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The Therapy of Desire

THEORY AND PRACTICE IN  
HELLENISTIC ETHICS

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sions should be completely extirpated from human life. And, once again, it does not seem to be necessary for the Nikidion I have described in this chapter to believe this. Indeed, one could imagine a further unpacking of the notion of practical rationality itself that would allow emotions such as love, sympathy, and grief to play a guiding role.

To some extent, these commitments really are independent of one another: one may continue to pursue many of the Stoic goals investigated in this chapter (under some description, at least) without accepting the anti-passion side of Stoicism that I shall describe in the following chapter. Indeed, certain Stoic arguments rely on this, beginning from the pupil's antecedent commitment to reason's integrity and trying to argue from that to the advisability to extirpating passion. But there is need for caution: for the Stoic argument will charge that the life of the person in question is actually inconsistent. Many people, they charge, claim that they are committed to their own integrity and practical reason, while living lives of subservience to passion that conflict with and undercut that commitment. In other words, they claim (whether successfully or not) that the commitment to rational self-determination, properly understood, actually entails the extirpation of the passions. And in the account of self-reliance that I have just given, one can already see some strong suggestions of the anti-emotion view.

Nikidion is to trust nothing and nobody but herself. But how deeply, then, can she trust and care for others? She is to be ceaselessly watchful over herself, her appearances and her impulses. But isn't this likely to put an end to the surprise and spontaneity that are so important to the passionate life? She is to value her own reason as *the* source of her humanity and her integrity, the one thing of real intrinsic worth in her life. So long as that is with her, she can go through life fulfilled. So long as that is free, she has her dignity, whatever the world may do to her. But what, then, can she consistently think of her deepest ties to other people? Of the prospect of losing them or being betrayed by them? In this way, reason's zealous hegemony, plausible and attractive though it is, points beyond itself to some of the more disturbing and controversial elements in Stoicism. Can one live in reason's kingdom, understood in the way the Stoics understand it, and still be a creature of wonder, grief, and love?

## The Stoics on the Extirpation of the Passions

### I

IN ORDER to get a deeper understanding of the Stoic conception of therapy we must now turn to their account of the emotions or passions<sup>1</sup> and its consequences for their picture of the "cured" person's life. I begin by setting down, somewhat dogmatically and without detailed textual argument, certain features of the Stoic conception of the human end or good that will play a role in the Stoics' diagnosis and treatment.<sup>2</sup> (This will not prevent us from asking, later on, how the diagnosis and this conception of health are interrelated.) According to Stoicism, then, only virtue is worth choosing for its own sake; and virtue all by itself suffices for a completely good human life, that is, for *eudaimonia*. Virtue is something unaffected by external contingency—both (apparently) as to its acquisition and as to its maintenance once acquired.<sup>3</sup> Items that are not fully under the control of

<sup>1</sup> On these terms and their interchangeability, see chapter 9 n. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Many of the pertinent ancient texts are to be found in SVF, especially vol. III. See, above all, DL 7, Cic. *Fin.* 3–4, for general accounts of Stoic moral theory. On the *pathē*, SVF III.377–490, DL 7.110–18, Cic. *TD* 3–4, Galen *PHP* 4–5. There is much pertinent material in Seneca's *Moral Epistles* and *Moral Essays* (on the *pathē*, above all the *On Anger*, or *De ira*). On Seneca's relationship to early Stoicism, see chapter 11 and Inwood (1993). Good general accounts of Stoic ethics that can be consulted to supplement this summary include Rist (1969), Long (1974), Inwood (1985); for the connection of Stoic ethics with physics and logic, see also Christensen (1962). Useful collections of articles dealing with related issues are Long (1971), Rist (1978), Schofield and Striker (1986), Brunschwig and Nussbaum (1993).

<sup>3</sup> There are actually difficulties surrounding both of these claims. For since the Stoics, beginning at least with Chrysippus, did not claim to be wise men, and clearly thought the appearance of a wise man a rare and remarkable event, for which decent effort alone is not sufficient, they might appear to be placing this most important matter in the control of forces beyond the agent. They would certainly resist this inference, but it is not entirely clear what account they give in reply. As for the losing of virtue, numerous texts insist that the Stoic position (in contrast to that of the Peripatetics) is that virtue once acquired cannot be lost: cf. SVF III.238 = Simplic. *In Aristot. Categ.* I.102A, 102B; III.240 = Clem. *Strom.* 4.22; III.241 (Theognetus comicus), 242 = Alex. Aphr. *De Fato* 199.27. But DL 7.127 (SVF III.237)

the agent—such as health, wealth, freedom from pain, the good functioning of the bodily faculties—have no intrinsic worth, nor is their causal relationship to *eudaimonia* even that of an instrumental necessary condition. In short, if we take all these things away, if we imagine a wise person living in the worst possible natural circumstances, so long as she<sup>4</sup> is good—and once good she cannot be corrupted—her *eudaimonia* will still be complete.<sup>5</sup> She will be living as valuable and choiceworthy and enviable a life as a human being possibly could.

At this point we enter an area of considerable controversy and obscurity. For the Stoics (in order, apparently, to explain why and how the wise person will actually act in any way at all out there in the world)<sup>6</sup> also insist that these external goods are appropriately preferred, in many circumstances, to their opposites. The wise person will in many cases, and rightly (for the wise person never errs)<sup>7</sup> pursue health and not sickness, freedom from pain rather than pain, and so forth.<sup>8</sup> Some texts seem to suggest that these items may therefore be correctly said to have some worth, even if only a derivative or second-grade worth.<sup>9</sup> It is extremely difficult to tell exactly what worth (*axia*) is, and how it is related to goodness (*to agathon*), which is consistently denied to all indifferents. I do not intend to get enmeshed in

reports a difference of opinion between Cleanthes and Chrysippus, Cleanthes holding that virtue can never be lost, Chrysippus that it is lost in times of drunkenness and mental illness—times, in other words, when the entire functioning of the cognitive system is knocked out of commission. This distinction, though interesting in its own right, does not affect our argument here. For Chrysippus clearly denies that virtue can degenerate in the sense of turning into vice.

<sup>4</sup> The Stoics are convinced that both males and females have the potential for virtue—that, in effect, the moral and rational soul is genderless; see chapter 9. They typically use the unmarked masculine gender to refer to the wise person, but since I am following Nikitidis' education and since their theory plainly admits the possibility of female virtue, I shall use the feminine throughout, marking it with brackets in citations.

<sup>5</sup> On the sufficiency of virtue for *eudaimonia*, see, e.g., DL 7.127.

<sup>6</sup> Contrast the heterodox position of Aristotle of Chios who, holding that everything other than virtue is a matter of perfect indifference, left the wise man no reasons of his own for action. If he moves and acts at all, it is only in the way a stage actor does (DL 7.160–64, SVF 1.333–403 and, for good discussion of all the evidence, Ioppolo (1980)).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. DL 7.121–22 = SVF III.549, 556; Stob. *Ecl.* 2.111.18 = SVF III.554, 548. The wise man does all things well—cf. SVF III.557–66, especially 561 = DL 7.125.

<sup>8</sup> For the list of "indifferents" and the claim that they are not goods (*agatha*), see DL 7.102 = SVF III.117, Stob. *Ecl.* 2.79, 1W = SVF III.118, and also SVF III.118–123.

<sup>9</sup> On the notion of worth (*axia*) and the connection of worth with the preferred indifferents, dis-worth (*apaxia*) with the dispreferred, see especially DL 7.105–6 = SVF III.126–27; Stob. *Ecl.* 2.83.10, 2.84.4, 2.84.18 = SVF III.124, 125, 128; Cic. *Fin.* 3.50–53; and in general, SVF III.124–39.

this difficult problem of interpretation here,<sup>10</sup> I shall simply record certain facts that seem to me uncontroversial, sketch several available routes out of the interpretative dilemma, and then show the significance of these observations for the issues that will concern us most.

It is quite clear, then, that for the Stoics virtue admits of no trade-offs in terms of any other good; indeed, it is not even commensurable with any other good. This ultimate good, Cicero insists, has a unique quality that is not reducible to degrees or quantities of anything else (*Fin.* 3.33–34). For this reason we cannot speak of adding other goods to virtue to get a larger total: "It is not the case that wisdom plus health is worth more than wisdom by itself separately" (*Fin.* 3.44).<sup>11</sup> But given that the other goods and virtue are not commensurable with one another, and given that virtue alone has the highest worth, we then cannot speak of exchanging a piece or part of virtue, however "small," for even the largest possible amount of any other good or goods. No such trade-off would ever be justified. Furthermore, it is equally clear that for the Stoics external goods are neither parts of *eudaimonia* nor necessary for *eudaimonia*. They are "things that have no power for living happily or wretchedly" (*Fin.* 3.50). Virtue by itself is self-sufficient, sufficient for *eudaimonia*.<sup>12</sup> But the Stoics, like Aristotle, also hold that *eudaimonia* is, by definition, inclusive of everything that has intrinsic value, everything that is choiceworthy for its own sake. Putting these claims together, we are forced to conclude, what a large number of texts in fact assert, that external goods, all goods other than virtue, have no intrinsic value at all.

At this point we might try various interpretative strategies. We might say that the preferred indifferents have a kind of second-class worth and are ordered below virtue in the sort of hierarchy that is known in contemporary philosophy as a "lexical ordering": we satisfy all the claims of virtue first, but at any time when we have satisfied them we may go on to consider the claims of the indifferents. Or we might claim that the worth of the indifferents to derive from the productive relation in which they stand to virtue in the career of the child, whose natural orientation to these exter-

<sup>10</sup> For a variety of recent treatments, see Irwin (1986), Kidd (1971a), Rist (1969), Long and Sedley (1987), Inwood (1985), C.C.W. Taylor (1987), Lesses (1989).

<sup>11</sup> See also *Fin.* 4.29, 5.7; *Sen. Ep.* 92.17; SVF III.29 = Plut. *St. Repugn.* 1039C; SVF III.30 = DL 7.101. Other passages are collected and well discussed by Irwin (1986).

<sup>12</sup> See, e.g., DL 7.127–28 = SVF III.49; also SVF III.50–67. Diogenes reports that Zeno and Chrysippus both defended that view; he adds that the later Stoics Pnactius and Posidonius denied it, claiming that health, strength, and some means of livelihood are necessary conditions of *eudaimonia*.



nals plays a crucial positive role in the process of development. When the child's reason matures and he or she develops virtue, she does not cease to be a natural being, and she still appropriately follows the animal aspects of her natural constitution, when and as virtue permits. Various other similar solutions have been suggested.<sup>13</sup> But I think it is clear that what we must not, is to attach to the indifferents, to external goods, the sort of value that most ordinary people are seen to attach to them and that Aristotle explicitly accords them. That is, we must neither ascribe to them any intrinsic worth as constituent parts of the agent's *eudaimonia* nor view them as absolutely indispensable necessary conditions for the *eudaimon* life. But to love and friendship, which are in their nature relations with unstable and uncontrolled external items. Most people, again, see themselves as social beings, for whom the loss of a country or of political privileges is the loss of an intrinsic value. Most people believe that the good human life cannot be pursued and realized without a certain amount of food, shelter, and bodily health—making these items necessary for *eudaimonia*, though not constituents of it. The Stoic is committed to denying all of this.

It is particularly important to understand that when the Stoics deny all value to items other than virtue they are including here all the items to whose presence or absence the contingencies of the external world can make a difference. This means that they are committed to denying the intrinsic worth of external worldly action and even, as they explicitly assert, the intrinsic worth of life itself (DL 7.102).<sup>14</sup> Not only traditional "external goods" like wealth and honor, not only "relational goods" like having children, having friends, having political rights and privileges, but also individual forms of virtuous activity, such as acting courageously, justly, and moderately, are held to be, strictly speaking, worthless, on the grounds that they can, as Aristotle has argued and as anyone knows, be cut off or impeded by accidents beyond our control. But the wise man must be self-sufficient; his life is always *eudaimon*, no matter what happens (TD

<sup>13</sup> The first alternative is suggested by several texts; the second is argued by Lesses (1989) on the basis especially of Cic. *Fin.* 3.19ff. Kidd (1971a) and Irwin (1986) suggest still other solutions.

<sup>14</sup> It is, of course, odd to deny that life is necessary for virtue—especially in the absence of a relief in an afterlife in which virtuous activity is possible. The Stoics hold that the souls of the dead survive until the next conflagration, and presumably retain their virtue, but without opportunities for its exercise. One clear point is that Stoics, like Epicureans, hold that the prolongation of life is not important for virtue: more life is not always better, and can sometimes be worse (see chapter 11).

## EXTIRPATION OF THE PASSIONS

5.83).<sup>15</sup> The virtues are held to be states of soul (*daiōtheis*—cf. DL 7.89, 98).<sup>16</sup> Cicero's interlocutor tells us that it is as if we said that in spear-throwing the ultimate end was to "do all one could to aim straight"—and the actual hitting of the target, even, presumably, the actual throwing action, will be no part of what is esteemed.<sup>17</sup> Virtue, then, is not an inert inner condition: it is imagined as a striving or straining; indeed, as Diogenes Laertius tells us, "the good person is always using his soul, which is perfect" (7.128). But, these inner activities are explicitly said to be unaffected by worldly contingency (DL 7.128); and they are held to be complete in themselves, quite apart from their emergence into the world, complete from the very moment they begin. The worldly performance is for this reason called a mere "afterbirth" (*epigenēmatikon*, Cic. *Fin.* 3.32).<sup>18</sup> The wise person does not need to stride out into the world at all, to open up her soul to the world, to press the exigencies of her soul upon the world. She can, as Seneca so frequently says, simply stay at home; for at home, inside herself, she has whatever she needs. In this way the Stoics not only repudiate the value of the usual list of "external goods," to which (with the exception of *philia*) even Aristotle does not ascribe intrinsic worth. They go further and break with one of the claims about human good to which, as Aristotle tells us, ordinary people will most readily give their agreement: namely, that the good life consists in activity and that this activity goes on out in the world.

We are beginning to get a picture of the radical detachment of the Stoic sage, the detachment that greets slavery and even torture with equanimity, the detachment that receives the news of a child's death with the remarkable words, "I was already aware that I had begotten a mortal" (Cic. *TD* 3.30).<sup>19</sup> Of this detachment and the view of the self it implies, I shall speak

<sup>15</sup> Cf. also *Fin.* 3.26, 42; *Stob. Ecl.* 2.98.17 = *SVF* III.54.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. also *TD* 4.34 = *SVF* III.198 (*adfectio animi*) and also the definitions of the particular virtues given by Andronicus (*SVF* III.266ff.), which characteristically use the words *hexis* and *epistēmē*, although DL 7.98 makes a clear distinction between *diaitheses* and *hexeis*, giving virtue as an example of the former. See also *Plut. Virr. Mor.* 441C, where both *diaithesis* and *dynamis* are used.

<sup>17</sup> On this image, see Striker (1986), Irwin (1986), Inwood (1985), C.C.W. Taylor (1987).  
<sup>18</sup> The word seems to mean that which is produced after something, as its causal product: it is not limited to contexts of birth. See, e.g., *Plut. Mor.* 637E, where the egg is the *epigenēma* of the creature's nourishment and digestion.

<sup>19</sup> The story is told about Anaxagoras (cf. Diels-Kranz, *Anaxagoras*, A33); he is being used as an example of the right Stoic response. The story occurs also in DL 2.13, and, cited by Posidonius, in *Galen PHP* 4.7.9–10, 282D. Posidonius uses this story as an example of the moral value of "prefiguring" (*praemediatio*).

more in what follows. But this detachment has a corollary, which I must now introduce. If declaring worldly activity external and unnecessary eases the agent's ethical burden in one way, making her less dependent upon ungovernable conditions, in another way it increases it, by focusing all ethical attention on the internal doings of the heart.

Aristotelian ethics had already argued that we are morally assessable not only for our overt acts, but also for the quality of feeling and imagination that accompanies them. A person who does the correct thing from the wrong motives, or with rebellious and conflicting reactive feelings, does not perform a virtuous action. To be virtuous, an act must be done as the person of practical wisdom would do it. And yet the overt action, while not the only important thing, is still very important. Self-control, or *enkrateia*, correct action accompanied by rebellious yet temporarily frustrated feelings, is morally far better than *akrasia*, doing the incorrect thing in spite of good principles and some good feelings. (It is, of course, vastly better than doing the bad thing with harmoniously bad feelings.) The difference between *enkrateia* and *akrasia* is a large moral difference; but we can imagine that frequently the inner difference will be very small, a tiny tilting of the balance of thought and feeling. And in some cases this difference may be made not so much by some extra degree of moral strength at all, but by some feature of the circumstances over which the agent does not have full control: the absence of a supremely tempting object, the presence of some unusual pressure or temptation. Aristotle does urge us, in assessing such cases, to consider how the agent's disposition stands to the usual case. If she yields to a pressure that most good people would withstand, we judge her harshly. If she yields to extreme circumstantial pressures, we are asked for forgiveness and some indulgence of judgment (EN III. 1). But Aristotle does not ask us simply to forget what the person has in fact done. The action is there, and it makes things morally different. Many of us will do something shameful if pressed hard enough; and yet the few who have the bad luck to be so pressed will be judged for their acts, while the rest of us will not. On the other hand, a person who forms bad thoughts and wishes, but never carries them into action for want of an occasion, will be judged harshly, to be sure, but not nearly as harshly as the person who actually does these acts.

We can see already that the Stoics would not be happy with this emphasis on the external. First, they are committed to denying the moral relevance of luck and external circumstance; so they will be committed to judging people for what their intentions and motives and thoughts are, quite apart from what happens out there, quite apart from all worldly conditions over

which agents do not have full control. This means that there is no moral difference at all between the criminal who never gets a chance to commit his crime and the one who does; no moral difference between ordinary people who do vile things under circumstances of extreme pressure and you and me, who never happened to be so tempted but are right now such that we would not resist any and every temptation.<sup>20</sup> The only virtue we can safely applaud is a pure error-proof virtue, virtue without any counterbalancing inner forces. (We begin to see why the Stoics want to say that the only wise person is one who never errs at all, and that all others are fools.) Similarly, the only difference between self-control and *akrasia* the Stoic can recognize is the one that is actually there in the heart: that is, frequently, a very small delicate difference in the inner psychological condition, in its balance of feelings and thoughts.<sup>21</sup> We assess the agent for her thoughts and passions, without permitting ourselves the moral comfort of insisting that all was well in the end. It becomes difficult to distinguish the person who has but masters murderous wishes from a conflicted and reluctant murderer. The boundary between agent and world, the decisive wall that for us now separates the two, is taken away: it is permitted to have no moral relevance at all.

We can go further. On the Stoic picture, what happens internally just is an action, and is assessable as such. And a virtuous or vicious act is, we recall, complete at any moment, complete at its inception in the heart. So what for Aristotle would be described as a correct action achieved with difficulty against the pressure of angry murderous desires will in Stoic terms be described as a good inner action, accompanied by an extremely vicious inner action. Cicero makes this explicit:

For just as it is a moral offense [*peccatum*] to betray one's country, to use violence against one's parents, to rob a temple, which are evils in result [*in effect*], so too to fear, to grieve, to have erotic desires are each of them a moral offense, even without any result [*sine effect*]. Truly these are of-

<sup>20</sup> There will, however, be a moral difference between the person whose bad motives are checked by good motives and the person who lacks such inhibiting motives—see chapter 12.

<sup>21</sup> A question that naturally comes up at this point is: what about the difference made by also the formation of desires and intentions themselves seem to some extent to be affected by factors we do not control. Are people who never desired to harm others, but were not so strances, any better morally than people of similar strength who actually did form such desires? This thought suggests one more reason why the Stoics wanted to insist that all who were not absolutely error-proof were fools.



fenses not in their subsequent consequences, but straight from the start. So too, the things that proceed from virtue are to be judged morally right on the basis of their first inception, not their completion. (*Fin.* 3.32)

And since virtue is not a matter of degree, but an absolute, we will find it hard to distinguish the bad inner act of the self-controlled murderer from the bad act that actually gets by into the world. A single failure in thought and passion can have, directly, the direct possible consequences for the agent's whole moral condition. If philosophy must make itself a therapy of the passion, we begin to see why this should be so: the cost of failure in passion is higher here than in any other school.

One further observation, before we examine the Stoic passions. The Stoic virtues are all forms of knowledge; the inner activity of these dispositions is some form of practical reasoning or wise thinking. This being the case, it follows that the art that pursues wisdom has the structure of an art whose activities are (once we reach a sufficiently high level) ends in themselves. Cicero reminds us that some arts, like navigation and doctoring, aim at ends that are separate from the activities of the artist and can be fully characterized without reference to his activity. In others, like dancing and acting, the art activities are themselves ends (*Fin.* III.24). Wisdom is of the latter sort. And yet, Cicero immediately reminds us, it is quite unlike all the other arts in this: that its performance is entirely unified and self-contained: each exercise of wisdom is an exercise of all virtue. Thus philosophy is not only a road to *eudaimonia*: practiced at its highest, it is our human end, and the whole of it, not simply a part. *Phronēsis*, wise and virtuous thinking, just is *eudaimonia*.<sup>22</sup>

## II

Among the most notorious and paradoxical theses in the history of philosophy is Chrysippus' thesis that the passions are forms of false judgment or false belief.<sup>23</sup> On its face this claim seems bizarre indeed. For emotions

<sup>22</sup> Plutarch, *St. Rep.* 26, 1046D = SVF III.54: Chrysippus held that "*Phronēsis* is nothing other than *eudaimonia* in and of itself, but just is *eudaimonia*."

<sup>23</sup> Chrysippus seems to have used both the word *doxa*, usually translated "belief" or "opinion," and the word *krisis*, usually translated "judgment": the latter more often in general assertions (the *pathē* are *krisēis*), the former more often in concrete definitions ("grief is a fresh *doxa* that something bad is present"). *Hypolēpsis*, "supposition," is sometimes used as well. (See, e.g., DL 7.111, where in reporting Chrysippus' view Diogenes shifts from *krisis* in the statement of the general view to *hypolēpsis* in particular examples.) Most of the

such as fear, grief, anger, pity, and erotic love seem to us (and seem to the Stoics too, when they write about them concretely) to be (as their name implies) violent motions or upheavals in the soul, quite unlike the calm graspings and placings of reason. To equate passion with belief or judgment seems, furthermore, to ignore the element of passivity that installed the term "passion" as another generic name. For judgments seem to be things that we actively make or do, not things that we suffer. In short: to feel love or fear or grief or anger is to be in a condition of tumult, violent movement, and vulnerability. Nikidion will ask: how can this condition possibly be equivalent to judging that such and such is the case?

We can readily see why the Stoics might have wished to defend this strange claim. For it helps them in no small measure to establish the necessity and efficacy of philosophy as the art of life. If passions are not subrational stirrings coming from our animal nature, but modifications of the rational faculty, then, to be moderated and eventually cured they must be approached by a therapeutic technique that uses the arts of reason. And if judgments are all that the passions are, if there is no part of them that lies outside the rational faculty, then a rational art that sufficiently modifies judgments, seeking out the correct ones and installing them in place of the false, will actually be sufficient for curing Nikidion of the ills that are caused by the passions.<sup>24</sup> False beliefs can be altogether removed, leaving no troublesome trace behind them. If, in addition, the curing of the passions (which, as we shall see, means their total extirpation) is the central task for which Nikidion requires an art of life, then philosophy, in showing that it can cure them, will establish its own practical sovereignty. So the analysis of the passions and the description of a philosophical therapy go hand in hand. Chrysippus wrote, we are told, four books on the passions. In the first three he argued for his analysis of passion and gave his accounts and definitions of the particular passions. The fourth book turned from this theoretical basis to the practice of curing. It was called the *thera-*

canonical definitions use *doxa*. The Latin sources show the same pluralism of use: *iudicium* occurs alongside both *opinio* and *opinitio*. (Cic. *TD* 3.61 uses *opinio et iudicium* in defining grief.) Since the Stoics are unusually careful to say exactly what sort of cognitive activity they have in mind, this does not cause a problem for their argument.

<sup>24</sup> Later Stoics who reject Chrysippus' view and posit a natural irrational part of the soul are led to the view that philosophy must be supplemented by music (understood in a rather non-cognitive way) which alone can tame this animal part. See especially the fragments of Diogenes of Babylon *On Music* in SVF III, pp. 221–35. Early Stoics value poetry, but on all of this see Nussbaum (1993a).

*peutikon*, the therapeutic book, and also the *ēthikon*, the one concerned with ethical practice. Clearly this book required and rested on the analysis for which the first three books had argued.<sup>25</sup>

But it is one thing to see why a certain thesis is important to a philosopher, quite another to assess its truth. A closer analysis shows, however, that the apparently strange thesis is not merely a handy theoretical tool imposed by force upon the experience of life. It is one of the most powerful candidates for truth in this area; and it is also far less counterevident than we might at first think.

These two issues—intuitive acceptability and truth—are closely linked in most contemporary ethical thought. They were also closely linked in the thought of Chrysippus. It would be surprising indeed if he had completely missed the mark where ordinary belief and experience are concerned. For Aristotle, he is constantly, deeply, and almost obsessively concerned with the close investigation of ordinary thought and language. It is clear that his book on the emotions is no exception to this general policy. Aristotle characteristically begins an inquiry with a brief dialectical summary of ordinary beliefs and sayings on a topic. Chrysippus goes further,<sup>26</sup> filling

<sup>25</sup> On the four-book structure of Chrysippus' *Peri Pathōn*, see *PHP* 5.6.45–46, 336D = *SVF* III.458, and 5.7.52, 348D = *SVF* III.460. In citing from the fourth book, Galen sometimes calls it the *therapeutikon*, sometimes the *ēthikon* (once *therapeutikon kai ēthikon*, "added on" (*epigraphomenon*) "on its own" (*idia*)). But he consistently speaks of the work as a single four-book whole, or *pragmata* (e.g., 272D); and his citations from the therapeutic surviving fragments it is difficult to see any clear difference—though presumably the final book would have included detailed material on the treatment of the passions that does not "to know all the causes" of irrational action (272D); later he says that the fourth book sets out to describe the proportion or harmony according to which the soul is said to be healthy or diseased (304D). One further remark of Galen's is probably misleading. In a different work (*De Loc. Affect.* 3.1 = *SVF* III.457) he uses Chrysippus' books to illustrate his own distinction between the *logikotera*, i.e., "those that going beyond use examine the nature of things as they are in their own being," and writings intended for use. But a Chrysippian Stoic would be unlikely to make this distinction in this sphere (cf. chapter 9.) In any case, the surviving quotations show us that the fourth book contains a lot of theory, and that the earlier books discuss the emotions in a way that is highly relevant to practice. Judging from Galen's remarks about the relative length of Chrysippus' books and his own, the *On Passions* must have been fairly long: about 250 printed pages in a standard typeface.

<sup>26</sup> Chrysippus and Aristotle seem to be close here. But I think that their reasons for interest in ordinary use are subtly different. For Chrysippus, language reveals a rational structure that exists in the universe; it is important as a sign of that independently existing reality. For

much of his four-book work with scores of observations on ordinary usage, on common expressions, on literary passages used as evidence for ordinary belief, and even on our gestures as evidence of our common conceptions. He clearly thinks that our language and our daily practices reveal truth, and that philosophical theory ignores these data at its peril. Some of the examples recorded by Galen seem tendentious or naive; many more seem, to me at least, to reveal a subtle and careful attention to the nuance of what we say and the conceptual structure revealed in what we say. And it is very clear indeed that Chrysippus thought that his theory of the passions was the one to which everyday intuitions gave strongest support. Galen sometimes objects to his arguments on the grounds that experience refutes them. But more often, and revealingly, he mocks Chrysippus for spending too much time on what non-experts and poets say, too little on the theories of understood Chrysippus' theory unless we have seen not only how it coheres with his other theories, but also how it might be defended, and commended to a non-Stoic Nikidion, on intuitive and experiential grounds.

As we have seen, there is in Greek thought about the emotions, from Plato and Aristotle straight on through Epicurus, an agreement that the emotions are not simply blind surges of affect, stirrings or sensations that are identified, and distinguished from one another, by their felt quality alone. Unlike appetites such as thirst and hunger, they have an important cognitive element: they embody ways of interpreting the world. The feelings that go with the experience of emotion are hooked up with and rest upon beliefs or judgments that are their basis or ground, in such a way that the emotion as a whole can appropriately be evaluated as true and false, and also as rational or irrational, according to our evaluation of the grounding belief. Since the belief is the ground of the feeling, the feeling, and therefore the emotion as a whole, can be modified as a modification of

Aristotle, use is itself more intimately connected with truth, since (or so I think) the reality use reveals does not exist as a set of distinct items in nature, independently of the demarcating activities of mind. However, when we remember that the Stoic universe is itself a rational animal, and that the structure revealed by *logos* is itself, in this way, a homomorphic conceptual structure or *logos* (and not only similar in structure, but the larger whole of which this *logos* is a part), the difference becomes far subtler. Neither thinker believes that the universe has a structure apart from *logos* and reason's conceptualizing activity; and this is one reason why, for both, the study of the conceptual structures of discourse is of the highest importance.

<sup>27</sup> See, e.g., *PHP* 3.5.23, 204D: Galen has so far criticized only "all the arguments that have some plausibility and do not invoke the testimony of women, non-experts, etymologies, motions of the hands, upward or downward movements of the head, or poets."



belief. We have seen how these ideas provided Aristotle with accounts of emotions like anger and pity; we have seen how they were put to work in Epicurean therapy.

Two further elements of continuity in the tradition prepare the way for Chrysippus' move. First, the beliefs on which emotions are based prominently include our evaluative beliefs; our beliefs about what is good and bad, worthwhile and worthless, helpful and noxious. To cherish something, to ascribe to it a high value, is to give oneself a basis for the response of profound joy when it is present; of fear when it is threatened; of grief when it is lost; of anger when someone else damages it; of envy when someone else has it and you don't; of pity when someone else loses such a thing through no fault of his or her own. Second, as chapter 3 argued, the evaluative beliefs on which the major emotions rest all have something in common. They all involve the ascription of a high value to vulnerable "external goods"—to items that are to some extent not in the full control of the agent, items that can be affected by happenings in the world. They presuppose, then, the non-self-sufficiency of the most valuable things (or some of them). They embody a conception of the agent's good according to which the good is not simply "at home" inside of him, but consists, instead, in a complex web of connections between the agent and unstable worldly items such as loved friends, city, possessions, the conditions of action. They presuppose that we have hostages to fortune. In this sense, we notice that there is a remarkable unity among the emotions. They share a common basis, and appear to be distinguished from one another more by circumstantial and perspectival considerations than by their grounding beliefs. What we fear for ourselves we pity when it happens to another; what we love and rejoice in today engenders fear lest fortune should remove it tomorrow; we grieve when what we fear has come to pass. When others promote the vulnerable elements of our good, we feel gratitude; the same relation to an external good gives rise to anger, should the action of others prove maleficent.

In all these cases the emotion will not, Aristotle stresses, get off the ground unless an evaluative belief ascribes not only worth, but also serious or high worth, to the uncontrolled external item. Fear requires the thought that important damages can happen to us through no fault of our own; anger, again, requires the thought that the item slighted by another is of serious value. I do not go around fearing that my coffee cup will break; I am not angry if someone takes a paper clip. I do not pity someone who has lost a toothbrush. My breakfast cereal does not fill me with joy and delight; even my morning coffee is not an object of love.

## EXTIRPATION OF THE PASSIONS

These examples suggest a further thought, one that will be exploited by Stoic therapy. The damages of fortune, when they are seen as trivial or light, and thus prove insufficient to ground an emotion, are frequently seen this way because the object damaged or promoted is itself seen, with respect to its value, as replaceable. Coffee cups and paper clips are rarely reasons for grief, because we don't care which one we use. There is a readily renewable supply, and all alike serve the function for which we value the item. If we try to imagine a case where the loss of a coffee cup would be an occasion for grief, we find ourselves imagining a case in which the particular item is endowed by the owner with a historical or sentimental value that makes it a unique particular. This suggests that the removal of the sense of particularity and specialness, in big things as well as small, might contribute to the eradication of fear, anger, and even love, should we wish to effect their eradication.<sup>28</sup>

This tradition of Greek thought about the emotions seems, so far, to be not bizarre, but intuitively quite plausible. If Chrysippus does indeed end up in a counterintuitive position, he starts from a basis that seems to articulate our intuitions about the emotions as well as any philosophical tradition; but he also makes a radical departure from it. To see what he has done, we need to distinguish four theses that are defended within this tradition about the relationship between belief or judgment and passion.

1. *Necessity.* The relevant belief<sup>29</sup> is necessary for the passion.
2. *Constituent Element.* The belief is a (necessary) constituent element in the passion.
3. *Sufficiency.* The belief is sufficient for the passion.
4. *Identity.* The belief is identical to the passion.

To be precise enough, this classification would need several refinements. First, we would need to distinguish occurrent passions from entrenched dispositional states. Stoic theory does this well, as we shall later see. Second, we would need to get clear in each case about exactly what level of belief we are working with, and about how the different levels interact. Generic beliefs that at least some external uncontrolled items have high value; more concrete beliefs that there are serious damages that I may suffer by another's agency, through no fault of my own; the very concrete belief

<sup>28</sup> For a typical example of a Stoic therapeutic exercise focusing on this idea, see Epictetus, *Enchiridion*, 3. And see also Sen. *Ep.* 63.11, cited later. There may be antecedents of this therapy in Plato's *Symposium*; see Nussbaum (1986a) chapter 6.

<sup>29</sup> Of course it may also be a complex family of beliefs.



## III

that X has wronged me in such and such a way just now—all of these are at work in the passion of anger; they need to be distinguished and their role in the passion assessed. Again, the Stoics thought carefully about this. For now, however, I shall be thinking of a specific occurrent evaluative belief (for example, "X has seriously damaged an important element of my good life just now") that is the basis for a concrete episode of passion; this specific belief of course presupposes the more general ones, and would be removed with their removal.

To put things roughly and somewhat crudely: Plato and Epicurus hold (1) and possibly none of the other theses—though their position on (2) is unclear, and Epicurus might be prepared to grant (3).<sup>30</sup> Aristotle, I have argued, holds (1) and (2). His position on (3) is unclear, but his rhetorical strategies rely on the *usual* sufficiency of belief for passion. Zeno, Chrysippus' predecessor, seems to have held (1), in a causal form that is incompatible with (2), and also (3). He says that the belief reliably causes a fluttering feeling, and that this feeling, not the belief, is what the passion itself is. He appears to deny (2); and yet there is need for caution here. For it appears that he individuates and defines passions at least partially via their causes, the beliefs; and it seems to be his view that the very same feeling not only could not be caused in another manner, but would not, if it were otherwise caused, count as that pathos.<sup>31</sup> All of these people, then, defend a close and intimate connection between passion and belief; but this connection stops short of identity.

<sup>30</sup> See also Galen *PHP*, 240D, who identifies Epicurus' position as (3) and links it with Zeno's.

<sup>31</sup> For Zeno's position, see SVF I.205–15; the relevant passages of Galen are I.209, 210. See also Galen *PHP* 4.3.1–2, 246D; 5.1.4, 292D; 4.2.6–7, 240D. Galen consistently insists on the difference between Zeno and Chrysippus. There is some evidence, on the other hand, that Zeno on occasion did identify passion and judgment—see, e.g., Cic. *TD* 3.74–75 = SVF I.212, where Zeno is said to have added "fresh" (cf. subsequent discussion) to the definition of distress as *opinio praesentis mali*. The general classification of the *pathē*, along, perhaps, with the canonical definitions, is ascribed to Zeno (and Hecato) by DL 7.110–11. Just after in his *Peri Pathōn*. "They" presumably means "Stoics"; but it is significant that Diogenes Laertius saw no significant shift of ground here. At any rate, it is clear that both Zeno and Chrysippus had "one-part" views of passion; neither recognized an independent emotional part of the soul. I do not agree with Inwood (1985) that the difference makes no difference, for there are important intuitive differences, as we shall see; and we should emphasize that to preserve intuitions was one of Chrysippus' goals and achievements.

The substantial literature on the possible differences between Zeno and Chrysippus is summarized in Inwood (1985). Some major contributions are Pohlenz (1938, 1970), Voelke (1965), Gilbert-Thirry (1977), Rist (1969), Lloyd (1978).

Now we want to know: what leads Chrysippus to take the final step?<sup>32</sup> We might have thought that the Zenonian and/or the Aristotelian position would have been sufficient to defend whatever picture of philosophical therapy the Stoics wish to defend. Now clearly Chrysippus does not ignore or deny the affective and kinetic aspects of passion—for he says that the judgment that is identical with the passion is itself a *pleonazousa hormē*, an excessive inclination.<sup>33</sup> But he wants to say that the sort of tumultuous movement it is, is a judgment; and that its seat is the rational soul. Why does he want to say this?

Here we frequently get a superficial answer. The Stoics, we are reminded, recognize only a single part to the soul, namely the rational part. They reject Plato's division of the soul into three distinct elements. Hence they have to make all psychological conditions conditions of this one element, no matter how odd or implausible this might seem.<sup>34</sup> This seems to me quite inadequate as an answer. It was not an item of unargued dogma for the Stoics that the soul has just one part; it was a conclusion, and a conclusion of arguments in moral psychology, prominently including arguments about the passions. Galen tells us that Chrysippus argued first for the existence of some *alogos dunamis*, some irrational capability, in the soul, and then went on to consider the relative merits of a view that separates passion from judgment and the view he finally adopted, arguing against a pluralist psychology and in favor of his own one-part account of passion, as the view that best explained human irrationality.<sup>35</sup> Posidonius,

<sup>32</sup> Major discussions of Chrysippus' theory include Frede (1986), Lloyd (1978), Inwood (1985); see also Pigaud (1981), and the works cited in the previous note. On Posidonius' criticisms of Chrysippus, see Kidd (1971b).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. *Plut. Mor.* 449C = SVF III.384, and especially Galen *PHP* 4.8.2–18, 240–42D = SVF III.462. Chrysippus writes as if he is explicating the traditional Zenonian definition.

<sup>34</sup> This answer is first given by Galen (drawing perhaps on Posidonius), who thinks that all intuitive evidence about the *pathē* points in the direction of the tripartite view. It recurs in many accounts. Lloyd (1978) concludes that Chrysippus could not have really had the view that emotions are simply judgments; he must have meant "judgments that lead to irrational feelings." But this seems to go against the evidence of Galen, which says that Chrysippus argued against the view that passions are things supervening on judgments and in favor of the view that they are the judgments.

<sup>35</sup> Galen, *PHP* 4.1.14ff., 4.3.1ff. Galen reproves Chrysippus for not considering Plato's view, but arguing instead only against the view that passions are irrational items that supervene on or follow on judgment. But it is not clear that we should believe this. Chrysippus may not have spent time quoting Plato; but he clearly produced, by Galen's own account, a great

a perfectly good Stoic, takes the opposite course, restoring the three parts of the soul and placing emotion in an irrational part, because he felt that this gave Stoicism its best account of human irrationality.<sup>36</sup> So what needs explaining is precisely the fact that is being invoked as an explanation—namely, why Chrysippus decides to make all *passional* states the conditions of a single part or faculty, and the same faculty that does our practical reasoning. Why does he think this the best and most plausible account?

We must begin by noting that a judgment, for the Stoics, is defined as an assent to an appearance.<sup>37</sup> In other words, it is a process that has two stages. First, it occurs to Nikidion, or strikes her, that such and such is the case. (Stoic appearances are usually propositional.) It looks to her that way, she sees things that way—but so far she hasn't really accepted it. She can now go on to accept or embrace the appearance, commit herself to it; in that case, it has become her judgment. She can also deny or repudiate it: in that case, she is judging the contradictory. Or, like the Skeptic she was in chapter 8, she can live with it without committing herself one way or the other. Recall Aristotle's similar analysis. The sun strikes Nikidion as being about a foot across.<sup>38</sup> (That's the way it looks to her, that's what she sees it as.) But if she has acquired a belief, to which she is committed, that the sun is larger than the inhabited world, she will reject the appearance. She distances herself from it, she does not accept or embrace it—though of course it may go on looking that way to her. She says to herself, "That's the way it looks to me, but of course that's not the way things really are." In this simple perceptual case there seems to be nothing odd about saying both that the appearance presents itself to her cognitive faculties and that its acceptance or rejection is the work of those very faculties. Embracing or acknowledging an appearance, committing oneself to it as true, seems to be a task that requires the discriminating power of cognition. And unless we have an anachronistic Humean picture of cognition, according to which it is motionless, performing calculations without commitment, it seems in no way strange to say that it is reason itself that reaches out and takes that

deal of intuitive and literary evidence in favor of his view and against the passions inhabit a separate irrational part. For a fine discussion of Chrysippus' use of literary examples, see Gill (1983).

<sup>36</sup> See Kidd (1977b), who, however, insists that Galen is not to be altogether trusted in his assimilation of Posidonius to Plato, and who shows that Posidonius retains many essential points of Chrysippus' view.

<sup>37</sup> See also Frede (1986).

<sup>38</sup> *Insomn.* 460b19. On *phantasia* and belief, and Aristotle on the emotions of animals, see chapters 3 and 8, and also Sorabji (1993).

appearance to itself, saying, so to speak, "Yes, that's the one I'll have. That's the way things are." The classic way of distinguishing humans from other animals, from Aristotle on, is, in fact, to point to the fact that animals just move in the way appearances cause them, without making judgments.<sup>39</sup> They move the way things strike them, without commitment. The extra element of selection, recognition, and commitment that sets us apart from the beasts is taken to be the contribution of reason. In fact, we might say that this is paradigmatically what reason is: that faculty in virtue of which we commit ourselves to a view of the way things are.

Let us now examine a different case.<sup>40</sup> A person Nikidion loves very much has died. It strikes her, it appears to her, that something of enormous and irreplaceable value that was there a short time ago is there in her life no longer. If we want to display the appearance pictorially—a conception of appearing that some Stoic texts occasionally suggest—we might think of a stretch of daily life with a big empty space in it, the space that the loved person used to fill by his presence. In fact, the representation of this evaluative proposition, properly done, might require a whole series of picturings, as she would notice the person's absence in every corner of her existence,<sup>41</sup> notice the breaking of a thousand delicate and barely perceptible threads. Another sort of picturing would also be possible: she could see that wonderfully beloved face, and see it both as enormously beloved and as irrevocably cut off from her. What we must insist on, however, is that the appearance is propositional: its content is that such and such is the case; and it is evaluative. Whether pictorially displayed or not, it represents the dead person as of enormous importance, as unlike anything or anyone else in the world.<sup>42</sup>

So far, we are still at the stage of appearing. Now several things might happen. She might reject or repudiate the appearance, push it away from

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Aristotle, *EN* 1147b3–5, *Metaph.* 980b25–28. On this view of reason and belief, see also Burnyeat (1980a).

<sup>40</sup> Grief and mourning were central examples for Chrysippus—cf. *PHP* 4.7.

<sup>41</sup> I have depicted the grief as self-referential: strictly speaking, there seem to be two aspects here. I mourn the dead person both as a part of my existence and experience, and also for his own sake, mourning the loss of life and activity to him. It is not clear that the Stoics make this distinction.

<sup>42</sup> Strictly speaking, the recognition of qualitative uniqueness does not seem to be necessary—for I might believe that each and every human life is of enormous importance and value, no matter how like or unlike humans are to one another in both intrinsic and historical/relational characteristics. But the ascription of an extremely high value to a particular object is frequently connected with, and also nourished by, the thought that the object is irreplaceable.



her—if, for example, she decides that it is a nightmare or a morbid imagining. She might, if she is still a Skeptic, get herself into an attitude of complete neutrality about it, so that she neither commits herself to it nor rejects it. But suppose that she embraces it, really accepts or assents to it, someone tremendously beloved is forever lost to her comparable with emotional equanimity? Chrysippus' claim is that it is not. She cannot really perform that act of recognition without profound upheaval. Not if what she is recognizing is that proposition with all its evaluative elements. Suppose she says, quite calmly, "Yes, I know that the person I love most is dead all." (Remember Cicero's story about the father who says, on learning of his son's death, "I was already aware that I had begotten a mortal.") assenting to that proposition. She may be saying the words, but there is something in her that is resisting it.<sup>43</sup> Or if she is assenting to something, it is not to that same proposition. She may be assenting to something, it that a mortal human being has died: even (just possibly) to the proposition that X (the man she loves) has died; what she has not assented to is the proposition, that the person whom she loves and values above all others, has died. For to recognize this is to be violently disturbed.

Notice the crucial importance of getting clear about which proposition we have in mind here. Some of the literature about Chrysippus' view makes the salient proposition one without any evaluative element, say, "Socrates is dead." We have already seen that the beliefs or judgments that are hooked up with emotion in the pre-Stoic tradition are judgments that are value: cherishings and disvaluings of external uncontrolled items. We should now insist that the appearances that the Stoic agent either acknowledges or does not are, similarly, appearances with a marked evaluative element. To be more precise, in order to be equivalent to a passion they must have three features. First, they must make a claim about what, from the point of view of that agent, is valuable and fine, or the contrary. The

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Aristotle on the akratic: he mouths the words of the correct proposition, but doesn't really activate it in his life. He is like an actor, or like a drunk reciting the words of Empedocles. Aristotle adds that it is like this with a pupil who recites a lesson, but can't be really said to have, as yet, the relevant knowledge: it must "grow to be a part of him, and this requires time" (EN 1147a10–24).

<sup>44</sup> I do not intend to suggest that loving implies high moral evaluation, I mean only to say that it implies thinking of the object as of tremendous importance, however that importance is to be understood.

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texts speak always of the "opinion of good and bad," the "supposition of good and bad"—both in giving the general theory and in defining particular passions (e.g., SVF III.385, 386, 387, 391, 393, 394).<sup>45</sup> And we should insist here that the propositions express not simply the agent's desires and preferences, but his or her values: the scheme of ends believed choiceworthy, by which she chooses to live. Thus several texts insist that the agent not only believes that something bad is at hand, but believes that it is the sort of bad thing about which it would be right to be upset.<sup>46</sup> This added element of affirmation shows us that we are not talking about mere desiderative whim and caprice.

Second, the propositions ascribe to the item in question not only some value, but a serious or very high value (or disvalue).<sup>47</sup> Chrysippus tells us explicitly that the mistake, and the passion, come not in thinking the things in question to be good, but in thinking them to be much better than they are—in fact, to be the most important things (cf. PHP 5.5.20–22, 262D = SVF III.480; compare Galen's paraphrase, which adds the word *megista*, "greatest"—264D). Similarly, accounts of the dispositional conditions that underlie particular episodes of passion make them equivalent to a belief that something is very worth pursuing (*valde expetenda*, Cic. TD 4.26 = SVF III.427, Sen. Ep. 75.11 = SVF III.428; the Greek has *sphodra*, cf. SVF III.421), although that thing is in fact either only slightly choiceworthy or not choiceworthy at all. Again, a passage of Posidonius, reporting Chrysippus, speaks of a conviction that a thing contains a "great

<sup>45</sup> There are several roughly equivalent ways in which we could express the proposition, and its evaluative element. The definition of *lupe* (grief or distress) is "a fresh belief that a bad thing is present." This suggests that in my example the proposition about the lover's death should be, "A very horrible event is here at hand." The evaluative element would be the strong disvalue of that event. I have instead placed the evaluative element on the other side, so to speak, by attributing high positive value to the lover who is said in the proposition to be irretrievably lost. The texts insist (cf. section IV) that it should not matter which conception we adopt. For if something has a very high positive value for us we view its destruction or loss as a correspondingly bad thing. One might dispute the connection in a number of ways. For example, Epicurus would say that to value highly the life of a friend will not, in rational people, lead to the judgment that the friend's death is bad—not for him at any rate, and most people's desires.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. SVF III.391.

<sup>47</sup> Frede (1986) seems to take this element of seriousness or intensity to be not a part of the content of the proposition itself, but rather to be a way this proposition has of appearing to a certain agent. Although it is true that *phantasiai* contain more than their strictly propositional contents, the textual evidence strongly and without any exception I know of supports the view that the intensity of concern with the object is part of the propositional content.

benefit" (fr. 164 E-K). The belief that money is a good thing is said to turn into a chronic infirmity only "when one holds that money is the greatest good and even supposes that life is not worth living for the man who has lost it" (PHP 4.5.25, 264D).<sup>48</sup>

Finally, the belief must have a certain content: it must be concerned with vulnerable external things, things that can fail to be present, that can arrive by surprise, that are not fully under our control. This is common ground between Chrysippus and the pre-Stoic tradition. The Stoics do not explicitly include this in their definitions, though they repeatedly underline the connection between passion and a concern with external goods, and emphasize that a person who ceases to be concerned with externals will be free of passion. For this failure to be explicit they are reproached by Posidonius, who points out that the wise man ascribes the highest possible value to his wisdom, and yet does not feel fear for its loss, longing for its presence, and so forth (fr. 164 E-K, 266D).<sup>49</sup> Again, sometimes the texts speak as if the relevant group of judgments was identified by its falsity, relative to Stoic moral theory. This seems to be a strategic error too, since the Stoics claim to be able to persuade pupils like Nikidion, who start out with another conception of good. The passion-beliefs all share, as the more concrete definitions make clear, a subject matter; and they can and should be identified and defined with reference to that subject matter. This would answer Posidonius' worry and make more conspicuous the motivations behind the theory and the call for extirpation.

So far we have gotten only to thesis 3 on our list. We have argued that a judgment is an embracing of an appearing proposition; and that the real client for being moved emotionally. It entails the emotion; if emotion is sufficient then we are entitled to say that real acknowledgment of the proposition is not (or not yet) there. But all of this—though it goes against Aristotle's claim that the belief-component of the emotion is independent of the feeling—could, apparently, be satisfied by a causal picture like Zeno's, in which the belief of necessity produces the passion, which is still seen as a distinct item. We still need to know, then, what leads Chrysippus to make

<sup>48</sup> This is actually Galen, imagining how Chrysippus would develop his view further in reply to objections. He is staying close to Posidonius' account of the orthodox Stoic view.

<sup>49</sup> Posidonius also considers the attitude of the person who is making progress toward wisdom. Here it is less obvious that the attitude in question could not be a *pathos*—given the elusive character of wisdom and the absence of sufficient conditions for its acquisition. But it is clear that the Stoics are committed to saying that it is not.

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the emotion itself a function of reason, and to make it identical with the assent that is the judgment.

First, then, why should the upheaval be seen as a state of reason? Well, what is it that gets the terrible shock of grief? Nikidion thinks of the person she loves—she embraces in her mind the fact that that extraordinary person will never be with her again—and she is shaken. Where, she asks herself? Is the grief fluttering off in her ear, or a trembling in her stomach? Is it a movement in some animal appetitive nature that she shares with rabbits and birds?<sup>50</sup> No, these answers seem wrong. It seems clear that we don't want to relegate the grief itself to such trivial and undignified seats as these. We want to give it a seat that is specifically human, and discerning enough, complex enough, to house such a complex and evaluatively discriminating response. What part of me, she asks, is worthy of grieving for the person I love? Perhaps we could invent a special emotional part of the soul to house it. But in order to be capable of housing it, this part would have to be capable of conceiving of the beloved person in all his beauty and specialness; of comprehending and responding to the evaluative proposition on which the grief is based, even of accepting it. It would have to be able to know and properly estimate the richness of their love for each other; to insist on the tremendous importance of that love, even in the face of Stoic arguments belittling it; and so forth.<sup>51</sup> But then it will need to be very much like reason: capable of the same acts of selection, evaluation, and vision that are usually taken to be the works of reason. If then begins to seem peculiar to redouble faculties. If we have a faculty on hand that can perform this job, we surely would do best to make the grief a state of that same faculty. The point is, once we make the emotions as cognitive and selective as Chrysippus, building on his tradition, argued that they must be, Reason looks like just the place to house them.

But, one might object, this is not yet clear. For if it is true that emotion's

<sup>50</sup> Galen and Posidonius treat it as obvious that animals and young children have the same *pathē* that we do, and they use this as a point against Chrysippus. I believe that they are correct only insofar as it would also be correct to ascribe to children and to certain animals complex cognitive attitudes. Seneca and other Chrysippians regard it as obvious that animals do not have full-fledged passions: see, e.g., fr. 1.3.6–8.

<sup>51</sup> Chrysippus stressed this element of deliberate evaluation and even deliberate rejection of contrary arguments, in distinguishing between *pathē* and other errors of reason. Passion, of course, it is not because some force just blows them away. They are led by a contrary view of things, they (often consciously) disobey reason—something that the tripartite people often say, but which their view cannot explain, since it makes the "disobeying" part too brutish even to understand the opposing argument. Cf. PHP 4.2 and 4.6, *passim*.



seat must be capable of many cognitive operations, there also seems to be an affective side to emotion that we have difficulty housing in the soul's rational part. We have already begun to respond to this point by stressing the fact that Stoic reason is dynamic, not static. It moves, embraces, refuses. It can move rapidly or slowly; it can move directly or with hesitation. We have imagined it entertaining the appearance of the loved person's death and then, so to speak, rushing toward it, opening itself to take it in. So why would a faculty this dynamic, this versatile, be unable to house, as well, the disorderly motions of the ensuing grief? Sophocles' Creon, confronted by the death of his only son, says, "I accept this knowledge and am shaken in my reason" (*Antigone* 1095). What Chrysippus wants us to see is that this can happen; reason is capable of that. But if this is so, why push off the affect into some corner of the soul more brutish, less discriminating, less closely connected with the cognitive and receptive processes that we have seen to be involved in grieving? "I recognize this and (incidentally) I am shaken in my gut." Here we lose the close connection between the recognition and the being shaken that Chrysippus' analysis, and Creon's speech, give us. No, we want to say, the recognizing and the upheaval belong to one and the same part of her, the part with which she makes sense of the world.

I have spoken of the recognition and the "ensuing" upheaval. The final stage in Chrysippus' argument is to tell us that this distinction is wrong and misleading. When Niktion grieves, she does not first of all coolly embrace the proposition, "My wonderful lover is dead," and then set about grieving. No, the real, full recognition of that dreadful event is the upheaval. It is like putting your hand straight down on the sharp point of a nail. The baneful appearance sits there, asking her what she is going to do about it. If she goes up to embrace it, if she takes it into herself, opens herself to receive it, she is at that very moment putting the world's knife into her own insides.<sup>52</sup> That's not preparation for upheaval, that's upheaval itself. That very act of assent is itself a wrenching, tearing violation of her self-sufficiency and her undisturbed condition. The passion is a "very violent motion" that carries us along, "pushing us violently" toward action (*SVF* III.390). But this does not imply that it is not a form of recognition. For, as Chrysippus insists, "It is belief itself that contains the disorderly kinetic element" (*SVF* III.394). Knowing can itself be violent.

Seneca adds a useful distinction. Sometimes, he says, the presence of an appearance might evoke a reaction even when the appearance itself is not accepted or taken in, but, so to speak, just strikes against your surface.

<sup>52</sup> For related imagery in Seneca, see chapter 12.

Sudden pallor, a leap of the heart, sexual excitation—all of these bodily movements may be caused by the appearance alone, without assent or judgment.<sup>53</sup> But these are not passions: these are mere bodily movements.<sup>54</sup> It is only when the appearance has been allowed in, that we get—in the very act of recognition—the tumult of the mind that is the passion (*Ir.* 2.3).

In short: we have here a dynamic conception of practical knowing or judging, in which a judgment is not a cool inert act of intellect set over against a proposition, but an acknowledgment, with the core of my being, that such and such is the case. To acknowledge a proposition is to realize in one's being its full significance, to take it in and be changed by it. On this conception—which seems to me to be a powerful one—there is every reason to insist that passion and judgment do not come apart: rather, the passion is itself a certain sort of assent or acknowledgment: an acknowledgment of the tremendously high importance of something beyond my control, an acknowledgment appropriately called "excessive" because it transgresses the limits prescribed by right reason for our relation to things external.<sup>55</sup>

Chrysippus adds one further significant element to his account. The judgment, to be equivalent to a passion,<sup>56</sup> must be *prosphaton*: not yet spoiled or digested, "fresh." This word, used frequently of food, and also of corpses newly dead,<sup>57</sup> implies that no decomposition has yet set in—the item in question still has its pristine character. The point of this seems to be to allow for certain sorts of affective distancing, especially over time, compatibly with the retention of the same belief or judgment. When the person Niktion is mourning has been dead for a long time, she will no longer have the violent recognition of his death that is identical with grief. Without the supplement, Chrysippus would then have been required to say that she no longer judges or believes that he is dead; or, equally implausible, that this

<sup>53</sup> See chapter 3 on Aristotle's *MA* chapter 11.

<sup>54</sup> For a convincing defense of the view that Seneca is an orthodox Chrysippian on this point, see Inwood (1993).

<sup>55</sup> For this interpretation of "excessive" as "transgressing the limits set by right reason," see also Inwood (1985), with a convincing discussion of Chrysippus' use of the phrase *logon summetra*, the balance or commensurateness of reason.

<sup>56</sup> Strictly speaking, "freshness" is involved in the definitions only of passions relating to the present, not the future: *SVF* III.391.

<sup>57</sup> Representative examples: of corpses, *Hom. Il.* 24.757, *Hdt.* 2.89, 2.121–24; of food and drink, *Ar. HA* 520b31, *PA* 675b32; *Ps.-Ar. Probl.* 924b28; of actions and events, *As. Cho.* 804, *Soph. fr.* 130, *Ar. HA* 509b31, *GA* 764a6, *Rhet.* 1375b27, 1376a7, *Ps.-Ar. Probl.* 907b25; of emotions and thoughts, *Lys.* 18.19, *Ar. EE* 1237a24, *MM* 1203b4; and see [LSJ] s.v.

cool and distant recognition is itself identical with grief. He does not wish to say either of these things. For there are many ways to acknowledge an irreplaceable loss, and over time those ways naturally transform themselves. When, like food, the loss has been assimilated or digested, she will still have the same judgment and the same recognition, but it seems wrong to say that she still has the passion. Loss of "freshness" is usually portrayed in the texts as a temporal matter; though we might be able to imagine other factors that might distance her from passion without entailing a refusal to recognize or admit the proposition.

It may seem that here Chrysippus gives the game away. For isn't he admitting after all that there is something more to grieving than believing that . . . ? And isn't this something, this "freshness," an irrational element that has nothing to do itself with grieving? Yes, and no. Yes, having a certain belief is not, we now see, sufficient for grieving (though we should remember that Chrysippus advances this point with uncharacteristic tentativeness, saying that the phenomenon is "hard to understand" [*asullogiston*]). No, because the difference is itself a cognitive difference—a difference in the way that proposition is active in, received by, the self; above all, a difference in its relation to other propositions. The "fresh" acceptance is something rearing and wrenching. Since it concerns her deepest values and projects, it upsets everything in me, all the cognitive structures of hope, cherishing, and expectation that she has built up around those values.<sup>58</sup> But when the proposition has been there for a long time, when the element of surprise and tearing is gone, it has lost its extreme sharpness, its intrusive cutting edge, since she has by that time adjusted her life and the rest of her beliefs to fit with it. It does not assault the other beliefs, it sits alongside of them. For example, she doesn't any longer look forward to happy times that she will share with her lover. She doesn't have the belief that he will be with her tonight, or expect to see his face when she opens the door. These, however, are cognitive changes. It was the discrepancy of the death-proposition with so many others that gave grief its bite, and time removes this discrepancy—not because the grief-proposition changes, but because other related propositions change. As Chrysippus says in this very passage, "Things don't present the same appearances."<sup>59</sup>

<sup>58</sup> This shows us a further reason why a Stoic will not grieve: through the practice of *praemeditatio* she will have accepted bad things before they happen and will adjust her hopes and expectations to the knowledge of life's tremendous uncertainty. For just a few of the hundreds of references to this technique in Stoic texts, see Cic. *TD* 3.29–34, 4.57; Epict. *Disc.* 1.4.20; *Ench.* 21; Sen. *Ep.* 4.6; 14.3; etc.

<sup>59</sup> SVF III.466 = Galen *PHP* 4.7.12ff. Chrysippus says that the opinion that remains is that

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Chrysippus' picture has interesting implications for the analysis of ethical conflict. On the parts-of-the-soul view, conflict is viewed as a struggle between two forces, different in character and simultaneously active within the soul. Reason leads this way, desire pushes that way. The outcome may or may not be a matter of sheer strength; what is crucial is that both forces are active together, until one wins. Suppose that Nikiðion is mourning for the person she loves; suppose she is also, at the same time, striving to be a good Stoic, distancing herself from grief with the thought that virtue is sufficient for happiness. The parts view will say that her irrational element is doing the grieving, while the rational part is thinking philosophical thoughts and endeavoring to restrain her from grief. Chrysippus would urge us, instead, to regard the conflict as an oscillation of the whole soul between recognition and denial. He speaks of the soul "turning and shifting as a whole," "not the conflict and civil war of two parts, but the turning of a single reason in two different directions, which escapes our notice on

"a bad thing is present"—i.e., I still judge the death to be a bad thing, not just to have been at one time a bad thing. (See also Cicero's explanation of *retentis* at *TD* 3.74ff.) Freshness figures only in the definitions of the present passions. Inwood connects loss of freshness with *extinguishing* this; and we have seen that that opinion is really a part of the evaluative content of the main proposition.

Two further suggestions have now been made in Duncan (1991), a very subtle treatment of this entire topic. First, he notes that when a bad event such as a death is recent, many give in occasions for thinking about it. This seems true, but not likely to be an explanation of Stoic "freshness," which has to concern some change in the way the proposition itself strikes me, not just the number of times it strikes me. Duncan's second suggestion is, however, a valuable alternative to my interpretation. He points out that over time, as memory fades, the particular value my lover (for example) had for me becomes vague, and the corresponding propositional appearances likewise. "Particular experiences, we claimed, gave rise to particular types of valuations perhaps fades for want of sustenance." He adds that, when memory brings back that full particularity, we are often thrown back into "the pronounced disorder of our initial grief."

Finally, in my 1993 Gifford Lectures (Nussbaum, forthcoming a), developing a quasi-Stoic theory in my own way, I argue that over time the proposition alters with respect to its eudaimonistic content, as I reshape my life and goals. It was once true that "a person who is absolutely central to my life has died." Over time, the centrality shifts into the past tense, as I find myself able to go on living without that person, and adopt other attachments. Studies of time is usually connected to a failure to reformulate a conception of what is most important in one's life: the person remains fixed on the lost object as still of central, even paramount, importance for her entire life.



account of the sharpness and swiftness of the change" (SVF III.459 = *Plut. Vit. Mor.* 441C, 441F).<sup>60</sup> At one moment, she assents (her whole being assents) to the idea that an irreplaceable wonderful person has departed from her life. At another moment, she distances herself from that knowledge, saying, "No, you will find someone else." Or, "that is just one person like many others." Or, in the words of Seneca: "You have buried the one you love; go look for someone to love. It is better to replace your love than to weep for him" (*Ep.* 63.11). Then the thought of her lover, with his particular eyes, his ways of moving and talking, overwhelms her, and she assents, once again, to the thought that something has gone from her life and that she can never replace. Chrysippus claims that this story of oscillation and shifting perspective is a more accurate account of the inner life of mourning than the story of battle and struggle. The oscillation may of course be extremely rapid; his point is that in this rhythm of embracing and denial, this uneven intermittance of vision, we have a more accurate analysis of the struggle of mourning than the parts model can provide. When she denies the evaluative proposition about her lover's specialness, at that moment she really is not grieving. When she is fully acknowledging that irreplaceability, she is not at the same time committing herself to a Stoic view of the good. We cannot fully comprehend the complex agony of these conflicts if we downplay their cognitive content, thinking in terms of contending forces. They must be seen as urgent struggles of reason with itself concerning what is valuable and fine in the universe, concerning nothing less than how to imagine the world. To struggle against grief is to strive toward a different view of the universe, in which that face does not appear, luminous and wonderful, on every path; in which places, no longer seen as habitations for that particular form, flatten out and lose their agonizing sharpness.

The picture of oscillation can explain one further feature of the experience of mourning that the parts model fails to notice. In my example, the thought of the Stoic attitude toward loss and the relapse into grief were not accidentally connected; one can be seen to have been, in a strange way, the cause of the other. It was the fact that Nikidion noticed herself looking for someone else to love—she caught herself saying Seneca's cold words about replacing—that threw her back, so to speak, into the arms of her grief. It was the cognitive content of one picture that reminded her violently of the

<sup>60</sup> For an excellent treatment of this part of Chrysippus' view, with reference to his interpretation of Euripides' *Medea*, see Gill (1983); see also Campbell (1985). For this interpretation of Euripides' *Medea*'s conflict, see also Epicet. *Disc.* 1.28.7.

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opposing picture: the very suggestion of other replacements that prompted the return of that one face—as the ebbing tide is followed inexorably by the flood. The parts model cannot explain this rhythm, except to say that sometimes one force, sometimes the other, wins the upper hand. Chrysippus' view strikingly anticipates the account of mourning in Proust, when it suggests that the explanatory connections are tighter, and work through the very cognitive content of the opposing pictures. Just as it is the thought of making love with other women that awakens Marcel's grief and love for Albertine, until that love, like a raging lion, takes over the heart with its own violent view of the world, so here it is the vision of undifferentiated flatness that summons the vision of the single point, which returns with triumphant force as, in pain, she embraces it.

Notice that we have here, subtly delineated, two conceptions of mourning: the mourning of time, which is compatible with the retention of recognition and acknowledgment, and the mourning of denial, which cuts short the natural process of grief's digestion by veering over to a different view of the world. If Nikidion mourns in the first way, the way most people mourn, she will find her grief diminishing gradually, as her judgment loses its "freshness." She will eventually stop grieving altogether, but she will continue to retain the very same judgment.<sup>61</sup> She never tells herself that the person who died was not uniquely beloved. She never alters her fundamental commitment to that love. She may in time find another love; but she will not for that reason give up her thought that the first person was unique and irreplaceable; she will not go over to Seneca's flattened view, and she will probably continue to find it a shocking view. This means that she will be likely to see her new love, too, as a unique and irreplaceable individual, qualitatively distinct from the other, and indeed from all other people in the universe. So she will still be loving in a way that leaves her vulnerable to loss in the future. Because she has not altered her judgments, she remains the sort of person for whom grief is possible and natural. If she mourns in the second way, the way described in my example, the extinction of grief is the result of a more fundamental restructuring of her cognitive commitments. The grief is extinguished by the refusal of the evaluative commitment and the acceptance of a contradictory proposition. By the time that grief is gone, she will have denied the value of something she once valued supremely; and her attitude to a new love can hardly fail to be different in

<sup>61</sup> If we accept Duncan's proposal, however (see n. 59), the judgment will remain the same only in its general outlines, and will shift in its degree of concreteness. If we accept my Gifford Lecture proposal, the tenses in a part of the judgment will shift.

consequence. (Proust, mourning in the second way, comes to understand that each beloved woman is simply an instantiation of the "general form" of his needs and desires, and that love has, really, nothing to do with the individuating qualities of the loved one.) She will be removed in a global way, from the possibility of future grief. As Chrysippus would say (recommending the second way),<sup>62</sup> she will be that much closer to being really cured. We shall shortly see how he argues for the second way.

## IV

As we by now expect, the Stoic passions will be very close to one another, resting, as they all do, on some kind of high evaluation of externals. And they are classified accordingly in the formal definitional accounts that become canonical in the school, with reference to two distinctions: the distinction between good and bad, and the distinction between present and the future, as these opposites figure in the propositions to whose content passion is a response.<sup>63</sup> Thus, there are four basic emotions: (1) judgment that what is presently at hand is good: called delight (*hēdonē*); (2) judgment that something still in the future is good or valuable: called longing or appetite (*epithumia*); (3) judgment that what is presently at hand is bad: called distress (*lupē*); and (4) judgment that what is still in the future is bad: called fear (*phobos*).<sup>64</sup> (Note that to recognize that a possible or future

<sup>62</sup> Chrysippus suggests, however, that the two sorts of mourning can be connected: for when grief has lost freshness one may also hope that "reason will make its way in and take up SVF III.467.

<sup>63</sup> There is some evidence that the Stoics (or some of them) regarded the two future emotions as prior in some way: they "lead off" (*prohēgēsthai*); the present species are the "subsequent" responses to the results of our longings and fears, "pleasure occurring when we get what we desire or escape what we try to avoid and pain when we miss what we desire or run into what we fear" (see Arius Didymus in Stob. *Ecl.* 2.88–89, translated and discussed in Inwood [1995] 146). Epictetus makes a similar remark about the relationship among the four, though without any claim of priority. The claim seems to be (*pace* Inwood) no more than a straightforward remark about temporal sequence: for any imagined good or bad event (relative to my scheme of values) it will be in the future for me, and so an object of fear or longing, before it is (if it ever is) in the present for me.

<sup>64</sup> I have used "delight" and "distress" to translate *hēdonē* and *lupē*, rather than the more obvious "pleasure" and "pain." I have done so because these are genera that have as their species only specifically human emotions, and not the bodily feelings and reactions that we share with animals. I believe that the Stoics were not giving a surprising analysis of bodily feeling, or denying that animals feel simple bodily pleasures and pains, such as thirst and

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item is good or valuable is *ipso facto* to reach out for it; that's what it is really to have that recognition.) There are in each case numerous sub-species, depending upon the specific subject matter of the content of the proposition. Pity is distress at the undeserved sufferings of another; envy is distress at the good fortunes of another, viewed as a bad thing for me; mourning is defined as distress at the untimely death of a beloved person; and so forth.<sup>65</sup>

In some cases as well, we find the definition mentioning the specific kinetic character of the recognition or judgment: depression (*achthos*) is a distress "that weighs us down"; exasperation (*enochlēsis*) is "a distress that coops us up and makes us feel that we haven't got enough room"; and prevents us from seeing what is at hand" (DL 7.112 = SVF III.412; cf. Andron. in SVF III.414). These wonderful phenomenological descriptions show us that the Stoics are not neglecting the way passions feel. What they insist is that, in each case, the thing that feels like this is an act of assent or acknowledgment. Some recognitions feel like embracing a nail; others like rubbing yourself across a rough, grating surface; other propositions "cut" differently, so other acceptances have a different phenomenological content.

These emotions, we have said, are concrete episodes of passion, to be identified with highly specific evaluative beliefs about one's situation. But we have also said that the Stoics recognize the importance of more general beliefs in generating the passions: the entrenched beliefs about the value of certain sorts of externals that, internalized in a person's ongoing concep-

hunger. They were using these words in a rather special sense, for want of any better generic words. Cicero remarks on this double use at *Fin.* 3.35: "what, giving a single name to both a bodily and a psychological phenomenon, they call *hēdonē*." Cicero himself removes the ambiguity where *lupē* is concerned, using *aegritudo* rather than *dolor* for the emotion *gēnē*. In the case of *hēdonē*, he is again at pains to indicate that it is not the ordinary sense of *voluptas* that is meant here; he speaks of *voluptas gestiens, id est praeter modum elata laetitia* (TD 3.24). At other times he simply uses *laetitia* (4.14). On the double sense of *voluptas*, see also Sen. *Ep.* 59.1.

<sup>65</sup> For the canonical definitions, see DL 7.110–14; Cic. TD 4.14–22; Andronicus *Peri Pathōn* 2–5 = SVF III.397, 401, 409, 414. The reader of these lists will be struck by the prevalence of terms designating angry and hostile feelings. Under *lupē* we find jealousy, envy, spite, annoyance; under longing, we find hatred, love of quarreling, anger (*orgē*), with (*mēns*), resentment—and only two other species. Even under delight we find hostility: one of the four species mentioned is malevolent joy at another's sufferings, *epichairekakia*. If one were to inquire into the motivations behind the Stoic condemnation of the passions on the basis of these lists alone, one would have to conclude that worries about malice and anger are central. The rest of the evidence confirms this.



tion of value, are the stable basis for concrete outbursts of passion. This level of belief figures, as well, in their formal theory, which here relies explicitly on the medical analogy. The soul of an ordinary person, says Chrysippus, is like a body that is prone to various diseases, some large, some small, which may arise from chance causes (*PHP* 5.23, 294D). These diseases are diseased conditions of belief. A *nosēma* or chronic illness of the soul is a stable condition of the personality that consists in accepting a value-judgment that leaves its holder susceptible to passions. It is defined as "a belief in the desirability of something that gets strengthened into a disposition [*hexis*] and hardens, according to which they take things that are not choiceworthy to be strongly choiceworthy" (Stob. *Ecl.* 2.93.1 = *SVF* III.421; cf. *DL* 7.122). The belief that money is extremely important, the belief that passionate love is extremely important, these would be *nosēmata*.<sup>66</sup> So too, presumably, would be the more concrete belief that X is extremely important—an entrenched belief that could become the basis for a concrete episode of love, fear, or grief. Chrysippus added that when such an illness is deeply enough entrenched and generates psychological weakness, we should call the condition of *nosēma* plus weakness an *ar-rhostēma*, or infirmity.<sup>67</sup>

What this schema implies, among other things, is that (if we confine ourselves to the big generic categories and some especially prominent subspecies) Nikidion cannot have one emotion without letting herself in for many others: perhaps even, given the fullness of time, for all the others. Once she has hostages to fortune, the very course of life will bring her now to grief, now into fear, now into intense joy. "Those same things in whose presence we experience distress are objects of fear when they are impending and approaching" (Cic. *TD* 3.14; cf. 4.8). "If the wise man should be open to distress, he would also be open to anger . . . and also to pity and envy" (3.19–20). "Where you take greatest joy you will also have the greatest fear." Just as there is a unity among the virtues, all being forms of correct

<sup>66</sup> Examples in Diogenes Laertius are love of fame and love of pleasure. Stobaeus adds love of women, love of wine, love of money—and also the hardeds corresponding to each of these. <sup>67</sup> One further category is *eumptōsia*, or susceptibility to a particular passion. Examples given include irascibility, enviousness, fearfulness. It is not entirely clear how these tendencies are supposed to be related to the beliefs that are the *nosēmata*. I shall not discuss here the problems raised by Cicero's confused and careless account of these categories at *TD* 4.23ff. He expresses irritation with Chrysippus' extended probing of the medical analogy (*inimium opere consistitur*, 4.23), and concludes that we may neglect the fine points of the medical analogy and occupy ourselves with the main outlines of the argument. This leads him into confusion.

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apprehension of the self-sufficient good, just so there is a unity to the passions—and also to their underlying dispositional states. But this means, too, that there is a unity to the cure of the passions. "You will cease to fear, if you cease to hope. . . . Both belong to a soul that is hanging in suspense, to a soul that is made anxious by concern with the future" (*Sen. Ep.* 5.7–8). The world's vulnerable gifts, cherished, give rise to the passion-ate life; despaired, to a life of calm. "What fortune does not give, she does not take away" (*Sen. Ep.* 59.18).

## V

The Stoics teach Nikidion that the passions should be not moderated but extirpated. Indeed, they view this as one of the greatest differences between their therapeutic teaching and that of their Aristotelian/Peripatetic rivals. "It is often asked," writes Seneca, "whether it is better to have moderate passions or none. Our people drive out the passions altogether [*expellant*], the Peripatetics moderate them" (*Ep.* 116.1 = *SVF* III.443). They must be pulled out root and branch (Lactantius, *SVF* III.444, 447). We must, that is, not only cut out the external manifestation but also tear out the roots of the passion that go deep into the soul (Cic. *TD* 3.13ff.; cf. 61–63). Since they are beliefs, and not organic parts of our innate constitution, they can be so extirpated (3.31, etc.). Indeed, nature herself demands their removal, saying, "What is all this? I brought you into the world without longing, without fear, without religious anxiety, without treachery and these other plagues; leave the way you came in" (*Sen. Ep.* 22.15).<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> The passions are present in almost all human beings. The Stoics must have a good explanation for this, since they deny their natural origin and their presence in animals and children. Chrysippus apparently offered two explanations for the prevalence of error: (1) 7.89 = *SVF* III.228; *PHP* 5.5.12–20, 320D = *SVF* III.229a. He seems to have granted that even if children were raised by a philosopher and never saw or heard any examples of vice, nonetheless they would not necessarily turn out philosophers in the end. One reason for this is "the conversation of most men" (*PHP*, cf. *DL*, "the conversation of those around them"). Here presumably Chrysippus is envisaging a situation in which the child, while without system that grounds the passions. A child whose only conversation was with a philosopher and who was without paradigms of such viciousness as exclusive love and concern (these two requirements would be hard to combine) might escape. (For this explanation, see also *Sen. Ep.* 115.11–12 = *SVF* III.231; *Sen. Ep.* 94.53 = *SVF* III.232; and *SVF* III.233–35.) The second explanation, as stated in the sources, is obscure. Diogenes Laertius says "through the persuasiveness of external things"; Galen, "through the persuasiveness of appearances," and

So the Stoic does not hesitate to describe the wise person as totally free from passion (*apathēs*; cf. DL 7.117). Free, that is, from fear, distress, pity, hope, anger, jealousy, passionate love, intense joy, and all of the many relatives and subspecies of these.<sup>69</sup> Free, as Seneca etymologizes, from all is totally self-sufficient. "Distress never befalls [her]: [her] soul is serene, and nothing can happen that would cloud it" (*Clem.* 2.5.4; cf. DL 7.118, *Cic. TD* 4.10ff.). External happenings merely graze the surface of her mind (Sen. *Ep.* 72). Indeed, her spirit is "like the country on the other side of the moon: it is always calm there" (*Ep.* 59.16). Our task must now be to understand the reasons for this extreme view of the goal of therapy. What, then, could possibly persuade Nikidion to take up this militant and obsessive opposition to the passions? Let us pursue this question by imagining her an Aristotelian; for it is the Aristotelian view that is the Stoics' primary target here, and it is that view which serves as their surrogate for the ordinary beliefs to which it is closely related.

The first thing that we must tell Nikidion is that, in Stoic terms, the judgments with which the passions are identical are *false*. Externals do not have such great value; indeed, they have no intrinsic ethical value at all. If one had only true evaluative judgments, both general and particular, one would never have any of them. This is evident from the account we have given of the Stoic theory of value. But this, in a sense, does not take us very far. For the very judgments that are false according to the Stoic theory of value are true inside the Aristotelian theory, which appears to be closer to our intuitions. So far, then, we have no reason why someone not independently convinced of the truth of Stoic theory should wish to extirpate the

elaborates, "pleasure throws forward the persuasive appearance that it is good and pain that it is bad." We must not interpret this in any way that makes use of a notion of innate or natural attraction or aversion. How, then, to grasp the cause of the appearance? (Posidonius apparently found Chrysippus unclear here.) A long passage in Chalcidius' commentary on the *Timaeus* offers an interesting and possibly correct explanation (*SVP* III.229). The idea seems to be that a new baby finds the experience of birth a painful one, on account of the sudden transition from a warm moist environment to a cold dry one. But as soon as it cries the doctor hurries to assuage it, washing it in warm water and stimulating the pleasant environment of the womb. This gives the child already the idea that in this world pain is something to be avoided and pleasure pursued. This idea is acquired so early (long before the child grasps propositional judgments) that it seems natural: things just look that way. But nonetheless, this appearance is learned, and once learned it shapes the propositions the child will form. On this topic, see also Kerferd (1978). For a different and more plausible account in Seneca, see chapter 11.

<sup>69</sup> On love and marital affection, see further in chapter 12.

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passions. And it is also clear that, although the Stoics certainly do defend their account of value with arguments (including a complete view of the universe) that are in many ways independent of their analysis of passion, they view the account of passion as offering serious support to the theory of good. One of the major reasons repeatedly adduced in favor of going over from the Aristotelian to the Stoic theory is that it will free us from the domination of our passions.<sup>70</sup> We recall that Chrysippus went to some pains to insist that his arguments could treat people who continued to cling to a false conception of good; Cicero's statements about therapy tell the same story. Indeed, Epictetus goes so far as to say that if he discovered that the belief that the external is nothing to us was false, and the arguments that support it deceptions, he would still cling to that deception, since from it he is likely to live in a smooth and undisturbed way (*Disc.* 1.4.27). We need to find out, therefore, whether the Stoics really have what they claim they have: independent arguments for extirpation, arguments that would be powerful even to an Aristotelian Nikidion.<sup>71</sup>

A second Stoic claim takes us a little further. This is that the passions are not as important as the Aristotelian thinks in motivating virtuous action. Insofar as anger is defended on the grounds that without it patriotic or other-defending action would be either non-existent or weak, the Stoics are able to answer that a healthy mind can be motivated to correct action by the thought of virtue and duty alone—indeed, that these are far more secure and reliable than the motivations that come from passion. Aristotle describes the man without anger as a man who will allow himself to be trampled down in a slavish manner, who will not fight to defend his country or those he loves. Seneca's *On Anger* (*De Ira*) vividly rebuts this contention:

"What then?" he says. "The good man will not be angry, if he sees his father slaughtered, his mother raped?" No, he will not be angry; but he will avenge them, he will protect them. Why, moreover, are you afraid that *pietas* is too slight a motivation without anger? . . . The good man will fulfill his duties undisturbed and unafraid; and he will do what is worthy of a good man in such a way so to do nothing that is unworthy of a man.

<sup>70</sup> Cic. *TD* 3 is an especially clear example of this line of argument. It is pervasive in Seneca's *Epistulae Morales* as well.

<sup>71</sup> I choose the Aristotelian position in what follows because, compared with its major philosophical rivals, it is the most committed to the positive value of items over which we do not have full control; and it is also the one that seems closest to ordinary intuitions about these values, both ancient and modern.



... My father is being slaughtered: I shall defend him. He is slaughtered: I shall pursue the murderer—because it is appropriate, not because I am in pain. (*Ir.* 1.12.1–2)

The good man's actions, he later says, are like the operations of the law: secure, constant, reliable, passionless—and reliable because passionless, and therefore maximally capable of rational self-determination (1.16.6).

This argument has something to say to Nikidion insofar as, in following Aristotle, she has built her case for the passions on their importance as forces motivating to correct action. But an Aristotelian is bound to feel at this point that the main point has been missed.<sup>72</sup> Nikidion will, first of all, dispute the Stoic claim that emotional motives are unstable and unreliable, and she will be right to ask for more and better argument here. But, more important, she will insist that the moral value of an action depends in part upon its motives and upon the other reactive feelings accompanying it; and that motives of passion are in many cases more morally valuable than motives of duty, as revealing cares and commitments that are themselves ethically valuable. As showing a recognition of the proper and high importance of certain externals. She will insist that an action, in order to be really virtuous, must not only have the same content as the virtuous man's action; it must be done in the way that the person of practical wisdom would do it, with those very motives, those very reactive feelings. The person whom Seneca describes is not only less praiseworthy than one who is moved to anger by the rape of a mother and the murder of a father; he is actually failing to perform a virtuous action. Anger is the right motive here; grief and pity will be the right accompanying reactions. Right, because these passions are acknowledgments of the importance of family love in a correct view of the good human life. So it appears that this Stoic argument, like the first, rests, after all, on the prior acceptance of a Stoic view of value, and can do little work independently of it. I shall discuss this argument further in chapter 11.

A third argument is only partially circular. It concerns the intensely painful feeling of the experience of the passions. In making the case for seeing the passions as sick conditions of the personality, their underlying dispositional bases as forms of chronic illness, the Stoics like to point out that, after all, passions are felt, more often than not, as violent pains and upheavals of the organism; moreover, the person subject to them feels herself to be in a chronic condition of weakness and lassitude. Stoic writ-

<sup>72</sup> For related argument against Kantian positions that resemble Stoicism on this point, see Blum (1980).

ings continually put before us the discomforts of anxiety, the raging disorder of anger, the agony of fear, the torments of love. Treatises on particular passions characteristically begin with a description of the painful phenomenology of the passion in question, destined to convince even those who might think the passion an appropriate response that its cost in pain and upheaval is too great to bear. Consider, for example, this description of an angry person from the opening section of Seneca's *On Anger*:

His eyes blaze and sparkle; his face is red all over as the blood surges up from the lowest depths of the heart; his lips tremble, his teeth are clenched, his hair bristles and stands on end, his forced breath makes a creaking sound, his joints make a cracking sound from twisting; he moans and bellows, his speech bursts out in hardly comprehensible words; he keeps striking his hands together and pounds the ground with his feet; his whole body is aroused, "and performs the great threats of anger." It is a disgusting and horrifying sight of swelling and distortion—I don't know whether this vice is more detestable or more hideous. (1.1.3–5)

Even the allegedly positive emotions, these writings stress, have a phenomenology of upheaval and disruption. Joy of the intense sort is experienced as a giddy inflation, a dangerous uplift that is never without the vertiginous sense that at any moment we may be dashed to the ground. It feels thin, ungrounded, terribly exposed and fragile. Love of the intensely passionate sort (as opposed to the calm affection that is aimed at friendship, which Stoics approve and foster—cf. chapter 12) feels uncertain, scary, unpredictable. And Chrysippus perceptively insists that lovers demand this element of surprise and unpredictability, rejecting a more solid relation (*SVE* III.475 = *PHP* 4.6.29, 276D). But spontaneity brings with it the possibility of upset, and therefore a continued enervating anxiety. In general, the dispositional state of a person who is prone to strong passions is a state that feels infirm, debilitated, lacking in solidity. It is the psychological analogue to the physical state of a person who is lacking in muscular tone, effete, neurasthenic. (And of course, given Stoic psychological theory, it is just such a physical state.) Epictetus tells us that this feeling of learned from philosophy that their beliefs about externals are false. They are led to seek out philosophy in the first place by "an awareness of weakness and incapacity" concerning the things that they consider most important (*Disc.* 2.1.1).

Here, I think, the Stoics begin to have a case against Nikidion's Aristotle. To some extent, it is the sort of circular argumentation already familiar to

us from the Sleepies of chapter 8. For unless Nikidion is already convinced of the ethical value of freedom from disturbance and anxiety, she will be less than overwhelmed by the obvious fact that passions are disturbing. However, the Stoics' detailed and careful work on the phenomenology of particular strong passions does forcefully remind Aristotelians of the magnitude and the terror of these disturbances of the personality. It asks them whether having these forces around, with their ability to shatter reflection, to invade and shake up other areas of life, is not too great a price to pay for the ethical satisfactions they afford. The claim that uncontrolled externals have serious ethical value was defended by the Aristotelian not with any knockdown or even by any very detailed or systematic argument, but only by pointing directly to intuitions about value that most ordinary people seem to share. Those intuitions may begin to weaken if we confront Nikidion vividly enough with the agony of passion and the disruption it leaves behind it. Especially in the case of anger—and especially when Stoic writers depict its baneful influence in the public sphere—the case for extinction made through this line of argument begins to look pretty strong. Does Nikidion want Nero to feel “appropriate” Aristotelian anger when she sees truly how ghastly a disturbance of personality anger is? Does she want leaders and wise men whose souls are always being cut through by knives, even if she does have a view of the good that endorses this agony as a correct response?

The Stoics add to this argument two others that are even more impressive. The first, an argument from integrity, contains an element of circularity, but is still powerful internally against the Aristotelian position. The second, the argument from excess, seems free of even this limited circularity. Since the deeper exploration of these arguments will be the business of chapters 11 and 12, I shall here describe them only briefly.

The argument from integrity reminds Nikidion that as an Aristotelian she herself is committed to a good life that is, for each agent, “one’s own and hard to take away” (EN 1095b25–26). She defines her selfhood, her identity, in terms of the planning and ordering of such a life. Identified with several intrinsically good ways of acting and living, and with the practical reason that arranges for the orderly enactment of these,<sup>73</sup> she views an impediment to these actions or to this reasoning as a diminution and even an invasion of her sphere of selfhood, of her person. She has, then, a deep abhorrence for the condition of slavery, a condition in which her own actions and relations are not under his own control, but are dictated by

<sup>73</sup> For the identity of person and practical reason, see EN I.7 and IX.4, 1166a16–17.

externals over which he has no control. It was on grounds such as these that Aristotle himself argued against ascribing supreme value to external items such as wealth or fame and in favor of ascribing such value to virtuous action. He too, then, wants to be “at his own disposal, not someone else’s” (Epict., *passim*, e.g. *Disc.* 4.7.9). But then doesn’t Nikidion have to grant that by opening herself up to external goods such as love and the other grounds of the passions, by valuing in such a way as to be living a passion-ate life, she opens his personality, the core of her self, to the possibility of invasion and control by the world—therefore to a possible loss of personal dignity and integrity? Distress, *λυπή*, Chrysippus etymologizes, gets its name from the verb *λυō*, “dissolve”: it is a dissolution of the entire person (Cic. *TD* 3.61; cf. Plato *Crat.* 419C). The self of the Aristotelian agent is extended out over parts of the world of change. Happenings in that world can then lacerate it, even rip it limb from limb. It can be enslaved, raped, even devoured by another. To cultivate such attachments, and the conception of the self that goes with them, is to go about inviting rape and enslavement, violations that abase and humiliate because they damage what is most intimately one’s own. This spectacle of violation is just as repellant to the Aristotelian as it is to the Stoic; but she does not move to close off that possibility. The Stoic self, by contrast, feels external happenings as things that merely graze the surface of his skin (Sen. *Ep.* 72). They can never penetrate to the core. He and his good are safely at home together. “He retreats into himself and lives with himself” (Sen. *Ep.* 9.17). As Seneca puts it, his highest good “seeks no equipment from outside. It is cultivated at home, and is entirely developed from within him. He begins to be the subject of fortune, the minute he looks for some part of himself outdoors” (*Ep.* 9.15); again, “all his good begins and ends inside him—and he can say, ‘All my goods are with me’” (9.18). Philosophy builds an impenetrable wall around the self, fortifying it against all possible assaults of fortune (*Ep.* 82.5).

To some extent, once more, this argument is circular. That is, unless Nikidion accords the enormous value the Stoics do to self-sufficiency and that it opens her to violation by fortune. Again, unless she believes that virtue is the supreme good, she will not be disposed to grant that the Stoic does have all good things at home with her. But the argument has force against the Aristotelian nonetheless. For even if she does not ascribe supreme value to self-sufficiency and freedom from external control, Nikidion does ascribe considerable value to it—far more, it appears, than is compatible with her endorsement of the passionate life. She is charged with



not having considered seriously enough the cost of her scheme of value in terms of her own conception of integrity. The suggestion is that once she considers this she will realize that the values she most seriously prizes can only be found within a Stoic life.

Finally, the Stoics charge the Aristotelian with naive optimism about the extent to which passion can be moderated and controlled. Nikidion seems to believe that a good upbringing and good habits can make love and anger into moderate, discerning, self-governing elements of good character, choosing just the occasion and degree of expression that reason also approves. The Stoics reply that if we really enter into the inner life of passion, we will understand that this is not the case. Passions have in their very nature a propensity to ungovernable excess. In a long passage of *On Passions* quoted by Galen, Chrysippus invents a vivid metaphor. When a person is walking, the impulse of the limbs can be checked and changed as he wishes. But if he is running, it is no longer this way. The movement carries itself further, by its own impetus—so that even if she should wish to stop or change course, she will be unable to. The impulse of her motion will take her on ahead of the point at which she wished to stop. That is the way passion is. The true judgments of Stoic reason, like walking, are governable by our will; anger, fear, and love, even when they can be stopped, cannot be reliably stopped at the place where virtue would want. They carry us further than our wish (*SVF* III.462 = *PHP* 4.2.13–19, 240–42D).<sup>74</sup>

There are actually two subtly different points made by this set of arguments. One concerns the internal structure of each passion taken singly. Love leads on to excessive love, anger to excessive anger. Nikidion cannot say, "I shall have anger in my life, but I shall educate myself so that anger will always manifest itself in the right way at the right time toward the right people in the right degree." No, say the Stoics, that is not possible; for the passion is tumultuous and gets ahead of your plan. As Seneca vividly expresses this point:

There are certain things whose beginnings are in our power, but which later carry us away by their force and leave us no way of turning back. As when people's bodies are dropped headlong from a height they have no control over themselves and, once thrown down, are unable to hold back or delay, but the irrevocable speed of the fall cuts away all reflection and all second thoughts, and they are not permitted to avoid arriving at a place

<sup>74</sup> Chrysippus seems to have been fond of the runner metaphor: see also *SVF* III.476 = *PHP* 4.4.24–26, 256D, and *SVF* III.478 = *PHP* 4.6.35–36, 276–78D, both direct quotations from Chrysippus.

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toward which they would once have been permitted not to go, so the soul—if it hurts itself into anger, love, and the other passions—is not allowed to check its impetus: the very weight and the downward nature of the vices must carry it away and take it to the very bottom. (*lr.* 1.7.4)

And Chrysippus has insisted that it is in the very nature of passion that those who are in it disdain planning and control. Absence of control is, indeed, a part of what people value in the experience of passion. Nikidion doesn't want lovers who obey a rational principle at all times. She likes them to fling caution to the winds, to ignore sound advice, to follow their love in an "uncalculated" spontaneous way. In short: to be carried away by love (*SVF* III.475 = *PHP* 4.6.29, 276D). Such lovers, Chrysippus says, should have as their motto the lines from Menander: "I took my good sense and stuffed it into a jar." For that is what it means to have those values and those beliefs about the good.

This rejection of limit and measure is most unfortunate in the case of anger: for the excesses of that passion are not just silly and wasteful, they are harmful, both to self and to others. In anger, Chrysippus observes:

We stand so far from ourselves and get so far outside ourselves and are so completely blind in our difficulties that sometimes if we have a sponge or some wool in our hands we raise it up and throw it, as if by doing this we could accomplish some end. If we had happened to have a knife or something else of the sort, we would have used it in the same way. (*PHP* 4.6.44–45 = *SVF* III.478)<sup>75</sup>

Seneca, too, insists that anger cannot reliably be stopped short of cruelty and murderousness (*lr.* 2.5.3). The politics of his time lend support to these contentions. Nero's career is not a reassuring spectacle for even the most determined Aristotelian.

This argument is complicated and strengthened by the view we have already mentioned, concerning the close interrelationships among the passions. Suppose Nikidion tries to reply by conceding a part of the Stoic argument. All right, she says, I shall extirpate anger, and jealousy, and any

<sup>75</sup> The extracts that Galen quotes immediately after this one are also of interest: "Often under the influence of this kind of blindness we bite our keys and thump against the door when it is not opened right away. And if we stub our toe on some stones we take our revenge on them, breaking them up and hurling them who knows where. And each time we use the most inappropriate language" (*PHP* 4.6.45, 280D). And, following this, "From such exchanges one can discern the unreasonableness of people gripped by passion, and how blinded we are in such moments, as if we had become different people from the ones who were previously exchanging reasoned arguments" (*PHP* 4.6.46, 280D).

other passions whose excessive form is likely to be especially brutal and dangerous. But surely I need not extinguish love, or pity—or perhaps even fear. For the first two may have no harmful excess; and the excess of the third is surely harmful to me alone. The Stoic now points out that this is neither plausible nor even consistent with Nikidion's own position. The very same evaluations that ground one group of passions ground—given a change of circumstances or a different temporal perspective—the others as well. She cannot love without being liable to hate and anger; the others as extraordinarily lucky she cannot love without actual hate and anger. For her love may have an obstacle; another person may take from her the one she cherishes; and then the love itself provides anger with most exquisite fuel. Nor can she be the sort of person who feels intense joy without being frequently immobilized and tormented by fear; without sometimes suffering all the agonies of grief. Seneca writes to Nero reproving the emotion of a moral and political error, she had better reflect further on the connections between that emotion and murderous rage. She will find them if she looks.

These seem to me to be the most powerful of the Stoic arguments against Aristotelians. For they tell them that they cannot have forms of evaluation and action that they cherish, without committing themselves to what they themselves abhor. If there is any argument that would persuade those among us who cherish our passions to rethink those commitments—to persuade Nikidion if she considers turning from Aristotle to the Stoic way—it would, I believe, be the argument that it is only in the Stoic life of self-containment that we can have stable gentleness and beneficence, the avoidance of terrible acts. ("Wise men are harmless: for they do no harm, either to others or to themselves" [DL 7.123].) I shall therefore devote chapters 11 and 12 to the further exploration of these claims.

## V1

What is Nikidion left with, if she completes the Stoic therapy? As far as the passions themselves go, she has, as Zeno put it, the scars of her former condition, though the wound itself is closed (*Ir.* 1.16.7). Seneca interprets this to mean that she will "feel certain suggestions and shadows of the passions, but from the passions themselves [s]he will be entirely free" (*Ir.* 1.16.7).<sup>76</sup> She will, on the other hand, be permitted to keep three so-called

<sup>76</sup> These scars and shadows will include, presumably, the natural animal responses that are

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affective responses (cf. DL 7.115 = *SVF* III.431; Cic. *TiD* 4.12–14 = *SVF* III.438). These items, called *eupatheiai*, are not passions and are not identified with any high evaluation of externals. But they are motivations that will help Nikidion steer her way among things indifferent. There is no good affective form corresponding to distress: in other words, no good way to register negatively the presence of a bad state of affairs. A response of prudent caution (*eulabeia*) is, however, approved toward future negative possibilities. In other words, without ascribing to externals any intrinsic value at all, while keeping one's responses exactly in accordance with reason's judgment about their value,<sup>77</sup> one can still appropriately be motivated to avoid death and other dispreferred indifferents. If they come, one will not mind; but one can sensibly avoid them. Toward their future opposites one can move under the guidance of rational wish (*boulêsis*).<sup>78</sup> And finally, if the good externals should arrive as one wishes, Nikidion is permitted to have a certain sort of joy (*chara*), namely the sort that is defined as "rational uplift" (*eulogos eparxis*).

So it is a further point in the Stoic battle against Aristotelianism to insist that they have not done away with the thing that people value most in the emotional life. There is joy here; joy without enervating uncertainty, joy without fear and grief, a joy that really does move and lift up the heart. "Do you think that I am now taking many pleasures from you," Seneca asks Lucilius,

when I remove things that come by chance, when I insist that hopes, those extremely sweet delights, must be avoided? No, on the contrary: I do not want you ever to lack gladness [*laetitia*]. I want it to be born in your home; and it is born, if only it is inside of you. Other cheerful things [*hilaritates*] do not fill the breast, they simply relax the brow; they are

sometimes erroneously taken to be the passions themselves—such as the tendency to start when alarmed, to be sexually aroused by appropriate stimuli, etc.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. *SVF* III.480 = *PHP* 4.5.21–22, 262–64D. Galen quoting Chrysippus' therapeutic book: "For these infirmities, we say, do not lie in the judgment that each of these things is good, but in inclining to them in excess of what is in accordance with nature." Chrysippus, it should be found pleasant" (*SVF* III.463 = *PHP* 4.2.4, 238D). *Orexis* is first named in the classification of the *eupatheiai* reported in Andronicus—but *boulêsis* is defined as *eulogos* definition of *boulêsis* or of one of its species. Epictetus contrasts passion with a *symmetros orexis* for the choiceworthy things (*Disc.* 4.1.84).

<sup>78</sup> Inwood (1985) argues persuasively that a central idea here is that of "reservation": I want X, but with the proviso that it is in accordance with Zeus' will. See for example Epict. *Ench.* 2.2; *Disc.* 4.7.12; Sen. *Tranq.* 13.3; *Bem.* 4.34.4, 4.39.4.



superficial [*leues*]—unless perhaps you believe that a person who laughs has joy [*gaudere*]. The soul must be brisk and confident, raised up above everything. (Ep. 23.3)

Interpreters sometimes point to passages such as this in order to argue that Stoic extirpation is not the radical move against our emotional life that we might initially think. For though the tumult is undone, much happy affect still remains.

But I believe that we should not be lulled by this sort of Stoic rhetoric into thinking that extirpation will leave much of Nikidion's happiness where she is accustomed to find it, while merely getting rid of many difficulties and tensions. The state that Seneca describes is indeed called joy. But consider how he describes it. It is like a child that is born inside of one and never leaves the womb to go out into the world. It has no commerce with laughter and elation. For wise people, we know, are harshly astringent, *astēroi*,<sup>79</sup> intolerant of idle pleasure in themselves and in others (DL 7.117); and it is difficult to laugh if one is never caught off guard.<sup>80</sup> Indeed, the letter goes on,

Believe me, true joy [*gaudium*] is a stern matter [*res severa*]. Or do you think that one can with a carefree expression, or one that . . . is full of humor, despise death, open one's home to poverty, hold pleasures in check, contemplate the endurance of pain? The person who reflects on these things in himself is in a condition of great joy [*gaudio*]—but not a sweetly agreeable joy. It is this joy that I want you to possess; it will never fail you, if once you have discovered where to seek it. . . . The joy of which I speak, to which I am trying to lead you, is something solid. . . . Therefore, I beg you, my dearest Lucilius, do the one thing that can make you really happy [*felici*]: cast away and trample underfoot everything that shines on the outside, everything that is offered you by another or from another. Look to the true good and take joy only in that which comes from what is your own. What do I mean by "from what is your own"? I mean you yourself and your own best part. (23.4–6)

In the following chapters we shall examine further the motivations that we all may have for going over to this joy. But we can see already that the

<sup>79</sup> On the notion of austerity, see SVF III.637–39. Chrysippus mentions that he has elsewhere discussed the causes of laughter—apparently in close connection with the *pathē* (SVF III.466 = PHP 4.7.17, 284D). His rejection of surprise may well have played a role in the analysis.

<sup>80</sup> Compare Epictetus' advice: each person making progress away from diseases of passion "keeps guard over himself, as if he were an enemy lying in wait" (Ench. 48.3).

change to Stoic joy from Nikidion's own is vast. It is the change from suspense and elation to solid self-absorption; from surprise and spontaneity to measured watchfulness; from wonder at the separate and external to security in that which is oneself and one's own. To follow Seneca's sexual metaphors, it is the change from passionate intercourse, giving birth, and child-rearing to parthenogenetic conception, followed by the retention of the conceived child forever inside the womb. It is a change that leaves no part of life untouched. She is promised great good; and for this good she is asked to give up what are now to her the most precious things, the very bases of her daily life. Epictetus imagines speaking to Medea, the unhappy heroine of chapter 12. He gives her one simple formula for happiness. "Stop wanting your husband, and there is not one of the things you want that will fail to happen" (Disc. 2.17.22). Nikidion sees that this is not casual modification. Indeed, it is not modification at all. It is what the Stoics said it was. It is extirpation.