisse mit dem Auge ansehen, mit dem wir sie anzusehen pflegen, wenn es die Erlebnisse Anderer sind, – diess beruhigt sehr und ist eine rathsame Medicin. [...] Gewiss ist [...] jene [...] Maxime der Vernunft und dem guten Willen zur Vernünftigkeit gemässer, denn wir urtheilen über den Werth und Sinn eines Ereignisses objectiver, wenn es an Anderen hervortritt und nicht an uns: zum Beispiel über den Werth eines Sterbefalles, eines Geldverlustes, einer Verleumdung.<sup>502</sup>*

It is striking in this aphorism how Nietzsche again regards the calming effect (‘dies beruhigt sehr’) as the desired outcome; viewing one’s own sufferings from a distance is ‘eine rathsame Medicin’. What is more, adopting this perspective is more in accord with reason and the will to rationality (‘der Vernunft und dem guten Willen zur Vernünftigkeit gemässer’), because it entails a greater degree of objectivity. Reading these aphorisms, therefore, leads us to conclude that Nietzsche is to a large extent still inspired by Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus when it comes to the acquisition of a calm, detached, rational standpoint, one that is more suitable to perform the steps necessary in order to find ‘truth’ instead of mere cures, in line with Nietzsche’s apparent example in this matter; Aristotle.

#### 4.2.2 SELF-RESTRAINT AND OBJECTIVITY

However, the strategies as discussed above entail a sense of disengagement with one’s feelings. The adoption of a ‘third eye’, the idea of viewing one’s own emotional fluctuations from the perspective of a spectator in the theatre or a complete stranger, implies a sense of disentanglement (‘er war *ausser sich*<sup>503</sup>) that will turn out to be completely different from the warm rediscovery of ‘nearest things’ that follows later. In particular, the kind of emotional ‘openness’ of the latter is absent in the aphorisms revealing admiration for Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. I will begin therefore by analysing the texts in which the Stoic attitude of self-restraint is interpreted as brave and modest solitude and independence, necessary for acquiring an objective standpoint of hovering above humanity. I will dedicate a special section afterwards to the Stoically inspired expression ‘was liegt an mir?’, claiming that this exclamation highlights the climax of rational restraint and a neglect of the importance of the

<sup>502</sup> 3.130. The Epictetus-text that has clearly been used as its inspiration is *Encheiridion* ch. 26: ‘The will of nature can be learnt from the things in which we do not differ from each other. For instance, when someone else’s slave breaks a cup, our immediate reaction is, “It is just one of those things that happen.” Realize, then, that when your own cup is broken, you must react in the same way as when someone else’s cup was broken. Transfer this to more important things as well. Someone else’s child or wife has died? There is nobody who would not say, “That’s life.” But when someone’s own child dies, he immediately goes, “Alas!” and “Poor me!” But we should remember how we feel when we hear such things about others.’ Boter, G. (1999), 304.

<sup>503</sup> *MA I Vorrede* 5 2.19.

self. The subsequent section then will point out how these texts sit uneasily with the growing importance of emotions expressed in other aphorisms, marking the transition to *FW*.

*M 497* adds to the objective perspective of a stranger and the third eye of the spectator the possibility of adopting a ‘purifying eye’.

*M 497 Das reinmachende Auge.* – Von „Genius“ wäre am ehesten bei solchen Menschen zu reden, wo der Geist, wie bei Plato, Spinoza und Goethe, an den Charakter und das Temperament nur *lose angeknüpft* erscheint, als ein beflügeltes Wesen, das sich von jenen leicht trennen und sich dann weit über sie erheben kann. [...] [Sie] haben das *reine, reinmachende Auge*, das nicht aus ihrem Temperament und Charakter gewachsen scheint, sondern frei von ihnen und meist in einem milden Widerspruch gegen sie auf die Welt wie auf einen Gott blickt und diesen Gott liebt.<sup>504</sup>

The spirit of a genius (examples of which are Plato, Spinoza and Goethe, all of whom Nietzsche admires at this point) is described as a ‘winged being’ that seems to be only ‘loosely attached’ to temperament and character; it can detach itself effortlessly, and rise high above them. It seems therefore that in order to look at the world as they do (seeing and loving it as if it were God), one has to free one’s spirit and associate oneself with its position not as the consequence of, but ‘in mild opposition’ to temperament and character. This purified (and purifying) position, distanced from one’s more emotional self, is not something given; it must be *lernt* according to the last sentences of the aphorism.

Auch ihnen ist aber dieses Auge nicht mit Einem Male geschenkt: es giebt eine Übung und Vorschule des Sehens, und wer rechtes Glück hat, findet zur rechten Zeit auch einen Lehrer des reinen Sehens.

What, one may wonder, will be the appropriate procedure in order to learn ‘pure seeing’, and who will be those teachers? The following aphorism hints at two possible answers to the last question: Plato and the Stoics. What is more, it gives a very clear indication of what is needed in order not to lose one’s ‘Vernunft’: one has to flee from experiences.

*M 448 Die Wirklichkeit ehren.* – [...] Wozu können uns also die Erlebnisse fortreißen! Was sind unsere Meinungen! Man muss, um sich nicht zu verlieren, um seine *Vernunft* nicht zu verlieren, vor den Erlebnissen flüchten! So floh Plato vor der Wirklichkeit und wollte die Dinge nur in den blassen Gedankenbildern anschauen; er war voller Empfindung und wußte, wie leicht die Wellen der Empfindung über seiner Vernunft zusammenschlugen. – So hätte sich demnach der Weise zu sagen: „ich will die *Wirklichkeit* ehren, aber ihr den Rücken dabei zuwenden, *weil* ich sie kenne und fürchte“?<sup>505</sup>

Plato, a very sensitive man, decided to turn his back on reality, not out of a sense of disdain but out of respect. Nietzsche analyses Plato’s decision to see reality only in pallid mental pictures as the consequence of his sensitivity: how easily are we carried away by our experiences! How easily are we seduced into adopting all kinds of opinions, one of the main dangers pointed out

<sup>504</sup> 3.292-3. A position reminding us of Spinoza’s *amor dei intellectualis*.

<sup>505</sup> 3.271.

by Marcus Aurelius! The only way to pay respect to reality, to practice a rational ‘pure seeing’ must be to flee from confusing experiences. However, the consequence of honouring reality in this way (*‘Die Wirklichkeit ehren’*) is to abstract from the nearest things and persons in the world<sup>506</sup> – implying an opposite stance therefore to the one we will discuss later on.

*M 512 Gegen die Sachen muthig.* – Wer seiner Natur nach gegen Personen rücksichtsvoll oder ängstlich ist, aber seinen Muth gegen die Sachen hat, scheut sich vor neuen und näheren Bekanntschaften und beschränkt seine alten: damit sein Incognito und seine Rücksichtslosigkeit in der Wahrheit zusammenwachsen.<sup>507</sup>

Ruthlessness with regard to truth grows together with a sense of Incognito and a shunning of new acquaintances. As Nietzsche explains in other aphorisms: ‘Wenn immer ein Anderer um uns ist, so ist das Beste von Muth und Güte in der Welt unmöglich gemacht’<sup>508</sup>; and ‘„Die Hälfte unserer Tugend“ nehmen uns die Götter, wenn sie uns das Incognito nehmen und uns berühmt machen.’<sup>509</sup> The elements necessary to be courageous in the face of truth will be taken away from the brave truth-seeker if he is deprived of the calmness of his solitary existence. The distraction, for example, of hearing what other people have to say about him has the potential of annihilating even the strongest man, so Nietzsche argues in a way that is reminiscent of Marcus Aurelius once more:

*M 522 Die Weisheit ohne Ohren.* – Täglich zu hören, was über uns gesprochen wird, oder gar zu ergübeln, was über uns gedacht wird, – das vernichtet den stärksten Mann. [...] Kurz, bringen wir der allgemeinen Verträglichkeit das Opfer, horchen wir nicht hin, wenn über uns geredet, gelobt, getadelt, gewünscht, gehofft wird, denken wir auch nicht einmal daran!<sup>510</sup>

To avoid all these devastating distractions it is vital to cherish one’s solitude. Several aphorisms in *M* are dedicated to solitude; *M 443* for instance reveals how Nietzsche regrets a neglect of attention to its importance in all education: ‘Allmählich ist mir das Licht über den allgemeinsten Mangel unserer Art Bildung und Erziehung aufgegangen: Niemand lernt,

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<sup>506</sup> And this seems to be the natural thing to do for a thinker: *M 440 3.269*: ‘*Nicht entsagen!* – Auf die Welt verzichten, ohne sie zu kennen, gleich einer *Nonne*, – das giebt eine unfruchtbare, vielleicht schwermüthige Einsamkeit. Diess hat Nichts gemeinsam mit der Einsamkeit der *vita contemplativa* des Denkers: wenn er sie wählt, will er keineswegs entsagen; vielmehr wäre es ihm Entsagung, Schwermuth, Untergang seiner selbst, in der *vita practica* ausharren zu müssen: auf diese verzichtet er, weil er sie kennt, weil er sich kennt. So springt er in *sein* Wasser, so gewinnt er *seine* Heiterkeit.’

<sup>507</sup> 3.298. For a very similar aphorism, see *M 441 3.269*: ‘*Warum das Nächste uns immer ferner wird.* – Je mehr wir an Alles, was war und sein wird, denken, um so bleicher wird uns Das, was gerade jetzt ist. Wenn wir mit Gestorbenen leben und in ihrem Sterben mitsterben, was sind uns dann noch die „Nächsten“? Wir werden einsamer, – und zwar *weil* die ganze Fluth der Menschheit um uns rauscht. Die Gluth in uns, die allem Menschlichen gilt, nimmt immer zu – und *darum* blicken wir auf Das, was uns umgiebt, wie als ob es gleichgültiger und schattenhafter geworden wäre. – Aber unser kalter Blick *beleidigt!*’

<sup>508</sup> *M 464 3.279.*

<sup>509</sup> *M 466 3.280.*

<sup>510</sup> 3.301. Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* 1.5: ‘From my tutor, [...] to endure hardship, and have few needs; to do things for myself and not meddle in the affairs of others; and to turn a deaf ear to slander.’ See also, for the same point made from the other perspective, *M 528 3.303* ‘*Seltnerer Enthaltksamkeit.* – Es ist oft kein geringes Zeichen von Humanität, einen Andern nicht beurtheilen zu wollen und sich zu weigern, über ihn zu denken.’

Niemand strebt darnach, Niemand lehrt – *die Einsamkeit ertragen*.<sup>511</sup> M 485 furthermore makes it explicit again that solitude allows for adopting the ‘distanced perspectives’ needed in order to ‘think well of things’:

M 485 *Ferne Perspectiven*. – A: Aber warum diese Einsamkeit? – B: Ich zürne Niemandem. Aber allein scheine ich meine Freunde deutlicher und schöner zu sehen, als zusammen mit ihnen [...]. Es scheint, ich brauche die fernen Perspectiven, um gut von den Dingen zu denken.<sup>512</sup>

These reflections on the constructive effects of solitude relate closely to Nietzsche’s admiration for Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus. In line with the emphasis on modesty in Ansell-Pearson’s approach, Nietzsche recognizes in Epictetus a style of living that fits his needs perfectly: the unwearied glance turned inward instead of outward, the courage that this attitude requires, and the contempt for display and vainglory – not only because fame would distract the thinker and influence his thoughts to the extent that he will no longer be able to reflect independently, but also because he wishes to ‘spoil no one’s good humour’; a human being who lives like Epictetus is ‘not fanatical’, does not impose himself on others, but is in possession of a mild and humorous kind of humaneness instead.

M 546 *Slave und Idealist*. – Der Epiktetische Mensch wäre wahrlich nicht nach dem Geschmacke Derer, welche jetzt nach dem Ideale streben. Die stete Spannung seines Wesens, der nach Innen gewendete unermüdliche Blick, das Verschlussene, Vorsichtige, Unmittheilsame seines Auges, falls er sich einmal der Aussenwelt zukehrt; und gar das Schweigen oder Kurzreden: Alles Merkmale der strengsten Tapferkeit [...]! Zu alledem ist er nicht fanatisch, er hasst die Schaustellung und die Ruhmredigkeit unserer Idealisten: sein Hochmuth, so gross er ist, will doch nicht die Anderen stören, er gesteht eine gewisse milde Annäherung zu und möchte Niemandem die gute Laune verderben, – ja er kann lächeln! Es ist sehr viel antike Humanität in diesem Ideale!<sup>513</sup>

What is more, Nietzsche pictures Epictetus’ ‘ideal man’ in this aphorism as ‘der Stille, Sich-Selbst-Genügende’. Let me point out two more characteristics of the Stoic example for Nietzsche, the first of which is independence. As we have seen, solitude is seen as necessary for gaining a more objective standpoint; but it is of value only if it leads to the (re-)discovery of the independent perspective that has been described above in terms of a ‘third eye’, even a ‘purifying eye’. The connection between solitude and the (re-)discovery of this perspective, which is presented poetically below as ‘the water out of the well of oneself’, is made as follows:

M 491 *Auch desshalb Einsamkeit!* – A: So willst du wieder in deine Wüste zurück?. – B: Ich bin nicht schnell, ich muss auf mich warten, – es wird spät, bis jedesmal das Wasser aus dem Brunnen meines Selbst an’s Licht kommt, und oft muss ich länger Durst leiden, als ich Geduld habe. Desshalb gehe ich in die Einsamkeit, – um nicht aus den

<sup>511</sup> 3.270. See also M 453 3.274, in which Nietzsche mentions the existence of an ‘Einsamkeitslehre’. Hutter, H. (2006) has dedicated two chapters to this topic.

<sup>512</sup> 3.288.

<sup>513</sup> 3.316.



Cisternen für Jedermann zu trinken. Unter Vielen lebe ich wie Viele und denke nicht wie ich<sup>514</sup>

But of equal importance in the process of finding the right perspective is the practical realization of an independent lifestyle. The passage quoted above, *M* 546, pictures Epictetus as an independent, ‘Sich-Selbst-Genügende’, unconcerned as he is with, for instance, a Christian kind of hope. The relation between the renunciation of hope and the Stoic attitude of self-sufficiency has already been explored at the beginning of this chapter. But there are more things an independent thinker should be free from; he should not be bothered by fame, as we have seen, nor by other people’s opinions; status and wealth should be avoided<sup>515</sup>, like luxury<sup>516</sup>, alcohol, women, papers, and meals in the company of eager people eating noisily.<sup>517</sup> But most particularly, he should not be restrained by any kind of office, which comes with a prescribed schedule.

*M* 500 *Wider den Strich*. – Ein Denker kann sich Jahre lang zwingen, wider den Strich zu denken: ich meine, nicht den Gedanken zu folgen, die sich ihm von Innen her anbieten, sondern denen, zu welchen ein Amt, eine vorgeschriebene Zeiteinteilung, eine willkürliche Art von Fleiss ihn zu verpflichten scheinen. Endlich aber wird er krank<sup>518</sup>

Rather, Nietzsche’s ideal is to be as anonymous and free as a bird (again implicitly alluding to the idea of a distanced, flying, ‘higher’ and therefore ‘truer’ perspective), living ‘cheaply’.<sup>519</sup> Connected perhaps with this ideal of independence is, secondly, the notion that one should not think too greatly of oneself. It may also be a consequence of the practice of looking upon oneself from the ‘third eye’, from ‘ferne Perspektiven’; in any case, *M* contains several occurrences in which a contempt for ‘exceptionality’ is expressed; one of those being the following.

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<sup>514</sup> 3.290.

<sup>515</sup> *M* 206 3.183: ‘Arm, fröhlich und unabhängig! – das ist beisammen möglich; arm, fröhlich und Sklave! – das ist auch möglich’. The *Vorstufe* of this aphorism reveals Epictetus as Nietzsche’s model. See also *NL* 7[91], 9.335: ‘Ich bin *passionirt für die Unabhängigkeit*, ich opfere ihr alles – wahrscheinlich weil ich die abhängigste Seele habe und an allen kleinsten Stricken mehr gequält werde als andere an Ketten.’

<sup>516</sup> *NL* 6[341] 9.283: ‘Das *Bedürfnis* <nach> *Luxus* scheint mir immer auf eine tiefe innerliche *Geistlosigkeit* zu hindeuten’.

<sup>517</sup> *NL* 7[95] 9.336: ‘eine nicht das Auge beleidigende Unabhängigkeit, ein gemilderter und verkleideter Stolz, ein Stolz, welcher sich abzahlt an die Anderen, dadurch daß er nicht um ihre Ehren und Vergnügen konkurriert und den Spott aushält. Dies soll meine Gewohnheiten veredeln: nie gemein und stets leutselig, nicht begehrlig aber stets ruhig strebend und aufwärts fliegend; einfach, ja karg gegen mich, aber milde gegen Andere. Ein leichter Schlaf, ein freier ruhiger Gang, kein Alkohol, keine Fürsten, noch andere Berühmtheiten, keine Weiber und Zeitungen, keine Ehren, kein Umgang außer dem der höchsten Geister und ab und zu des niederen Volkes [...], die bereitesten Speisen, welche uns nicht in das Gedränge begehrligen und schmatzenden Gesindels bringen, womöglich selbst bereitete oder der Bereitung nicht entbehrende.’ See also *NL* 7[97], 9.337.

<sup>518</sup> 3.294.

<sup>519</sup> *M* 566 3.329: ‘*Wohlfeil leben*. – Die wohlfeilste und harmloseste Art zu leben ist die des Denkers: denn, um gleich das Wichtigste zu sagen: er bedarf gerade der Dinge am meisten, welche die Anderen geringschätzen und übriglassen’. Some commentators, e.g. Brusotti, claim that this attitude is inspired by Diogenes of Sinope. See also *NL* 6[341] 9.283-4.

M 488 [...] Wenn wir es der Stimme anhören, dass wir ausgewählt, vorgezogen werden! Ach, ich bin nicht dankbar für dieses Auswählen, ich merke, dass ich es Dem nachtrage, der mich so auszeichnen will [...]! Will ich doch schon zusehen, mit mir mich selber zu ertragen!<sup>520</sup>

The reason for Nietzsche's lack of gratitude is 'Ungerechtigkeit', which is mentioned earlier in the aphorism. And it is not just the case that Nietzsche confesses to a personal feeling of discomfort when treated, unjustly, as an exception: M 542 and 544 express, each in their own way, dissatisfaction with the way in which older thinkers (M 542) and younger philosophers, women and artists (M 544) indulge in phantasies of being so exceptional that they can take things more easily, promulgating instead of properly demonstrating ('*sich es leichter zu machen* und als Genie mehr zu decretiren, als zu beweisen'):

M 542 [...] die *Müdigkeit*. Als deren gefährlichstes Kennzeichen mag wohl der Genieglawe bezeichnet werden, welcher erst um diese Lebensgränze grosse und halb-grosse Männer des Geistes zu überfallen pflegt: der Glaube an eine Ausnahmestellung und an Ausnahmerechte.<sup>521</sup>

M 544 [...] ihr feinerer Ehrgeiz möchte gar zu gerne sich glauben machen, dass ihre Seelen Ausnahmen seien, nicht dialektische und vernünftige Wesen, sondern – nun zum Beispiel „intuitive Wesen“, begabt mit dem „inneren Sinn“<sup>522</sup>

It is, in other words, a sign of fatigue ('*Müdigkeit*') or refined ambition ('feinerer Ehrgeiz') to think of oneself as an exception; thinkers who, like Socrates, rejoice over the recent invention of *rational* thinking ('das Jauchzen über die neue Erfindung des *vernünftigen* Denkens'<sup>523</sup>) do not allow for this kind of weakness. Instead, it seems therefore, thinking rationally denotes that one refrains from viewing oneself as an exception.<sup>524</sup>

#### 4.2.3 'WAS LIEGT AN MIR?'

So far, we have come across several techniques for adopting an attitude of calm detachment in order to think properly: we should avoid all kinds of external distractions, other people's voices, fame, an office; instead we should maintain a perspective as Stoically independent and objective as possible, distanced, purified from mere opinions and sentimental experiences. We are warned in particular against thinking of ourselves as exceptions; in order to continue thinking in a strictly rational manner, it should be considered dangerous to think of oneself as different from others. The expression 'was liegt an mir?', Stoically inspired as well as I will show shortly, can be seen as the climax of this serious line of thought aimed at the pursuit of

<sup>520</sup> 3.289.

<sup>521</sup> 3.310.

<sup>522</sup> 3.315.

<sup>523</sup> M 544 3.314.

<sup>524</sup> This suggestion may be related to M 442 3.269: '*Die Regel*. – „Die Regel ist mir immer interessanter, als die Ausnahme“ – wer so empfindet, der ist in der Erkenntniss weit voraus und gehört zu den Eingeweihten.'

knowledge; ultimately though, it is thinking in this way that will lead to the petrification introduced in chapter 3.2.2.

As I have already indicated, *M* should be seen as a transitional work. In *FW* a completely different tone can be found, also in relation to this expression. The shift from *M* to *FW* becomes apparent in the following aphorism:

*FW 332 Die böse Stunde.* – Es hat wohl für jeden Philosophen eine böse Stunde gegeben, wo er dachte: was liegt an mir, wenn man mir nicht auch meine schlechten Argumente glaubt! – Und dann flog irgend ein schadenfrohes Vögelchen an ihm vorüber und zwitscherte: „Was liegt an dir? Was liegt an dir?“<sup>525</sup>

In order to understand where the comical tone comes from, I believe we should turn to *FW 107*, in which it is explained that we should adopt an artistically distanced perspective and laugh at ourselves sometimes, otherwise we will just not survive our own constant seriousness.

*FW 107 Unsere letzte Dankbarkeit gegen die Kunst.* – [...] Wir müssen zeitweilig von uns ausruhen, dadurch, dass wir auf uns hin und hinab sehen und, aus einer künstlerischen Ferne her, *über* uns lachen oder *über* uns weinen; wir müssen den *Helden* und ebenso den *Narren* entdecken, der in unsrer Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis steckt, wir müssen unsrer Thorheit ab und zu froh werden, um unsrer Weisheit froh bleiben zu können!<sup>526</sup>

These aphorisms from *FW* seem to promote viewing ourselves from a distance – and yet, the original expression ‘was liegt an mir?’ is the consequence of a distanced self-reflection as well, connected to the rejection of ‘Ausnahme-denken’. The differences between the two are obvious: the ‘was liegt an mir?’ in *M* is the outcome of a serious kind of self-reflection, one that is intimately connected with what in the above aphorism is called the ‘Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis’; the self-reflection in *FW*, the comical one, puts in perspective precisely the seriousness of the philosopher who questions himself and his work. *FW 332* describes the moments of self-relativisation expressed in ‘was liegt an mir?’ as ‘eine böse Stunde’; all philosophers have faced such a bad hour of despair, but it is in these times exactly that we should imagine some birds laughing at us.<sup>527</sup>

It is, however, only in *FW* that we encounter this kind of light-hearted self-relativisation. *M* might, in retrospect, be exactly the representation of the ‘böse Stunde’ that Nietzsche refers to; for it is in this book and its *Nachlass* notes that the highest number of ‘was liegt an mir?’ occurrences can be found. The following *Nachlass* fragment of the autumn of 1881 confirms this. Written about half a year after the publication of *M*, it shows how it was in times of ‘Noth’ and ‘Sturm’ (a ‘böse Stunde’ indeed) that the Stoics invoked this expression.

<sup>525</sup> 3.558.

<sup>526</sup> 3.464-5.

<sup>527</sup> Brusotti, M. (1997), too, associates the seriousness and gravity that belongs to ‘Redlichkeit’, opposed to the comic perspective, with Stoicism, even though he does not relate it to self-reflection; 452: ‘Macht die Redlichkeit aus den Erkennenden „im letzten Grunde schwere und ernsthafte Menschen und mehr Gewichte als Menschen“ (FW 107 zit.), so können sie sich durch das Komische und seine „Schelmenkappe“ ihre „Freiheit über den Dingen“ bewahren. Erlöst vom schweren Ernst, von der *gravitas* der stoischen Philosophen, lernen sie dann zu „schweben“ und zu „spielen“ (ebd.).’

NL 15[59] Der Stoicism z.B. zeigte, daß der Mensch sich willkürlich eine härtere Haut und gleichsam eine Art Nesselsucht zu geben vermöge: von ihm lernte ich mitten in der Noth und im Sturm sagen: „was liegt *daran*?“ „was liegt an mir?“<sup>528</sup>

The thought is not only intimately related to the serious and distanced standpoint of self-relativisation as sketched in the previous section; it can even be seen as the manifestation of a further step: if it is knowledge we are truly after, then we should be prepared to not only abstract from, but even sacrifice ourselves – what do we matter, ultimately, if the pursuit of knowledge is at stake? We may drop our sentimental interest in ourselves now, so one of the *Nachlass* fragments reads, and it is time to direct our scientific desire to things *outside of us*.

NL 7[158] Das leidenschaftliche Interesse für uns verlieren und die Leidenschaft außer uns wenden, gegen die Dinge (Wissenschaft) ist jetzt möglich. Was liegt an mir!<sup>529</sup>

The following aphorism from *M*, not coincidentally perhaps the last of the entire book, describes the same longing for further, new discoveries, which will be revealed not by us, but by the next generation of ‘aeronauts of the spirit’: we, like our teachers and predecessors before us, will have to come to a stop at some point. But what do we matter if the search for knowledge will continue and will reveal things beyond our own final discoveries?

M 575 *Wir Luft-Schifffahrer des Geistes!* – [...] Alle unsere grossen Lehrmeister und Vorläufer sind endlich stehen geblieben, und es ist nicht die edelste und anmuthigste Gebärde, mit der die Müdigkeit stehen bleibt: auch mir und dir wird es so ergehen! Was geht das aber mich und dich an! *Andere Vögel werden weiter fliegen!* [...] Und wohin wollen wir denn? Wollen wir denn *über* das Meer? Wohin reisst uns dieses mächtige Gelüste, das uns mehr gilt als irgend eine Lust?<sup>530</sup>

I believe it is no accident that this aphorism again starts from a bird-perspective. We have come across several observations related to birds, not just in the *FW* passage quoted above, but also in *M*. The bird is a perfect image of Nietzsche’s ideal life, so it seems; its independence, its anonymous ‘Incognito’ life, its modesty and of course the far perspectives (‘ferne Perspektiven’) it can obtain by simply flying away (‘Zu leben als ein Vogel, der kommt und fortfliegt und keinen Namen im Schnabel trägt!’<sup>531</sup>) – all inspire Nietzsche up to the very last aphorism of *M*. Another element connected to this position is courage. The sentence opening this last aphorism characterises birds as ‘kühnen Vögel, die in’s Weite, Weiteste hinausfliegen’<sup>532</sup>, hinting at their courageous activity of discovering further perspectives. The expression ‘Was

<sup>528</sup> 9.655.

<sup>529</sup> 9.349. Clearly, this fragment forms a direct and very strong counter-argument to Ansell-Pearson and Ure’s interpretation of *M* as a mere exercise in self-cultivation, as also Brusotti, M. (1997) concedes, 211: ‘Nietzsche scheint tatsächlich im Zweifel zu sein, ob das Interesse für die eigene Person wünschenswert ist oder nicht.’ (NL 7[200] 9.358: ‘Was ich an mir vermisste: jenes tiefe Interesse für mich selber.’) See also NL 7[45] 9.326: ‘„Was liegt an mir!“ ist der Ausdruck der wahren Leidenschaft, es ist der äußerste Grad, etwas außer sich zu sehen.’

<sup>530</sup> 3.331.

<sup>531</sup> M 470 3.282. See also in this context M 574 3.331 ‘*Nicht zu vergessen!* – Je höher wir uns erheben, um so kleiner erscheinen wir Denen, welche nicht fliegen können.’

<sup>532</sup> M 575 3.331.

liegt an mir?’ is woven into this whole field by the following aphorism entitled ‘The final argument of the brave’:

*M 494 Letztes Argument des Tapferen.* – „In diesem Gebüsch sind Schlangen.“ – Gut, ich werde in das Gebüsch gehen und sie tödten. – „Aber vielleicht wirst du dabei das Opfer, und sie werden nicht einmal das deine!“ – Was liegt an mir!<sup>533</sup>

‘I’ am not important if it comes to the discovery and conquering of new and dangerous elements like snakes; I may be sacrificed, but what do I matter! The expression ‘was liegt an mir?’, as the expression of true ‘Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis’, will be the motto of a higher and more magnanimous inspiration for science; it will stand ‘over the door of the thinker of the future’ as an encouraging and comforting dictum.<sup>534</sup> And there are more allusions to the serious dangers of science to be found. Let me come back to *M 429*, the aphorism on the ‘neue Leidenschaft’ mentioned earlier. Its last sentences are of importance to us in this context.

*M 429* [...] Vielleicht selbst, dass die Menschheit an dieser Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis zu Grunde geht! – auch dieser Gedanke vermag Nichts über uns! [...] Sind die Liebe und der Tod nicht Geschwister? Ja, wir hassen die Barbarei, – wir wollen Alle lieber den Untergang der Menschheit, als den Rückgang der Erkenntnis! Und zuletzt: wenn die Menschheit nicht an einer *Leidenschaft* zu Grunde geht, so wird sie an einer *Schwäche* zu Grunde gehen: was will man lieber? Diess ist die Hauptfrage. Wollen wir für sie ein Ende im Feuer und Licht oder im Sande? –<sup>535</sup>

This aphorism reveals the presence of not just one, but three great dangers facing humanity: the danger of barbarism (that is, the regression of knowledge), the danger of perishing out of weakness (a possible consequence of the barbaric regression of knowledge), and the danger of perishing out of a passion (the passion for knowledge being the only plausible possibility). If humanity will perish anyway, the suggestion implicit in the text is that a death of fire and light (resulting from the ‘Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis’) is more desirable than one of weakness, described here in terms of becoming soft and formless like sand.

The exclamation ‘was liegt an mir?’ must therefore be understood as aiming to inspire us to persevere in our pursuit for knowledge, even in the face of the ‘Noth’ and ‘Sturm’ of a certain death. The choice is not between perishing and surviving, so it seems, but between dying in a strong or weak manner. Having dedicated our life to knowledge, we thereby have chosen the danger of light and fire, threatening to burn us, but also, apparently, to make us ‘hard’ – or at least *not* weak and soft like sand. So let me focus now on the *effect* of all the processes leading

<sup>533</sup> 3.291.

<sup>534</sup> *M 547* 3.318: ‘[...] Daraus ergibt sich, dass im Grossen und Ganzen die Wissenschaft [...] mit einer höheren und *grossmüthigeren* Grundempfindung fürderhin getrieben werden muss. „Was liegt an mir!“ – steht über der Thür des künftigen Denkers.’ See also *NL 7*[102] 9.338 ‘Es ist mein Fleiß und mein Müsiggang, meine Überwindung und mein Nachhängen, meine Tapferkeit und mein Zittern, es ist mein Sonnenlicht und mein Blitz aus dunklem Wolkenhimmel, es ist meine Seele und auch mein Geist, mein schweres ernstes granitenes Ich, das aber wieder zu sich sprechen kann „was liegt an mir!“ and *NL 7*[126] 9.344 ‘Dieser Gang ist so gefährlich! Ich darf mich selber nicht anrufen, wie ein Nachtwandler, der auf den Dächern lustwandelt, ein heiliges Anrecht hat, nicht bei Namen genannt zu werden. „Was liegt an mir!“ dies ist die einzige tröstende Stimme, die ich hören will.’

<sup>535</sup> 3.265.

up to the expression ‘was liegt an mir?’: ultimately, it seems, abstracting from the nearest things, including one’s own experiences, and shifting the focus to things *outside* of us, leads to a hardening (‘eine härtere Haut’<sup>536</sup>) that can be equated with petrification. The following aphorism at least suggests something similar; it offers the prospect of how the lover of knowledge, suffering from his own love, will end up being fossilized.

*M 327 Eine Fabel.* – Der Don Juan der Erkenntniss: er ist noch von keinem Philosophen und Dichter entdeckt worden. Ihm fehlt die Liebe zu den Dingen, welche er erkennt, aber er hat Geist, Kitzel und Genuss an Jagd und Intriguen der Erkenntniss – bis an die höchsten und fernsten Sterne der Erkenntniss hinauf! – bis ihm zuletzt Nichts mehr zu erjagen übrig bleibt, als das absolut *Wehethuende* der Erkenntniss, gleich dem Trinker, der am Ende Absinth und Scheidewasser trinkt. So gelüftet es ihn am Ende nach der Hölle, – es ist die letzte Erkenntniss, die ihn *verführt*. Vielleicht, dass auch sie ihn enttäuscht, wie alles Erkannte! Und dann müsste er in alle Ewigkeit stehen bleiben, an die Enttäuschung festgenagelt und selber zum steinernen Gast geworden, mit einem Verlangen nach einer Abendmahlzeit der Erkenntniss, die ihm nie mehr zu Theil wird!<sup>537</sup>

The Don Juan of knowledge pictured in this aphorism – a figure Nietzsche seems to identify himself with – does not love the things he knows, but has a limitless appetite for and enjoyment of the chase and intrigues of knowledge; he persists in his hunt until there is nothing left for him except what is hurtful. This kind of lover will not end his pursuit, even if there is nothing left for him to take in but the strongest and most dangerous spirits<sup>538</sup>; in the end he even ‘lusts after hell’. The effect of this continuous lack of satisfaction is petrification: the Don Juan of this fable will have to ‘stand transfixed to disillusionment’ in all eternity; he has himself become a ‘stone guest’.<sup>539</sup>

On the one hand, it seems that this ultimate consequence of the desire for knowledge is appealing to Nietzsche. Not only does it fit well with his dismissal of the idea of perishing like sand, it moreover explains this enigmatic aphorism:

*M 541 Wie man versteinern soll.* – Langsam, langsam hart werden wie ein Edelstein – und zuletzt still und zur Freude der Ewigkeit liegen bleiben.<sup>540</sup>

One might say that a certain Epicurean calmness, even joy, is attached to this attitude: it breathes an atmosphere of calm and peaceful acceptance or *ἀταραξία*; moreover, the allusion to the gems indicates that the petrification is thought of as a noble process. And yet, there are

<sup>536</sup> *NL* 15[59] 9.655.

<sup>537</sup> 3.232.

<sup>538</sup> See also *M* 460 3.277: ‘*Seine gefährliche Stunden ausnutzen.* [...] Solange sich uns die Wahrheiten nicht mit Messern in’s Fleisch schneiden, haben wir in uns einen geheimen Vorbehalt der Geringschätzung gegen sie’. See moreover the remark in the late *Vorrede 1* of *FW* quoted at the beginning of this chapter: ‘diese grundsätzliche Einschränkung auf das Bittere, Herbe, Wehethuende der Erkenntniss.’ 3.346.

<sup>539</sup> The reference to a ‘steinernen Gast’ may be a playful inside joke referring to his friend Peter Gast, a pseudonym invented by Nietzsche for his friend Heinrich Köselitz, possibly referring to the ‘stone guest’ who carried the Don in Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* off to hell. Nietzsche allegedly considered this pseudonym to be of help for Köselitz’s career as a composer. See Young, J. (2010), 214.

<sup>540</sup> 3.309.

also texts that point in an opposed direction. It seems that the process described thus far, of denying oneself all kinds of human experiences, of relativising one's own importance, even of willingly succumbing to a process of petrification – the process that will be labelled asceticism in *GM* – has now been thought through to its ultimate limits; that is, there is no step beyond becoming eternally stone-like out of desire for knowledge. What is more, the question arises whether the process just described is truly what is required to gain knowledge. Does knowledge demand an attitude of patience and restraint before it surrenders itself to its Don Juan? *M 539* is one of the clearest (though not the earliest) examples of a serious questioning of the nature of knowledge – more particularly, of the relation between knower and knowledge.

*M 539* *Wisst ihr auch, was ihr wollt?* – Hat euch nie die Angst geplagt, ihr möchtet gar nicht dazu taugen, Das, was wahr ist, zu erkennen? Die Angst, dass euer Sinn zu stumpf, und selbst euer Feingefühl des Sehens noch viel zu grob sei? Wenn ihr einmal merktet, was für ein Wille hinter eurem Sehen waltete? [...] Immer voller geheimer Vorbestimmungen, wie die Wahrheit beschaffen sein müsse, dass ihr, gerade ihr sie annehmen könntet! Oder meint ihr, heute, da ihr gefroren und trocken wie ein heller Morgen im Winter seid und euch Nichts am Herzen liegt, ihr hättet bessere Augen? Gehört nicht Wärme und Schwärmerei dazu, einem Gedankendinge *Gerechtigkeit* zu schaffen? – und das eben heisst *Sehen*!<sup>541</sup>

At issue is the fear that one's senses might be far too coarse to grasp the truth; Nietzsche seems to ask his readers ('ihr') if they, too, are conscious of the secret preconceptions they have concerning the way truth would have to be constituted for *them* to be able to take it on. 'You' may be 'frozen and dry' like a 'bright morning in winter' – a cold and rational position to be in, with nothing 'weighing on your heart'<sup>542</sup> – but would that really make your eyes more suitable for seeing the truth? Are not, instead, warmth and enthusiasm needed to do justice to an object of thought? Is that not what it is truly like to *see*? Might it not be the case that truth presents itself in a way adapted to the way you feel? When you are tired you will bestow on things a pale and tired coloration; when you are feverish you will turn them into monsters, according to this same aphorism.<sup>543</sup> So is it not a mistake to think that truth will be attained only when you have achieved, finally, the cold and emotionless outlook inspired by Stoicism? Should you not fear constantly encountering your own ghost in the process of chasing truth, the ghost that is the veil behind which truth keeps hiding itself from you ('Fürchtet ihr nicht in der Höhle jeder Erkenntniss euer eigenes Gespenst wieder zu finden, als das Gespinnst, in welches die Wahrheit sich vor euch verkleidet hat? Ist es nicht eine schauerliche Komödie, in welcher ihr so unbedachtsam mitspielen wollt?')<sup>544</sup>?

<sup>541</sup> 3.307-8.

<sup>542</sup> To be read, I believe, in connection to the petrification described in *M 327*, and as the result of the process of 'light and fire' of *M 429*. The images are not entirely consistent, but I believe they can be read as different attempts to describe in physical terms one and the same process, namely that of self-sacrifice in the name of science.

<sup>543</sup> *M 539* 3.308 'Eure körperliche Ermattungen werden den Dingen matte Farben geben, eure Fieber werden Ungeheuer aus ihnen machen!'

<sup>544</sup> 3.308; Colli and Montinari's commentary, together with Brusotti's interpretation, suggest once again how this growing awareness of and disgust at the comedy of knowledge should not be taken to mean that Nietzsche's 'Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis' diminishes. 14.226: '*Rs* [*Reinschrift*] am *Schluß gestrichen*:

It is at this point that the clearest signs of a change in Nietzsche's thought can be perceived, one that explains not only why there is attention to the 'nearest things' in *M*, but also why there is a growing sense of critical distance towards the Stoics. The following aphorism reveals, for instance, how the 'comedy' (as it is called in both the above and the following quote) of the chase between the lover and its object, knowledge, begins to cause misery and disgust: if we have only our own human eyes as instruments for chasing the truth (the possibility of *M* 497 of a 'reine, reinmachende Auge' clearly being abandoned at this point), who will guarantee that these are suitable for knowledge at all? Perhaps the only knowledge we will obtain concerns our own organs – which is equal to saying that true knowledge, of things outside of us, is out of reach. We can see the parallel with Don Juan more clearly at this point; we might end up as 'unglücklich Liebende' indeed.<sup>545</sup>

*M* 483 *Überdruss am Menschenen*. – A: Erkenne! Ja! Aber immer als Mensch! Wie? Immer vor der gleichen Komödie sitzen, in der gleichen Komödie spielen? Niemals aus anderen, als aus *diesen* Augen in die Dinge sehen können? Und welche unzählbaren Arten von Wesen mag es geben, deren Organe besser zur Erkenntniss taugen! Was wird am Ende aller ihrer Erkenntniss die Menschheit erkannt haben? – ihre Organe! Und das heisst vielleicht: die Unmöglichkeit der Erkenntniss! Jammer und Ekel! – B: Das ist ein böser Anfall, – *die Vernunft* fällt dich an! Aber morgen wirst du wieder mitten im Erkennen sein und damit auch mitten in der Unvernunft, will sagen: in der *Lust* am Menschlichen. Gehen wir an's Meer! –<sup>546</sup>

In this aphorism an attempt is made by B to offer A some consolation; B analyses the situation A is in as one that will pass. It is only an 'attack by reason', but tomorrow, when A will be absorbed by the practice of gaining knowledge again, he will no longer be aware of its problematic situation (that is, 'in der Unvernunft', 'in der Lust am Menschlichen'). The last sentence, 'let us go down to the sea', is again a reference to Epicurus: the calm and idyllic sight of the sea will lead to the typically Epicurean ataraxic attitude of calm endurance, as expressed in the vision of the gems as well.

But the Epicurean calmness will not turn out to provide consolation for long. The question on the agenda is: should we persist in the same direction, continuing the Stoic path of calm rationality to be summarized as 'was liegt an mir?', and ignoring in an Epicurean fashion the impossibility of this approach – or should we, in the name of knowledge, change our strategies, and abandon the path of restraint and petrification developed so far? As Nietzsche makes clear

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Und doch! Ich will, ich muß mitspielen – was soll ich antworten! Nichts als immer wieder das Eine: Was liegt an mir! Was liegt an mir!' Brusotti, M. (1997), 307: 'Die Tapferkeit und die stoische Aufopferung der Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis, wie sie sich in Nietzsches Leitspruch ausdrücken, erfahren nun eine besondere Wendung. Er richtet hier sein „was liegt an mir!“ insbesondere gegen den Unmut, den die Einsicht in die Unmöglichkeit der Erkenntnis auslöst.'

<sup>545</sup> *M* 429 3.264.

<sup>546</sup> 3.287; see for an interesting commentary on this aphorism, in which again the connection with Stoicism becomes apparent, Brusotti, M. (1997), 308: '„B“ hat auch dessen verbissenen Stoizismus hinter sich gelassen [...]. „B“ stellt einen sonderbaren Gegensatz zwischen Erkenntnis und Vernunft auf: Vernünftig sei zuletzt nur die vernichtende Einsicht in die Erkenntnis als Unvernunft. Er gibt damit zu, daß allein „A“'s radikale Einsicht vernünftig ist [...].'



in a *Nachlass* fragment written in the autumn of 1880 on Schopenhauer: maybe the best way to proceed is to choose the second option and *avoid* a hardening.

NL 6[381] Ich finde Schopenhauer etwas oberflächlich in seelischen Dingen, er hat sich wenig gefreut und wenig gelitten; ein Denker sollte sich hüten, *hart zu werden*: woher soll er dann sein Material bekommen?<sup>547</sup>

As already indicated, *M* is a book of transition, of wandering – so it seems that *both* positions are in play in this book; the Stoically distanced one, and the warmer, more open one, in which emotions like joy ('freuen') and suffering ('litten') are welcomed because they provide the thinker with substance ('Material'). So let me now proceed by turning to the anti-Stoic tendency in *M*: a warm attention to the nearest things.

#### 4.2.4 THE NEAREST THINGS AND EMOTIONAL OPENNESS

The attention to the nearest things does not start in *M*, but already in *MA*, especially in *WS*. But the nature of this attention changes between *MA* and *M* – or, to be more precise, within *M* – as a result of the process just described. Only the transformed, renewed interest forms an opposition to the Stoic focus on emotionlessness as I will show. My aim in this section is to give an explanation of the *Vorrede* passage of *MA* I already quoted in the introduction to this chapter.

*MA* I *Vorrede* 5 [...] Fast ist ihm zu Muthe, als ob ihm jetzt erst die Augen für das *Nahe* aufgingen. [...] Diese nahen und nächsten Dinge: wie scheinen sie ihm verwandelt! welchen Flaum und Zauber haben sie inzwischen bekommen!<sup>548</sup>

The meaning of the nearest things in *WS* cannot be separated from the project of *MA*, namely to unmask the metaphysical, moral and religious truths as only 'human, all too human' projections. *WS* 6 reconstructs the order of events as follows: our focus has always been on the nearest things, but it has been diverted, purposefully, by priests and teachers, to what the first Book of *MA* I called the 'first and last things'<sup>549</sup>; leading not only to a lack of knowledge, but also an accumulation of defects.

*WS* 6 [...] die *allernächsten Dinge* [werden] von den Meisten sehr schlecht gesehen, sehr selten beachtet [...]. Und ist diess gleichgültig? – Man erwäge doch, dass aus diesem Mangel sich *fast alle leiblichen und seelischen Gebrechen* der Einzelnen ableiten: [...] *im*

<sup>547</sup> 9.295; see also in this context NL 15[55], 9.652-3, in which Nietzsche explicitly criticises the Stoic process of 'Versteinerung'.

<sup>548</sup> 2.19.

<sup>549</sup> *WS* 6 2.542: 'Priester und Lehrer, und die sublime Herrschsucht der Idealisten jeder Art, der gröberen und feineren, reden schon dem Kinde ein, es komme auf etwas ganz Anderes an: auf das Heil der Seele, den Staatsdienst, die Förderung der Wissenschaft, oder auf Ansehen und Besitz, als die Mittel, der ganzen Menschheit Dienste zu erweisen'. According to Ansell-Pearson, K. (2011), 192, the shift to devoting attention to nearest things is inspired by Epicurus.

*Kleinsten und Alltäglichsten unwissend zu sein und keine scharfen Augen zu haben – das ist es, was die Erde für so Viele zu einer „Wiese des Unheils“ macht.*<sup>550</sup>

‘Nearly all the bodily and spiritual infirmities’ of the individual are derived from the lack of attention to the nearest things, the smallest and most common ones. It is the main reason why so many people regard the world as a ‘vale of tears’. It follows therefore that if we wish to diminish our suffering and augment our knowledge, we will have to first execute Nietzsche’s project of dismantling religious and metaphysical theories, for it is these theories that have diverted our concentration. Understanding them as not representing a higher truth but as human phantasies will release some new energy, that should be redirected towards the nearest things. The very last aphorism of *WS* describes the state of the free spirit accordingly, released as he is from the chains of the ‘schweren und sinnvollen Irrthümer der moralischen, der religiösen, der metaphysischen Vorstellungen’.

*WS 350 [...] Nun stehen wir mitten in unserer Arbeit, die Ketten abzunehmen und haben dabei die höchste Vorsicht nöthig. Nur dem veredelten Menschen darf die Freiheit des Geistes gegeben werden; ihm allein naht die Erleichterung des Lebens und salbt seine Wunden aus; er zuerst darf sagen, dass er um der Freudigkeit willen lebe und um keines weiteren Zieles willen; und in jedem anderen Munde wäre sein Wahlspruch gefährlich: Frieden um mich und ein Wohlgefallen an allen nächsten Dingen.* –<sup>551</sup>

Only the ‘noble’ human, introduced in 3.5, will be able to say that he can live for ‘Freudigkeit’ and nothing else; only he can adopt the (Christian-inspired) ‘Wahlspruch’ ‘Peace around me and goodwill towards all the nearest things’. It thus seems that an important result of the unmasking procedure is the focus on nearest things, which will simultaneously relieve the free spirit’s initial suffering (‘salbt seine Wunden aus’). It is no wonder in this context to find Nietzsche himself, struggling as he is with physical discomfort, turning to all kinds of exercises belonging in the same sphere. He even refers in his fragments explicitly to the method of the ancients.<sup>552</sup>

How, then, can we account for the expression in the *Vorrede* quoted above that the nearest things are ‘newly discovered’ and changed? First, it should be recalled that one of the main differences between *MA* and *M* is that Nietzsche leaves behind the idea that gaining (historical-psychological) knowledge about the first and last things will lead automatically to a

<sup>550</sup> 2.542.

<sup>551</sup> 2.702.

<sup>552</sup> *NL 10[B36] 9.420*: ‘Heißes Wasser, im Freien und im Gehen geistig arbeiten, reinliche und sparsame Gewohnheiten, Vormittag in freier Luft; Zeiteintheilung von soldatischer Strenge. Abendliche Abrechnung im Geiste der antiken Philosophen.’ See also a letter to Overbeck, 11. July 1879: ‘Meines Tageseintheilung, Lebens- und Nahrungsweise brauchte sich kein Weiser der Alterthums zu schämen: alles *sehr einfach* und doch ein System von 50 oft sehr delikaten Rücksichten.’ *KGB II/5.425*. Nietzsche’s reference to an *abendliche Abrechnung* is taken either from Seneca, *De Ira* 36: ‘This was the habit of Sextius, so that at the day’s end, when he had retired to his nightly rest, he questioned his mind: ‘What bad habit have you put right today? Which fault did you take a stand against? In what respect are you better?’ Anger will abate and become more controlled when it knows it must come before a judge each day. Is anything more admirable than this custom of examining the whole day?’ or from Epictetus, *Discourses* 3.10.2-3 ‘Allow not sleep to close your wearied eyes, until you have reckoned up each daytime deed: ‘Where did I go wrong? What did I do? And what duty’s left undone?’

sense of relief. We have seen how *M* recognizes the drive for truth as one that goes hand in hand with ‘Unruhe’; Nietzsche is no longer convinced that his project will result in ‘peace around him’ and ‘goodwill towards all the nearest things’. If there will be attention for the nearest things after the unmasking of metaphysics, it will not be so peacefully so.

This realization can be connected to the process accounted for above: the Stoic attitude of looking for a ‘hovering’ objectivity, lonely and disengaged from one’s emotions, attempting to adopt ‘ferne Perspektiven’ out of a hunger for truth, ultimately results in extreme self-relativisation and petrification. Moreover, we have seen that this attitude will *not* lead to a truer outlook on things; slowly the insight matures that we will never be able to escape our ‘human all too human’ perspective. This insight causes disappointment, as can be read in an aphorism in *M* in which our outlook is compared to a prison<sup>553</sup>; but it also leads to the awareness that if we wish to proceed in our quest for knowledge it is vital that we investigate our own psychological constitution – not in a distanced and cold manner, but instead by making our own emotional world, necessarily responsive to our environment, an indispensable part of the procedure.

The aphorisms *M* 117, 118 and 119 form an important sequence in this context. *M* 117 not only equates our limited outlook on the world with a prison, but also emphasises that it is with our limited senses that we measure the world, indicating that an objective stance is out of reach. Our measuring is erroneous from beginning to end.

*M* 117 *Im Gefängniss*. [...] Nach diesen Horizonten, in welche, wie in Gefängnismauern, Jeden von uns unsere Sinne einschliessen, *messen* wir nun die Welt, wir nennen Dieses nah und Jenes fern, Dieses gross und Jenes klein, Dieses hart und Jenes weich: diess Messen nennen wir Empfinden, – es sind Alles, Alles Irrthümer an sich!<sup>554</sup>

*M* 118, called ‘Was ist denn der Nächste!’, argues that we will never have access to another person – the nearest in this context referring not to things but human beings. What really happens is that we perceive some changes *in us*; these changes are attributed to our neighbours, leading to the wrong idea that we actually know what others feel.<sup>555</sup> This line of thought suggests that it is ourselves and our own psychological movements that we should take seriously, more than the things we think belong to the outside world. *M* 119 then questions the knowledge we have of our inner movements; as it appears, these too remain largely hidden, leaving us with even less hope of developing any kind of knowledge.

*M* 119 *Erleben und Erdichten*. – Wie weit Einer seine Selbstkenntniss auch treiben mag, Nichts kann doch unvollständiger sein, als das Bild der gesammten *Triebe*, die sein Wesen constituiren. Kaum dass er die gröbereren beim Namen nennen kann: ihre Zahl

<sup>553</sup> *M* 117 3.110: ‘*Im Gefängniss*. – Mein Auge, wie stark oder schwach es nun ist, sieht nur ein Stück weit, und in diesem Stück webe und lebe ich, diese Horizont-Linie ist mein nächstes grosses und kleines Verhängniss, dem ich nicht entlaufen kann.’

<sup>554</sup> 3.110.

<sup>555</sup> *M* 118 3.111: ‘Wir begreifen Nichts von ihm, als die *Veränderungen an uns*, deren Ursache er ist, – unser Wissen von ihm gleicht einem hohlen *geformten* Raume. Wir legen ihm die Empfindungen bei, die seine Handlungen in uns hervorrufen, und geben ihm so eine falsche umgekehrte Positivität.’

und Stärke, ihre Ebbe und Fluth, ihr Spiel und Widerspiel unter einander, und vor Allem die Gesetze ihrer *Ernährung* bleiben ihm ganz unbekannt.<sup>556</sup>

We are only superficially familiar with our drives – that is, we only know a drive if it distinguishes itself from the others, articulating itself more prominently. But, importantly, we would be mistaken if we thought of ourselves as observing our own drives from a neutral, rational point of view, as it would seem from the above lines. Instead, as Nietzsche continues, it is a *drive* that makes us interpret in a certain way; it is *through* a drive that we interpret the world – and our drives are part of the world. *M* 119 uses the example of sleep: even though our nightly movements do not differ much from one night to another (the only difference in ‘text’ consisting of our motions of the blood and intestines, the pressure of the arm and bedclothes, the sounds made by church bells, etc.), our dreams, that is, our interpretations of their causes, vary widely.

Dass dieser Text, der im Allgemeinen doch für eine Nacht wie für die andere sehr ähnlich bleibt, so verschieden commentirt wird, dass die dichtende Vernunft heute und gestern so verschiedene *Ursachen* für die selben Nervenreize sich *vorstellt*: das hat darin seinen Grund, dass der Souffleur dieser Vernunft heute ein anderer war, als er gestern war, – ein anderer *Trieb* wollte sich befriedigen, bethätigen, üben, erquickern, entladen, – gerade er war in seiner hohen Fluth, und gestern war ein anderer darin.<sup>557</sup>

It is a drive that obtains the role of a ‘prompter’, informing the ‘dichtende Vernunft’ to interpret the ‘text’ in a certain way, so as to gratify or discharge itself. Nietzsche goes on to argue that the condition of sleep may offer a greater freedom of interpretation, but that there is no essential difference between waking and dreaming: during the day, too, our drives are actively interpreting our bodily stimuli in a variety of ways.<sup>558</sup> The last lines of the aphorism explicitly state that *all* our experiences may consist of ‘Erdichtungen’.

Was sind denn unsere Erlebnisse? Viel *mehr* Das, was wir hineinlegen, als Das, was darin liegt! Oder muss es gar heissen: an sich liegt Nichts darin? Erleben ist ein Erdichten? –<sup>559</sup>

The consequence of this inference is serious: if our view of the world is necessarily and completely determined by the workings of our drives, then the whole Stoic exercise of attempting to find the ‘third eye’ perspective, or to look at the world from a ‘pure’ and ‘purifying eye’ must be abandoned. It is here that we find the greatest opposition in *M*; on the one hand, Nietzsche is clearly attracted to the Stoic exercise of finding a depersonalised and distanced perspective; on the other, the above aphorisms leave no room for doubt that the Stoic approach is impracticable, as it wrongly presupposes the possibility of a position free from any drive. As it turns out, even our coldest and most neutral attitude towards the world is determined by a certain drive.

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<sup>556</sup> 3.111.

<sup>557</sup> 3.113.

<sup>558</sup> *M* 119 3.113: ‘muss ich aber ausführen, dass unsere Triebe im Wachen ebenfalls nichts Anderes thun, als die Nervenreize interpretiren und nach ihrem Bedürfnisse deren „Ursachen“ ansetzen? dass es zwischen Wachen und Träumen keinen *wesentlichen* Unterschied giebt?’

<sup>559</sup> 3.114.

This inference leads to a completely altered approach toward the pursuit of knowledge, one that requires much more attention to our own drives and that as a result changes the appearance of the ‘nearest things’. The *Nachlass* fragment on Schopenhauer quoted above reveals how Nietzsche comes to distance himself from the ideal of petrification and maintains instead that our *joy* and *suffering* provide us with the material we need.<sup>560</sup> Consequently, if knowledge does not require restraint but rather a better appreciation of our drives, we will have to take *ourselves* as the main object of investigation. We should not close ourselves off from our own feelings, opinions and experiences – rather, these will become the main pillar of every scientific investigation. Hence Nietzsche’s allusions to treating ourselves as our own *experiment*<sup>561</sup> – a thought that will become more powerful in *FW* – and his explicit contempt for thinkers like Kant and Schopenhauer whose thoughts do not also ‘constitute a passionate history of their souls’.

*M 481 Zwei Deutsche.* – Vergleicht man Kant und Schopenhauer mit Plato, Spinoza, Pascal, Rousseau, Goethe in Absehung auf ihre Seele und nicht auf ihren Geist: so sind die erstgenannten Denker im Nachtheil: ihre Gedanken machen nicht eine leidenschaftliche Seelen-Geschichte aus, es giebt da keinen Roman, keine Krisen, Katastrophen und Todesstunden zu errathen, ihr Denken ist nicht zugleich eine unwillkürliche Biographie einer Seele [...] – ich denke, wie billig, nicht an grobe „Ereignisse“ von Aussen, sondern an die Schicksale und Zuckungen, denen das einsamste und stillste Leben verfällt, welches Musse hat und in der Leidenschaft des Denkens verbrennt.<sup>562</sup>

A great thinker is one who ‘burns with the passion of thinking’; quite literally, if we compare this text to the subsequent one, in which Nietzsche describes the types of men he seeks company with.

*M 482 Seinen Umgang suchen.* – Suchen wir denn zu viel, wenn wir den Umgang von Männern suchen, welche mild, wohlschmeckend und nahrhaft geworden sind wie Kastanien, die man zur rechten Zeit in’s Feuer gelegt und aus dem Feuer genommen hat?

True thinkers are those who agree to undergo a process of an inner burning, one that will seem to happen naturally when it is understood that our drives provide at the same time the condition for and the object of knowledge, and who come out ‘mild, agreeable to the taste and nutritive’.

In line with this anti-Stoic tendency, moreover, *M 553* discloses how the notion of philosophy itself changes. In *M* philosophy is understood both as a practice of ascetic withdrawal in order to obtain the most objective and neutral position, relativising and abstracting from all personal

<sup>560</sup> *NL 6[381] 9.295*: ‘Ich finde Schopenhauer etwas oberflächlich in seelischen Dingen, er hat sich wenig gefreut und wenig gelitten; ein Denker sollte sich hüten, *hart zu werden*: woher soll er dann sein Material bekommen?’

<sup>561</sup> *M 501 3.294*: [...]‘Wir dürfen mit uns selber experimentiren! Ja die Menschheit darf es mit sich! Die grössten Opfer sind der Erkenntniss noch nicht gebracht worden, – ja, es wäre früher Gotteslästerung und Preisgeben des ewigen Heils gewesen, solche Gedanken auch nur zu *ahnen*, wie sie unserem Thun jetzt voranlaufen.’

<sup>562</sup> 3.285-6.

elements, and a personal search for the right diet, broadly conceived. Regarded as both the expression and the investigation of certain drives, philosophy thus reveals a renewed interest in the ‘nearest things’. It becomes increasingly clear, that is, that our drives stand in an intimate and complex relation to their environment.

*M 553 Auf Umwegen.* – Wohin will diese ganze Philosophie mit allen ihren Umwegen? Thut sie mehr, als einen stäten und starken Trieb gleichsam in Vernunft zu übersetzen, einen Trieb nach milder Sonne, heller und bewegter Luft, südlichen Pflanzen, Meeres-Athem, flüchtiger Fleisch-, Eier- und Früchtenahrung, heissem Wasser zum Getränke, tagelangen stillen Wanderungen, wenigem Sprechen, seltenem und vorsichtigem Lesen, einsamern Wohnen, reinlichen, schlichten und fast soldatischen Gewohnheiten, kurz nach allen Dingen, die gerade mir am besten schmecken, gerade mir am zuträglichsten sind? Eine Philosophie, welche im Grunde der Instinct für eine persönliche Diät ist? Ein Instinct, welcher nach meiner Luft, meiner Höhe, meiner Witterung, meiner Art Gesundheit durch den Umweg meines Kopfes sucht?<sup>563</sup>

Since it has been established that philosophy should not disregard, but on the contrary take very seriously one’s personal wishes, experiences, emotions, and taste (philosophy being itself nothing other than the expression of a drive; the drive only taking a ‘detour through the mind’), it follows that the ‘nearest things’ gain a renewed interest, the taste for which is particularly revealing. No longer are they of interest merely because they ensure the health and solitude of the thinker as the effect of an unmasking scientific process, as in *WS*; they become of central interest from now on, going hand in hand with a growing appeal to ‘openness’. It is in this way that we should understand the remark in the *MA I Vorrede* that the nearest things are ‘changed’ and ‘newly discovered’, ‘als ob ihm jetzt erst die Augen für das *Nahe* aufgingen’.

#### 4.2.5 THE NECESSITY OF THE STOIC PHASE

We might compare this development, finally, to the process of ‘changing skin’ I referred to in section 4.2. Only if one develops a ‘second nature’, as a protection and firm boundary between the ‘inside’ and ‘outside’, can one’s ‘first nature’ grow mature.

*M 455 Die erste Natur.* – So wie man uns jetzt erzieht, bekommen wir zuerst eine *zweite Natur*: und wir haben sie, wenn die Welt uns reif, mündig, brauchbar nennt. Einige Wenige sind Schlangen genug, um diese Haut eines Tages abzustossen: dann, wenn unter ihrer Hülle ihre *erste Natur* reif geworden ist. Bei den Meisten vertrocknet der Keim davon.<sup>564</sup>

It can be argued therefore that the development of the Stoic ‘thick skin’<sup>565</sup> is a necessary phase in a process in which slowly but steadily one’s ‘first nature’ ripens into a more open, warmer,

<sup>563</sup> 3.323.

<sup>564</sup> 3.275. Brusotti, M. (1997), 217, claims that this is a classical theme, to be found in Cicero, *de Finibus*, V, xxv.74. He is right, although the meaning and context of both texts differ significantly.

<sup>565</sup> *FW* 306, 3.544: ‘die stoische harte Haut mit Igelstacheln’. Also to be compared with the famous idea of the Stoic ‘citadel’, to be found in Marcus Aurelius *Meditations* 8.48, and referred to in *M 471* 3.282: ‘Eine andere Nächstenliebe. – Das aufgeregte, lärmende, ungleiche, nervöse Wesen macht den Gegensatz zur

and more welcoming stance towards his own feelings, whether of pain or pleasure. *FW* in particular shows a deepened awareness of the importance of passions related to science<sup>566</sup>; but as it appears, the phase of emotionless self-restraint has been indispensable to make the transition. In the following aphorism we find Nietzsche reflecting upon this process in terms of sickness and recovering (pointing forward to his later *Vorreden*) in a way that reveals its undeniable importance.

*M 114 Von der Erkenntniss des Leidenden.* – Der Zustand kranker Menschen, die lange und furchtbar von ihren Leiden gemartert werden und deren Verstand trotzdem dabei sich nicht trübt, ist nicht ohne Werth für die Erkenntniss, – noch ganz abgesehen von den intellectuellen Wohlthaten, welche jede tiefe Einsamkeit, jede plötzliche und erlaubte Freiheit von allen Pflichten und Gewohnheiten mit sich bringen. Der Schwerleidende sieht aus seinem Zustande mit einer entsetzlichen Kälte *hinaus* auf die Dinge: [...] ja, er selber liegt vor sich da ohne Flaum und Farbe. Gesetzt, dass er bisher in irgend einer gefährlichen Phantasterei lebte: diese höchste Ernüchterung durch Schmerzen ist das Mittel, ihn herauszureissen: und vielleicht das einzige Mittel.<sup>567</sup>

Sick people (Nietzsche included, solely perhaps) have a certain value for the acquisition of knowledge: not only does the situation of solitude and liberation from duties bring ‘intellectual benefit’ (reminding us of the pleas for solitude and independence encountered earlier), a cold and colourless image of oneself is attained as well. This position, ‘looking out at things with a terrible coldness’, has fulfilled its sobering role – liberating the patient from the perilous world of phantasy he has lived in hitherto. This world of phantasy can be connected with the project of *MA*, in which the world of religion and metaphysics is understood as one of phantasy – and to *M 54*, in which the calming of the invalid’s phantasy is presented as a first but important step toward recovering. Importantly, though, whereas the sick man regards himself without ‘Flaum und Farbe’, the recovering man, throwing off his second nature and retrieving his first nature matured, reflects upon his earlier situation in the way we have encountered above: the ‘nearest things’ have gained ‘Flaum und Zauber’.<sup>568</sup>

This warmer outlook on oneself, with the ripened understanding concerning the indispensable importance of our drives, the necessary openness to one’s emotions and environment that comes with it, also and especially for the pursuit of knowledge, will become of utmost

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*grossen Leidenschaft*: diese [...] lässt den Menschen nach Aussen hin kalt und gleichgültig blicken und drückt den Zügen eine gewisse Impassibilität auf. [...] sie blicken gleichsam aus den Fenstern ihrer Burg hinaus, die ihre Festung und eben dadurch ihr Gefängniss ist: – der Blick in’s Fremde, in *das Andere* thut ihnen so wohl! My analysis of *M 455* differs, therefore, from the usual interpretation of the second skin as the result of what we are taught by social institutions. I see it here, instead, as the result of petrification in the difficult search for knowledge, a search that is regarded as more useful for society than what follows from it: the phase of self-experimentation and the stimulation of pain and joy in *FW*.

<sup>566</sup> *FW 12 3,383-4*: ‘Vom Ziele der Wissenschaft. – Wie? Das letzte Ziel der Wissenschaft sei, dem Menschen möglichst viel Lust und möglichst wenig Unlust zu schaffen? [...] Aber sie könnte auch noch als die *grosse Schmerzbringerin* entdeckt werden! – Und dann würde vielleicht zugleich ihre Gegenkraft entdeckt sein, ihr ungeheures Vermögen, neue Sternwelten der Freude aufleuchten zu lassen!’

<sup>567</sup> 3.104-5.

<sup>568</sup> *MA I Vorrede 5 2.19*: ‘Er ist verwundert und sitzt stille: wo *war* er doch? Diese nahen und nächsten Dinge: wie scheinen sie ihm verwandelt! welchen Flaum und Zauber haben sie inzwischen bekommen! [...] er *war* *ausser* sich: es ist kein Zweifel. Jetzt erst sieht er sich selbst’.

importance for *FW*. What is more, it goes together with an increasingly critical attitude towards Stoicism. But before we go into that, let me focus on one aspect left out of the discussion so far: pity.

#### 4.2.6 PITY

The theme of pity is of relevance for the discussion in at least two respects. One: it is in relation to this topic that Nietzsche most explicitly turns to the Stoic tradition, in particular, in *M*, to Epictetus. Two: since pity, the German word used by Nietzsche being *Mitleid*, cannot be seen separately from the theme of suffering, the significant shift of thought between *M* and *FW* can be made even more apparent on the basis of this theme – in accordance with the transition from Stoic restraint to emotional openness as sketched above. I will do so below by critically evaluating an interesting article by Primavera-Lévy on Nietzsche's interpretation of suffering.<sup>569</sup>

The discussion of pity in *M* should be placed in the context of what in *EH* is proclaimed to be *M*'s main theme: the reflection on moral prejudices, especially concerning the self and its boundaries ('Mit der „Morgenröthe“ nahm ich zuerst den Kampf gegen die Entselbstungs-Moral auf<sup>570</sup>). *M* 139 shows how Nietzsche explicitly opposes the morality of Stoicism to the morality of pity:

*M* 139 *Angenommen höher!* – Ihr sagt, die Moral des Mitleidens sei eine höhere Moral, als die des Stoicismus? Beweist es! aber bemerkt, dass über „höher“ und „niedriger“ in der Moral nicht wiederum nach moralischen Ellen abzumessen ist: denn es giebt keine absolute Moral.<sup>571</sup>

Although in these lines it is observed only that it is not possible to evaluate moralities, because there is no 'absolute' morality with which to measure them, other aphorisms clearly reveal Nietzsche's preference for an anti-pity morality such as Stoicism. And as indicated in the *EH* passage, one of the main reasons to mistrust pity is its implied morality of 'selflessness'. In line with what we have seen Nietzsche defending in the above sections, there is something wrong with being 'open' to the influence of foreign voices on our own thought and sentiment (see e.g. the several aphorisms on practicing solitude, in particular *M* 485 and 491). The more we allow ourselves to be distracted by others, in this case by their suffering, the less we are in touch with our 'self' and our own thoughts. We have seen how Nietzsche is initially in agreement with the Stoic defence of independence; a morality of pity would not be suitable in that context.

It is undisputed that Nietzsche draws on Stoicism in his attack on the morality of selflessness and pity; yet comparing several commentators on this topic reveals a variety of interpretations of why exactly Nietzsche disapproves of pity and, secondly, what elements in these arguments

<sup>569</sup> Primavera-Lévy, E. (2011), 130-55.

<sup>570</sup> *EH* (*M*) 2 6.332. Nevertheless we should keep in mind that there is not one explicit reference to 'Entselbung' in *M*.

<sup>571</sup> 3.131.



are taken from the Stoics.<sup>572</sup> In this section, I will critically engage with the analyses provided by Keith Ansell-Pearson, Michael Ure and Martha Nussbaum.<sup>573</sup> According to Nussbaum, Nietzsche's objection to pity must be seen as part of Nietzsche's project 'to bring about a revival of Stoic values of self-command and self-formation'.<sup>574</sup> Ansell-Pearson claims that he agrees with her<sup>575</sup>, but he seems to have missed an important aspect of Nussbaum's article: whereas Ansell-Pearson's focus is exclusively on *M*, Nussbaum's article is part of a book on *GM*, which explains why many of her arguments are taken from this much later text. She is right that *GM*, like *M*, argues against a morality dominated by pity; yet she disregards the fact that in *GM* it is no longer the Stoics who represent the main inspiration for this standpoint. On the contrary; as I will show in more detail below, Nietzsche's understanding and evaluation of suffering changes in and after *M* – as does his evaluation of Stoicism. Hence, Nussbaum is right that Nietzsche consistently contests a morality of pity throughout his life, but his arguments for this standpoint change. Her claim that Nietzsche's project as a whole is to be seen as a 'revival of Stoic values' is therefore mistaken.

What is Nietzsche's objection to pity in *M*? Pity is seen as part of the detested morality of 'Entselbung', but by what moral standard does Nietzsche evaluate it? Is its morality a threat to our happiness or is it a danger to the development of knowledge? Arguments against pity of both kinds can be found. What is more, these arguments seem to contradict each other concerning the meaning and importance of suffering, a contradiction that has gone unnoticed by all commentators: arguments against pity as an unhealthy type of morality depict this morality as 'dangerous', 'destructive', leading to an avertable increase of pain and suffering, whereas arguments against pity as a threat to the pursuit of knowledge underscore the irrelevance of pain and suffering. Is suffering to be averted, as the morality arguments have it, or is it to be ignored as implied in the arguments concerning knowledge?

#### 4.2.6.1 PITY AS AN OBSTACLE TO KNOWLEDGE

Both types of arguments are presented in *M* in roughly the last twenty aphorisms of Book II. Interestingly, the aphorisms that take the importance of knowledge as their main focus are ignored by Nussbaum and Ure (and to a large extent by Ansell-Pearson as well). They are of great importance, however; for our analysis of Nietzsche's changing thoughts on Stoicism, but also as a significant part of Nietzsche's reflection of pity. An early indication that Nietzsche objects to losing sight of the boundary between 'me' and the 'other' in connection with knowledge is to be found in *VM*.

*VM 37 Der Betrug in der Liebe.* – [...] man will, dass unser Bild, welches von der Vergangenheit her uns anstrahlt, uns belüge, unserm Dünkel schmeichele, – wir arbeiten fortwährend an diesem Selbstbetrüge. – Und nun meint ihr, die ihr so viel vom

<sup>572</sup> Ure, M. (2008) does not make mention of a Stoic background in his analysis of Nietzsche's thoughts on pity, ch. 6 'The Irony of Pity', 185-206.

<sup>573</sup> Ansell-Pearson, K. (2011), 179-204; Ansell-Pearson, K. (2010), 137-163; Ure, M. (2008); Nussbaum, M. (1994), 139-67.

<sup>574</sup> Nussbaum, M. (1994), 140.

<sup>575</sup> Ansell-Pearson, K. (2011), 185-6.

„Sich selbst vergessen in der Liebe“, vom „Aufgehen des Ich in der andern Person“ redet und röhmt, diess sei etwas wesentlich Anderes? Also man zerbricht den Spiegel, dichtet sich in eine Person hinein, die man bewundert, und genießt nun das neue Bild seines Ich, ob man es schon mit dem Namen der anderen Person nennt, – und dieser ganze Vorgang soll *nicht* Selbstbetrug, *nicht* Selbstsucht sein, ihr Wunderlichen! Ich denke [...] dass sie in der Schatzkammer der Erkenntniss einen *Diebstahl* verüben: woraus sich ergibt, vor welchem Vergehen der Satz „erkenne dich selbst“ warnt.<sup>576</sup>

Although Ure argues anachronistically that this aphorism should be seen as part of Nietzsche's psycho-analytic theory<sup>577</sup>, he is right in so far as he understands Nietzsche's objection to love to be an obstruction to (self-)knowledge. This aphorism compares the way in which we attempt to forget our own past to the self-forgetfulness in loving and losing ourselves in another person: the two situations are similar to the extent that they expose 'a theft from the treasury of knowledge'. Both uncover a transgression against the famous maxim from Delphi: 'know thyself', implying that we should refrain from depriving ourselves of *knowledge*.

In a similar manner, *M 137* objects to approaching the suffering of others as if it were our own (i.e., *Mitleid*) as 'not objective', not fitting with 'der Vernunft und dem guten Willen zur Vernünftigkeit'. That this aphorism has not been taken up in any analysis is even stranger, given the fact that it is directly inspired by Epictetus.<sup>578</sup> It warns against the adoption of a first person perspective in matters of misery and bad luck, as it comes 'mit seiner Übertreibung und Ausschweifung'. The maxim of *Mitleid* will lead to the situation that we 'freiwillig' burden ourselves 'mit einer doppelten Unvernunft'.<sup>579</sup>

We find a comparable situation in *M 134*; that is, Nietzsche warns against pity in a strikingly Stoic manner – referring to it as a dangerous passion – yet without being recognized as such by Ure or Nussbaum (only Ansell-Pearson makes mention of it, but ignores its Stoic nature<sup>580</sup>). Nietzsche argues against pity here by depicting it as an affect that is, like all other affects, potentially harmful.

*M 134 In wie fern man sich vor dem Mitleiden zu hüten hat. – Das Mitleiden [...] ist eine Schwäche, wie jedes Sich-verlieren an einen schädigenden Affect. [...] An sich hat es so wenig einen guten Charakter, wie irgend ein Trieb: erst dort, wo es gefordert und gelobt wird – und diess geschieht dort, wo man das Schädigende in ihm nicht begreift, aber eine Quelle der Lust darin entdeckt –, hängt sich ihm das gute Gewissen an, erst dann gibt man sich ihm gern hin und scheut nicht seine Kundgebung. Unter anderen*

<sup>576</sup> 2.397-8.

<sup>577</sup> Ure, M. (2008), 142: in this aphorism he takes Nietzsche to be saying that 'our fear of narcissistic suffering [...] establishes a taboo against seeing ourselves and thus an inner resistance to self-analysis'.

<sup>578</sup> See the end of 4.2.1. Only Ansell-Pearson, K. (2011) refers to this aphorism, 185; but his point there is that Nietzsche warns us against 'fantasizing' not because it would stand in the way of an objective and rational point of view, but because of the danger that it 'will serve only to destroy us'.

<sup>579</sup> 3.130.

<sup>580</sup> Ansell-Pearson, K. (2011), 187: '*Mitleid* is an affect which, like any other, needs to be brought under control and sifted by reason; otherwise it is as dangerous as any other affect.' Unfortunately, he uses for this argument a reference to *WM* and fails to recognize the Stoic tendency.

Verhältnissen, wo begriffen wird, dass es schädigend ist, gilt es als Schwäche: oder, wie bei den Griechen, als ein krankhafter periodischer Affect<sup>581</sup>

The Greeks, as opposed to thinkers in Nietzsche's age, were capable of understanding pity correctly as a drive like all other drives – that is, as a potential weakness or disease, to be approached with care and intelligence. Although it is not explicitly specified here that the danger involves a privation of rationality, the last few lines of the aphorism do make apparent that a rational man like a physician should be on his guard: pity 'lähmt ihn in allen entscheidenden Augenblicken und unterbindet sein Wissen'.

*M* 146 is even more explicit in regarding pity as a hindrance to the development of knowledge. This aphorism is picked up only by Ansell-Pearson in 'For Mortal Souls', and he seems to acknowledge here – in contrast to other texts, for instance in 'Beyond Compassion' – that knowledge is of major importance to Nietzsche; also as an argument against pity.<sup>582</sup> It is stated in this text that hurting others for the advancement of knowledge is unavoidable; we will inevitably hurt ourselves in the process as well. It is of a 'higher and freer viewpoint and posture' to neglect the pain inflicted on ourselves and others, to 'transcend our own pity' ('über unsrer Mitleid hinweg') and 'pursue more distant goals'. In other words: giving in to pity and evading possible pain for us and others obstructs the achievement of a higher aim: the development of knowledge.<sup>583</sup>

In all these aphorisms in *M* (137, 134, 146) the adoption of Stoicism can be recognized, in line with what I have outlined before: they imply an attitude of solitude and calm rationality, cold and undisturbed by dangerous affects, avoiding the distraction of alien voices, attempting to be appreciative of one's own sense of reason, and as much in tune with a true outlook on the world as possible. Yet, the last aphorism, *M* 146, might be seen as in line with the changed perspective as well. As we have seen, Nietzsche comes to realise that knowledge is not attainable by simply adopting an attitude of Stoic restraint; since all knowledge is constrained by our human perspectives, we cannot but embrace our emotions in the process. These include painful ones as well. Therefore, we might see the proposal in this aphorism to deem suffering as unimportant and a necessary sacrifice for knowledge as part of the second, less Stoic attitude: 'die Erkenntniss zu fördern, auch trotz der Einsicht, dass unsere Freigeisterei zunächst und unmittelbar die Anderen in Zweifel, Kummer und Schlimmeres werfen wird.'<sup>584</sup> As we will see later, the attitude that deems suffering a necessary sacrifice to be made for

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<sup>581</sup> 3.127-8.

<sup>582</sup> Ansell-Pearson, K. (2010), 145: 'it now concerns us as searchers of knowledge – and a new fearlessness is required as we embark on this search free of 'the prejudices of morality'. [...] We are in the process of becoming creatures that exist largely to know and who seek to conquer the elevation offered by 'morality'.' On 146 he explicitly refers to *M* 146.

<sup>583</sup> *M* 146 3.137-8: '[...] höher und freier scheint es mir gedacht, auch über diese nächsten Folgen für den Anderen hinwegzusehen und entferntere Zwecke unter Umständen auch durch das Leid des Anderen zu fördern, – zum Beispiel die Erkenntniss zu fördern, auch trotz der Einsicht, dass unsere Freigeisterei zunächst und unmittelbar die Anderen in Zweifel, Kummer und Schlimmeres werfen wird. [...] Sind wir denn ohne Mitleid? Aber wenn wir auch über unser Mitleid hinweg gegen uns selber den Sieg erringen wollen, ist diess nicht eine höhere und freiere Haltung und Stimmung, als jene, bei der man sich sicher fühlt, wenn man herausgebracht hat, ob eine Handlung dem Nächsten wohl oder wehe thut?'

<sup>584</sup> *M* 146 3.137. On the other hand, this expression can also be seen as in line with the self-relativising attitude of the expression 'was liegt an mir?'

knowledge, will become gradually more important for Nietzsche, overpowering the second argument against pity, namely that it causes suffering.

The arguments regarding pity as a morality causing preventable pain are fully in line with Stoicism again, as we shall see in the following section. We should bear in mind that for the Stoics there is no fundamental difference between possessing the virtue of rationality and being happy: being rational amounts to happiness, regardless of all other circumstances. For Nietzsche, as we have seen, this equation increasingly fails to apply. Yet, when attacking the morality of pity in *M*, he does seem to draw on both arguments at the same time: pity is not rational (it stands in the way of gaining knowledge, and, distancing himself from the Stoics, all suffering associated with the gaining of knowledge should be seen as a worthy sacrifice), and it amounts to suffering.

The inconsistency might be solved by pointing out that there is a difference between pain resulting from the striving for knowledge and other, more external, causes of suffering; yet, there is no indication in Nietzsche's text of a distinction between two kinds of suffering, implying that we should welcome the one and prevent the other. Instead I believe we can only properly understand this issue by seeing it as part of the shift between *M* and *FW*. Whereas *M* adopts a Stoic perspective to a large extent – claiming that we should be as calm, emotion-free, and self-sufficient as possible in order to achieve a rational outlook on the world and so to prevent unnecessary suffering – the transition from *M* to *FW* shows a growing awareness that a kind of welcoming of emotions and suffering is necessary in order to learn. It is because of this transition that the arguments against pity as a source of suffering slowly but steadily disappear from Nietzsche's texts, as Martha Nussbaum correctly notices (even though she draws the wrong conclusion from it).

#### 4.2.6.2 PITY AS A DANGEROUS MORALITY

The arguments against suffering are most clearly summarized in *M* 134: 'Das Mitleiden [...] vermehrt das Leiden in der Welt'.<sup>585</sup> Ansell-Pearson, Nussbaum and Ure have paid considerably more attention to this line of reasoning, yet their interpretations differ widely. As we have seen, Ure merely highlights the psycho-analytic elements of Nietzsche's analysis, arguing that the morality of pity is seen as a sign of immature narcissism.<sup>586</sup> Ansell-Pearson's 'Beyond Compassion' enumerates three concerns on the basis of which Nietzsche critically evaluates the morality of pity. Although they are introduced as enquiries aiming to 'gain some genuinely reflective insight into the affect of pity'<sup>587</sup>, all three involve a warning against some kind of danger. Clearly, more is at stake for Nietzsche than merely a neutral understanding of pity; moreover, the three points seem to amount to one and the same argument, namely that the

<sup>585</sup> *M* 134 3.127-8.

<sup>586</sup> Ure, M. (2008), 185: 'This chapter examines Nietzsche's critique of *pitié*/*Mitleid*, and demonstrates that he treats this as another pathology of narcissism. Boldly stated, he argues that as a psychological transaction *Mitleid* satisfies the ego's desire to assuage its loss of narcissistic plenitude.' That this attitude is considered by Nietzsche as a dangerous one is argued for on 196: 'it is, as Nietzsche underscores, a damaging and enervating means of doing so because it creates an addiction [...]. The psychological consequence of this addiction to envy is *melancholia* [...].'

<sup>587</sup> Ansell-Pearson, K. (2011), 185.

morality of pity endangers our individuality: (a) describes how ‘the imperatives of philosophies of universal love and compassion will serve only to destroy us’; (b) states that ‘modern society is in danger of providing a single moral-making morality that amounts to a tyrannical encroachment on the requirements of individual self-cultivation’; (c) defends the thesis that a ‘culture of compassion could be a very destructive culture’.<sup>588</sup>

Ansell-Pearson is still right that Nietzsche bases his warnings on certain assumptions concerning pity. Two are important here. One: Nietzsche fights against the Schopenhauerian interpretation of pity. He wishes to unmask it as a phantasy, especially in *M* 133 and 142. The thought that we are all ‘mystically’ united in our suffering, and that we possess a special kind of ‘subtle, penetrating understanding of suffering’<sup>589</sup>, proves for Nietzsche that Schopenhauer ‘lacks adequate experience in the realm of the moral’.<sup>590</sup> In *M* 138 Nietzsche defends the position that there is something degrading in suffering and something elevating and productive of superiority in pity, which in an anti-Schopenhauerian way ‘separates these two sensations from one another to all eternity’.<sup>591</sup> In *M* 133 Nietzsche provides a completely different analysis of pity, arguing that it is a word covering many motives for action, all of which have to do with ourselves and our own well-being more than the interests of the victim in need of help.<sup>592</sup> But in *M* 134 it becomes clear why even adopting the correct interpretation of pity as guidance for a true moral life is discouraged by Nietzsche:

*M* 134 [...] Wer einmal, versuchsweise, den Anlässen zum Mitleiden im praktischen Leben eine Zeitlang absichtlich nachgeht und sich alles Elend, dessen er in seiner

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<sup>588</sup> Ansell-Pearson, K. (2011), 185; 185; 187. Ansell-Pearson refers to *M* 132, 134 and 147.

<sup>589</sup> Schopenhauer most extensive text on compassion is in *Über die Grundlage der Moral*, 1840 (1979), where he claims that compassion is the foundation of all moral action. This foundation is ultimately metaphysical, as the experience of participation in the suffering of another cannot be proven based on empirical evidence. § 22, ‘*Metaphysische Grundlage*’, 163: ‘Das, was bis hierher Erklärungsgrund war, wird jetzt selbst unser Problem, nämlich jenes jedem Menschen angeborene und unvertilgbare natürliche Mitleid, welches sich uns als die alleinige Quelle *nicht-egoistischer Handlungen* ergeben hat: diesen aber ausschließlich kommt moralischer Wert zu.’ 168: ‘Gehört demnach Vielheit und Geschiedenheit allein der bloßen *Erscheinung* an, und ist es Ein und das selbe Wesen, welches in allem Lebenden sich darstellt; so ist diejenige Auffassung, welche den Unterschied zwischen Ich und Nicht-Ich aufhebt, nicht die irrige’.

<sup>590</sup> *M* 133 3.126: ‘Dass dagegen das Mitleiden *einartig* mit dem Leiden sei, bei dessen Anblick es entsteht, oder dass es ein besonders feines durchdringendes Verstehen für dasselbe habe, diess Beides widerspricht der *Erfahrung*, und wer es gerade in diesen beiden Hinsichten verherrlicht hat, dem *fehlte* eben auf diesem Bereiche des Moralischen die ausreichende Erfahrung.’

<sup>591</sup> *M* 138 3.131: ‘Aus dem Allen folgt, dass, selbst für den günstigsten Fall, im Leiden etwas Erniedrigendes und im Mitleiden etwas Erhöhendes und Überlegenheit-Gebendes liegt; was beide Empfindungen auf ewig von einander trennt.’

<sup>592</sup> *M* 133 3.125: ‘Die Wahrheit ist: im Mitleid – ich meine in dem, was irreführender Weise gewöhnlich Mitleid genannt zu werden pflegt, – denken wir zwar nicht mehr bewusst an uns, aber *sehr stark unbewusst* [...]. Der Unfall des Andern beleidigt uns, er würde uns unserer Ohnmacht, vielleicht unserer Feigheit überführen, wenn wir ihm nicht Abhülfe brächten. Oder er bringt schon an sich eine Verringerung unsrer Ehre vor Anderen oder vor uns selber mit sich. Oder es liegt im Unfalle und Leiden eines Anderen ein Fingerzeig der Gefahr für uns [...]. Diese Art Pein und Beleidigung weisen wir zurück und vergelten sie durch eine Handlung des Mitleidens, in ihr kann eine feine Nothwehr oder auch Rache sein.’

Umgebung habhaft werden kann, immer vor die Seele stellt, wird unvermeidlich krank und melancholisch.<sup>593</sup>

Nietzsche thus argues that the presuppositions of the Schopenhauerian analysis of pity are false; yet, even accepting the correct account of pity as the main imperative for good action will not take us far: we will prevent much suffering by not giving in at all to the desire of being open to the suffering of others.<sup>594</sup>

Secondly, Nietzsche attempts to show that the view of pity being the essence of morality is a temporary approach, dominant in some ages but not in all. *M* 131, as well as *M* 132 and 133<sup>595</sup> emphasise how the understanding of pity as constitutive of morality is relatively new. *M* 131, entitled ‘*Die moralische Moden*’, stages Epictetus as a moral thinker who would be perceived as immoral in this time.

*M* 131 *Die moralischen Moden*. – Wie sich die moralischen Gesamt-Urtheile verschoben haben! Diese grössten Wunder der antiken Sittlichkeit, zum Beispiel Epiktet, wussten Nichts von der jetzt üblichen Verherrlichung des Denkens an Andere, des Lebens für Andere; man würde sie nach unserer moralischen Mode geradezu unmoralisch nennen müssen, denn sie haben sich mit allen Kräften für ihr ego und gegen die Mitempfindung mit den Anderen [...] gewehrt.<sup>596</sup>

Again, this analysis of changing attitudes to pity might be neutral in itself, but on other occasions Nietzsche clearly shows that the contemporary approach to morality is dangerous: it leads to a socialist type of civilization. As Ansell-Pearson correctly analyses: ‘market-driven atomization and de-individuation can readily lead to a form of communitarian tyranny. We are today creating a society of “universal security” but the price being paid for it is, Nietzsche thinks, much too high: “the maddest thing is that what is being effected is the very opposite of universal security”’.<sup>597</sup> *M* 174 returns to a notion we have encountered before: making pity – or sympathy – the essence of morality will eventually turn man into *sand*:

*M* 174 [...] Sind wir denn bei einer solchen ungeheuren Absichtlichkeit, dem Leben alle Schärpen und Kanten abzureiben, nicht auf dem besten Wege, die Menschheit zu *Sand* zu machen? Sand! Kleiner, weicher, runder, unendlicher Sand! Ist das euer Ideal, ihr Herolde der sympathischen Affectionen?<sup>598</sup>

The morality of pity is, so Nietzsche argues in *M* 174, a morality of timidity (‘Furchtsamkeit’); it confiscates a great deal of the pleasure human beings would have taken in themselves, it

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<sup>593</sup> 3.128. *M* 136 3.129 describes the only possible occasion in which pity might lead to happiness, namely for people such as the Indians, who suffer from suicidal disgust with existence after a long and thorough investigation of human suffering.

<sup>594</sup> See also, regarding the diminishing of the suffering of others, *M* 144 3.136, entitled ‘*Die Ohren vor dem Jammer zuhalten*’: ‘Wir können weder *hülfreich* noch *erquicklich* für sie sein, wenn wir das Echo ihres Jammers sein wollen, ja auch wenn wir immer nur nach ihm hin unser Ohr richten’.

<sup>595</sup> *M* 132 3.124-5: ‘diess ist der *moralische Grundstrom* in unserem Zeitalter; Mitempfindung und sociale Empfindung spielen dabei in einander über’; *M* 133 3.127: ‘die Mitleidigen *gut* zu nennen, ist Nichts, als eine moralische Mode, welche ihre Zeit hat’.

<sup>596</sup> 3.122.

<sup>597</sup> Ansell-Pearson, K. (2011), 189. The quote is from *M* 179.

<sup>598</sup> 3.155.

makes them small and adaptable, interchangeable, meaningless. In *M* 174 we find Nietzsche wondering therefore whether one is really of more use to another if one immediately leaps to his side and helps; would it not be better to ‘create something out of oneself that the other can behold with pleasure: a beautiful, restful, self-enclosed garden perhaps, with high walls against storms and the dust of the roadway but also with a hospitable gate’?<sup>599</sup>

This analysis of the danger of the morality of pity, that it might be better – for others, for oneself, and for the culture as a whole – not to constantly focus on the suffering of others, but to keep one’s concentration on oneself, creating ‘a garden out of ourselves’, continues to be of importance for Nietzsche. Yet, in *GM* it is no longer the threat of suffering that Nietzsche warns against, but the threat of ‘nausea’, the will to ‘nothingness’, culminating in the diagnosis of ‘nihilism’ for western culture.<sup>600</sup> A reason for this change might be that Nietzsche’s analysis of the meaning of suffering has changed in the meantime, as Primavera-Lévy argues. In *M* Nietzsche still makes explicit use of the example of Epictetus, arguing that pity amounts to suffering and that the Stoic morality against ‘Entselbung’ is to be preferred.<sup>601</sup>

#### 4.2.6.3 THE STOIC ATTITUDE TO WHAT IS ‘INDIFFERENT’

It is significant, though, that in his acceptance of Epictetus as an example against adopting the dangerous morality of ‘Entselbung’ or pity, Nietzsche does not refer to the most famous Stoic argument against suffering. In Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius and Seneca one finds many examples of the Stoic procedure to prevent suffering: suffering is the consequence of the mistaken assumption that what you have in your life will be with you forever and is of relevance to your happiness. The example one finds in Epictetus’ *Encheiridion* is the attachment to a favourite cup or one’s wife: we have to remind ourselves every day that these

<sup>599</sup> *M* 174 3.155: ‘Inzwischen bleibt selbst die Frage unbeantwortet, ob man dem Anderen *mehr nützt*, indem man ihm unmittelbar fortwährend beispringt und *hilft* [...] oder indem man aus sich selber Etwas *formt*, was der Andere mit Genuss sieht, etwa einen schönen, ruhigen, in sich abgeschlossenen Garten, welcher hohe Mauern gegen die Stürme und den Staub der Landstrassen, aber auch eine gastfreundliche Pforte hat.’

<sup>600</sup> *GM* Vorrede 5 5.252: ‘Es handelte sich in Sonderheit um den Werth des „Unegoistischen“, der Mitleids-, Selbstverleugnungs-, Selbstopferungs-Instinkte, welche gerade Schopenhauer so lange vergoldet, vergöttlicht und verjenseitigt hatte, bis sie ihm schliesslich als die „Werthe an sich“ übrig blieben, auf Grund deren er zum Leben, auch zu sich selbst, *Nein sagte*. Aber gerade gegen *diese* Instinkte redete aus mir ein immer grundsätzlicherer Argwohn, eine immer tiefer grabende Skepsis! Gerade hier sah ich die *grosse* Gefahr der Menschheit, ihre sublimste Lockung und Verführung – wohin doch? In’s Nichts? – gerade hier sah ich den Anfang vom Ende, das Stehenbleiben, die zurückblickende Müdigkeit, den Willen gegen das Leben sich wendend, die letzte Krankheit sich zärtlich und schwermüthig ankündigend: ich verstand die immer mehr um sich greifende Mitleids-Moral, welche selbst die Philosophen ergriff und krank machte, als das unheimlichste Symptom unsrer unheimlich gewordenen europäischen Cultur, als ihren Umweg zu einem neuen Buddhismus? zu einem Europäer-Buddhismus? zum – *Nihilismus?*...’ See also *GM* III 14 5.368.

<sup>601</sup> See also *M* 516 3.299: ‘*Seinen Dämon nicht in die Nächsten fahren lassen!* – Bleiben wir immerhin für unsere Zeit dabei, dass Wohlwollen und Wohlthun den guten Menschen ausmache; nur lässt uns hinzufügen: „vorausgesetzt, dass er zuerst *gegen sich selber* wohlwollend und wohlthuend gesinnt sei!“ Denn *ohne Dieses* – wenn er vor sich flieht, sich hasst, sich Schaden zufügt – ist er gewiss kein guter Mensch. Dann rettet er sich nur *in die Anderen*, vor sich selber’.

are mortal and can be broken.<sup>602</sup> Doing so will make us less shocked when we eventually lose them. Moreover, the only source of happiness for the Stoics is our virtue; even in the midst of loss and pain, they argue that we will be able to find a certain calmness, even happiness, as long as we stay rational and accept that everything happens in ‘accordance with nature’.

Only Nussbaum draws on this typically Stoic argument of the indifference of external things. What is more, she takes it to be the one that Nietzsche is most attracted to.<sup>603</sup> The first two of the six arguments against pity she distinguishes in Nietzsche’s texts have the Stoic values of self-command as their pillars: the first discusses the weakness and insufficiency revealed in the nature of the pitied, the second of the pitier. Her main point is that pity indicates for Nietzsche, both for the pitied and the pitier, a recognition of dependency: we only pity someone if we feel that something of importance has been taken away. According to Nussbaum, a significant line of arguing to be found in Nietzsche’s texts is therefore that the things we implicitly think are important in pitying someone (as Nietzsche himself sums up in *M* 137, ‘a death, a money-loss, a slander’) should be considered differently: a morality of pity should be avoided because it encourages us to become dependent on external things, which undermines our strength and independence.

Yet, her analysis goes wrong when she claims that for Nietzsche both the Stoic values of self-formation *and* self-command are taken up as main arguments against pity.<sup>604</sup> As we have seen, the value of self-formation is indeed of importance to Nietzsche. Focusing on oneself and turning oneself into a garden are of value because doing so will liberate us from a great deal of pain. But when it comes to self-command, Nietzsche tentatively explores this argument in *M* and comes to reject it completely in *FW*. The argument, as I have indicated above, concerns the intensity with which we care about external things. In Nussbaum’s account, the Stoics suggest that we should care as little as possible. Nussbaum does not take this attitude to be worthy of adopting; in fact, she dismisses it as fearful and weak: ‘There is a strength in the willingness to form attachments that can go wrong and cause deep pain, in the willingness to invest oneself in the world in a way that opens one’s whole life up to the changes of the world, for good and for bad. [...] The Stoic, by contrast, looks like a fearful person, a person who is determined to seal himself off from risk, even at the cost of loss of love and value.’<sup>605</sup> At the same time she accuses Nietzsche of adopting a similar attitude of self-command. Nietzsche is for her ‘an armchair philosopher of human riskiness’, who wishes to ‘have it both ways: to play-act at romantic risk-taking while retaining Stoic hardness’.<sup>606</sup> The hints at risk-taking she finds in Nietzsche, citing a passage from *Z* II ‘Von den berühmten Weisen’, are dismissed as mere ‘play-acting’. Nietzsche lacked true insight into suffering: ‘he really doesn’t see what the life of

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<sup>602</sup> Epictetus, *Encheiridion* ch. 3 ‘With all the things that attract you or that are useful or that are appreciated remember to say what kind of a thing it is, starting from the smallest things. If you are fond of a jug, say, “I am fond of a jug”; for if it gets broken, you will not be upset. If you kiss your child or wife, say that you are kissing a human being; for when it dies you will not be upset.’ Boter, G. (1999), 280.

<sup>603</sup> Nussbaum, M. (1994), 157: ‘it is obvious that the important arguments in the attack on pity all revolve around the question of weakness and need’.

<sup>604</sup> Again, based on a reading of *GM* but applied, wrongly, to Nietzsche’s complete oeuvre.

<sup>605</sup> Nussbaum, M. (1994), 160.

<sup>606</sup> Nussbaum, M. (1994), 161.



a beggar is, what it is really like to lose your only child, what it is really like to love someone with all your heart and be betrayed.<sup>607</sup>

However, Nussbaum entirely misses the growing distance with regard to Stoic stiffness and independence to be observed in *M* and *FW*. What we read there shows, rather, how suffering and vulnerability become of increasing importance to Nietzsche.

#### 4.2.6.4 SUFFERING

As I have indicated above, we can detect in Nietzsche's anti-pity texts two opposite attitudes with respect to suffering. On the one hand, there are arguments presupposing that suffering is to be averted; on the other hand, especially in *M* 146, we have seen how suffering is to be neglected, unimportant as it is compared to the higher aim of knowledge. We have also seen how the arguments against suffering are, to a large extent (except for the Stoic anti-vulnerability-approach, that has not been explicitly addressed by Nietzsche) adopted from Epictetus; the arguments to ignore suffering on the other hand show a growing distancing from Stoicism.

This line of reasoning fits the interesting analysis of Nietzsche's interpretation of suffering recently provided by Primavera-Lévy remarkably well. According to her, Nietzsche's thought on pain and suffering should not be understood in separation from the medical achievements made in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Because of the production of several narcotics, among them morphine, the question to what extent suffering really was necessary gained renewed interest in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and led to a discussion on the meaning of suffering.<sup>608</sup> She distinguishes between two interpretations of 'Schmerz' that are at work in Nietzsche's philosophy but are essentially at odds: the one is part of a heroic vitalism, a kind of interpretation initiated by Hippokrates and Galenus, and taken up by Kant and Fichte, approaching suffering as a necessary ingredient for health; the other is part of an 'epistemological critique', and aims to 'de-substantiate' pain. It is inspired by Dumont, and regards 'Schmerz' as the outcome of interpretation: it is not substantive (as it is in the first account) but relative, and always the outcome of a process of the mind.<sup>609</sup>

This second interpretation of pain, as a 'Gehirnprodukt' and the outcome of a process of interpretation, can be read in connection with Nietzsche's analysis of pity as a preventable cause of suffering in *M* (we have seen an instance of the reduction of suffering through a different interpretation in 4.2.1, where Nietzsche draws on Marcus Aurelius and claims that

<sup>607</sup> Nussbaum, M. (1994), 161.

<sup>608</sup> Primavera-Lévy, E. (2011), 132.

<sup>609</sup> According to Primavera-Lévy, E. (2011) this interpretation remains of value for Nietzsche throughout his life and can be connected to the development of the doctrine of *Wille zur Macht*. See 151. For an earlier reference, see 146-7: 'Schmerz wird nicht als unmittelbare Gegebenheit betrachtet, sondern als Wirkung eines vorausgehenden Werturteils des Central-Organ, das die Verschiebung der Kräfte wahrnimmt, rechnet und Schlussfolgerungen zieht. [...] Das Gefühl Schmerz, so plötzlich sein Auftauchen auch erscheinen mag, ist gesättigt mit einer „Unsumme von Werthschätzungen und Irrthümern“, metaphysischen Überzeugungen, persönlichen Erinnerungen sowie mit genetisch verankerten Annahmen und Werturteilen einer archaischen Menschheitsperiode und der tierischen Vorgeschichte (Nachlass 1881, 11[334], KSA 9.572).'

taking away the phantasy accompanying pain amounts to taking away an important part of the pain itself<sup>610</sup>). The first interpretation of pain, on the other hand, becomes increasingly prominent in *FW*; it regards suffering as a necessary ingredient for growth that should not be resisted but welcomed. This heroic outlook appreciates the value of suffering for life and other higher goals (such as knowledge – which makes possible the interpretation of *M* 146 as an early instance of this approach). It can be observed that the increasing importance of this interpretation of suffering goes together with the rejection of Stoicism.

The most explicit formulation of the heroic kind of suffering we find in *FW* 48, entitled ‘*Kenntniss der Noth*’. It starts out as a comparison between Nietzsche’s own age and ‘*einem Zeitalter der Furcht – dem längsten aller Zeitater*’, with respect to ‘*Kenntniss der Noth*’: our age, according to Nietzsche, can be characterised as one that lacks this knowledge, making us ‘*Stümper und Phantasten zugleich*’.<sup>611</sup> He distinguishes between ‘*Noth der Seele*’ and ‘*Noth des Leibes*’ and claims, with respect to the second, that in previous ages men were used to practice the mechanics of pain.

*FW* 48 [...] Damals machte ein Mann seine reiche Schule körperliche Qualen und Entbehrungen durch und begriff selbst in einer gewissen Grausamkeit gegen sich, in einer freiwilligen Uebung des Schmerzes, ein ihm nothwendiges Mittel seiner Erhaltung; damals erzog man seine Umgebung zum Ertragen des Schmerzes, damals fügte man gern Schmerz zu<sup>612</sup>

But also with respect to the suffering of the soul Nietzsche sees a lack of experience in his age, which has the following consequence:

man hasst jetzt den Schmerz viel mehr, als frühere Menschen, und redet ihm viel übler nach als je, ja, man findet schon das Vorhandensein des Schmerzes *als eines Gedankens* kaum erträglich und macht dem gesammten Dasein eine Gewissenssache und einen Vorwurf daraus.<sup>613</sup>

Hence Nietzsche’s conclusion: ‘*Nun! Das Recept gegen „die Noth“ lautet: Noth*’; the solution for today’s pessimism is a conscious accumulation of pain as a kind of training. This notion of suffering as a substantive quantity necessary for healthy life can be traced back, among others, to Kant. From his *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht* Primavera-Lévy quotes: ‘*Der Schmerz ist der Stachel der Tätigkeit, und in dieser fühlen wir allererst unser Leben; ohne diesen würde Leblosigkeit eintreten.*’<sup>614</sup> The value of this type of suffering is based, thus, on its status as the indicator of vitality. What is more, a lack of ‘*Reiz*’, the painful stimulus leading to

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<sup>610</sup> *M* 54 3.57. In this context we might also understand the famous expression ‘*Wir haben umzulernen, – um endlich, vielleicht sehr spät, noch mehr zu erreichen: umzufühlen.*’ *M* 103 3.92.

<sup>611</sup> *FW* 48 3.413.

<sup>612</sup> 3.413.

<sup>613</sup> 3.414. This is what Nietzsche accuses Schopenhauer of doing; see the quote of *GM* Vorrede 5 in a footnote at the bottom of section 4.2.6.2.

<sup>614</sup> Kant, I. (1798), *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht*, 147; quoted by Primavera-Lévy, E. (2011), 134-5.

action, leads to a passive, even morbid state, associated with moral and mental lethargy ('Trägheit') by both Kant and Nietzsche.<sup>615</sup>

In the *Nachlass* fragments written in the time of *FW* we can see the connection both between the addition of pain and a kind of heroism, and between a lack of heroism and 'Trägheit'; moreover, Nietzsche comes to evaluate the Stoics explicitly by these criteria.

*NL* 12[140] *Heroismus* ist die Kraft, Schmerz zu leiden und zuzufügen.

*NL* 12[141] Der *Stoicismus* im gefaßten Ertragen ist ein Zeichen gelähmter Kraft, man stellt eine Trägheit gegen den Schmerz auf die Wage – Mangel an Heroismus, der immer kämpft (nicht leidet) der den Schmerz „freiwillig aufsucht“.<sup>616</sup>

The Stoics do not seek pain; they rather do everything to reduce it. The longest fragment on Stoicism in the *Nachlass* of 1881 reproaches the Stoics on a similar basis.

*NL* 15[55] [...] Diese Denkweise ist mir sehr zuwider: sie unterschätzt den Werth des Schmerzes (er ist so nützlich und förderlich als die Lust), den Werth der Erregung und Leidenschaft, er ist endlich gezwungen, zu sagen: alles wie es kommt, ist mir recht, ich will nichts anders – er beseitigt keinen Nothstand mehr, weil er die Empfindung für Nothstände getödtet hat.<sup>617</sup>

Different from the anti-suffering argument against pity, Nietzsche here regards 'Schmerz' as something *valuable*. It is 'as useful and advantageous' as 'Lust'. This reasoning is new – it can be found neither in *MA* nor in *M*. Whereas in these texts the Stoic 'calming' and 'cooling' effect on the emotions is valued, here it becomes apparent that the growing appreciation of pain goes hand in hand with an increasing dissatisfaction with Stoicism. As we have seen, the cure against the 'Noth' of pessimism and weakness is found in *FW* 48 in the courageous search for more 'Schmerz', that is – 'Noth'; yet the Stoics with their tricks of '*Starrheit*' and '*Kälte*' do everything to avoid the feeling of pain (again described in terms of '*Trägheit*'), which leads to an insensitivity to 'Noth': the Stoics are no longer able to even detect the difference between 'Noth' and non-'Noth'.

It should not come as a surprise therefore that the arguments against pity change along similar lines. As Primavera-Lévy rightly claims: Nietzsche characterises 'die Vermeidung von Schmerz, die sich u.a. im Mitleid zeigt, als Verneinung des Lebens'<sup>618</sup> – that is to say, he does so *after* the writing of *M*; in *M*, as we have seen, it is precisely the 'Vermeidung von Schmerz' that is used as an argument against adopting the morality of pity (except, as we have seen, in *M* 146). Particularly in *Z* pity is rejected as a sign of weakness; according to this text, life can be measured by the way suffering is handled – if welcomed it signifies strength, if regarded with fear it indicates weakness. Nietzsche continuously argues against pity therefore, but in a way that increasingly values suffering and discredits Stoicism.

<sup>615</sup> Primavera-Lévy, E. (2011), 135: 'Ein Mangel an Reizung, und diese ist in den Bildungstheorien fast immer als schmerzlicher Reiz kodiert, ist gleichbedeutend mit einem passiven bis morbiden Zustand und wird mit moralischer und mentaler Trägheit assoziiert.'

<sup>616</sup> 9.600.

<sup>617</sup> 9.653.

<sup>618</sup> Primavera-Lévy, E. (2011), 136.

It follows that Nietzsche's project is not an undifferentiated bringing about of a revival of Stoic values, as Nussbaum argues; rather, Nietzsche agrees with Nussbaum that there is, indeed, a sense of fearfulness, stiffness, and lack of courageous riskiness in the Stoic approach to suffering. I will argue in the following section on *FW* that the new appreciation of suffering and other emotions should not be separated from Nietzsche's principal desire to pursue knowledge. I will argue that Nietzsche's courage for risk-taking becomes increasingly prominent in *FW*.

#### 4.3 DIE FRÖHLICHE WISSENSCHAFT

Recalling the status of *M* as a work of transition, consider the following aphorism.

*M* 540 *Lernen*. – [...] [Es ist] nicht so leicht, zu *lernen*, und nicht nur die Sache des guten Willens; man muss lernen *können*. Bei einem Künstler stellt sich dem oft der Neid entgegen, oder jener Stolz, welcher beim Gefühl des Fremdartigen sofort seine Stacheln hervorkehrt und sich unwillkürlich in einen Vertheidigungszustand, statt in den des Lernenden, versetzt. An beidem fehlte es Raffael, gleich Goethe, und desshalb waren sie *grosse Lerner*<sup>619</sup>

Rafael and Goethe are honoured by Nietzsche as '*grosse Lerner*'; other artists are hindered in the process of learning because of their 'envy' or 'that pride which puts forth its sting as soon as it senses the presence of something strange'. The opposition between the state of learning and a 'Vertheidigungszustand' does not fit well with the admiring remarks we have also encountered in *M* of the Stoic attitude of defensive solitude, for instance in aphorisms on Epictetus.<sup>620</sup> We have seen there that Epictetus' attitude of calm and defensive detachment is taken as exemplary in the search for a neutral and emotion-free position, to be adopted in the process of pursuing knowledge. I will argue in what follows that the opposition between (Stoic) defensiveness and the attitude of openness to sensations including pain required for learning becomes ever more important in *FW*, leading to a complete rejection of Stoicism as an inadequate attitude for learning.<sup>621</sup>

The most explicit formulation of this position is found in *FW* 305, where Nietzsche accuses those 'moralists' ('Morallehrer') who 'command man first and foremost to take control of himself'<sup>622</sup> (referring to the Stoics and Epicureans, as the subsequent aphorism called 'Stoiker

<sup>619</sup> 3.309.

<sup>620</sup> See, for instance, *M* 546 3.316-7: 'der Stille, Sich-Selbst-Genügende [...] der sich nach Aussen hin für sich selber wehrt'.

<sup>621</sup> This observation is also made by Ure, M., in Sellars, J. (2016), 298: 'Stoicism's extirpation of the passions, [Nietzsche] implies, retards species' learning.' The evolutionary perspective that Nietzsche adds to this argument is worked out in chapter 5.

<sup>622</sup> An earlier reference to this notion of Stoic self-control, which Nussbaum understands as 'self-command', can be found in *M* 251 and *M* 242. *M* 251 3.205: '*Stoisch*. – Es giebt eine Heiterkeit des Stoikers, wenn er sich von dem Ceremoniell beengt fühlt, das er selber seinem Wandel vorgeschrieben hat, er geniesst sich dabei als Herrschenden.' *M* 242 3.202: '*Unabhängigkeit*. – Unabhängigkeit (in ihrer schwächsten Dosis „Gedankenfreiheit“ benannt) ist die Form der Entsagung, welche der Herrschsüchtige endlich annimmt, – er, der lange Das gesucht hat, was er beherrschen könnte, und Nichts gefunden hat, als sich selber.' The subtle criticism, which Nietzsche further develops in *FW*,

und Epikureer' shows) of being unable to learn. The argument begins with the diagnosis that these teachers afflict their student with a peculiar disease, 'nämlich eine beständige Reizbarkeit bei allen natürlichen Regungen und Neigungen und gleichsam eine Art Juckens.'

*FW* 305 [...] Was auch fürderhin ihn stossen, ziehen, anlocken, antreiben mag, von innen oder von aussen her – immer scheint es diesem Reizbaren, als ob jetzt seine Selbstbeherrschung in Gefahr gerathe: er darf sich keinem Instincte, keinem freien Flügelschlage mehr anvertrauen, sondern steht beständig mit abwehrender Gebärde da, bewaffnet gegen sich selber, scharfen und misstrauischen Auges, der ewige Wächter seiner Burg, zu der er sich gemacht hat. Ja, er kann *gross* damit sein! Aber wie unausstehlich ist er nun für Andere geworden, wie schwer für sich selber, wie verarmt und abgeschnitten von den schönsten Zufälligkeiten der Seele! Ja auch von aller weiteren *Belehrung!* Denn man muss sich auf Zeiten verlieren können, wenn man den Dingen, die wir nicht selber sind, Etwas ablernen will.<sup>623</sup>

The 'Morallehrer' leave their student over-sensitive and defensive, afraid of anything 'endangering his self-control'. He may no longer 'entrust himself to any instinct or a free wing-beat', he is rigidly 'armed against himself', being 'the guardian of his fortress' (reminding us of the Stoic 'citadel'). But of greatest concern is the fact that he is 'cut off from the most beautiful fortuities of the soul', of any 'further *instruction*'. For it is only if we 'lose ourselves from time to time' that we are able to 'learn something from things we ourselves are not'.<sup>624</sup>

For a more elaborate analysis of *FW*'s relation to Stoicism I will return to the question set out at the beginning of this chapter: what role should be given to emotions in the process of science and in the striving for health? As indicated before, the question remains of importance to Nietzsche but its answer undergoes a shift. We have seen how *MA* and *M* are sympathetic towards the Stoic strategies of calming down one's emotions; even the idea of completely extinguishing them receives some appreciative comments. In *M* we noticed a growing awareness of the importance of emotions, passions, drives, even suffering; *FW* continues this line of thought, resulting in an explicit rejection of the Stoic ideal of *ἀπάθεια*. The return in *FW* to the 'warmth' of 'hopeful' perspectives that include the 'rediscovery of the self' and the 'most beautiful fortuities of the soul', as well as finding the 'nearest things' endowed with 'Zauber und Flaum', allow for a next phase in the pursuit of knowledge and indicate the return of health at the same time.<sup>625</sup>

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escapes Nussbaum's attention; see Nussbaum, M. (1994), 151: 'This sense of power and sufficiency is at the other remove from the feelings of the pitier [...]. It is this that Nietzsche puts in the place of pity.'

<sup>623</sup> 3:543.

<sup>624</sup> A similar point is made in *FW* 294 3:534-5: '*Gegen die Verleumder der Natur*. – Das sind mir unangenehme Menschen, bei denen jeder natürliche Hang sofort zur Krankheit wird, zu etwas Entstellendem oder gar Schmähhlichem, – *diese* haben uns zu der Meinung verführt, die Hänge und Triebe des Menschen seien böse; *sie* sind die Ursache unserer grossen Ungerechtigkeit gegen unsere Natur, gegen alle Natur! [...] *Daher* ist es gekommen, dass so wenig Vornehmheit unter den Menschen zu finden ist: deren Kennzeichen es immer sein wird, vor sich keine Furcht zu haben, von sich nichts Schmähhliches zu erwarten, ohne Bedenken zu fliegen, wohin es uns treibt – uns freigebozene Vögel!' The reference to the bird's perspective fits the ideal of a free and fearless curiosity considered in sections 4.2.2 and 4.2.3.

<sup>625</sup> See 4.1 for the references to *FW* Vorrede 1 and section 4.2 for the reference to *MA* I Vorrede 5.

## 4.3.1 EMOTIONS, PAIN AND SCIENCE

*FW* thus continues the story of the growing appreciation of openness. Armstrong aptly formulates Nietzsche's rejection of Stoicism along these lines as follows: 'In denying value to stimulation, suffering, and passion, Stoicism also denies what is for Nietzsche a fundamental condition for growth in activity and joy; namely, openness to being affected. Insofar as Stoic ethics advocates withdrawal, endurance, and indifference toward the world, it closes the door to valuable sources of stimulation and struggle'.<sup>626</sup> Although the importance of openness for the development of knowledge is left out of her account, she is right in stressing Nietzsche's growing dissatisfaction with a Stoic attitude, its consequence being indifference and stone-like insensitivity. As we have seen in *NL* 15[55], discussed in section 4.2.6.4 above, Nietzsche accuses the Stoics of not being able to differentiate between 'Noth' and non-'Noth', and of ignoring the fact that Schmerz is 'so nützlich und förderlich als die Lust'.<sup>627</sup>

The most explicit aphorism putting forward this complaint is *FW* 306. This aphorism is to be found in book IV, which opens with *FW* 276 on *amor fati*, as we have seen in chapter 1. First a comparison is drawn between an Epicurean and a Stoic approach.

*FW* 306 *Stoiker und Epikureer*. – Der Epikureer sucht sich die Lage, die Personen und selbst die Ereignisse aus, welche zu seiner äusserst reizbaren intellectuellen Beschaffenheit passen, er verzichtet auf das Uebrige – das heisst das Allermeiste –, weil es eine zu starke und schwere Kost für ihn sein würde. Der Stoiker dagegen übt sich, Steine und Gewürm, Glassplitter und Skorpionen zu verschlucken und ohne Ekel zu sein; sein Magen soll endlich gleichgültig gegen Alles werden, was der Zufall des Daseins in ihn schüttet.<sup>628</sup>

An Epicurean selects 'die Lage, die Personen und selbst die Ereignisse' that suit his 'äusserst reizbaren intellectuellen Beschaffenheit' (which could be the effect, one may suspect, of the possibly Epicurean 'Morallehrer' mentioned in *FW* 305). In opposition, a Stoic attempts to swallow everything, including the most painful objects. Clearly, Nietzsche prefers the Epicurean way of proceeding. Further in the aphorism we read why: it is the more appropriate attitude for those who are engaged in 'the work of the spirit', that is, of being a thinker: 'Wer [...] einigermaassen absieht, dass das Schicksal ihm einen langen Faden zu spinnen erlaubt, thut wohl, sich epikureisch einzurichten; alle Menschen der geistigen Arbeit haben es bisher gethan!'<sup>629</sup>

However, we may argue that Nietzsche contradicts here what he said about the Stoics in *M* 485, 546, and 552; for as we have seen there, the Stoics, too, were taken to be selective with respect to 'Lage', 'Personen' and 'Ereignisse'. The pieces of advice on solitude etc. encountered in these aphorisms, discussed in section 4.2.2, are remarkably similar to for instance *FW* 331

<sup>626</sup> Armstrong, A. (2013), 20. Ure, M., in Sellars, J. (2016), writes similarly, 297: 'If Stoic joy (*gaudium*) is a purely internal state, a fortress heavily defended against the "gifts of chance," Nietzschean joy is an incorporation or mediation of "external" goods, which requires an openness to chance, registered by passions, fear and hope.'

<sup>627</sup> *NL* 15[55] 9.653.

<sup>628</sup> 3.544.

<sup>629</sup> 3.544.

and 338. *FW* 331 argues that a thinker should keep himself deaf from the screaming voices of the market: allowing its noise to enter his head will make him ‘go to pieces from impatience and headaches’.<sup>630</sup> Instead, a thinker has to be able to find and select ‘seine Stille’. *FW* 338 even encourages the adoption of ‘a skin of at least three hundred years between you and today’, reminiscent of the Stoic ‘citadel’:

*FW* 338 [...] so will ich doch meine Moral nicht verschweigen, welche zu mir sagt: Leben im Verborgenen, damit du dir leben *kannst!* Leben *unwissend* über Das, was deinem Zeitalter das Wichtigste dünkt! Lege zwischen dich und heute wenigstens die Haut von drei Jahrhunderten! Und das Geschrei von heute, der Lärm der Kriege und Revolutionen, soll dir ein Gemurmel sein!<sup>631</sup>

This formulation of Nietzsche’s ‘Moral’ is remarkably similar, therefore, to what he claimed to be Stoic advice in *M*. On the other hand, it is clear that pointing to the selectivity of the Stoics in *M* does not capture the difference between the Stoics and the Epicureans brought forward in *FW* 306. Crucial in *FW* 306 is the metaphor of digestion. We read how a Stoic wants to ‘swallow stones and worms, glass shards and scorpions without nausea’, whereas an Epicurean is more selective in that respect; a diet like this would be easily ‘too strong and heavy’ for his stomach.

The metaphor of metabolism becomes increasingly meaningful for Nietzsche in 1881. Wilhelm Roux’s book *Der Kampf der Theile im Organismus. Ein Beitrag zur Vervollständigung der mechanischen Zweckmäßigkeitstheorie*, which he read that year, has been of great influence.<sup>632</sup> More on Nietzsche’s analysis of humanity in terms of an organic struggle and the importance of ‘Einverleibung’ will follow in chapter 5. For now it suffices to show that the difference between Stoics and Epicureans constitutes their (intellectual) diets more than their environmental choices. We have already seen examples in *M* of an unhealthy diet connected to the desire of knowledge, analysed in terms reminiscent of Stoicism (possibly early occurrences of Roux’s influence). In 4.2.3 for instance we encountered the example of Don Juan, who so much desired hunting knowledge that he ended up chasing ‘das absolut *Wehethuende* der Erkenntniss, gleich dem Trinker, der am Ende Absinth und Scheidewasser trinkt’; the longed for ‘Abendmahlzeit der Erkenntniss’ never came. Interestingly, we have also seen that the effect of this type of desire leaves its victim petrified: Don Juan is ‘selber zum steinernen Gast geworden’.<sup>633</sup> This is remarkably similar to the effect described in *FW* 306; the Epicurean chooses to be selective in his diet precisely to prevent this.

Ihnen wäre es nämlich der Verlust der Verluste, die feine Reizbarkeit einzubüssen und die stoische harte Haut mit Igelstacheln dagegen geschenkt zu bekommen.

<sup>630</sup> *FW* 331 3.558: ‘Das ist nun freilich ein böses Zeitalter für den Denker: er muss lernen, zwischen zwei Lärmen noch seine Stille zu finden, und sich so lange taub stellen, bis er es ist. So lange er diess noch nicht gelernt hat, ist er freilich in Gefahr, vor Ungeduld und Kopfschmerzen zu Grunde zu gehen.’

<sup>631</sup> 3.568.

<sup>632</sup> See for more on Nietzsche’s reading of Roux Müller-Lauter, W. (1999), ch. 9 ‘The Organism as Inner Struggle: Wilhelm Roux’s Influence on Nietzsche’, 161-82.

<sup>633</sup> *M* 327 3.232.

The effect of the Stoic diet is what the Epicureans – and Nietzsche – object to: they would never ‘forfeit their subtle sensitivity in exchange for a hard Stoic skin with porcupine spines’.

Why is sensitivity so highly valued by Nietzsche in *FW*? Apart from the fact that the 1886 *Vorrede* of *FW* indicates its significance for the return of health, we know that an amount of sensitivity is required in the process of pursuing knowledge; it is a consequence, as we have seen, of the discovery of the ‘Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis’ itself being a drive. *FW* 333 offers a more nuanced account of the position of drives in the development of knowledge, in opposition to Spinoza who defines ‘intelligere’ (understanding or knowing) as something fundamentally distinct from ‘ridere’ (laughing), ‘lugere’ (lamenting) and ‘detestari’ (despising), all of which are drives obstructing the process of knowledge.<sup>634</sup>

*FW* 333 *Was heisst erkennen*. [...] Bevor ein Erkennen möglich ist, muss jeder dieser Triebe erst seine einseitige Ansicht über das Ding oder Vorkommniß vorgebracht haben; hinterher entstand der Kampf dieser Einseitigkeiten und aus ihm bisweilen eine Mitte, eine Beruhigung, ein Rechtgeben nach allen drei Seiten, eine Art Gerechtigkeit und Vertrag [...]. Wir, denen nur die letzten Versöhnungsszenen und Schluss-Abrechnungen dieses langen Processes zum Bewusstsein kommen, meinen demnach, intelligere sei [...] etwas wesentlich den Trieben Entgegengesetztes; während es nur ein gewisses Verhalten der Triebe zu einander ist.<sup>635</sup>

Again we read how Nietzsche regards the achievement of ‘knowing’ not as the consequence of an emotion-free, purely rational project; it is rather the latest phase of a very emotional process. Since each drive has a certain approach towards an external object, seeing it as something laughable, lamentable or contemptible, the drives fight over which view should be dominant – and it is through this fight, that makes the other drives felt, that we become aware of them; we have seen a similar analysis in *M* 117, 118, and 119 discussed in section 4.2.4. Only after the accomplishment of a contract, a reconciliation between the drives, that is, after the emotional phase has come to an end, we can say that we may know an object (or perhaps better: we have achieved a more refined understanding of our drives). The assumption that knowing is a calm activity is clearly mistaken.

If science is to be understood, then, as the practice of gaining knowledge, it follows that it should entail the encouragement of our drives. The more we stimulate our drives to develop different views, the greater our amount of knowledge will be. In this context we should also read *FW* 12, on the painful aim of science. Science as it has been understood thus far only emphasises its rational, cooling effect, but now that we have come to comprehend its true nature, we should abandon this thought.

*FW* 12 *Vom Ziele der Wissenschaft*. – Wie? Das letzte Ziel der Wissenschaft sei, dem Menschen möglichst viel Lust und möglichst wenig Unlust zu schaffen? Wie, wenn nun Lust und Unlust so mit einem Stricke zusammengeknüpft wären, dass, wer möglichst viel von der einen haben *will*, auch möglichst viel von der andern haben *muss* [...]? [...]

<sup>634</sup> *FW* 333 3.558: ‘Non ridere, non lugere, neque detestari, sed intelligere! sagt Spinoza, so schlicht und erhaben, wie es seine Art ist.’

<sup>635</sup> 3.558-9.



In der That kann man mit *der Wissenschaft* das eine wie das andere Ziel fördern! Vielleicht ist sie jetzt noch bekannter wegen ihrer Kraft, den Menschen um seine Freuden zu bringen, und ihn kälter, statuenhafter, stoischer zu machen. Aber sie könnte auch noch als die *grosse Schmerzbringerin* entdeckt werden! – Und dann würde vielleicht zugleich ihre Gegenkraft entdeckt sein, ihr ungeheueres Vermögen, neue Sternenwelten der Freude aufleuchten zu lassen!<sup>636</sup>

The most familiar working of science so far has been to ‘deprive man of his joys and make him colder, more statue-like, more stoic’. This we have seen in *MA* and *M*. But since we have understood that this view does not represent the most fruitful kind of science, we will have to reinvest in our emotions – the happy as much as the painful ones. In this sense science may now be discovered as ‘die *grosse Schmerzbringerin*’, which goes hand in hand with ‘ihr ungeheueres Vermögen, neue Sternenwelten der Freude aufleuchten zu lassen’. For the Stoics were right at least in this regard: it is not possible to stimulate ‘Lust’ at the cost of ‘Unlust’; if we are to have emotions, we will have to have them all.

Und so steht es vielleicht! Die Stoiker glaubten wenigstens, dass es so stehe, und waren consequent, als sie nach möglichst wenig Lust begeherten, um möglichst wenig Unlust vom Leben zu haben<sup>637</sup>

Now we can see even more clearly how Nietzsche comes to a divergent understanding with regard to the meaning and importance of emotions compared to the Stoics. In contrast to their attitude of defensiveness, the stiff avoidance of the sensation of pain (and joy) which ends up in ‘Versteinerung’, Nietzsche comes to realise that sensitivity in general will bring us further in the pursuit of knowledge.

#### 4.3.2 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DANGER

At the same time we must formulate the following problem. On the one hand we see how Nietzsche rejects the Stoic attitude of ‘swallowing stones and worms, glass shards and scorpions without nausea’ because of its petrifying effect; on the other we have also seen that this effect occurs after the painful pursuit of knowledge, which Nietzsche wishes to continue while insisting even stronger on its painful aspects. How, in other words, will Nietzsche accomplish avoiding petrification in the future while adding even more painful elements to his diet?

*FW* 318 offers the first clues for a possible answer, developed in more detail in chapter 5 – as I will argue there, *amor fati* might be understood precisely as a strategy addressing this difficult situation. *FW* 318’s title ‘*Weisheit im Schmerz*’, which also suggests an implicit dialogue with the Stoics, defines the use of ‘Schmerz’ in two ways. First it is said that being sensitive to its messages (informing us of the presence of ‘Noth’, to which the Stoics are said to have become

<sup>636</sup> 3,383-4.

<sup>637</sup> 3,383. See also *FW* 338 3,567, stating that this equation not only applies to ‘Lust’ and ‘Unlust’ but also to ‘Glück’ and ‘Unglück’: ‘das Glück und das Unglück sind zwei Geschwister und Zwillinge, die mit einander gross wachsen oder, wie bei euch, mit einander – *klein bleiben!*’

insensitive in *NL* 15[55]) gives us the chance to make sure we will be safe, averting a certain death.

*FW* 318 *Weisheit im Schmerz*. – [...] Ich höre im Schmerze den Commandoruf des Schiffscapitains: „zieht die Segel ein!“ Auf tausend Arten die Segel zu stellen, muss der kühne Schifffahrer „Mensch“ sich eingeübt haben, sonst wäre es gar zu schnell mit ihm vorbei, und der Ozean schlürfte ihn zu bald hinunter.

We have seen, in section 4.2.3, that the continuance of one's life had become of minor importance under the domination of the Stoic attitude. Being awake to the subtle indications hidden in 'Schmerz' that one's life might be in danger has prevented many unwelcome deaths in the past and will continue to do so; it reintroduces the awareness that the self and survival is important. A Stoic would ignore these signals, it is suspected, and would stubbornly continue his quest for knowledge, stiffly choosing death over 'adjusting the sail'. At the same time, secondly, 'Schmerz' gives the opportunity for humanity to grow, this time not by obeying to its message of self-protection, but by adding even more pain to the situation.

– Es ist wahr, dass es Menschen giebt, welche [...] nie stolzer, kriegerischer und glücklicher dreinschauen, als wenn der Sturm heraufzieht; ja, der Schmerz selber giebt ihnen ihre grössten Augenblicke! Das sind die heroischen Menschen, die grossen *Schmerzbringer* der Menschheit: jene Wenigen oder Seltenen, die eben die selbe Apologie nöthig haben, wie der Schmerz überhaupt, – und wahrlich! man soll sie ihnen nicht versagen! Es sind arterhaltende, artfördernde Kräfte ersten Ranges: und wäre es auch nur dadurch, dass sie der Behaglichkeit widerstreben und vor dieser Art Glück ihren Ekel nicht verbergen.<sup>638</sup>

The welcoming attitude to pain and especially dangers (storms etc.) indicates the existence of 'heroischen Menschen'; people for whom the greatest moments originate in pain, and who then become the '*Schmerzbringer* der Menschheit'. We recognize here the importance of the addition of the heroic kind of pain as developed along the lines of Primavera-Lévy; pain is not something to be avoided, but a necessary ingredient for growth: people who are strong enough not only to take in pain but also as '*Schmerzbringer*' to provoke their fellow human beings should be seen as 'arterhaltende, artfördernde Kräfte ersten Ranges', 'if only because they resist comfort and do not hide their nausea at this type of happiness'.<sup>639</sup> It moreover fits the description of 'Wissenschaft' of *FW* 12 quoted above; 'Wissenschaft' could be such a '*Schmerzbringer*', as it is understood now by Nietzsche as a practice that stimulates rather than silences the passions.

The importance of 'Schmerz', therefore, is that it both increases the amount of knowledge, at least specifically related to one's very own situation, for instance in the case of a dangerous situation, and stimulates the development of oneself and humanity. Yet it should be noted that the two effects reinforce each other. It is only if one has sufficient knowledge of one's own constitution that one knows when adding pain will lead to growth, and in what cases it will

<sup>638</sup> 3.550.

<sup>639</sup> A static kind of happiness that lacks a vision for the future, as Nietzsche observes in a late *Nachlass* fragment: *NL* 34[75] 11.443: 'Es ist merkwürdig, wie die Stoiker und fast alle Philosophen kein Blick für die Ferne haben.'

lead to death – so knowledge is required for the enhancement of humanity; and, vice versa, the stimulation of all passions, i.e., the enhancement of a human being, is required for the pursuit of more knowledge. We should, in this context, keep in mind that Nietzsche slowly but steadily develops the insight that the content of all knowledge redirects us to our human, all too human perspectives. The clearest expression of this awareness is *M 483*, quoted already in section 4.2.3.

*M 483* [...] Niemals aus anderen, als aus *diesen* Augen in die Dinge sehen können? [...] Was wird am Ende aller ihrer Erkenntniss die Menschheit erkannt haben? – ihre Organe!<sup>640</sup>

It is, in other words, important both for the development of knowledge and the enhancement of oneself and humanity that an element of danger is kept in place. Nietzsche concludes:

*FW 283* *Vorbereitende Menschen.* – [...] Denn, glaubt es mir! – das Geheimniss, um die grösste Fruchtbarkeit und den grössten Genuss vom Dasein einzuernten, heisst: gefährlich leben! Baut eure Städte an den Vesuv! Schickt eure Schiffe in unerforschte Meere!<sup>641</sup>

The danger of living ‘on the slopes of Vesuvius’ and sending your ships ‘into uncharted seas’ is the only way in which ‘the greatest fruitfulness and the greatest enjoyment’ can be ‘harvested’, formulations indicating the state of human beings who are ‘more fruitful, more endangered, happier’ (‘gefährdetere Menschen, fruchtbarere Menschen, glücklichere Menschen!’). They are preparatory for a new age, one that ‘will carry heroism into the search for knowledge’ (‘jenes Zeitalter, das den Heroismus in die Erkenntniss trägt’), emphasising once again the interconnectedness of greatness and knowledge. We can thus formulate a preliminary answer to the problem sketched above as follows. Although Nietzsche’s project of increasing knowledge involves, indeed, an intensification of pain and suffering by living in danger, it simultaneously amounts to a more refined understanding of one’s limitations, which limits the chances of perishing – it is a matter of *knowing* when to ‘adjust the sail’. Precisely this knowing is, again, the outcome of the project of the pursuit of knowledge, which amounts to living dangerously, and heroically exercising both the painful and the joyful passions. Nietzsche’s age lacks this knowledge (see *FW 48*: ‘Das Recept gegen „die Noth“ lautet: *Noth*<sup>642</sup>), but so do the Stoics, which is, according to Nietzsche, the result of their petrifying diet.

Dealing with pain and suffering is therefore a subtle game of constant self-observation: which cases must be considered too dangerous, causing death or Stoic petrification, and should be avoided by ‘adjusting one’s sail’; and which must be welcomed instead, as chances to take both knowledge and humanity to a next level? Nietzsche sometimes refers to this game as an ‘experiment for the knowledge-seeker’ or as a ‘dance’ or ‘play’; all these expressions we find in *FW 324*.

*FW 324* *In media vita.* – [...] Von Jahr zu Jahr finde ich [das Leben] [...] wahrer, begehrenswerther und geheimnisvoller, – von jenem Tage an, wo der grosse Befreier

<sup>640</sup> 3.287. More on this topic will follow in chapter 5.

<sup>641</sup> 3.526.

<sup>642</sup> 3.413.

über mich kam, jener Gedanke, dass das Leben ein Experiment des Erkennenden sein dürfe – und nicht eine Pflicht, nicht ein Verhängniss, nicht eine Betrügerei! – Und die Erkenntniss selber: mag sie für Andere etwas Anderes sein, zum Beispiel ein Ruhebett oder der Weg zu einem Ruhebett, oder eine Unterhaltung, oder ein Müssiggang, – für mich ist sie eine Welt der Gefahren und Siege, in der auch die heroischen Gefühle ihre Tanz- und Tummelplätze haben. „*Das Leben ein Mittel der Erkenntniss*“<sup>643</sup>

Understanding life as an experiment for the knowledge-seeker is, for Nietzsche, a ‘great liberator’. Ever since this thought ‘overcame him’, life appeared to him ‘truer, more desirable and mysterious’, reminding us of the formulations of the late *Vorreden* indicating a return of strength, joy and health.<sup>644</sup> Knowledge is to Nietzsche a ‘world of dangers and victories’, in which ‘heroic feelings have their dance- and playgrounds’. A similar type of formulation we find in *FW* 319, in which it is made clear that we must from now on view ourselves as our own ‘experiments’ and ‘guinea-pigs’.

*FW* 319 [...] wir Anderen, Vernunft-Durstigen, wollen unseren Erlebnissen so streng in’s Auge sehen, wie einem wissenschaftlichen Versuche, Stunde für Stunde, Tag um Tag! Wir selber wollen unsere Experimente und Versuchs-Thiere sein.<sup>645</sup>

The effect of this new perspective on the relation between life, knowledge, danger, pain and suffering is that life appears as a place of experiment, constantly testing and challenging one’s limits; but it can appear this way only after developing enough understanding of one’s own ‘Organe’ and the workings of knowledge in general to have gathered the health, energy and courage to continue without perishing or petrifying. What is more, the old perspectives on suffering now appear in a different light. Whereas pain used to indicate something to be simply averted or diminished (a position still defended in *M* along the lines of Primavera-Lévy), it can now be conceded that those who defended this view perhaps purposively exaggerated its unbearableness.

*FW* 326 *Die Seelen-Aerzte und der Schmerz*. [...] Was haben die Moralprediger vom inneren „Elend“ der bösen Menschen phantasirt! Was haben sie gar vom Unglücke der leidenschaftlichen Menschen uns *vorgelogen!* – ja, lügen ist hier das rechte Wort: sie haben um das überreiche Glück dieser Art von Menschen recht wohl gewusst, aber es todtgeschwiegen, weil es eine Widerlegung ihrer Theorie war, nach der alles Glück erst mit der Vernichtung der Leidenschaft und dem Schweigen des Willens entsteht! Und was zuletzt das Recept aller dieser Seelen-Aerzte betrifft und ihre Anpreisung einer harten radicalen Cur: so ist es erlaubt, zu fragen: ist dieses unser Leben wirklich schmerzhaft und lästig genug, um mit Vortheil eine stoische Lebensweise und

<sup>643</sup> 3.552-3. Brusotti, M. (1997), 455, connects this aphorism explicitly with *amor fati*: ‘Auch den Gedanken vom *amor fati* arbeitet er im Rahmen seiner Auffassung des Lebens als Mittel der Erkenntnis aus, und dieser Gedanke ist selbst – so muß man schließen – ein Ausdruck der Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis.’ For more on this connection, see section 5.3.2.4.

<sup>644</sup> See section 4.1, 4.2, and 4.2.4. We are also reminded of the description of ‘zwei Glückliche’, portrayed in *FW* 303 3.542. The second of the two lives the life of danger described above, and claims: ‘Ich weiss mehr vom Leben, weil ich so oft daran war, es zu verlieren’.

<sup>645</sup> 3.551. Also the expression ‘Nierenprüfer’ is relevant in this context; it appears in *FW* 308 3.545: ‘für dich Nierenprüfer, der du ein *Wissen um das Gewissen* hat!’ and in *FW* 335 3.560: ‘*Hoch die Physik!*’, in the context of self-knowledge.

Versteinerung dagegen einzutauschen? Wir befinden uns *nicht schlecht genug*, um uns auf stoische Art schlecht befinden zu müssen.<sup>646</sup>

Thinking about the soul-doctors and preachers of morals who hold that happiness arises only with the annihilation of passions and the silencing of the will immediately brings the Stoics to mind: they might be the instigators of the attitude of contempt regarding all 'Hänge und Triebe'.<sup>647</sup> The question with which the aphorism ends, 'is our life really so painful and burdensome that it would be advantageous for us to trade it for a fossilized Stoic way of life?', must now be answered with an unequivocal *no*. Not only is our life, even without Stoicism, full of tricks to extract the thorn of pain and unpleasantness<sup>648</sup>, we have also seen that the taking away of 'Unlust' will go hand in hand with the loss of many kinds of 'Lust' – which would be a true impoverishment. There is no 'Grösse' in the mere endurance of pain (even women and slaves can do it, as we read in *FW* 325 entitled '*Was zur Grösse gehört*'), which makes this attitude weak in comparison to the heroic one; but first and foremost, there is no '*Vortheil*' in this kind of approach of suffering. Only the heroic stance has the potential to take us to a higher level – in the development of knowledge as well as in the enhancement of the human kind.

#### 4.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have traced in detail the shift between *MA* and *FW* regarding Nietzsche's appropriation of the Stoic 'Kunstgriffen'. The question what role Nietzsche envisions for emotions has been answered in the context of health and the pursuit of knowledge.

Nietzsche starts out in *MA* and *M* defending an attitude of independent solitude, avoiding distraction by all kinds of external influences and affects. In order to find a neutral, 'objective' (emotionless, depersonalised) outlook on things, adopting a 'third eye perspective' along the

<sup>646</sup> 3.554.

<sup>647</sup> See *FW* 294 3.534-5: '*Gegen die Verleumder der Natur*. – Das sind mir unangenehme Menschen, bei denen jeder natürliche Hang sofort zur Krankheit wird, zu etwas Entstellendem oder gar Schmähhlichem, – diese haben uns zu der Meinung verführt, die Hänge und Triebe des Menschen seien böse; sie sind die Ursache unserer grossen Ungerechtigkeit gegen unsere Natur, gegen alle Natur!'; the following aphorism makes an explicit connection with Paulus, who, as we have seen in chapter 3 (*AC* 52, 6.215: 'Paulus, der seine Heimath an dem Hauptsitz der stoischen Aufklärung hatte'), is seen by Nietzsche as being heavily influenced by Stoicism: *FW* 139 3.488-9: '*Farbe der Leidenschaften*. – Solche Naturen, wie die des Apostel Paulus, haben für die Leidenschaften einen bösen Blick; sie lernen von ihnen nur das Schmutzige, Entstellende und Herzbrechende kennen, – ihr idealer Drang geht daher auf Vernichtung der Leidenschaften aus'.

<sup>648</sup> *FW* 326 3.554: 'Man schweigt dagegen geflissentlich davon, dass es gegen den Schmerz eine Unzahl Linderungsmittel giebt, wie Betäubungen, oder die fieberhafte Hast der Gedanken, oder eine ruhige Lage, oder gute und schlimme Erinnerungen, Absichten, Hoffnungen, und viele Arten von Stolz und Mitgefühl, die beinahe die Wirkung von Anästheticis haben: während bei den höchsten Graden des Schmerzes schon von selber Ohnmachten eintreten. Wir verstehen uns ganz gut darauf, Süßigkeiten auf unsere Bitternisse zu träufeln, namentlich auf die Bitternisse der Seele; wir haben Hülfsmittel in unserer Tapferkeit und Erhabenheit, sowie in den edleren Delirien der Unterwerfung und der Resignation. Ein Verlust ist kaum eine Stunde ein Verlust: irgendwie ist uns damit auch ein Geschenk vom Himmel gefallen – eine neue Kraft zum Beispiel: und sei es auch nur eine neue Gelegenheit zur Kraft!'

lines of Epictetus' advice, it is imperative to find places of silence and to withdraw in one's own 'citadel'. This attitude culminates in the idealization of the position of a bird's 'hovering above the human kind' in *M*, disconnected from one's first person desires, and even relativising one's individuality by objecting to the thought of being an 'Ausnahme' and adopting the Stoic expression 'was liegt an mir?'. At the same time we have seen that *M*, as a work of transition, shows a growing awareness that truth will not be achieved by adopting a cold and neutral attitude, which ultimately leads into petrification. Slowly the idea becomes prominent that the desire for truth is itself a drive (the 'Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis'), colouring the outside world in its own way. Taking this idea seriously then leads to an increasing interest in the relation between the drives and emotions and their 'external' objects, which includes a renewed and warmer concern for 'the nearest things'. In Armstrong's words: "openness towards pain and suffering, perceived as necessary for growth and production" is the mark of healthy, strong natures that enjoy an excess of life, that are strong enough to be open to the contingencies of the world, that are strong enough to be porous rather than hard. In this light, Stoic insensitivity, detachment, and self-control no longer seem to be valuable attributes, to represent heroism or strength. On the contrary, they appear as signs of weakness, as forms of self-protection that express a fear of the world and its contingencies."<sup>649</sup> In *FW* the openness to and interest in the outside world is concentrated on the concept of *danger* – it is in being sensitive to situations of 'Noth' that one can develop new sentiments, which lead both to the expansion of knowledge and the empowering of the human race.

The stance to emotions, then, ranges from an encouragement of 'cooling' in order not only to prepare for facing the truth, but also to make sure that our reaction to it is as calm as possible (*MA*), to the conviction that it is only by stimulating our passions, including pain and joy, that we will be able to see our knowledge grow (*FW*), the capacity of which is also indicative of the returning of health (see the 1886 *Vorreden*). In between we have seen how *M* encompasses elements of both; in the section on *Mitleid* we came across the double interpretation of suffering as outlined by Primavera-Lévy. Whereas *M* approaches suffering as something that we should prevent by changing our interpretation of it, it also contains the first signs of the position that becomes dominant in *FW*: heroically inflicting pain is a sign of 'Grösse', and it is the only path open to us for the advancement of knowledge.

This development regarding the evaluation of passions in health and the pursuit of knowledge runs parallel to Nietzsche's judgement of Stoicism. Although *MA* reveals how Nietzsche dismisses the Stoic metaphysics, it also betrays the willingness to adopt a Stoic attitude precisely in the aftermath of this devastating process. Yet, the crisis of the will to truth being inimical to life itself deepens in *FW*, and brings with it the realisation that a Stoic attitude is useful neither for the pursuit of knowledge nor for an enhancement of the individual, and, ultimately, the humanity of the future. Nietzsche therefore comes to categorically reject the Stoic 'ἀπάθεια'.

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<sup>649</sup> Armstrong, A. (2013), 20. She refers in this context to Siemens, H.W. (2001), 73.



