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Contributions, Orders, Subscriptions, Enquiries:
Pli, The Warwick Journal of Philosophy
Department of Philosophy
University of Warwick
Coventry CV4 7AL UK

Email: plijournal@warwick.ac.uk
Website: www.plijournal.com

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Schopenhauer and the Stoics

JONATHAN HEAD

This paper considers the largely unexplored relation between Schopenhauer's metaphysical system of Will and the philosophical therapy offered by Stoicism. By focusing on three key texts from disparate points in Schopenhauer's philosophical career, as well as considering live debates regarding the metaphorical nature of his thought and his soteriology, I argue that the general view of straightforward opposition between himself and the Stoics is not the correct one. Rather, there are deep parallels to be found between the therapeutic aspects of The World as Will and Representation *(*WWR*) and the ethical recommendations made by the ancient Stoics. I will argue, further, that Schopenhauer recognised these similarities between his thought and Stoic ethics, often defending what he sees as the true essence of Stoicism. I conclude with some thoughts regarding the adoption of Stoic ideals by Nietzsche and Wittgenstein, in relation to their reading of Schopenhauer's work.*

I

Michael Ure offers us a familiar picture of Nietzsche, in *Human, All Too Human* mostly but also *Dawn* to some extent, turning away from Schopenhauerian salvation, in which one engages in practices of self-denial designed to mortify the will, towards a Stoic 'self-fashioning', in which we attempt to construct a 'stable, mild, and basically cheerful soul'[1] that does not draw away from others, as more egocentric therapies are liable to do. Not only that, Ure writes, 'Taking his lead from the Hellenistic schools, Nietzsche develops a philosophical therapy that turns on resisting the seductions of the metaphysical and religious chimeras of

1 Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, trans. by R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 34.

a transcendent world'[2]. So, it seems that, in his 'Middle Period', Nietzsche turns away from a Schopenhauerian soteriology, or theory of salvation, and towards a Stoic philosophical therapy, in order to escape from the metaphysical trappings of his system, as well as to avoid encouraging therapies that would lead to individuals turning away from the world and others. In something of a contrast, in a recent paper, 'Schopenhauer's Influence on Wittgenstein', Severin Schroeder has suggested that *Tractatus*-era Wittgenstein holds to a Stoic ethical ideal garnered *from* his reading of Schopenhauer.[3] Somewhat paradoxically, then, Schopenhauer appears to have acted as a catalyst for both a turning away from Stoicism (in the case of Nietzsche) and a turning towards it (in the case of Wittgenstein). The paradox may only be apparent, though – after all, it was the content and practical consequences of Schopenhauer's system that turned Nietzsche towards Stoicism, whilst it could be the simple fact that the Stoics are mentioned in *WWR* and thereby brought to Wittgenstein's attention that is a sufficient explanation for his dalliance with Stoic ethical ideals. As such, despite Wittgenstein adopting a Stoic-style ethics due to his reading of Schopenhauer, we can still see the latter in this picture as fundamentally opposed to Stoicism.

One example of the widespread assumption that Schopenhauer rejects Stoicism wholesale is provided by Peter Lewis, who states that Schopenhauer regards Stoicism 'as merely an estimable guide to the rational life and [an ethical view] to which the very idea of salvation is incomprehensible', and thus as a view that compares unfavourably to the ascetic traditions found in Christianity and Hinduism[4]. In a recent work, Vandenabeele has also sought to argue for a stark contrast between Schopenhauer and the Stoics, stating that '[Schopenhauer's] own ideal of the complete denial of the will is very different from stoic *ataraxia* or *apatheia*',[5] a view echoed by Julian Young in a recent paper, who argues that Schopenhauer's denial of the will has to retain a 'transcendent' char-

2 Michael Ure, *Nietzsche's Therapy: Self-Cultivation in the Middle Works* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008), p. 128.

3 Severin Schroeder, 'Schopenhauer's Influence on Wittgenstein', in *A Companion to Schopenhauer*, ed. by Vandenabeele (Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), pp. 367-384 (p. 368).

4 Peter Lewis, 'Review: Sophia Vasalou, *Schopenhauer and the Aesthetic Standpoint: Philosophy as a Practice of the Sublime*' , *Philosophical Investigations,* 37:4 (2014), pp. 383-386 (p. 386).

5 Bart Vandenabeele, *The Sublime in Schopenhauer's Philosophy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 19.

acter that is unavailable within a Stoic framework[6]. In contrast, I wish to argue that Schopenhauer's relation to the Stoics is not as straightforward as is usually supposed, and is certainly not one of outright opposition. It is not my purpose here to question Ure's reading of Nietzsche, nor Schroeder's view of Wittgenstein's philosophy; rather, I would like to reflect upon whether Schopenhauer's influence in these examples may be more positive than has been presented, and whether in fact it is vestiges of Stoicism *inside* Schopenhauer's system that inspire Nietzsche and Wittgenstein to explore a Stoic philosophical therapy. In this regard, I wish to explore the question of whether one could pursue a Stoic-style philosophical therapy within the framework of Schopenhauer's philosophy, and I will argue that Schopenhauer himself recognises deep parallels between his system and Stoic ethics, even going so far as to express great sympathy for the Stoic approach.

I will begin this investigation into Schopenhauer's relation to the Stoics in the following section by focusing on three key texts that encompass both his earlier and later works; namely, 1) Chapter 16 of the first volume of *The World as Will and Representation* (hence *WWR1*), which the Longman translation entitles 'Practical Reason Properly and Falsely So-Called', 2) its companion chapter in the second volume (hence *WWR2*), entitled (by Schopenhauer this time) 'On the Practical Use of Our Reason and on Stoicism', and finally 3) the section on the Stoics that forms part of his 'Fragments for the History of Philosophy', which falls in the first volume of *Parerga and Paralipomena* (hence *PP1*). I will argue that Schopenhauer's approach to Stoicism is more complex than has been previously recognised, insofar as his criticism of particular Stoic thinkers and extant Stoics texts sits alongside a general defence of what he sees as the 'true spirit' of Stoicism. He is particularly keen to combat any Stoic thinkers and texts that, as far as he sees it, corrupt the original message of Stoicism. In addition, I will argue that we find a positive characterisation of the Stoic sage by Schopenhauer as one who has understood the pessimistic lessons of the metaphysics of Will – as such, we can understand the Stoic sage, the representative of the 'true spirit' of Stoicism, as an important figure in the context of Schopenhauer's wider soteriological scheme.

6 Julian Young, 'Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Death and Salvation', *European Journal of Philosophy*, 16:2 (2008), pp. 311-324 (p. 323n.).

In Section III, I will go on to reflect more generally on Schopenhauer's soteriology and its similarities to Stoicism, with the intent of answering those who may reject my interpretation immediately due to potential conflict between the speculative parts of the Schopenhauerian system (including the 'self-denial of the Will') and the more grounded philosophy found in Stoicism. In particular, I will argue that if we adopt a more metaphorical reading of Schopenhauer's system, which a number of scholars have begun to do, we can see his soteriology as sitting comfortably with the Stoic ethical ideal of coming to terms with nature. To finish, in section IV, I will offer some conclusions regarding what this may mean for our understanding of Nietzsche in his 'Middle Period' and *Tractatus*-era Wittgenstein's adoption of the Stoic ideal. I will argue that we are left with the possibility of interpreting Nietzsche and Wittgenstein as retrieving Stoic aspects of their respective philosophies from their readings of Schopenhauer.

II

In this section, I will examine three key texts in which Schopenhauer explicitly discusses Stoicism. I will argue that close analysis of these texts reveals a multi-faceted approach to Stoicism on the part of Schopenhauer – he is not afraid to paint the core message of Stoicism as lying close to his soteriological scheme, and is even willing to go as far as to criticise those who he feels have distorted that message.

The Stoic sage first makes his appearance in *WWR1* in the context of a discussion of reason in its practical employment. As part of his critique of Kant, Schopenhauer seeks to strictly circumscribe the capacity reason has to inform action. Reason affects action only insofar as its operations expand our sphere of knowledge beyond that which is immediate, both spatially and temporally, by allowing us to have abstract knowledge:

> [We] by virtue of knowledge in the abstract, comprehend not only the narrow and actual present, but also the whole past and future together with the wide realm of possibility. We survey life freely in all directions, far beyond what is present and actual.[7]

7 Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation, vol. 1*, trans. by Payne (New York: Dover, 1969), p.84.

Clearly, an increased awareness of the realms of possibility, as well as future consequences of our actions and the lessons of the past, will affect our actions greatly, and it is reason that affords us such awareness. In that way, and in that way alone, Schopenhauer thinks we can speak of reason in its practical employment. Schopenhauer also claims that this is the main attribute that marks human beings apart from other animals, and thereby confirms our status as the highest grade of the Will's manifestation in nature.

The 'double life' of humans, lived in both the abstract and the concrete, not only impacts upon their actions, for it also can show itself in their emotional life. Given that the production of our abstract knowledge goes along the lines of a Humean 'copy principle' for Schopenhauer, the cognitive life we lead through our abstract knowledge is going to be a mere reflection of our concrete life, but crucially it is a calm one, where 'what previously possessed him completely and moved him intensely appears to him cold, colourless, and for the moment, foreign and strange; he is a mere spectator and observer'.[8] As such, whilst grounded in our concrete, everyday life in response to which our emotions can often fluctuate wildly, our abstract knowledge can give rise to cognitive processes which can reflect dispassionately on events, both actual and possible (Schopenhauer compares this to an actor stepping temporarily away from the stage to act as a spectator of the play, before in time returning to the action).

The Stoic sage comes in at this point, being described as 'the most perfect development of *practical reason* in the true and genuine sense of the word, the highest point to which man can attain by the mere use of his faculty of reason, and in which his difference from the animal shows itself most clearly'.[9] Such a statement is striking when considered within the wider context of Schopenhauer's soteriology and metaphysical system, regardless of the critique of the historical development of 'Stoic ethics' that follows it, and marks the idealised Stoic sage as potentially one of the most important characters in his thought. How does one attain salvation in Schopenhauer's system? Whilst I cannot provide a detailed answer to this question here, I would first note that for Schopenhauer only human beings, as the highest grade of the Will's manifestation, and

8 Ibid., p. 85.
9 Ibid., p. 86.

as such the greatest development of reason within the world as representation, are able to attain escape from this world. A major reason for this is the way in which our reason is able to widen our perspective upon the world in which we find ourselves and the sort of existence we have within it; we are able to grasp and come to know both the pain and suffering that dominates the world of representation through both space and time, as well as the underlying unity behind all things. Schopenhauer's soteriological journey takes one through such a widening of perspective, allowing a further insight into the truth about the world and about Will, with an end-point in a perfect moment of self-knowledge, where the Will fully recognises its own nature and recoils from itself in horror, thereby extinguishing itself in some way.[10] With this context in mind, when we reconsider the earlier quote about the Stoic sage, we see quite strikingly that this figure is placed close to the very pinnacle of the soteriological scheme of *WWR*; they are someone whose life is most closely marked by the widest perspective upon the surface and the essence of the world as it really is, they are in that sense close, if not absolutely identical, to Schopenhauer's idealised 'clear mirror of the will'. (It is also noteworthy that on the emotional side of things, the Stoic will also be leading the kind of calm, abstract life that I referred to earlier.) As such, given that Schopenhauer's philosophy is essentially soteriologically focused, the Stoic sage is an incredibly important figure in his work.

The rest of the chapter is taken up with a critique of Stoic ethics in general, as well as particular Stoic philosophers and their texts. Schopenhauer describes what he understands to be the source and

> spirit of Stoics [… namely] the thought whether reason, man's great prerogative, which, through planned action and its result, indirectly lightens the burden of life so much for him, might not also be capable of withdrawing him at once and directly, i.e., through mere knowledge, either completely or nearly so, from the sorrows and miseries of every kind that fill his life.[11]

This is undeniably an echo of the very essence of Schopenhauer's philosophy: reason, which is that which elevates us above all other beings in the world as representation, reveals to us with ever greater clarity the pain and suffering that characterises our existence, and the blind chaos under-

10 See ibid., pp. 378-98.
11 Ibid., p. 87.

lying it all, such that we are driven to engage with ascetic and other practices in order to withdraw from the Will's influence altogether. It is important to note that this soteriological process is always accompanied by a growth in knowledge: first, in self-knowledge constrained to the individual, then graduating to the self-knowledge of the essence of the world itself. Such a clear invocation of Schopenhauer's very guiding-principles in this description of the 'spirit and true source' of Stoicism, therefore, cannot be accidental and should be taken to indicate a strong underlying agreement between himself and Stoicism.

Michael Ure and Thomas Ryan in a recent paper have acknowledged such a deep similarity, though they remark that the differences between the two regarding the function of reason must always separate them:

> The Stoics assume that the correct use of reason can deliver 'joy' or 'tranquillity' in the sense of elevation above the burdens and sorrows of life. Schopenhauer argues that this is not possible because reason is only an instrument of the will… For Schopenhauer, therefore, the only radical cure for life's suffering is not Stoic reason, but the complete denial of the will[12].

Ure and Ryan are correct in stating that reason is only an instrument of the Will. However, within the context of Schopenhauer's system, it is crucially an instrument the Will can use to ultimately bring about its own destruction (and thereby achieve the soteriological end-point). So, both Schopenhauer and the Stoics share a view of reason as having a key soteriological role, despite the secondary status the former gives to reason from an ontological standpoint.

On the topic of reason and its relation to philosophical therapy, then, Schopenhauer and the Stoics may not be as far apart as they might seem. Indeed, a manuscript note from 1808 (or possibly 1809) makes it quite clear that he sees himself as close to the Stoics on this point of the role of reason in philosophical therapy. Here, Schopenhauer writes of a possible problem of ineffectively railing against the evils of the world through attributing disvalue to them directly, rather than seeing them

12 Michael Ure and Thomas Ryan, 'Nietzsche's Post-Classical Therapy', *Pli: The Warwick Journal of Philosophy,* 25 (2014), pp. 91-110 (p. 98).

correctly as in fact 'the image *of that real and terrible evil*', glossed as '*an actual evil existing in eternity* and not in time'.[13] Reason can aid in diverting our attention away from the more directly perceived evils of the phenomenal realm, towards the true super-sensible evil behind all things; as such, it is key for an effective philosophical therapy that '[t]raining of the faculty of reason enables us to perceive and avoid this delusion; indeed *this is what the Stoics had in mind*'[14]. As such, the use of reason in philosophical therapy, a notion he sees as inherited from the Stoics, is clearly in Schopenhauer's mind from the very beginnings of his philosophical reflections on the evils of the world and the need for soteriology.

Going back to *WWR1*, we then find critiques of specific Stoic thinkers, such as Epictetus and Zeno. The former is portrayed as acting in conformity with the 'spirit and aim of the Stoa'[15] but then transitioning into 'a doctrine of virtue' that argued pointlessly with the Peripatetics and Epicureans. Zeno, likewise, is described as starting with a very Schopenhauerian principle of attempting to achieve 'bliss through peace of mind' and '[living] in harmony with himself', which was later distorted and modified by his successors who saw it as 'too formal and empty […] therefore [giving] it material content by the addition 'to live in harmony with nature''.[16] The emphasis here, as elsewhere, is a deep unity between Schopenhauerian philosophy and the 'true spirit' of Stoicism, with criticism being offered of particular Stoics who seek to distort the true essence of Stoicism in some way. Such a position is reiterated in a very telling manuscript remark from 1814, where Schopenhauer even goes so far as to suggest that the Stoics *misunderstand* their own ideal. The remark is worth quoting in full:

> It is a mistake for the *Stoics* to say that only the sage is happy. On the contrary, he alone knows that on earth we cannot be happy at all, that life is only a constantly prevented dying, an illusion, and so forth. But through this knowledge of the essential nature of life the sage will never be capable of being very pleased with or very depressed by the events of life, and thus he will attain to genuine stoic indifference. But for this reason the

13 Schopenhauer, *Manuscript Remains, vol. 1*, trans. by Payne (Oxford: Berg, 1988), p. 9.
14 Ibid. – my emphasis.
15 Schopenhauer, *WWR, vol. 1*, p. 88.
16 Ibid., p. 89.

> real sage will always possess a placid and silent melancholy which is inseparable from a disappearance of the ordinary illusions concerning life.[17]

Admittedly, one could read this as a rejection of the Stoic view of a soteriological end-point in the character of the 'sage'. However, it is just as possible (and compatible with other passages we are considering) to read this passage as a criticism of the Stoics for *mishandling* and ultimately *betraying* their own ethical ideal, an ideal which Schopenhauer has great sympathy for. Schopenhauer portrays the sage as knowing the fundamental truths to be found in his system (such as the irredeemable nature of the world as representation and the life we have within it) and thereby attaining the state of mind that the Stoics are aiming for. Such a theme of Schopenhauer portraying himself as a defender of a 'true Stoicism', even to the extent of criticising specific Stoic figures, as well as finding deep similarities between his philosophical therapy and that offered by Stoicism, is continued in the companion chapter on practical reason in volume two, which we shall turn to now.

Much of Schopenhauer's chapter on the Stoics in *WWR2* is in fact taken up by a discussion of the Cynics, whom he styles as the precursors of Stoicism:

> the fundamental idea of cynicism is that life in its simplest and most naked form, with the hardships that naturally belong to it, is the most tolerable, and is therefore to be chosen. For every aid, comfort, enjoyment, and pleasure by which people would like to make life more agreeable, would produce only new worries and cares greater than those that originally belong to it.[18]

The Cynics, then, recognise one of the fundamental truths of Schopenhauer's system: that our desires will inevitably make us suffer and therefore it is best to attempt to quell them as much as possible. However, whereas Schopenhauer would seek to extinguish desire altogether, the Cynics have a much more limited goal of reducing desires to a minimum

17 Schopenhauer, *MR, vol. 1*, p. 118.

18 Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation, vol. 2*, trans. by Payne (New York: Dover, 1969), p.153.

whilst still keeping in touch with the human world and wider nature (thus, there is no sense in Cynicism of escaping from an illusory world of representation). In addition, Schopenhauer also accuses the Cynics of not acting in humility,[19] which also signals their continuing connection to the world as representation.

Schopenhauer then characterises the evolution of Cynicism into Stoicism as 'changing the practical into the theoretical',[20] in that they did not advocate dispensing of one's possessions, but rather of changing one's attitude towards them, and seeing them more truthfully as products of chance, liable to be taken away at any time. However, the focus on the notion of psychological change, as opposed to the physical change advocated by the Cynics, soon lead the Stoics astray, allowing themselves to feast at luxurious Roman parties, whilst at the same time proclaiming the shallowness of the things they were enjoying; they forgot that 'between desiring and renouncing there is no mean'.[21] Such a critique that we find here, though, should not be understood as a critique of the 'spirit of Stoicism' as such, but rather a critique of some of the Stoics and the eudaemonism that some fall into. Arrian, for example is lauded for an 'ascetic tendency' that reflects the spirit of orientalism,[22] a spirit that Schopenhauer himself invokes on numerous occasions (though as we shall see, Arrian is later criticised for going astray in other ways).

Schopenhauer also characterises the essence of Stoicism as '[springing] from an incongruity between our desires and the course of the world',[23] the starting-point of Schopenhauer's philosophical reflections, and as attempting to adapt our willing to the way things are, which is also the desired ultimate result of his soteriological scheme. Finally, Seneca states, 'In what does the happy life consist? In safety and unshakeable peace. This is what is attained by greatness of soul, by a constancy that adheres to what is correctly discerned'.[24] It is hard not to see Schopenhauer's salvific 'relative nothingness', beyond the destruction of the Will, about which very little can be said, reflected here; he writes of coming to 'the point where we have before our eyes in perfect saintliness… a world

19 Ibid., p. 155.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid., p. 156.
22 Ibid., p. 159.
23 Ibid., p. 158.
24 Ibid.

whose whole existence presented itself to us as suffering',[25] and of an individual achieving a 'peace that is higher than all reason, that ocean-like calmness of the spirit, that deep tranquillity, that unshakeable confidence and serenity'.[26]

So, what have we learned from our examination of the two passages on the Stoics from *WWR*? At the very least, I hope we have learned that the relation between Schopenhauer and the Stoics is complex. We must, it seems, attempt to separate Schopenhauer's critique of Stoicism from that of the Stoics, something that he systematically fails to do. However, when we do carefully separate these two critiques, it is impossible to miss that Stoicism itself, which he characterises as its 'true spirit', reflects a large portion of Schopenhauer's key philosophical notions and appears to offer a Schopenhauerian soteriology, though lacking the benefit of later philosophical developments, such as Kantian transcendental idealism. Many Stoics are led astray by such an absence of philosophical nuance, but that does not affect Schopenhauer's views of Stoicism itself.

The final passage on the Stoics we shall look at, arising in the first volume of Schopenhauer's *Parerga and Paralipomena*, does not require as much comment, but there are a couple of interesting facets of the text that I would like to briefly highlight. Here, Schopenhauer praises their theoretical notion of '*logos spermatikos*', a creative rational principle working through all things in the universe, including inanimate matter. Again, he emphasises the use such an idea can be put to in order to expand our perspective upon our own lives and the world in which we live. The '*logos spermatikos*' acts to preserve an identical form through individuals of the same species, and thus 'it is that which prevents death, the destroyer of the individual, from attacking the species'[27]. Through such a guarantee that the species will continue beyond the death of any particular individual, the individual can gain a certain acceptance or equanimity with regard to their own death – thus, a growth in knowledge and perspective upon our own existence and life aids the therapeutic process of coming to terms with suffering and engaging with will-denial.

25 Schopenhauer, *WWR, vol. 1*, p. 408-09.
26 Ibid., 411.
27 Schopenhauer, *Parerga and Paralipomena, vol. 1*, trans. by Payne (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 52.

The rest of the section in *PP* does not, in fact, engage in a critique of Stoic ethics at all; rather, it is a defence of what Schopenhauer takes to be the true spirit of Stoicism in the face of extant texts that conceal or modify it in some way. As an example, he writes of a text by Stobaeus that

> it is a pedantic, schoolmasterly, thoroughly diffuse, incredibly dreary, flat, and spiritless exposition of the Stoic morality without force and life and without any valuable, striking, or penetrating ideas. In it everything is derived from mere concepts; nothing is drawn from reality and experience,[28]

which implies that true Stoicism is none of these things (high praise indeed from Schopenhauer). In addition, he criticises Arrian on the basis that 'every trace of method, systematic treatment, and even orderly progress'[29] is lost from his description of Stoic ethics, again implying that Stoicism involves all of these positive facets. Schopenhauer goes on to argue that not only do these texts undermine the true spirit of Stoicism through their form, they do not even accurately portray the content of Stoic principles. Arrian is accused of offering 'a strong foreign admixture that smacks of a Christian-Jewish source'[30] by offering a view of the world that undermines the true Stoic view of the ultimate unity of all things and the lack of a personal God, and entirely missing the point of Stoicism by '[preaching] self-renunciation just because it pleases him'.[31] By making these criticisms, Schopenhauer is clearly allying himself and his philosophy with the teachings and practice of 'true Stoicism', and is indeed keen to defend Stoicism from corrupted and inaccurate portrayals in certain ancient texts.

III

For many readers, there will be an issue that resists any parallel between Schopenhauer and Stoic thought: namely, the metaphysical trappings of the philosophical system put forward in *WWR* and elsewhere. Such features of his system, for example, his claims regarding the identification of the thing-in-itself with Will, seems to place him at a large

28 Ibid., 53.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid., 54.
31 Ibid., 55.

distance from Stoicism, such that it makes no sense to claim that any legitimate vestiges of a Stoic philosophical therapy can be found within a 'metaphysics of Will'. Recent developments in Schopenhauer scholarship, however, suggest that we should perhaps be untroubled by the more speculative elements of his system. Though I cannot approach this topic in any great deal in this paper, what is becoming increasingly clear is that one cannot take these elements at face-value.[32]

Towards the end of his writings in particular, Schopenhauer begins to talk more often about the metaphorical aspects of his philosophy; he appears to retreat from a literal claim to the identification of the thing-in-itself with Will (by beginning to talk of the term 'Will' as a mere label[33]) and the unity of being through actions of compassion (in letters, he talks about that process being described as through a trope[34]). Through the influence on his philosophy of Eastern texts, such as the *Upanishads*, and an increasing focus on the limits of language and communication, he comes to see ever more clearly how metaphysical edifices can be constructed and communicated to bring out long-lasting psychological change, the kind of change that Stoicism attempts to bring about. This is still a live debate in the literature;[35] however, we can be confident in seeing some of Schopenhauer's stronger metaphysical claims as not offer-

32 Work has been recently undertaken to determine the extent to which Schopenhauer's philosophy can be interpreted as metaphorical in nature, with the result that his controversial metaphysics of Will should not be read literally. This is a rather nascent topic in the literature on Schopenhauer. Including work that I shall reference in this section, examples of texts that have considered the metaphorical interpretive line include Jonathan Head, 'Schopenhauer on the Development of the Individual', *Epoché: A Journal for the History of Philosophy,* 20:2 (2016), pp.427-446 and David Cartwright, *Schopenhauer: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), esp. p. 510.

33 See Schopenhauer, *WWR, vol. 2*, p. 195-198.

34 See Schopenhauer, *Gesammelte Briefe*, ed. by Hubscher (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1987), Letter 204.

35 Discussions regarding the metaphorical nature of some of Schopenhauer's central pronouncements, such as the identification of the thing-in-itself with Will and the self-negation of the Will through ascetic practices, can be found in F.C. White, *On Schopenhauer's Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* (New York: E.J. Brill, 1992); G. Steven Neeley, *Schopenhauer – A Consistent Reading* (Lewiston; Queenston; Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), esp. pp. 64-71; and G. Steven Neeley, 'The Consistency of Schopenhauer's Metaphysics' in *A Companion to Schopenhauer*, ed. by Vandenabeele (Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), pp. 105-119.

ing *prima facie* evidence against deep parallels between his thought and that of the Stoics. As such, whilst the exact nature of Schopenhauer's changing views regarding the literal nature of his metaphysics is still up for debate, it is clear that it could make a great deal of sense for him to defend Stoicism, and for someone operating consciously within a Schopenhauerian tradition to overtly adopt Stoic methods and expressions.

The upshot of all this is that whilst Schopenhauer certainly offers a therapeutic scheme different in *presentation* from the Stoics, the two soteriologies may be much closer in terms of *substance*. Schopenhauer, with his notion of a 'need for metaphysics', is aware of the importance of the mode of presentation for therapeutic impact, and presents his system accordingly, with an elaborate metaphysical scheme that is more likely to satisfy our drive for transcendent answers and as such to be truly internalised. Schopenhauer believes that without the use of such metaphors, those on a true path to salvation will inevitably be led astray, and we see this with the examples of Stoics that he criticises. It is also worth emphasising the close parallels between Schopenhauer and the Stoics. We have already seen an emphasis upon the use of reason in the development of a successful philosophical therapy, as well as the Stoic sage offering an ideal that is at least close to Schopenhauer's soteriological end-point of the complete self-denial and negation of the Will. There is also the fact that both Stoicism and Schopenhauer ultimately see salvation as involving a state of mind culminating in a complete state of awareness and self-knowledge, devoid of painful desires and emotions. We also do not need to view Schopenhauer's soteriology as culminating in a destruction of nature itself, in contrast to the Stoic aim of living in harmony with nature. If we continue to consider interpreting Schopenhauer's notion of the 'self-negation of the Will' in metaphorical terms, we may come to see him advocating some form of 'coming to terms' with the world in which we find ourselves, and thereby living the best kind of life that is possible within it. Of course, these interpretive issues remain tricky for readers of Schopenhauer, and I do not expect any agreement regarding 'literal' and 'metaphorical' readings any time soon – I simply seek to point out that the argument for distancing Schopenhauer from a Stoic philosophical therapy is not as obvious as it may seem at first glance.

IV

To conclude, we began with a traditional picture of Nietzsche's turn away from a Schopenhauerian soteriology towards a Stoic philosophical therapy, particularly in *Human, All Too Human*. We also noted that Schopenhauer may have inspired Wittgenstein to adopt a Stoic ethical ideal, though not perhaps because that ideal in any way forms part of the philosophy to be found in *WWR*. I have attempted to put forward some reasons for challenging these accounts, in that a turn towards Stoicism can be thought of as a shift of emphasis within the Schopenhauerian tradition, as opposed to leaving that tradition behind, on the part of Nietzsche, and for Wittgenstein, another part of the way in which Schopenhauer's system itself inspired him. Indeed, we can go as far as to suggest that the aspects of Stoic thought in Nietzsche and Wittgenstein are examples of those who have discovered Stoicism within the context of Schopenhauer's philosophical system. We considered three sustained examinations of Stoicism written at various stages in Schopenhauer's philosophical career, and found a continued theme of a defence of the true spirit of Stoicism, and the criticism of certain Stoics and those who have written on Stoicism who have both misrepresented or distorted Stoicism in some way. We also saw the idealised figure of the Stoic sage as being perhaps one of the most significant figures in Schopenhauer's system, unmistakeably reflecting the kind of figure who will at least come close to absolute will-denial, if not absolutely achieving that perfect state of self-knowledge.

In addition, I have attempted to reinforce my case by reflecting, albeit briefly, on the wider picture of Schopenhauer's philosophical therapy, and have visited some recent work on Schopenhauer that attempts to deflate some of the more speculative metaphysical elements of his system, such that he may not be as far from Stoicism as he seems on the surface. So, what is the significance of this? Certainly, it means that we need to continue probing into the details of Schopenhauer's philosophical therapy, and investigating the parallels that the philosopher himself sees between his work and ancient Greek thought about how to live the 'good life'. Does this mean anything, perhaps, for our understanding of Nietzsche in his 'middle period'? I will certainly not venture any definite answers to that question at this moment, but I think it is an interesting avenue of research to approach these texts as standing within something that is still recognisably a Schopenhauerian framework, something that has certainly not been done in the past, as far as I'm aware, because of the

traditional view of Nietzsche turning away from his 'Educator' at this point in his career. What the results of such an investigation would suggest, I am not sure – perhaps we need to delineate what we might mean by a 'Schopenhauerian framework' even more before we attempt it. Nevertheless, I am certain that some light would be shed on the 'middle period' works in this way.[36]

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