



Department of Classics

Royal Holloway University of London

Epictetus on Human Suffering

*(Ταράσσει τοὺς ἀνθρώπους οὐ τὰ πράγματα, ἀλλὰ τὰ περὶ τῶν
πραγμάτων δόγματα)*

By

Edward James Humphreys

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

PhD THESIS
December 2018

Declaration of Authorship

I, Edward James Humphreys, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed: 

Date: 23rd December 2018

© copyright by Edward James Humphreys 2011-2018. All Rights Reserved

Abstract

This thesis considers Epictetus' response to human suffering with regard to its broader meaning. This encompasses not only what Buddhism refers to as ordinary suffering, but also what they call suffering caused by change and by the conditioned mind, all of which manifest at different levels of consciousness, in different forms and from the very gross to the very subtle. In considering Epictetus' response we shall consider suffering as a universally occurring and unending dissatisfaction with life - a 'dis-ease' that exists as part of our human condition and formative learning experience of life. This thesis takes a fresh look at Epictetus by reframing his thinking and response to suffering. First, the Buddhist model known as the Four Noble Truths (cattāri ariyasaccāni) is used as a systematic basis for discussing Epictetus. Reframing Epictetus with respect to the Four Noble Truths provides us in our daily lives with the opportunity for reflection and contemplation on what suffering is: insight, understanding and knowing the causes of our suffering, together with recognising that there is a way out of our suffering and a path of reflective exercise, practice and training to cease our suffering.

Secondly our investigation into Epictetus and suffering involves consideration of the language of suffering, in particular the role of different aspects of language used in Epictetus, and how, through the use of language, experience and knowing of suffering comes about, and how such language becomes a tool for philosophical inquiry into that suffering. Thirdly our investigation looks at the pathological aspects of suffering and the language of moral choice. Throughout this thesis I maintain Epictetus' claim that to be educated is to discover the truth about our suffering and the ethical imperative of being liberated from that suffering.

This thesis is an original contribution to the current body of knowledge and understanding concerning human suffering and the human condition in the context of Epictetus. I shall, in this thesis, argue the case that re-casting his teaching contributes a fresh interpretation of his extant works in the broader context of human suffering.

Acknowledgements

Grateful acknowledgement and appreciation is given to Professor Anne Sheppard (Professor Emerita of Ancient Philosophy RHUL) for her generous help, guidance and tireless support during this journey of research. Thanks are also given to Professor Jonathan Powell (RHUL) and Dr. Richard Hawley (RHUL) for their support and helpful comments during annual research appraisals and reviews.

Thanks also go to my Buddhist teacher, Dhyana Master Trung Quang Nhat Hanh (also known as Thich Nhat Hanh) for his Buddhist guidance, instruction and moral practice for the last 11 years.

Finally thanks go to my family: mother and father (Alice and Thomas Humphreys - deceased), my three sons (Alexander, Thomas and James Humphreys) and their partners and children, and last but not least my wife Angela Humphreys for her enduring support.

Contents

Declaration of Authorship	3
Abstract	5
Acknowledgements	7
Contents	9
Figures And Tables	12
Abbreviations	13
INTRODUCTION	15
CHAPTER 1 TRUTHS AND LANGUAGE OF HUMAN SUFFERING	23
1.1 Prologue	23
1.2 Four Noble Truths	26
1.2.1 <i>Spiritual Path</i>	26
1.2.2 <i>The Truths and Metaphysics</i>	27
1.2.3 <i>Self/Non-Self</i>	29
1.3 Theory, Practice and Realisation	31
1.3.1 <i>Exercise and Practice</i>	31
1.3.2 <i>Philosophical Exercises of Epictetus</i>	33
1.3.3 <i>Exercises of Epictetus and Buddhism</i>	35
1.4 Epictetus' Surgery	36
1.5 Language and Suffering	39
1.5.1 <i>Role of Language</i>	39
1.5.2 <i>Language and Human Existence</i>)	40
1.5.3 <i>Inner Conversations</i>)	41
1.5.4 <i>Words and Thoughts of Epictetus</i>	42
1.6 Stoic Language, Logic and Categories	44
1.6.1 <i>Language and Logic</i>	44
1.6.2 <i>Lekta</i>	45
1.6.3 <i>Categories</i>	46
1.6.4 <i>Focus on Passive/Active Interplay</i>	47
1.7 Buddhist Language and Logic	47
1.7.1 <i>Common Areas of Interest</i>	47
1.7.2 <i>Aggregates and Sankhara</i>)	47
1.7.3 <i>Aggregates, Sankhara and Epictetus</i>	49
Epilogue to Chapter 1	50
CHAPTER 2 EPICTETUS AND THE FIRST NOBLE TRUTH	51
2.1 Prologue	51
2.2 Truth of Suffering	52
2.2.1 <i>Nature of Dukkha</i>	52
2.2.2 <i>Awake to the Understanding and Insight into Dukkha</i>	54
2.2.3 <i>Types of Suffering</i>	56
2.3 Pathological Elements, Conditions and Relationships	68
2.3.1 <i>Disease</i>	68
2.3.2 <i>Disposition, Habits and Hexis</i>	72

2.4 Pursuing the Good and Avoiding Evil	86
2.4.1 <i>The Good and The Wholesome</i>)	86
2.4.2 <i>Stoic Pathē</i>	87
2.4.3 <i>Content-Free Passions</i>	89
2.5 Diagnosis and Symptoms	90
2.5.1 <i>Diagnosis</i>).....	90
2.5.2 <i>Symptoms</i>	91
Epilogue to Chapter 2.....	93
CHAPTER 3 EPICTETUS AND THE SECOND NOBLE TRUTH.....	95
3.1 Prologue	95
3.2 The Causes of Our suffering	95
3.2.1 <i>The Arising of Suffering</i>	95
3.2.2 <i>Craving Desires</i>	96
3.2.3 <i>Clinging to Desires</i>	97
3.2.4 <i>The Consequences of Clinging</i>	98
3.2.5 <i>Ignorance and Delusion</i>	99
3.3 Language of Cause and Effect – Active and Passive.....	105
3.3.1 <i>Paschō</i>	105
3.3.2 <i>Pascho and Its Uses in Epictetus</i>	107
3.3.3 <i>The Active and Passive</i>	113
3.3.4 <i>Consequences of Doing What We Will</i>	123
3.3.5 <i>Suffering As the Active/Passive Relationship</i>	127
3.4 Aetiology.....	129
3.4.1 <i>Causes and Consequences</i>	129
3.4.2 <i>Pathē as Judgements</i>	129
3.4.3 <i>Clinging Judgements about Good and Evil</i>	131
Epilogue to Chapter 3.....	133
CHAPTER 4 EPICTETUS AND THE THIRD NOBLE TRUTH	135
4.1 Prologue	135
4.2 Our Suffering Can Be Overcome.....	137
4.2.1 <i>Third Noble Truth</i>	137
4.2.2 <i>Dependent Origination and Mortality</i>	138
4.3 Choosing A Quality of Life	140
4.4 Choosing One Thing Before Another	142
4.4.1 <i>What Is Depending On Us</i>	142
4.4.2 <i>Moral Choices</i>)	145
4.4.3 <i>Nothing Compels the Prohairesis but Itself</i>	147
4.4.4 <i>Suffering is a Personalised Judgement of Reality</i>	149
4.4.5 <i>Moral Character and Integrity</i>	152
4.5 Prohairesitic Language and Thought.....	155
4.5.1 <i>Our Inner Voice Is Calling Us</i>	155
4.5.2 <i>Self Serving Thoughts and Personal Pronouns</i>	157
4.5.3 <i>Thinking that Causes Us Unrest</i>	159
4.5.4 <i>I Suffer Because I Think and Feel This Way</i>	161
4.5.5 <i>The Tyrant Within</i>	163
4.6 Prognosis	165
4.6.1 <i>Art of Prognosis</i>	165
4.6.2 <i>Predicting the Future Condition of Our Soul</i>	166
4.6.3 <i>Prognostic Procedure</i>	167

4.6.4 <i>Strength Behind Our Infirmity</i>	168
4.6.5 <i>Weakness Behind Our Faculty</i>	169
Epilogue to Chapter 4.....	170
CHAPTER 5 EPICTETUS AND THE FOURTH NOBLE TRUTH.....	171
5.1 Prologue	171
5.2 Path to Liberation.....	171
5.2.1 <i>Fourth Truth</i>	171
5.2.2 <i>The Path According to Epictetus</i>	172
5.2.3 <i>Kammic Nature of Exercises and Practice</i>	181
5.2.4 <i>The Noble Truths and the EightFold Path: Relationships with Epictetus</i>	183
5.3 Treatment and Therapy	189
5.3.1 <i>Cures and Remedies</i>	189
5.3.2 <i>Exercises and Practice</i>	190
5.3.3 <i>Living in the Present Moment</i>	191
5.3.4 <i>Contemplation and Reflective Mind</i>	194
5.3.5 <i>Attention to What We Say to Ourselves</i>	195
5.3.6 <i>Practising and Exercising Letting Go</i>	201
5.3.7 <i>Modern Versus Ancient Therapy</i>	202
Epilogue to Chapter 5.....	203
EPILOGUE	204
BIBLIOGRAPHY	206
Appendix A: Glossary Of Pali Terms	219
Appendix B: Frequency Analysis Of Legō	220
Appendix C: Frequency Analysis Of Paschō-Poieō.....	221

Figures and Tables

FIGURES

- 1: Kamma (Spritual Cause and Effect) (1.2.1, p.27)
- 2: Kamma (Spritual Cause and Effect) (5.2.3, p.181)

TABLES

- 1: Types of Suffering and Underlying Feelings (2.2.3.5, p.66)
- 2: Aggregates, Sankhara and Epictetus (2.2.3.5, p.67)
- 3: Four Noble Truths and Epictetus (5.2.3, p.183)
- 4: Correlation Between Exercises of Epictetus and Eightfold Path (5.2.4, p.184)
- 5a: Eightfold Path (Insight/Widsom) and Epictetus (5.2.4, p.185)
- 5b: Eightfold Path (Moral Conduct) and Epictetus (5.2.4, p.186)
- 5c: Eightfold Path (Mental Discipline) and Epictetus (5.2.4, p.187)
- 6: Major Components of the Dharma and Epictetus (5.2.4, p.198)
- 7a: Frequency Analysis of Legō (Appendix C, p.220)
- 7b: Frequency Analysis of Paschō (Appendix D, p.221)
- 7c: Frequency Analysis of Poieō (Appendix D, p.222)

Abbreviations

Ancient Greek and Roman Authors

AESCHYLUS [A].

Ag.	<i>Agamemnon</i>
Ors.	<i>Oresteia</i>

ARISTOTLE [Arist.]

A.Po.	<i>Analytica Posteriora (Posterior Analytics)</i>
Cat.	<i>Categoriae (Categories)</i>
de An.	<i>De Anima (On the Soul)</i>
EE	<i>Ethica Eudemia (Eudemean Ethics)</i>
EN	<i>Ethica Nicomachea (Nicomachean Ethics)</i>
Metaph.	<i>Metaphysica (Metaphysics)</i>
MM	<i>Magna Moralia (Great Ethics)</i>
Ph.	<i>Physica (Physics)</i>
Rh.	<i>Rhetorica (Rhetoric)</i>

CICERO [Cic.]

De Fin	<i>De finibus bonorum et malorum (On the ends of good and evil)</i>
Inv.	<i>De inventione (On Invention)</i>
ND	<i>De natura Deorum (On the Nature of The Gods)</i>
Off.	<i>De Officiis (On Duties)</i>
Orat.	<i>Orator</i>
Tusc.	<i>Tusculanae Disputationes</i>

DIOGENES LAERTUS [DL.]

DL	<i>Lives of Eminent Philosophers</i>
----	--------------------------------------

EPICTETUS [Epic.]

Diss.	<i>Dissertationes (Discourses)</i>
Ench.	<i>Encheiridion (Handbook)</i>
Fr.	<i>Fragments</i>

GALEN [Gal.]

Art. med.	<i>Art of Medicine</i>
Meth. med.	<i>Method of Medicine</i>
PHP.	<i>de Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis (On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato)</i>

HIPPOCRATES OF COS [Hp.]

Epid.	<i>Epidēmiai (Epidemics)</i>
Praen.	<i>Coan Prenotions</i>

MARCUS AURELIUS [MA.]

Med	<i>Meditations</i>
-----	--------------------

PLATO [Pl.]

<i>Ap.</i>	<i>Apologia (Apology)</i>
<i>Grg.</i>	<i>Gorgias</i>
<i>Lg.</i>	<i>Leges (Laws)</i>
<i>Phd.</i>	<i>Phaedo</i>
<i>Phdr.</i>	<i>Phaedrus</i>
<i>Phlb.</i>	<i>Philebus</i>
<i>Plt.</i>	<i>Politicus (Statesman)</i>
<i>Sph.</i>	<i>Sophista (Sophist)</i>
<i>Smp.</i>	<i>Symposium</i>
<i>Tht.</i>	<i>Theaetetus</i>
<i>Ti.</i>	<i>Timaeus</i>

PLOTINUS [Plot.]

<i>Ennd.</i>	<i>Enneads</i>
--------------	----------------

PLUTARCH [Plu.]

<i>Mor.</i>	<i>Moralia (Moral Essays)</i>
-------------	-------------------------------

SENECA [Sen.]

<i>Ep.</i>	<i>Epistulae morales ad Lucilium (Letters to Lucilius)</i>
<i>Ira.</i>	<i>De Ira (On Anger)</i>

SIMPLICIUS [Simp.]

<i>in Epict.</i>	<i>In Epictetum commentaria</i>
------------------	---------------------------------

STOBAEUS [Stob.]

<i>Stob.</i>	<i>Stobaeus</i>
<i>Ecl.</i>	<i>Eclogues</i>

STOICORUM VETERUM FRAGMENTA

<i>SVF</i>	<i>Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta (ed. von Arnim)</i>
------------	--

Buddhist Texts

<i>AN</i>	<i>Anguttara Nikaya</i>
<i>DN</i>	<i>Digha Nikaya</i>
<i>MN</i>	<i>Majjhima Nikaya</i>
<i>SN</i>	<i>Samyutta Nikaya</i>

Introduction

Human suffering is a normal part of life that affects all of us as we progress through life's journey: from birth, sickness and old age through to death, including everything that happens in between these stages. Suffering is related to the human character and nature of our lives, which is bound up with our human experiences, and how we live our lives and how we relate to others in human society. It defines our very existence and stands at the heart of the human condition and is inseparable from our own humanity. Our failure to attend to our suffering is said to be a failure to attend to the ethical imperative that is innate to our humanity and to neglect what it means to be a human being. The question of suffering has provided a continuum of debate from earliest times to the modern day and still it confounds and puzzles mankind. This is generally the case whether the language of suffering is defined in moral, religious, spiritual or anthropological terms.

This thesis addresses human suffering, specifically in regard to the teachings of Epictetus, with some comparative discussions and support from the Buddhist canon. The issue of human suffering is not new to Stoic thinking, it has always been an integral part of it, specifically regarding their discussions on the emotions and passions. In this thesis I present a re-examination of Epictetus' response to human suffering taking a broader look at its meaning and nature. This refers not only to ordinary suffering, but also suffering caused by change as well as that concerned with the conditioned mind. Suffering across all these aspects manifests itself at different levels and in different forms from the very gross to the very subtle.

An essential aspect of Epictetus' teaching is about what it is to be a human being, that is, to be a rational sentient being living a moral life, and suffering in this context is couched in language with a strong moral content. Again, Epictetus' question is: what does it mean to be a human being? We can answer by saying it is to lead a good, flourishing life, that is, a life in accord with nature. It is suffering that stops us achieving this goal. This thesis will refocus our understanding of Epictetus on the problem of human suffering: if we do not attend to our suffering we cannot fully address what it means to be a human being, to realise our own humanity. Another of Epictetus' questions is: what does it mean to be free? His answer is 'to be educated'. This thesis thus reframes Epictetus' thinking and proposes that to be educated is to discover the truth of our suffering, the causes of our suffering and to recognise that there is a way out of our suffering, which involves the three exercises of the soul, to live life attending to our desires, actions and judgements.

The framework of reference used in this thesis for structuring Epictetus' thinking is that found in the Buddhist model of suffering (*Four Noble Truths*). The teachings of Epictetus and Buddhism have many aspects in common, and they are both said to be representative of Western and Eastern philosophical approaches to the problem of human suffering. The two doctrines, however, are not wholly compatible with each other; for example they diverge in areas of metaphysics and logic. There is, however, commonality in areas of ethics and moral conduct; specifically views and thinking on desires and aversions, having the right mental discipline for proper use of our impressions and

conditioned self, and the importance of exercise and practice to end our suffering and realise a tranquil mind. They both offer practical advice and guidance on freedom from suffering. They both agree that the self is the centre of our suffering: hence their respective approaches place emphasis on philosophy as a way of life, individualised to our self, practised by us for the freedom of the self from suffering.

In this thesis I shall also explore the language of suffering in terms of our being and existence. This aspect looks at the role of language in Epictetus in discovering the truth behind our suffering, the process of knowing what our suffering is through inquiry by language, acquiring knowledge of the cause of our suffering. Suffering is caused mainly by our ignorance; language is a means of recognising and knowing about our suffering; and it is through the medium of language that Epictetus brings to life and enlightens us as to the truths behind man's suffering.

The originality of this thesis lies in its contribution to the current body of knowledge and understanding concerning human suffering and the human condition in the context of Epictetus. I shall, in this thesis, argue the case that re-casting his teaching in the form of a 'theory of human suffering' contributes a fresh interpretation of his extant works in the broader context of human suffering. It will also allow us to respond to these questions: To what extent does Epictetus' teaching live up to the challenge of the broader meaning of human suffering? How well does it deal with this fundamental and significant aspect in our lives, which is inseparable from our own humanity and human condition? Furthermore both Epictetus and Buddhism share the common view that to attend to our suffering is to attend to the ethical imperative and moral responsibilities that are innate to our humanity: failure to do so is a failure in our role as a human being.

When we talk about suffering we may be referring to it in a broad everyday sense to mean a general experience and sensation of dissatisfaction, unpleasantness or pain. Equally we might be referring to suffering of the body, suffering of the mind, or suffering of both body and mind; in fact our experiences and sensations can be a combined suffering of body and mind due to the fact that our physiological and psychological conditions can have an effect on each other. We also find the terms 'suffering' and 'pain' are sometimes used interchangeably, without distinguishing any difference between suffering and pain, as synonyms for each other. Suffering of the body is considered in a narrow sense as undergoing physical pain; this often includes physical illness or injury and diseases of the body that cause unpleasant physical sensations such as soreness, aches, discomfort, irritations. Suffering of the mind is the mental, emotional or psychological pain caused by distress and sorrow, and many of the hardships of life that affect our feelings, moods, temperament, frame of mind or emotional well-being.

Review of literature and research

The main focus in selecting the source material for this thesis has been on Epictetus and his philosophical teachings, specifically, views and analysis of the suffering mind. In support of this focus source material related to Buddhism has also been selected, for the purpose of reframing Epictetus'

thinking in terms of the *Four Noble Truths* and secondly for general comparative purposes. It is important to note that there is a large library of Buddhist material and so the selection of research material for this thesis has been restricted, with a strict focus on the purposes mentioned, and not for a comprehensive study of Buddhism. The selection of material related to Epictetus has involved an extensive review of literature and research scholarship: both primary and secondary, ancient and modern.

Ancient Greek and Roman writings addressed suffering in a more general sense (for example, through use of the word *paschō*), particularising it to issues such as: anger, hate, greed and fear; the study of passions, attaining virtue, ethical conduct, and moral obligations. Their consideration was not as focused or philosophically rigorous on the topic of suffering as that of Buddhists (Buddha's uppermost mantra was said to be 'I teach only suffering and the transformation of suffering').¹ The Buddhist *Adhidhamma Pitaka* is not only an extraordinarily detailed analysis of the basic natural principles that govern mental and physical processes related to our suffering, but it treats the subject in a philosophically rigorous and systematised way. This thesis is attempting to bring together the wealth and richness of the Buddhist approach with that of the pragmatic, less rigorous, but nevertheless significant, approach of Epictetus and his version of Stoicism: each has something to offer the other, both trying to address the same human problem.

The primary source used for Epictetus is the Oldfather (1925-28) version of the *Discourses, The Encheiridion* (Handbook) and *Fragments*, and this is deployed throughout this thesis as the principal translation for analysis and argument. Other translations have also been used to double check and compare meanings and interpretations, as appropriate, and these include translations by: Hard and Gill (2014), a modern translation of the *Discourses, Encheiridion* and the *Fragments*, with some interesting notes on the *Discourses* and its critics; Dobbin (2008) which offers another useful modern translation of the *Discourses* and other selected writings of Epictetus; and again Dobbin (2007) which offers a translation of Book 1 of the *Discourses*, with a detailed accompanying commentary which is specific, to the point and thorough. Brittain and Brennan's translation of the commentary on the *Encheiridion* by Simplicius² is a useful and comprehensive exegesis, with complementary notes and an extensive glossary. Seddon (2005) is a translation of the *Encheiridion* with a modern commentary, most of which is thorough and useful, although not as comprehensively detailed as Simplicius.

Secondary sources of literature dealing directly with the general teaching as well as interpretations and analysis of Epictetus' ethics include Long's (2002) masterful study of Epictetus, which provides invaluable discussion on critical themes related to suffering including governance of our emotions, autonomy, volition, integrity, actions and feeling. Bonhöffer's (1996) classic exposition provides a clear and concise critical look at Epictetus' three exercises on the virtues of the soul.

¹ Nhat Hanh (1998) p.3

² Brittain and Brennan (2014). An interesting read for historical reasons is Stonehope's (1694) version of Simplicius' commentary on the *Encheiridion*.

³ Brittain and Brennan's translation and commentary on these authors are given in the bibliography. The 1694 version of Simplicius' commentary on the *Encheiridion*.

Stephens (2007) provides a comprehensive look at Epictetus on happiness as freedom. In addition, a large collection of material was reviewed that dealt with specific topics related to Epictetus. These include: a compendium of articles in Scaltsas and Mason (2007) that includes an excellent analysis of the *prohairesis* by Sorabji, insightful remarks by Eler on the self and Frede on the notion of a person; work on Epictetus and Chrysippus by Hershbell (1993); a study of diseases of the soul by Rabel (1981); discussion of freedom and determinism by Braicovich (2010, 2013); Gill (2006) on the structured self; Dyson (2009) on the normative self; work on the psychology and epistemology of Epictetus by Girdwood (1998).

In order to explore the background and broader aspects of Stoicism in relation to Epictetus various secondary sources have been used including Long and Sedley (1987) and Sellars (2006). Rist (2010) gives a good account of Stoicism with a particularly useful focus on Epictetus; in addition Sellars (2003) provides an insightful assessment of exercises in Epictetus' *Encheiridion* and the Stoic art of living. Graver (2007) gives a lucid analysis and interpretation of Stoic emotions; Inwood's (2003) companion to the Stoics offers a unique collection of authoritative references to the phases of Stoic development; Bobzien's (2001) major work provides a rich analysis and understanding of the Stoics' position on determinism and freedom, which is especially significant given Epictetus' obsession with freedom; Graeser (1997, 1978, 2006) and De Lacy (1943, 1945, 1977) discuss language, meaning and categories; Brennan (2005) studies emotions and Stoic psychology with much focus on Epictetus; Long (1982) presents a seminal account of the Stoic interpretation of the body and soul; and Sandbach (2001) provides a solid foundational reference on the Stoics and their thinking.

Ideas on philosophical therapy for the treatment of human suffering, were not only prevalent in ancient times, but have had some influence on modern therapeutic practice, especially in areas such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy (REBT). In addition, the use of the medical paradigm for psychological and ethical health was a recurrent theme in Greek and Roman times, as seen in the works of Aristotle, Plato, Galen, Plutarch, Chrysippus and Epictetus. There are parallels to be found in various ancient philosophies including Stoicism and Buddhism (see below for the coverage of Buddhism). Various secondary sources have been used to explore this avenue of thinking: Nussbaum (2009) focuses on a wealth of ideas on therapy in theory and practice as applied to ancient ethics and the analysis of passions, and is an invaluable source of information and reference; Sorabji's (2002) major study on emotion and its therapy is a comprehensive source of ideas and inspiration; Gill (1985, 2006) provides a masterly account of the philosophical foundations; Ellis (1962, 2005) and Beck (1979) relate to REBT and CBT respectively with Epictetus as a forerunner; Murguia and Diaz (2015) write on CBT, Stoicism (in particular Epictetus), Buddhism, Taoism and Existentialism; Zhang (2009); and Robertson (2010) write on CBT and Stoicism. Other sources of general material on therapy are found in Sellars and Graver referenced above.

Several other primary works have been consulted and reviewed that relate to ancient thinking on the emotions including Aristotle, Cicero, Diogenes Laertius, Philo, Plato, Plotinus, and Seneca, and

the earlier Stoics, Zeno and Chrysippus.³ Secondary works that relate to the other Roman Stoics, Marcus Aurelius and Seneca, and the earlier Stoics, Zeno and Chrysippus, have been consulted and reviewed.⁴

Like many ancient thinkers and philosophers, Buddha taught in the oral tradition and for many years his monks propagated his thoughts orally. Later his thoughts were captured in a set of canons and primary texts. Over the years many interpretations and commentaries based on the teachings of the Buddha have developed. The world's library of Buddhist teaching is voluminous and diverse, covering three main movements: *Theravada*, *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna*. As regards specific Buddhist texts in relation to this thesis the English translations of the original scriptures referred to as the *Tripitaka* (*Three Baskets – Vinaya Pitaka, Sutta Pitaka, Adhidhamma Pitaka*),⁵ have been our main source of reference to Buddhist discourse, in particular the second division, the *Sutta Pitaka*⁶ and to a lesser extent the *Adhidhamma Pitaka*. We have also used several modern interpretations and commentaries of the Buddhist scriptures including that of Tsering (2005, 2006, 2008, 2012), Nhat Hanh (1992, 1998), Dalai Lama (2009, 2013), Bodhi (2005, 2008, 2012, 2016, 2017), Kelsang Gyatso (1994), Kalupahana (1992a), Brazier (2003) and Frosndal (2005). Tsering, Nhat Hanh, Dalai Lama, Bodhi, Kelsang Gyatso have been helpful for their modern and authoritative interpretations and commentary on the *Four Noble Truths*, the *Eightfold Path* and related aspects such as Dependent Origination and the five Aggregates. In addition, references to the English translations of the *Sutta Pitaka* and the *Adhidhamma Pitaka* by Bodhi have been used. Kalupahana has been selected for more detailed discussion of the Buddhist theory of knowledge and understanding, human personality, epistemology and logic, and sankhara (dispositions). Brazier has been specifically used for an overview of Buddhist psychology.

Regarding comparisons between Buddhism and Stoicism/Epictetus, several secondary studies have been consulted and reviewed and these include: Ferraiolo (2010), Andrei (2009), Goerger (2017), Murguia and Diaz (2015), Gowans (2010), Davis and Sharpe, and Yu (2004). None of the studies consulted provide a detailed comparison of Buddhism with Epictetus, especially in regard to a comprehensive view of suffering. Ferraiolo is a good introduction into the way the West might appreciate Buddhism by considering Epictetus' teaching and counsel, in other words how we might fashion Epictetus in the likeness of a Roman Buddha. Goerger presents a limited and useful comparison of Buddhist meditative practices and Stoic ethics. Andrei is a good but limited

³ Full details of the editions and translations of these authors are given in the bibliography.

⁴ Hadot (1998); Rutherford (2003); Haines (2003); Farquharson (2008); Rutherford (1989); Rist (1989); Mendell (1941); Sandbach (2001); Gould (2012); Tieleman (2003)

⁵ *Tripitaka* is the doctrinal foundation of *Theravada* Buddhism and is the traditional term for the Buddhist scriptures. The *Tripitakas* were composed between 500 BCE and the 1st century BCE. *Mahayana* Buddhism also reveres the *Tripitaka* as authoritative but, unlike *Theravada*, it also reveres various derivative literature and commentaries that were composed much later.

⁶ *Sutta Pitaka* - the second division of the *Tripitaka*: *Digha Nikaya* (DN) the "Long" Discourses, *Majjhima Nikaya* (MN) the "Middle-length" Discourses, *Samyutta Nikaya* (SN) the "Grouped" Discourses, *Anguttara Nikaya* (AN) the "Further-factored" Discourses and *Khuddaka Nikaya* (KN) the "Division of Short Books". It should be noted that *Khuddaka Nikaya* (KN) contains the well-known collection of Buddhist verses or aphorisms known as the *Dhammapada* which provides an exegesis of principles from the Buddhist scriptures.

introduction to the medical paradigm that is used in Buddhism and Stoic thinking. The study by Murguia and Diaz examines the foundations of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and its roots in ancient philosophy, including Stoicism and Buddhism. Gowans' focus is on the medical analogies in Buddhist and Hellenistic thought and how this is related to discussion on psychological health, central moral questions and modification of beliefs in response to rational arguments. The study by Davis and Sharpe provides some useful and well constructed preliminary notes and ideas regarding the notion of philosophy as an art of living, comparing Stoicism with Buddhism, with examples from Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus. Finally Yu is a comparative study of *askesis* in Epictetus and early Buddhist meditation. Overall these studies provide useful references and input.

Finally it should be noted that the main liturgical language of *Theravada* Buddhism is *Pali*, as used in the *Tripitaka*. The language of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism is *Sanskrit*, but also Chinese and Japanese is used, and for *Vajrayāna* Buddhism the language is Tibetan. In this thesis *Pali* is occasionally used alongside the English translation, for example, dis-ease, suffering, dissatisfaction (*dukkha*) or ignorance (*avijjā*).

Plan of the thesis

Chapter 1 (Human Suffering) starts our investigation of Epictetus' response to human suffering by considering the Buddhist model, *The Four Noble Truths*. These *truths* express the foundation of Buddhist thinking and orientation regarding suffering and are used in this thesis to show a correspondence between Buddhist thinking and that of Epictetus; they are used as the point of reference for reframing Epictetus' thinking and approach as the basis of a practical 'theory of human suffering'. In addition, several key Buddhist concepts are introduced in the chapter that are referenced in the other chapters of this thesis for comparative purposes and to illustrate parallel thinking in Epictetus. These include: *sankhara* (disposition), *kamma* (action), *cetanā* (volition), *avijjā* (ignorance), *tanhā* (desire), *upādāna* (clinging, attachment) and *khandas* (aggregates related to 'personality'). Finally this chapter introduces the language of suffering, a theme that will continue throughout the thesis.

Chapter 2 (Epictetus and the First Noble Truth) looks in detail at the truth behind suffering (first noble truth) and discusses this in the context of Epictetus' approach to suffering. This chapter also examines the various pathological elements and conditions, and their relationships that contribute to the suffering of a *diseased* soul. This includes discussion of dispositions and habits as a critical factor in the conditioning of man's suffering. Various examples of language are cited to illustrate Epictetus' thinking on the suffering of a *diseased* soul.

Chapter 3 (Epictetus and the Second Noble Truth) looks in detail at the causes of suffering (second noble truth) and again this is discussed in the context of Epictetus. This chapter also looks at the language employed by Epictetus as a tool for our philosophical inquiry into suffering. Specifically, this aspect of language relates to our inquiry into the two basic principles of our existence that of receiving (the passive 'that which happens to us' *paschein* (πάσχειν)) and doing (the

active 'that which happens because of us' *poiein* (ποιεῖν)). Epictetus uses this language extensively to unravel the secrets of why our actions (our wishes, wants, desires) relate to our experience (our suffering). Our comparison with Buddhism continues with a discussion on the equivalent active/passive aspects of Buddhist thinking.

Chapter 4 (Epictetus and the Third Noble Truth) looks in detail at the cessation of suffering (third noble truth) with focus on Epictetus' approach to suffering. This chapter discusses the realisation that suffering can be overcome, and that we have the opportunity to free ourselves from the conditioned mind that keeps us attached to a cycle of suffering. Our realisation of this truth is directed through contemplation and a reflective mind, in particular, that volition (*cetanā*) drives actions (*kamma*), develops mental formations (*sankhara*) and leads to wholesome (*kusala*) or unwholesome (*akusala*) states of mind. In this chapter we discuss Epictetus' response to this through his teaching of the faculty of moral choice (*prohairesis*) and how through the application of this faculty we can practise the cessation of our unwholesome acts and states of mind.

Chapter 5 (Epictetus and the Fourth Noble Truth) looks in detail at the *eightfold path* (fourth noble truth), a set of activities to practise and train with for the cessation of suffering. Again our focus is in the context of Epictetus' approach to suffering and a comparison between the *eightfold path* and Epictetus' three disciplines of the soul is discussed. This chapter also discusses the regime of theory (*pariyatti*), practice (*patipatti*) and realisation (*pativedha*), which appears in the teaching of Buddhism and is reflected in the educational philosophy of Epictetus.

Finally throughout the thesis a comparison is made between Epictetus and Buddhism as regards the medical paradigm: diagnosis (*διάγνωσις*), aetiology (*αίτιολογία*), prognosis (*πρόγνωσις*) and therapy (*θεραπεία*).

Some Background Thoughts

The language of suffering has been expressed through the voice of tragedy, philosophy, politics and religion, featuring high on the human agenda from early times through to the modern day. It has been linked to topics such as the problems of evil, death and illness, God, and the modern-day definition of mental health and illness. Of course in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*⁷, the topic is linked with fate, free will and the pursuit of justice and revenge. The works of many ancient writers inform us of the tragedies and suffering of man, brought by his emotions:⁸ all embraced and accentuated, the plight of the heroes, armies, wives and children, all suffering for some cause, through conflict, love, jealousy and the need for power. (Hall (2012) provides an insightful response to this view in the context of ancient Greek tragedy.) As Epictetus himself remarks, '*For what are tragedies but the portrayal in tragic verse of the sufferings of men who have admired things external*',⁹ and so too in the real world, '*Suffering is an inevitable aspect of human life*', a view which I believe we must agree with;

⁷ A. Ors. 310, 893, 1070, 1176, 1210, 1561, 1655.

⁸ Konstan (2007); Braund and Most (2007).

⁹ Diss. 1.4.26-27

especially if we are to realise our own humanity, to fulfil the profession of being a man¹⁰ and pursue the moral imperative to be free of our suffering and madness.¹¹

Is suffering something we can precisely define and give meaning to? Or is suffering something that happens to us and we experience without necessarily being able to explain it? This thesis does not provide definitive answers to these age-old questions but gives an interpretation of Epictetus' thinking that shows that suffering is linked both with a language of being and a language of experience, and in real terms suffering found in life-experiences and our knowledge gained from these experiences helps us with our freedom of choice to control our desires and impulses.

¹⁰ *Diss.* 2.9.1-2

¹¹ *Diss.* 1.4.18, 1.12.9-10, 1.17.20-29, 1.19.7-8, 1.19.16-17, 1.19.22, 2.15.17-18

Chapter 1 Truths and Language of Human Suffering

1.1 Prologue

This is Suffering

Suffering is the common bond that all humans share: a natural and human experience that happens to all of us. Our attitude should be neither negative nor pessimistic: to think otherwise is to show a lack of understanding of what suffering is and the significant role it plays in our lives; to engage in addressing our suffering is an opportunity to learn more about oneself and to examine oneself. In this thesis I consider the relative suffering of the individual, not of society or a species. We are, says Epictetus, the subject matter of our own suffering experience, not of someone else's suffering.¹²

This thesis examines Epictetus' response to human suffering by comparing his approach with that of Buddhism; in particular the methodology used compares Epictetus' approach with that of the Buddhist work the *Four Noble Truths* (1.2). These *Truths* refer to, and are an expression of, the basic orientation of Buddhism,¹³ and are said to set the *Wheel of Dhamma*¹⁴ in motion. They form part of the core beliefs that are the essence of Buddhist scriptures (the *tripitaka*).

In this thesis I make the claim that what Epictetus teaches can be closely aligned to the *Four Noble Truths* (1.2) and to a reasonable degree¹⁵ some of the underlying scriptures found in the texts of the *Sutta Pitaka* and *Adhidhamma Pitaka*.¹⁶ In carrying out this comparison I shall show that the methodical, systematic and rigorously detailed approach of Buddhism is beneficial to the understanding and application of Epictetus' teaching, rendering a more systematized approach to his addressing of suffering, whilst providing a greater awareness of common philosophical and psychological principles involved.

East/West - Affinity of Thought

Prince Siddhārtha Gautama (known today variously as Gautama Buddha, Siddhārtha Gautama, Shakyamuni Buddha or simply the Buddha, the Enlightened One) started life at the other end of the spectrum to that of Epictetus. Gautama Buddha enjoyed the riches and material wealth of being born into a royal family with all its privileges, luxuries, comforts and status, but he gave it all up – to wander homeless in search of the truth behind man's suffering and enlightenment. Despite cultural

¹² *Diss.* 1.15.1-5

¹³ Gethin (1998) p.59

¹⁴ Dhamma (Dharma) generally means the teachings of the Buddha

¹⁵ We must acknowledge that not all the scriptures in the *Tripitaka* match the teaching Epictetus, or of Stoicism; indeed, there are some metaphysical differences and deviations (1.2.2-1.2.3). Their teachings do, however, share much common ground and understanding of the relative suffering of the individual as regards the causes of suffering, the moral commitment to the cessation of suffering, and common practices in freedom from suffering. Both approaches are direct and uncompromisingly realistic about suffering and the human condition.

¹⁶ The *Sutta Pitaka* and the *Adhidhamma Pitaka* are the second and third of the three books of the *tripitaka* which constitute the Pali Canon, the scriptures of Theravāda Buddhism. The *Sutta Pitaka* contains more than 10,000 teachings of Buddha and his close followers. The *Abhidhamma Pitaka* is a detailed scholastic analysis of the Buddha's teachings into general principles of 'Buddhist Psychology'.

differences and backgrounds, Epictetus and Prince Siddhārtha Gautama arrived at common points of understanding as regards human suffering: reflecting definitive voices of wisdom, the *logos* and the *Dharma*, respectively: they were in pursuit of finding the truth behind the suffering mind.

Both their journeys adopted a philosophical 'way of life' (1.3): a 'living' philosophy to search for the truth behind inner freedom and peace of mind. Such philosophical journeys brought them in touch with their inner souls, to be more aware of their existence and to recognise suffering, and work to be free of suffering. Many modern scholars have recognised such a philosophy, for example: Long,¹⁷ Hadot,¹⁸ and Sellars¹⁹ who says 'Philosophy is thus both this internal corporeal disposition of the soul and an activity or way of living; the latter is a necessary expression of the former'.

The teachings of Gautama Buddha and Epictetus have survived for thousands of years and have had a major influence on western and eastern cultures alike, both respectively being representative of East/West thinking on the suffering mind and the human goals of happiness and satisfaction.

Stoic/Buddhist Traditions

Stoic and Buddhist views are similar in many ways regarding the universal truth behind man's suffering, the causes of this suffering and the idea that man is capable of freeing himself from his suffering. The affinity of thought between the two systems is especially prominent as regards the psychology of the suffering mind and the moral imperative and urgency to turn our attention to deal with suffering. Both traditions share the view that we suffer because we are deluded by false views and opinions about ourselves and the world around us. Particularly troublesome is our desire for, and attachment to, things that are impermanent and not important or beneficial to our lives.

In the Stoic world the focus is predominantly on a philosophy of personal ethics based on a system of logic and an understanding of the physical world. They teach that the pathway to happiness is found in accepting the present moment as it is and not allowing ourselves to be controlled through what they traditionally refer to as the emotions or passions (*pathēe*) (2.4.2, 3.3.1 and 3.3.2). We shall consider in 3.5.2 the Stoic *pathē* and discuss that false beliefs and assumptions of what is good or evil (2.4.1), and what is in our sphere of control, result in errors in judgement.

In the Buddhist world the focus is on the notion of *dukkha*, a term that is difficult to translate (2.2.1), but is sometimes referred to as suffering, although more accurately it expresses a sense of dissatisfaction. Therefore, *dukkha* covers the full spectrum of suffering (2.2.3), from the suffering of the physical life/death cycle, through to feelings that are pleasant, unpleasant or neutral, and finally to those conditioned states of mind and volitional activities that embrace the complex emotions and passions.

Although the Stoic and Buddhist worlds might seem to be different in focus and starting point they offer similar but alternative perspectives of human suffering and are actually the same at the practical level as this thesis and analysis aims to show. Even though the Stoics traditionally dealt

¹⁷ Long (2002)

¹⁸ Hadot (1995), (2005)

¹⁹ Sellars (2003) pp. 82-83

with *pathē* as the prime subject of suffering, Epictetus' teaching demonstrates that the full landscape of suffering as classified by the Buddhists (2.2.3) is also covered.

As we shall discuss in 3.3 the Greek word *paschō*, from which *pathē* is derived, is a term covering all forms of experience that can happen to someone or something, to be influenced or affected in some way, to suffer (in both a general and also specific sense). Epictetus' use of this term goes some way to demonstrate his comprehensive coverage of suffering. Also there is much parallel thinking between Buddhism and Epictetus on the general principles that underlie the problematic inherent in the full spectrum of what we might call suffering, from the ordinary through to the complex (*pathē*). This thesis discusses this parallel thinking through the language found in Epictetus' teaching. Both Epictetus and Buddhism share the same view that humans all want to be happy and satisfied in their lives but they fail to achieve this since their desires and attachments are based on ignorance, false views and deluded assumptions.

There are, however, differences when it comes to the cosmological and metaphysical aspects of the two systems of thought, and the complex and intricate theory of the self (or non-self) defined in Buddhism. There will be no detailed discussion in this thesis of these differences as they are generally not of significance and add no value to the goal of this thesis (1.2.2, 1.2.3).

Methodology

My aim here in using the Buddhist Dharma and the *Four Noble Truths* is purely to provide a well-tried and tested framework to systematically structure the presentation of Epictetus' thinking on suffering. The *Four Noble Truths* approach is not found in the works of Epictetus *per se* but my claim is that it does exist, albeit in a covert way, and so taking this approach is a valuable means of illuminating the depth of Epictetus' thinking on suffering. Overall it is hoped that this approach will provide a richer understanding of Epictetus and perhaps open the door to a better appreciation of the universal nature of human suffering from each (East/West) perspective, given the cultural and social differences and respective traditions.

Epictetus' approach²⁰ to suffering is presented in his teachings, as recorded by Arrian, in a less systematic and methodological way than that found in the Buddhist *Four Noble Truths*: his reference to suffering in terms of a set of truths is indirect, but I claim that it is implicit in his discourses. I shall show there is included in his teaching the common elements of these truths that enable a reframing of his approach in a more systematic way: the nature of the principle to 'know thyself'²¹ is in fact to know the truth behind our suffering and provide truth to the soul.²² The methodological approach used in this chapter gives an opportunity to validate his thinking and principles against the *Four Noble Truths* model, and will provide an opening for a greater understanding of the Epictetus text by

²⁰ Epictetus' teachings, as found in the writings of Arrian, are unconcerned with style of presentation – topics and principles are scattered throughout the writings in an *ad hoc* fashion without any focus on order or particular logic or procedure for their placement. Topics of significant and prime importance are liberally distributed across the written text without, seemingly, any due care and attention to any method or procedure.

²¹ *Diss.* 3.1.18

²² *Diss.* 2.23.37

unlocking aspects of his teaching about suffering that are indirectly hidden or obscured by his unsystematic thinking.

1.2 Four Noble Truths

1.2.1 *Spiritual Path*

The question Buddha asked was - Why embark upon a spiritual path or journey? We have an instinctive desire to achieve peace and happiness in life – this is surely why we must embark on this spiritual path or journey. Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, remarks that 'happiness is something that we all aspire to achieve and of course we naturally have a right to fulfil this aspiration'.²³ Buddha also said 'there is suffering, there is a cause of suffering, there is cessation of suffering and there is a path leading to the cessation'.²⁴ What we have expressed here is the basic orientation of Buddhism generally referred to as the *Four Noble Truths*.²⁵ They are not truths in the absolute sense but four realities to reflect upon and to contemplate; they can be considered as types of practice or exercise (1.3) to support and realise our spiritual path. In the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* text²⁶ the truths are presented as follows:

- The *first truth (dukkha)* – the truth of suffering (a constant stream of dissatisfaction in life -discussed further in Chapter 2);
- The *second truth (samudaya)* – the truth of the origin of suffering (suffering is caused by our desires, attachments, clinging - discussed further in Chapter 3);
- The *third truth (nirodha)* - the truth of the cessation of suffering (our suffering through our personal system of desires can be brought to an end leading to liberation and well being - discussed further in Chapter 4);
- The *fourth truth (magga)* - the truth of the way to liberation from suffering due to our attachment to desires (eightfold path process, activities and exercises of *Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration* – discussed further in Chapter 5).

What these truths reflect is one of the fundamental laws in Buddhism, the *Law of Karma*.²⁷ The essence of this is reflected in the *Rice Seedling Sutra (Salistamba Sutra)*²⁸ 'Due to the existence of this, that arises. Due to the production of this, that is produced. It is thus: due to ignorance there is volition' – nothing comes into being without a cause. In considering these four truths we see they

²³ Gyatso (1997) p.34

²⁴ MN 63: *Culamalunkya Sutta*; I 426-32

²⁵ Gethin (1998) p.59

²⁶ SN 56.11

²⁷ The *Law of Karma* is referred to in AN 4:232, MN 41: *Saleyrika Sutta*, MN 135: *Culakammavibhanga Sutta*. The literal meaning of *kamma* (Pali) or *karma* (Sanskrit) is that of 'action' or 'doing' and in Buddhism *kamma* refers to action driven by intention or volition (*cetanā*), which leads to future results and consequences (*vipaka*): specifically it applies to the province of moral purpose (See *prohairesis* – Chapter 4) the moral quality of actions and their consequences. *Kamma* relates to internal actions (by body, speech and mind) and not actions and influences from external sources. *Kamma* is often thought of as a chain reaction of cause (intention, volition and action) and effect (the fruit of this action), and so the *Law of Karma* is sometimes referred to as the spiritual law of cause and effect.

²⁸ Tashi Tsering (2005) p.18

form two sets of relationships: the first and second truths (suffering arises because of some cause) and the third and fourth truths (suffering can cease if we follow the path leading to cessation). The existence of something (say, the thought of death) causes suffering to arise (in terms of fearful thoughts of death), the very same message found in the language of Epictetus.²⁹ Figure 1 below illustrates these relationships.

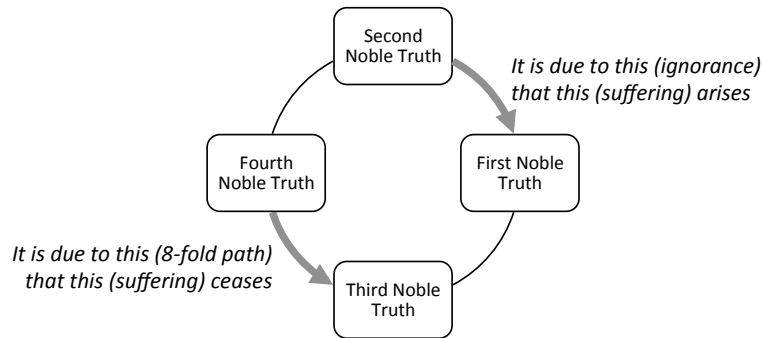


Figure 1 Kamma (spiritual cause and effect)

At the heart of the *Four Noble Truths* is the Pali word *dukkha*. This word is not easy to translate into English: it has many meanings and nuances, and as such embodies a diverse range of unpleasant human experiences:³⁰ incapable of being satisfied; unable to bear something unpleasant; being uneasy – not at ease (dis-ease); and is commonly translated as suffering, pain or generally being in an unsatisfactory state. This plurality of meanings points to the diverse nature of suffering and so the universal need for our reflection on the *Four Noble Truths* (such diversity of meaning is representative of the Greek word *paschō* and its usage – See 3.3).

1.2.2 The Truths and Metaphysics

There are three subjects in Buddhism that have generated misunderstanding, confusion, controversy and differences of opinion among both non-Buddhist and western thinkers. Even within Buddhism itself we can encounter many differences and deviations of thought and opinions about these subjects across the three Buddhist movements and the various schools.³¹ These subjects are Buddhist metaphysics, the notion of self and non-self (*anatta*).

It is not the intention of this thesis to consider in any detail these three controversial subjects but to focus our effort on the *Four Noble Truths* and supporting *sutras* (dialogues and discourses), which are more relevant and suited to our objective of comparing Buddhism with Epictetus, and to the subject of human suffering. Considering these subjects would divert and distract us from the goal of this thesis. In fact not considering these subjects aids our comparison, and greater insight is gained into the parallel thinking between Buddhism and Epictetus. The following is an explanation why this is the case.

²⁹ In *Ench. 5*, Epictetus' teaching reflects the same notions of *kamma*: our intent and action drives good or bad results, whether it is what we do bodily, verbally or mentally.

³⁰ Rhys Davids and Stede (2016) pp. 324–325

³¹ As Buddhism developed in the different movements (Theravada, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna) and the various schools, Buddhist scholars looked at metaphysical questions and formulated views, theories and discourses: the main divisions of Buddhist metaphysics are the Realistic and the Idealistic.

Our intention is to use the *Four Noble Truths* as these articulate the essence of all Buddhist teachings and this is all that is needed for this thesis as regards suffering. The *Four Noble Truths* have a symbolic and propositional function for understanding the teachings: symbolically they refer to the possibility of awakening or enlightenment and as propositions they are part of the matrix or network of teachings (the *sutras*).³² The *Four Noble Truths* are not some metaphysical treatise on suffering, and there is nothing absolute about these truths: rather these truths are ideas to reflect upon; they are not fixed in any absolute way and so we do not need to accept them and interpret them in any rigid way or with any exactness; they are for contemplation and consideration to enable our mind to transcend suffering.

The reasons why the *Four Noble Truths* are immune from metaphysical debate and controversy can be explained as follows. Buddha's teaching strategy revolves around asking the right types of question in the right context and at the right time.³³ One type of questions are the so-called undeclared (or unanswered) questions (*avyakata samyutta*), as illustrated in the *Majjhima Nikaya* (MN).³⁴ This type in particular pertains to the *Four Noble Truths*³⁵ and questions about metaphysical issues. Buddha considered questions about metaphysical issues as speculative views (about existence, the nature of reality and so on) and so they were deemed unnecessary as they do not lead to the end of suffering; this included questions about self and non-self, and so he left such questions undeclared.³⁶ Buddha's silence about metaphysical issues and the *Four Noble Truths* was primarily for pragmatic reasons and not to divert us away from our spiritual practice – talking about metaphysical issues³⁷ is unbeneficial, does not belong to the fundamental practice of a spiritual life, and does not lead to cessation of suffering, to peace, to awakening and enlightenment. Consequently he presented an alternative approach by declaring: 'This is suffering, This is the origin of suffering, This is the cessation of suffering and This is the way leading to the cessation of suffering' (The *Four Noble Truths*).

The *Four Noble Truths* should be acknowledged simply for what they are, four categorical teachings about suffering to be experienced, to reflect upon and to practise, as part of the path leading to the end of suffering. Answering unnecessary and speculative questions entangles us in a thicket of views and circular arguments that hampers our path to freedom from suffering. To treat the *Four Noble Truths* as something absolute, abstract and metaphysical, is to divert our attention from the practical problem of freedom from suffering. The *Four Noble Truths* therefore provide an appropriate basis for systematically reframing Epictetus' thinking on suffering. Such an approach is

³² Anderson (1999) pp.85-87, 127-128, 132, 230-231

³³ AN 4.4.2. The four types of question are those where the answer is: (i) categorical, (ii) analytical, (iii) answered with a counter-question and (iv) questions that should be put aside and left unanswered.

³⁴ MN 63: *Culamalunkya Sutta*, I 426-32

³⁵ DN 9

³⁶ Some scholars and writers have tried to give analytical answers or draw inferences to questions that Buddha set aside, left undeclared – questions that were out of context with the subject under discussion and so such questions are misguided. This does lead to wrong interpretation and misrepresentation of Buddha's teaching.

³⁷ Questions about the existence of the self, can in themselves lead to a state of suffering. Therefore, rather than ask 'Is there a self?' we ask, 'Am I suffering because I crave and cling to particular phenomena?' – See 1.2.3.

in keeping with Epictetus' own pragmatic approach to solving the problems of life, without having to consider the speculative questions that are not conducive to freeing us from suffering in the here and now. Applying the *Four Noble Truths* to Epictetus avoids discussion regarding differences with Buddhism on some questions related to metaphysics and the self/non-self distinction.

1.2.3 Self/Non-Self

The concept of a 'self' (*atman*)³⁸ is one that could be said to divide Buddhist and Stoic thinking. In another sense how this concept is applied in the context of Buddha's and Epictetus' approach to suffering reveals not divisions but some striking similarities in thinking. This is why the discussion of the *Four Noble Truths* is important, as well as related Buddhist topics of the *five aggregates* and *sankhara*, and the commonly shared subjects of impermanence, attachments and volitional actions.

The notion of selfhood is found in the words and teachings of the Buddha, and takes on several meanings and nuances.³⁹ For example, in Buddhism we can find the notions of 'I am'-conceit, 'ego-conceit' (*asmimāna*),⁴⁰ and the view of self, as the identity view (*sakkayaditthi*).⁴¹ There is also the Buddhist notion of non-self (*anatta*)⁴² - no unchanging, permanent self, soul or essence in living beings.⁴³

Therefore the teachings of Buddha on the one hand do not deny the existence of a 'self', but on the other hand the teachings do seem to deny such an existence. This might appear confusing but we need to consider this in the context of his teaching strategy, which provides the framework for everything he taught:⁴⁴ part of the strategy relates to the *Four Noble Truths*⁴⁵ and part relates to skilful or unskilful actions.⁴⁶ Buddha's discussion on the 'self'/non-self distinction does have a role to play in this teaching, and Buddha devised a number of strategies of the 'self' and 'non-self', which in part deals with the issue of skilful or unskilful actions:⁴⁷ this relates to the perception of self in terms of identification and *kammic* actions (1.2.1).

Buddha purposely used the phrase 'There is suffering'⁴⁸ (see above) rather than 'I am suffering' and this strategy not only avoids the entanglement with metaphysical debate of issues such as self/non-self (1.2.2), but equally importantly the use of the verb 'to be' is one of the main psychological factors behind our suffering, for example, in the 'I am'-conceit case or the identity view,

³⁸ The Sanskrit word *atman* means inner self or soul (Rhys Davids and Stede (1921) pp. 22-23). In Hindu philosophy this refers to the individual's true self beyond identification with phenomena. In Buddhism this concept of *atman* is found in early Buddhist literature under the discussion of the 'non-self'.

³⁹ SN 22:25; III 58-61, SN 22:82, abridged; 100-103 = MN 109, abridged; III 15-19

⁴⁰ SN 28:1-9, combined; III 235-38, SN 22:25; III 58-61, SN 22:82, abridged; 100-103 = MN 109, abridged; III 15-19, SN 22:89; III 126-32

⁴¹ Bodhi (2005) pp.380-381

⁴² SN 22:59; III 66-68, SN 35:85; IV 54, SN 35:234; IV 166-168

⁴³ The individual person consists of five *skandhas* (aggregates) —the body, feelings, perceptions, impulses and consciousness, therefore the idea of a self, over these aggregates, is illusory and the cause of suffering.

⁴⁴ Thanissaro Bhikkhu (2013) p.4

⁴⁵ SN 56.11

⁴⁶ AN 2.18, AN 10.176

⁴⁷ Thanissaro Bhikkhu (2013) p.4

⁴⁸ MN 63: *Culamalunkya Sutta*; I 426-32

especially our attachment to the five aggregates (*khandhas*).⁴⁹ All of Buddha's teachings are not theoretical discussion but pragmatically strategic, involving a daily regime of exercise, practice and training to deal with our suffering (see 1.3 and 5.3), which aligns with Epictetus in that philosophy was conceived as an *art of living* (see 1.3).

In Epictetus the 'self' reveals itself in many different ways, some of which are discussed in this thesis, in particular, in the context of ourselves, and what we say to ourself (1.5, 5.3.5), our dispositions (2.3), our volitional actions and the *prohairesis* (4.4) and our sensibilities to passions (5.3.3). We also see the idea of 'self' features in contexts such as self-conceit,⁵⁰ self-respect,⁵¹ self-sufficiency,⁵² self-control,⁵³ self-examination,⁵⁴ self-contemplation⁵⁵ (5.3.4) and so on. For the purposes of this thesis we do not engage in a detailed discussion on Epictetus and the 'self'; this is provided by Long (2002), Sorabji (2007), Erler (2007), Gill (2006), Rist (2010) and others. We also do not engage in a detailed comparison of the 'self' between Buddhism and Epictetus, for as discussed in 1.2.2 it is not necessary or important for the *Four Noble Truths* and Chapter 1. But what we can say is that Epictetus and Buddha are in a degree of harmony when it comes to suffering and our moral duties and imperatives: for example, whether our actions are skilful and wholesome or unskilful and unwholesome, and perceptions of 'self' in terms of the five aggregates (*khandhas*).

Before leaving this question of the 'self', it is worth mentioning that Buddhism has a chequered history of disputes about 'self' and 'not-self' doctrines.⁵⁶ The various interpretations and misinterpretation of Buddha's theories of 'self' and 'not-self' has led to many circular arguments and use of his theories and strategies that are out of context. One of the controversial debates is in regard to the phrase 'all phenomena are not-self' in relation to the five aggregates. These aggregates are a set of processes that shape the empirical individual and so the totality of our experiences can be explained in relation to these aggregates. Consequently our suffering arises because we cling/attach ourselves to anything that we think belongs to us, or that can define or identify us. So these aggregates explain the process of starting from a sensation, through a chain of processes that includes thinking and cognitions, and subsequently that can lead to attachments and so to suffering. The five aggregates are an important aspect our being able to understand the causes

⁴⁹ The five aggregates (*khandhas*) refer to the five factors (form, sensations, perceptions, mental/volitional formations and consciousness), which constitute and completely explain a sentient being's mental and physical existence.

⁵⁰ *Diss.* 3.23.16-17

⁵¹ *Diss.* 4.4.6, 3.22.15, 4.3.2-3, 8, 4.9.10-12, 4.9.17-18

⁵² *Diss.* 3.13.6-7

⁵³ *Diss.* 4.1.10, 4.9.17-18

⁵⁴ *Diss.* 4.6.33, 3.12.15

⁵⁵ *Diss.* 1.29.57-61, 1.17.1-3

⁵⁶ Disputes about the existence or non-existence of 'self' (*atman*), 'not-self' (*anatta*) and 'true-self' (*dhammakaya*) doctrines have continued throughout the history of Buddhism. In some debates there is an air of ambivalence, whilst in others the discussion is controversial and in some case polarised. Details of some of these disputes, views and opinions are contained in Mackenzie (1925) pp.51-72, 100-105; Harvey (1995) pp.54-56; Gethin (1998); Williams (2008) pp.125-128; Bronkhorst (2009) p.25; Wayne (2009); Potprecha Cholvijarn (2011); Jayatilleke (2010) pp.246-249; Thanissaro Bhikkhu (2013). Wynne and Gethin take a similar position as Thanissaro Bhikkhu, by arguing that the Buddha's description of non-self in the five aggregates does not necessarily mean there is no self, stating that the five aggregates are not descriptions of a human being but phenomena for one to observe.

of our suffering and the path of treatment for the cessation of our suffering, so they support the *Four Noble Truths*. Hence we should not misunderstand the five aggregates and we should treat them for what they are - as a set of processes about phenomena we attach ourselves to. Therefore, we should not succumb to metaphysical questions and arguments on self/non-self, which as Buddha says, should be left answered. For example: *kamma* (1.2.1) is something we experience first hand but we can also talk of *kamma* in connection with the five aggregates, which are regarded as not permanent and associated with the notion of 'non-self'. Again our thinking should be in terms of skillful *kamma* or unskillful *kamma* to avoid metaphysical arguments of self and non-self,⁵⁷ that distract us from dealing with our suffering and our path to enlightenment and awakening.

A second area of misunderstanding is that of Dependent Origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*),⁵⁸ and conditioned phenomena/volitional dispositions (*sankhara*),⁵⁹ which, as with the five aggregates, lead to questions that are inconsistent with discussion on self/non-self, and should be classed as undetermined questions. We consider Dependent Origination, *sankhara*, *kamma* and the five aggregates in more detail in 1.7 and 2.2.3.4. There is also a comparative summary with Epictetus given in Table 2 (p.39). These four topics are also related to 2.3 on dispositions, 3.3 on the language of the active/passive, and 4.4 on the *prohairesis*.

1.3 Theory, Practice and Realisation

1.3.1 Exercise and Practice

This section (1.3) covers the practical question of how to realise these truths, and so here we shall consider the parallels between Buddhism and Epictetus with regards to practice and exercise.

What is clearly pronounced in the *Four Noble Truths* is the need to reflect on the mind's activities through a daily regime of exercise, practice and training, which involves self-therapy, contemplation, meditation and mindfulness and other methods. The *Noble Truths* are mastered through three levels of vision, understanding, insight and knowing:

- *pariyatti* - theory, discourse, words, a claimed thesis;
- *patipatti* - practice with this thesis (pursuing the theory to gain insight and understanding);
- *pativedha* - finally there is the result of this practice (realisation of the truth of the thesis).

For example, with the *Second Noble Truth*: we have the thesis that craving and attachment is the origin of suffering; then there is practice with this thesis to exercise and develop our mind in a reflective way in our daily lives; and finally the result of the practice is succeeding in gaining insight, understanding and knowing, which means we are not just reacting to what has been learnt and exercised in our practice, but we fully accept and embrace it – we can see our life has been

⁵⁷ SN 22:25; III 58-61, SN 22:82, abridged; 100-103 = MN 109, abridged; III 15-19

⁵⁸ Dependent Origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) refers to a chain of conditioned links 'if this exists, that exists; if this ceases to exist, that also ceases to exist'.

⁵⁹ AN 4:232; II 230-232, MN 9:*Sammaditthi Sutta*; I 46-55, SN 22:56; III 58-61, SN 56:42; V 448-450

transformed. This notion of education through exercising and studying the theory and then practising what has been learnt is also major theme of Epictetus⁶⁰ and lies at the heart of the process of freedom. A mantra of Epictetus that we should keep in mind and say to ourselves when a hardship befalls us is, 'It was for this that I kept training, it was to meet that I used to practise'.⁶¹

This is linked with the concept of philosophy conceived as an *art of living*, as discussed by Sellars, Hadot, Nussbaum and others.⁶² This concept has its origins in the philosophy of Socrates.⁶³ The Stoic *art of living*⁶⁴ concept is along similar lines to the thinking of Buddhism: we have principles (*logos*), then practice (*askēsis*) and with an end goal (*telos*) that will produce deeds and actions (*erga*) appropriate to it.⁶⁵ Like Buddhism, this brings together the theory (principles and discourse) with the practice, applying the theory to our everyday experiences: a notion that can be seen in the writings of Musonius Rufus, Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. Epictetus argues for practice and training: learning Stoic theory, digesting it and applying it to our individual lives and experiences through practice. This line of thinking pervades his approach to philosophy, which is similar to that of Buddhism. Epictetus follows his master Musonius in this respect: he advocates learning theory, doctrines and principles and then putting this theory into practice, exercises and so finally transforming our lives.⁶⁶ Musonius argues that philosophical theories are useless unless through practice they can produce in us a transformation of our life, and this is echoed by Epictetus. We can talk and recite the rules but we also need to put them into practice;⁶⁷ both theory and practice are needed, and the end the products to be achieved are actions and deeds that reflect the good. Musonius also argues that practice is more effective than theory for acquiring virtue.⁶⁸ Practice leads us to act in a certain way which theory does not: it is by assimilating and digesting the theory⁶⁹ and through practice that we transform our enslaved mind into a mind free of disturbances.⁷⁰

Knowing and being able to talk about the Buddhist thesis on craving of desires contained in the *Second Noble Truth* is one thing, but acting upon this understanding is yet another thing: we will not know how to act upon our daily cravings unless we practise. Our actions are *up to us* and how we practise to act in accordance with the thesis is *up to us*: as Epictetus clearly points out 'Our affects (feelings) are inconsistent with our words; we are far from practising what we say'.⁷¹

⁶⁰ *Diss.* 1.2.6, 1.22.9, 1.26.3, 1.29.33-34, 1.29.44, 2.1.21-25, 2.2.13, 2.17.26-27, 2.1.29, 2.1.33, 2.16ff., 2.16.3, 2.16.5, 2.16.8, 2.16.19, 2.16.20, 2.16.27, 3.2.1, 3.8ff., 3.10.8, 3.12ff., 3.12.16-17, 3.20.9, 3.21.3-4, 3.21.15-16, 3.22.57, 4.1ff., 4.1.111, 4.4.11-13, 4.4.30, 4.5.7, 4.6.15-17; *Ench.* 5, *Ench.* 14, *Ench.* 48

⁶¹ *Diss.* 3.10.8

⁶² Sellars (2003) pp.15-106; Hadot (2002) pp.55-171, (2008) pp.264-275; Nussbaum (2009) pp.3-4, 14, 50, 318-319, 328-329, 367-368, 484-485

⁶³ Sellars (2003) pp.33-54

⁶⁴ *Diss.* 1.15.2; Sellars (2003) pp.55-85; Long (2002) pp.97-125

⁶⁵ Sellars (2006) p.107

⁶⁶ Musonius (2011) pp.36-37

⁶⁷ *Diss.* 2.9.13-17

⁶⁸ Musonius (2011) pp.34-35

⁶⁹ *Ench.* 46

⁷⁰ *Diss.* 4.1ff.

⁷¹ *Diss.* 2.9.21

Epictetus, like Buddhism, says deep understanding comes through practice. He says, we should not just understand the definition and theory of fever, but need to understand through practice what it means to have a fever in the right way, and have the right view; not to just take the thesis and words of a physician as to what a fever is, but to experience and embrace it, to develop an understanding of it, to understand and accept it in the right way, to learn through practice how to deal with it in the right way when it comes upon us.⁷² Epictetus disparages the study of theory if it is only for the purposes of display,⁷³ mere learning⁷⁴ or as an end in itself.⁷⁵ In every pursuit we need to decide what we want to do and then act accordingly; progress towards a virtuous life is through practice not theory. Again, as Sellars points out we need practice and theory; practice cannot replace theory but theory alone is not enough for philosophical progress; practice is central to our quest for such progress.⁷⁶

This brings us to an issue of insight and knowing – gaining knowledge. We can encounter in both Epictetus and Buddhism a close agreement on acquiring a state of knowing. As Sellars argues,⁷⁷ in Epictetus' thinking, mastery of philosophical theory does not, on its own, constitute knowledge. If someone with proficiency in theory fails to act in accordance with the theory he would be acting against such knowledge. The ancient Greek and Roman debate on theory and practice resonates with the Buddhist approach – a thesis/discourse (*pariyatti*) is presented, exercise and practice (*patipatti*) needs to follow if the thesis is to be realised (*pativedha*) in reality to deal with 'the affairs of life'.⁷⁸

1.3.2 Philosophical Exercises of Epictetus

Epictetus says that this art of living is the subject-matter of each man's own life, no-one else's.⁷⁹ It is clear from this that it falls to each person to connect with their own art of living and be mindful of their own way of life and their daily activities. What is also clear, however, is that some form of exercise (*askēsis*) for a philosophical way of life, to be used alongside philosophical theory, is necessary and essential if we are to achieve the end result; in Buddhist terms this is *pativedha* and enlightenment and in Stoic terms the end goal (*telos*).

As discussed above, the Buddhist spiritual path or journey, which has the *Four Noble Truths* as its foundation, is a daily regime of exercise, practice and training (1.3.1) to achieve a virtuous, satisfying and well flourishing life free from *dukkha* or suffering. With Epictetus there is also this notion of a spiritual path involving practice and training with similar objectives. Epictetus' three disciplines of the soul, referred to as three fields of study,⁸⁰ is one such example of exercises that man must

⁷² *Diss.* 3.10.12-15, 3.10.6

⁷³ *Diss.* 3.23ff.

⁷⁴ *Diss.* 2.9.13

⁷⁵ *Diss.* 1.7ff., 2.12.9-10, 2.20ff.

⁷⁶ Sellars (2003) pp.107-110

⁷⁷ Sellars (2006) pp.44-49

⁷⁸ *Diss.* 1.26.3

⁷⁹ *Diss.* 1.15.2-3

⁸⁰ *Diss.* 3.2.1-2, *Ench.* 1

practise and be trained in to be considered good and excellent. In Epictetus this path is based around what is sometimes referred to as the Three Spiritual Exercises or Disciplines of the Soul or Three Fields of Study.⁸¹ These spiritual exercises, psychological acts of the soul, deal with everything related to us and in our control: (i) desires and aversions, (ii) impulse to act and (iii) judgements and assent. Whatever is in our control we can desire or not desire, we have the impulse to act or not act, we can assent or not assent. These three spiritual exercises can be viewed as different aspects of reality: (i) wishing for things to happen as they do, acceptance of universal nature and living with impermanence; (ii) human conduct and ethical behaviour, acting virtuously with mankind; and (iii) value judgements and maintaining reason and objectivity through the functioning of thought. They are not theoretical exercises but reflect inner dispositions and are aimed at being practical exercises. They can be considered as embodying within themselves the core of Epictetus' teaching and contain the essence of Stoic discourse.

These spiritual exercises of Epictetus are discussed throughout the chapters of his *Discourses*, not necessarily in any systematic or formal way but generally thematically presented as philosophical discourse and arguments depending on the nature of the topic of his teaching being discussed. As well as editing Epictetus' *Discourses* in full, Arrian collected together passages from the *Discourses* and arranged them in the form of a *Handbook* of practical advice according to these spiritual exercises. Following the discussion of Sellars⁸² the organisation of the *Handbook (Encheiridion)* is:

- Introduction to the three disciplines (Section 1) – this first section provides the key to the *Handbook* with a brief discussion on 'what is up to us' (in our control) and an announcement of the three disciplines.
- Three spiritual exercises:
 - Desires and aversions (Sections 2-29) - that we may never fail to get what we desire nor fall into what we want to avoid;
 - Impulse to act (Sections 30-41) - that we may act in an orderly fashion, upon good reasons, and not carelessly;
 - Judgement and assent (Sections 42-45) - that we avoid error and rashness in judgement, and in general, about cases of assent.
- Philosophical life (Sections 46-52) – these sections present the theme of leading a philosophical life; they particularly focus on the various stages of educational development from layman to philosopher, and the training needed to make progress.
- Hymn (Section 53) – the final section captures the essence of some of the main ideas from the *Handbook* as living in harmony with nature, and words attributed to Socrates on things 'not up to us'.

⁸¹ *Ench.*1

⁸² Sellars (2003) pp.134-144

From ancient times through to the modern day the *Handbook (Encheiridion)* has been considered as a useful abstract of the *Discourses*, providing hands-on advice for daily practice, as well attested by its practical application

The question has been raised as to whether these three fields of study correspond to the three parts of Stoic philosophical discourse of physics, ethics and logic. There are various views (Bonhöffer, Dobbin, Barnes, Hadot)⁸³ about whether there are any forms of correlation or correspondence. Sellars argues that, rather than look for a correspondence between areas of study and the three parts of philosophy, we should agree to a correspondence between types of exercise and types of discourse, and this would connect the two together: exercise theme 'desires and aversions' and the discourse on physics; exercise theme 'impulse to act' and the discourse on ethics; exercise theme 'judgement and assent' and the discourse on logic. This relationship proposed by Sellars seems generally to work to avoid most areas of criticism and is one that is supported in this thesis.

1.3.3 Exercises of Epictetus and Buddhism

As we go through and discuss in detail each of the four truths in chapters 2-5 we shall observe aspects of all three spiritual exercises of Epictetus coming into play. Our discussion in the chapters that follow will aim to show that there are several areas of understanding and thinking in common between Epictetus and Buddhism, and that both schools suggest that progress towards the cessation of suffering can only be achieved through a spiritual path of daily exercise and practice. One example is Buddhist thinking regarding the three mental poisons or defilements (*klesas*) associated with attachments, aversions and ignorance. The *klesas* reflect the destructive and disturbing states of mind that, as we shall discuss at length in chapters 2 and 3, are the cause and effect of our suffering. The *klesas* are strikingly similar to Epictetus' discourse and teaching on desires and aversions, and on ignorance. Furthermore, we have highlighted the parallel thinking behind the cause of suffering (*dukkha*) relating to our mental conditioning through feelings and perceptions, cravings and clingings (attachments), and so on. This parallel thinking goes even further to embrace related issues of impermanence, existential phenomena and conditioned mental existence, emotions and impressions, meditative and therapeutic practice, to name but a few areas of remarkable commonality. This can lead us to admit that there is a close correlation of ideas between Epictetus and Buddhism, as the discussion in 1.2-5 explains. This intersection of ideas and concepts is remarkable despite there being East-West differences in language and vocabulary, culture, attitudes to life, and so on. For example, the presentation of Epictetus' teaching with its focus on a virtuous life and that of Buddhism with its soteriological emphasis on suffering can mislead us into seeing less similarity. However, closer inspection of the two traditions proves otherwise. There should be no doubt that both are related by a common cause and share similar thinking, which is interwoven on many levels, all of which combine in the pursuit of freedom from suffering. We shall shortly discuss

⁸³ Sellars (2003) pp.135-136, n.31

how this interweaving of ideas and exercises of Buddhist and Epictetus' practice reveal themselves in the medical paradigm for illness of the mind described below (1.4).

1.4 Epictetus' Surgery

The discussion of a medical analogy between the illness of the soul and that of the body is not new but is deeply entrenched in the Greek and Roman philosophical tradition. It has been used by many including Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Galen, Chrysippus, Epicurus, Seneca, Stobaeus and so on,⁸⁴ through to modern debate with Lidz,⁸⁵ Sellars, Nussbaum, Gowans⁸⁶ and others. The discussion has involved a number of developments including the analogy between philosophy as an 'art of life' and the 'art of medicine'. Despite problems with this analogy, it is, as Sellars says,⁸⁷ important to acknowledge the resonances between philosophy used to care for the soul and medicine to care for the body. He presents two useful accounts, one that is found in Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*⁸⁸ and the other from Galen's work *On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato*.⁸⁹ He concludes his analysis by stating that despite a slight problem about the relationship between the art of life, philosophy, and the art of medicine it is important to recognise resonances between the two that are practically useful. Nussbaum talks about medical dialectic and the thinking of Aristotle, who reflected upon the art of medicine providing some parallel ways to handle diseases of thought, judgement and desire.⁹⁰ She also extends the discussion on medical dialectic to present the analogy between *logos* and the soul, and medical treatment and illness of the body, as presented in the Greek writings. Medical images and metaphors deployed by Epictetus, including Plato's purgative elenchus as medicinal and therapeutic, are also referred to in Long.⁹¹

Going further down this analogical route we have the doctor's procedure and practice for the care of the soul: this involved the use of philosophical discourse and ethical argument for 'healing' psychological afflictions.⁹² In both Plato and Aristotle, a link is made between soundness of the *logos* and the soundness of the body and the soul.⁹³ trusting an unsound *logos* is like a disease.⁹⁴ For a more detailed discussion on this see McDowell (1998), Lord (1914), Bailey (2011), Lidz (1995), Moss (2104). In Aristotle we find the analogy 'the medical craft is the logos of health'⁹⁵ and in a similar way in Plato we have 'the medical art produces (poiei) health'.⁹⁶ As Nussbaum remarks⁹⁷ Aristotle's use of the medical analogy to emphasise the philosophical goal of ethics is a practical one – arguments are

⁸⁴ For example: Cic. *Tusc.* 3.1-21, 4.9-33, 4.23, Gal. *PHP* 5.1-2; Sen. *Ep.* 7.1, Stob. *Epitome of Stoic Ethics*, 2.7.5b4

⁸⁵ Lidz (1995) pp.527-541

⁸⁶ Gowans (2010)

⁸⁷ Sellars (2003) pp.65-68, p.84

⁸⁸ Cic. *Tusc.* 3.1-21, 4.9-33

⁸⁹ Gal. *PHP* 5.2.2-12, 22-23

⁹⁰ Nussbaum (1994) pp.48-50

⁹¹ Long (2002) pp.56-57

⁹² Nussbaum (1994) p.52

⁹³ Pl. *Gorg.* 476a-481b, 475-476a; Arist. *Metaph.* I. 1. 980b26-981a13, VII. 7.1032b, XIV., 3.1091a7-11, EN 1.13, 102a2b-1103a3, 1046a36-1046b2

⁹⁴ Bailey (2011) p.64, n84

⁹⁵ Arist. *Metaph.* 1070a30

⁹⁶ Pl. *Rep.* 346d

⁹⁷ Nussbaum (1994) pp.558-59

useless if they have no helpful bearing on a practical end: 'our aim is to be healthy rather than to know what health is'; 'to be in a good condition rather than to know what good condition is'.⁹⁸ In *Gorgias*⁹⁹ we have the notion of the physician offering *logos* as a prescription following a diagnostic dialogue between Socrates and Polus (prescriptive in the sense of what is good, and explanatory *logos* why it is good). We shall discuss more of this doctor/patient relationship when we consider the active/passive language in 3.3.

This brings us nicely back to the *Four Noble Truths*, and the medical paradigm. These *Truths* have been compared to the ancient Indian four-fold model of medical knowledge: the disease, diagnosis, cure and treatment. In the introduction to Gethin's work he refers to the four noble truths as 'The Disease, the Cause, the Cure, the Medicine'.¹⁰⁰ Again according to Anderson,¹⁰¹ this is a very common metaphor that we find throughout contemporary writings on the four noble truths but not a metaphor or an image that we find in the actual canonical teachings. Wezler argues that the *Four Noble Truths* may have been influenced by earlier Hindu medical teachings.¹⁰² Zysk provides a useful study of Buddhist medicine.¹⁰³

Despite this, there is insufficient ancient historical evidence to suggest that this analogy was used directly by Buddha or by his followers and disciples. However, as with the ancient western discussion, there is a useful analogy here, especially as an approach for comparing Epictetus with Buddhism, as briefly outlined in the paper by Andrei,¹⁰⁴ with elements of the medical analogy appearing also in Ferraiolo¹⁰⁵ on catharsis and desires, and Goerger¹⁰⁶ on remedial practices of meditation. Gowans¹⁰⁷ provides an interesting analysis of the use and limitations of the medical analogy and points to some controversial aspects where one might question the utility of such an analogy; for example, between psychological health and moral questions, and our beliefs/judgements. While these are important points of discussion, and there are limitations to the analogy, it can be equally argued that the analogy is significant in ancient thinking and the reception of such thinking in the modern day practice of psychotherapy.

Epictetus makes several references to physicians and medical treatment and likens the lecture room of a philosopher to a doctor's office¹⁰⁸ and a hospital.¹⁰⁹ We also have in many instances Epictetus expressing the therapeutic function of philosophy for the curing of the soul. In addition, Epictetus uses medical related language and terms, such as infirmity (*arrostēmata*),¹¹⁰ sickness

⁹⁸ Arist. *EE*.1216b22-25

⁹⁹ Pl. *Gorg.* 475-476a

¹⁰⁰ Gethin (1995)

¹⁰¹ Anderson (2001), (2016)

¹⁰² Wezler (1984) pp.291-337

¹⁰³ Zysk (1991) pp.48-49

¹⁰⁴ Andrei (2009)

¹⁰⁵ Ferraiolo (2011)

¹⁰⁶ Goerger (2017)

¹⁰⁷ Gowans (2010)

¹⁰⁸ *Diss.* 3.21.20

¹⁰⁹ *Diss.* 3.23.30

¹¹⁰ *Diss.* 2.18.10

(*nosos*),¹¹¹ remedies (*pharmaka*),¹¹² weals left behind on the mind,¹¹³ being cured (*therapeuō*),¹¹⁴ purification and cleansing of the soul (*catharsis*).¹¹⁵ as well as talking of the uneducated as being invalids or as if they were sick.¹¹⁶ We can observe from this that Epictetus follows the general essence of the Stoic medical analogy. In 2.3 we shall discuss further the medical language used by Epictetus.

The medical analogy of *logos* as treatment or remedy for the sick or ill mind is prevalent throughout Epictetus. As with right (sound, healthy) *logos* in Plato, Aristotle and Epictetus, in Buddhism we have Right View and Right Understanding, both of which are necessary for the proper medical treatment: both are remedies prescribed in the *Eightfold Path*. So too we find similar prescriptions in Epictetus, for example,¹¹⁷ regarding *logos* and noble thoughts and regarding *logos* and decent speech - whether it is better to speak than to keep silence, and to do so in this way, or in that, and whether this is appropriate or not appropriate, and the proper occasion and utility of each action.¹¹⁸ Just as the *Eightfold Path* prescribes the use of contemplation and meditation to be conscious of what one is doing and one's actions, likewise *logos* is self-contemplative, it is a kind of impression that is used for the proper use of external impressions.¹¹⁹ The *Four Noble Truths* and the procedure of *pariyatti*, *patipatti* and *pativedha* are closely replicated in Epictetus as discussed in 1.3 and 5.2. And as the Stoics, Aristotle, Plato and other Greeks and Romans will argue, philosophic principles or discourse (*logos*) is insufficient on its own to transform our sick and ill mind but we need also to train and practice (*askēsis*), reflecting the sentiments of the Buddhist procedure. Equally important, one of the functions of *askēsis*, is the digestion of the *logos* (as discussed in 5.2.1) – this is important to cure the illness of the soul and to realise the prescribed remedy.

So in Epictetus we have use of medical language, references and analogies. We also observe, from our discussion and investigation, that Epictetus closely correlates with the *Four Noble Truths* and hence, by extension, Epictetus' philosophy fits into this Buddhist medical analogy and the following procedure:

The Diagnosis and Symptoms (Dukkha - Identifying, understanding and knowing the disease of the soul and its nature –First Noble Truth)

The truth of suffering, is the truth of diagnosing our sick, ill and diseased mind. As we have discussed in 2.5, Epictetus does address this issue of identifying our suffering across the three broad classes of disease or illness: ordinary suffering, the suffering due to change and suffering due to the conditioned mind.

¹¹¹ *Ench.*2

¹¹² *Diss.* 3.21.20

¹¹³ *Diss.* 2.18.11

¹¹⁴ *Diss.* 2.21.15

¹¹⁵ *Diss.* 4.11.8

¹¹⁶ *Ench.*48

¹¹⁷ *Diss.* 4.9.8

¹¹⁸ *Diss.* 2.23.14-15

¹¹⁹ *Diss.* 1.20.5-7

The Aetiology (Identifying, analysing, understanding and knowing the causes that give rise to the disease of the soul – Second Noble Truth)

The truth of origin of our suffering is the truth of cause of our sickness, illness and disease. Again Epictetus' teaching illustrates many causes of man's suffering with some analysis, as we will discuss in 3.5.

The Prognosis (Understanding and knowing there is a cessation for the disease of the soul – Third Noble Truth);

The truth of cessation of our suffering is the truth behind the prognosis of our sickness, illness and disease. The prognosis will be poor as long as we continue to crave and cling to desires and aversions about things outside of our control. On the other hand the prognosis is bright and good if we give up trying to have control of things not in our power, not craving and clinging to things we can't control. Again Epictetus' teaching covers this truth as we will discuss in 4.7.

Treatment (Prescription and remedy for the cure for our diseased soul – Fourth Noble Truth)

The path to stopping our suffering is like the medicine and remedies to cure our sickness, illness and disease. This final part of the procedure concerns the treatment itself, whether the remedies and medicine prescribed are appropriate and fitting, whether they will be effective at dealing with our disease and illness. The reference point for these are the prescribed remedies found in the Buddhist *Eightfold Path* and the similar remedies found in Epictetus' teaching and the three disciplines of the soul (5.3).

1.5 Language and Suffering

1.5.1 Role of Language

Following this initial survey of the *Four Noble Truths* and of the parallels between these truths and the views of Epictetus with respect to exercise and practice, as well as the discussion of a medical analogy in both Buddhist and Greek traditions, the final topic to be discussed in this first chapter is the significance of language, both for Epictetus and in Buddhism.

Language and logic played a significant role in the philosophy and psychology of Stoic and Buddhist teaching. In both schools language and logic are important in the field of epistemology, the pursuit of freedom and the moral life and the psychology of suffering. The technical and historic details are beyond the scope of this thesis. We do, however, study the use of language not from a purely linguistic perspective but to give us insight into the psychology of suffering: this is related to our personality and disposition, our way of thinking, our emotional state of mind and how we react and respond to others. Language, as we shall investigate in this thesis (1.5-1.7, 3.3, 4.5-4.6 and 5.3-5) can have a persuasive influence on us and shape our thoughts. Our use of language can reveal a great deal about our personality and our state of mind (for example, feelings, emotions, anxiety). One category of words that are particularly powerful, persuasive and revealing about our personality and character are the pronouns. We discuss in various places (1.2.3, 4.5, 4.6 and 5.3.5) the psychological relationship with the use of pronouns such as 'I' and 'me', 'we' and 'you', 'myself' and so

on. Epictetus makes extensive use of pronouns for educational purposes for the understanding of what is important and gaining insight into what we should be attentive to and take care of regarding our suffering.

The role and part played by language in human suffering is a continuing theme throughout this thesis: it is an integral part of the problem and the solution/treatment of suffering; it is also a tool for philosophical investigation and analysis. It is worthwhile to recall the words of Arrian in the introduction to the *Discourses* where he makes reference to the power of language: '... it concerns Epictetus not at all if any man shall despise his words; for at the time when he uttered them, it was plain that he had no other purpose than to move the minds of his hearers to the best things. If, indeed, these *Discourses* should produce this effect, they will have, I think, the result, which the words of philosophers ought to have. But if they shall not, let those who read them know that, when Epictetus delivered them, the hearer could not avoid being affected in the way that Epictetus wished him to be'.¹²⁰

1.5.2 Language and Human Existence)

Language is an essential element of human existence enabling us to express our experiences, thoughts, feelings and needs. The link between language, our existence (our being and our becoming, acting and being acted upon), our perception and experience of reality, our psychology and state of mind has been discussed and explored by many ancient and contemporary writers. For example, Marcus Aurelius saying 'everything is but what we think'¹²¹ is remarkably similar to the statement in the *Dhammapada*, 'All experience is preceded by mind'.¹²²

The powerful nature of language and the spoken word (including our inner voice, conversations and discourse with ourselves) can move and incite us to act or produce a passive effect on us: our language and thought can modify and transform our being with the aim of realising good and averting evil: it might be used for cathartic and therapeutic purposes to heal us and bring psychological relief of our suffering. Paraphrasing Epictetus,¹²³ it is actualisation of the self through the faculty of moral purpose that makes proper use of the senses, removing us from being blind, deaf and mute to the true good and evil.

Through our sense impressions we are witness to the world around us and we try and make sense of this experience through language. We draw conclusions, make judgements or give testament to what we experience and perceive and we express this in the language of our thoughts; and of course our thoughts are based on our beliefs, views, attitudes and values. Language enables us to express our feelings about our experiences and so enables us to communicate how we feel about things, to express emotion: through language we express or reveal our identity; it is a means of control and action for ourselves and others; it can be a persuasive means of reasoning, influence and argument;

¹²⁰ *Disc.* Introduction letter from Arrian to Lucius Gellius

¹²¹ *Med.* II.15

¹²² Fronsdal (2005) verse 1

¹²³ *Diss.* 2.23ff.

and it communicates our thoughts and intentions. Language is a powerful medium that can change and influence many aspects of our lives: Wittgenstein remarks it is through language that man 'can encourage himself, give himself orders, obey, blame and punish himself; ask himself a question and answer it'.¹²⁴ He goes on to say we can conceive of a language 'in which a person could write down or give voice to his inner experiences – his feelings, moods and so on – for his own use'. In this context the words of this language he refers to is only what the speaker can know (about his immediate private sensations and experiences), – another person cannot understand this language); it is a private language. We are the subject matter of our own experiences; we have the understanding and knowledge that we are suffering. Can anyone else know this? They can surmise it, through our behaviour and language, but not with the certainty with which we ourselves know: they cannot say they doubt we are suffering.¹²⁵ This calls to mind the thinking of the Buddhist *Four Noble Truths* and the five aggregates as discussed in 1.2.3 and also the arguments presented by Epictetus that we are the subject-matter of our thoughts, feelings and cognitions, our prohairesis. The Buddhist scholar Thich Nhat Hanh reasons that when we get caught up in ideas and impressions we lose touch with reality¹²⁶ – the language of personal experience communicates the way we live and puts us in touch with reality. This is an experience only we have and have knowledge and insight about.

1.5.3 Inner Conversations

What we say to ourselves and what is said to us by others can persuade and influence our thinking, feelings and behaviour, and conversely what we feel and experience can be exhibited in linguistic expression. This was known in the Greek and Roman times as well as in modern times: it is one of the methods of the modern treatment of cognitive disorders and the basis of some cognitive¹²⁷ and rational emotive behavioural therapies.¹²⁸ Our internal communications and dialogue process information, feelings and impressions and these are monitored, examined and debated by us to take action and make decisions. Plato in the *Sophist* said 'thought and speech are the same; only the former, which is a silent inner conversation of the soul with itself, has been given the special name of thought'.¹²⁹ In *Theaetetus*, Plato again touches upon thought as the soul's conversation with itself – 'asking itself questions and answering, affirming and denying'¹³⁰ – the talking is the process of forming opinion and the talk that has been held is the opinion formed.

In addition, what we say to ourself and how we say it are essential to our thoughts and actions. Diogenes Laertius identifies five excellences of speech stylistics according to the Stoics, including clarity, ambiguity and appropriateness: 'lucidity is a style which presents the thought in a way easily understood; conciseness a style that employs no more words than are necessary for setting forth the

¹²⁴ Wittgenstein (2009), p.95 §243

¹²⁵ Wittgenstein (2009) pp.95-96 §246

¹²⁶ Nhat Hanh (1998) p.52

¹²⁷ Beck (2011)

¹²⁸ Ellis (2001a), (2001b); Ellis and Harper (1997)

¹²⁹ Pl. *Sph.* 263E

¹³⁰ Pl. *Th.* 190A

subject in hand; appropriateness lies in a style akin to the subject'.¹³¹ What is relevant here is whether our language and speech mirrors what is 'thought' and agrees with what is real: does our language and thought represent clearly, concisely and appropriately the content of an impression or not? If our thoughts are muddled, confused and unclear then what we say to ourselves can mirror this with incoherent and imprecise jumble of words and expressions.

Epictetus says there is 'no-one closer to myself than I am'¹³² to convince and persuade me of things good and evil, which is a reminder of inner conversation at work: an impression arises and then a thought, which has the power to speak out and express in language what it undergoes by the impression.¹³³ Yes indeed, my impressions and what I say in my mind are going to convince me of the good and evil and about things that affect my feelings. Of course the impression that arises because of what someone else might say generates thoughts and can leave us saying to ourself 'He insulted me'¹³⁴ and has an effect on us.

An interesting modern discussion addresses the use of words in our language and the impact they have on us. Korzybski (1951) discusses at length the emotive impact of the use of the verb 'to be', for example, in cases where 'I am good' and 'I am bad' and our use of 'to be' distort our perceptions. Ellis¹³⁵ discusses Korzybski's view highlighting some of the problems man encounters, by inaccurate and habitual overgeneralisations and predictions of 'what I am' and also the more difficult concept of the 'self', using the language we use to describe ourself, the impact that such inner conversations has upon us and our emotional state. In 1.2.3 there was mention of the Buddhist notion of the conceited 'I am' (*asmimāna*), an imperious sense of 'I' that lurks in the background of our mind, similar to the self-conceit notion discussed in Epictetus. The 'I am' can be recognised as a fragment of our imagination that through our inner discourse has the power to dominate our thoughts, which we will discuss later in 4.5 (inner thoughts, feelings and reactions) and 4.6.3 (voice of inner authority).

1.5.4 Words and Thoughts of Epictetus

Stoic arguments clearly link language to thoughts and impressions,¹³⁶ and Epictetus is one of several thinkers who developed their philosophical teaching around this connection. There is no shortage of advice from Epictetus about being careful about what we say to ourself: inner conversations such as 'I am in a bad way' or 'I am better than you'¹³⁷ can depress us or elate us. Clearly even the simplest of things we say to ourselves, especially if repeated and embellished, can strengthen our thoughts about something (become habit forming – see 2.3). Epictetus cautions us to avoid speaking at great length and excessively about our own dangers and unfortunate experiences because to call such unpleasant things to mind can only exacerbate our negative thoughts and our

¹³¹ DL 7.59

¹³² *Diss.* 4.6.11

¹³³ DL 7.49 (*SVF* 2.52, 55, 61)

¹³⁴ *Diss.* 2.14.22

¹³⁵ Ellis (2001a) pp.103-107; Korzybski (1951) pp.170-205

¹³⁶ *SVF* 2.166, 2.187, 2.52, 2.183, DL 7.63

¹³⁷ *Ench.* 44

suffering.¹³⁸ Likewise we can talk to ourselves with an overly high opinion of ourselves, exhibiting pretentious thoughts about ourselves and producing a feeling of having a greater importance than is actually possessed. We can also talk to ourselves in a way that is intermediate between these two: unaffected by negative thought provoking feelings and modest about any positive thought provoking feelings.

We have discussed Epictetus' claims that our examination of impressions and sensations forms the standard by which the truth of things is tested as a presentation (mental impression). Indeed as Epictetus says, 'For presentation comes first; then thought, which is capable of expressing itself, puts into the form of a proposition that which the subject receives from a presentation'.¹³⁹ When we compare this cause and effect series with Buddhism there is no doubt the theory of *kamma* and Dependent Origination (see 2.2 and 4.2.2) reflects the same thing – a comprehensive technical analysis appears in the *Abhidhamma*.¹⁴⁰

One of the distinctive features of the style of Epictetus is his use of language in a variety of ways such as dialogue to instruct and convey principles: to make us think and learn and to exercise our understanding of principles, self-interrogation, self-discovery and self-examination, methods to refute and pursue arguments, and so on. Long provides a valuable overview of the methods used by Epictetus.¹⁴¹ One of the most dominant and frequently used verbs in the *Discourses* is *legō* – to say, speak, converse, mean.¹⁴² Of particular interest is Epictetus' discussion in the context of the use of *legō* and what we say to ourselves with expressions such as 'I think this' and 'I feel that'. It is through such language that we reveal cognitive states and emotions that can influence ourselves and have an influence on others: 'I am the mightiest in the world'¹⁴³ is what you might think and this will have an influence on how you feel: I feel powerful, superior and strong, having authority makes me feel good and I feel great that 'all men will pay attention to me'.¹⁴⁴ The tyrant, in this case, diverts his victim's rational, reasoning side by appealing to the victim's emotional side with words of fear and threats, trying to overcome and control the victim's judgements.¹⁴⁵

We can argue that the Epictetus statement 'It is not the word that I fear, but the emotion, which produces the word'¹⁴⁶ must be regarded as fundamental to his psychological approach to suffering. Further, Epictetus would himself insist that language affects how we feel, our emotions and consequently our suffering. In 3.3 we draw on the active and passive aspect of language in Epictetus to provide supporting examples and instances of what subsists in our thoughts through the use of the active and passive and has the potential to manifest as affective experiences and suffering.

¹³⁸ *Ench.* 33

¹³⁹ DL 7.49

¹⁴⁰ Bodhi (2013) pp.293-303

¹⁴¹ Long (2002) pp.52-64, 67-93

¹⁴² The active indicative form alone appears 235 times, the active infinitive and participle appears 62 times – See Appendix A.

¹⁴³ *Diss.* 1.19.2

¹⁴⁴ *Diss.* 1.19.4

¹⁴⁵ *Diss.* 1.29.11-12 (c.f Dobbin (2007) p.229)

¹⁴⁶ *Diss.* 4.1.115

Discovering the truth of what subsists in our thoughts is a matter of judgement and what is signified or meant in what has been verbally expressed. Consequently what is said through language and what subsists accordingly in our thoughts can direct us towards what is true or false, right or wrong, feelings and emotions. We claim one of the reasons why Epictetus spends so much effort in exploring the various cases of expressions using *legō* and the active and passive is that it is critical to our linguistic and cognitive understanding of the cause and effect of suffering (3.3): we can compare this to the mental five aggregates (1.2.3) in Buddhism and the passive and active cases of *sankhara* (1.7) and the notion of *cetanā* (volition) and *kamma* (action).

There is enough practical evidence to suggest that Epictetus' views are generally credible – some of our evidence comes from cognitive psychologists such as Ellis, Horney, Beck and others (1.5). Language is used to give commands, make statements and ask questions of both ourselves and of others: 'What do I think about the situation?' or 'How do I feel about the situation?' Our answers can appeal to our intellect, logic and sense of reasoning and rational thinking, or appeal to our ethical position and sense of justice or appeal to our emotional side. In modern cognitive therapy the language we use, the questions we ask of ourselves, what we say to ourselves about the situations we are in greatly influence our feelings.

Epictetus says, 'my mind (thoughts, feelings, emotions) is the material with which I have to work' and I must use my mind to make the right use of my impressions.¹⁴⁷ His argument, which he resolutely repeats elsewhere, says men can go astray if they make wrong use of their impressions; their thinking about these impressions can lead them to thoughts that are incorrect, unrealistic and negative, that cause feelings of distress and and consequently have a negative impact on how they act or behave, as is the case with depression, for example. Our test of reality, our apprehension of real objects, in such cases is distorted because of our inaccurate mental impression of these objects or our ways of reasoning about these objects. The language we use and the thoughts that are influenced by our language are strongly related to how we feel and our emotions, both of joy and of sadness, distress and anger. We present similar Buddhist views (1.2.2, 2.2.3.4, 5.2.2) concerning our mind and the material it works with (five aggregates): our actions (*kamma*), be they bodily, verbal or mental, are driven our volition (*cetanā*) and our clinging to the five aggregates.

1.6 Stoic Language, Logic and Categories

1.6.1 Language and Logic

In order to understand more fully Epictetus' emphasis on the right and wrong use of impressions we must consider his use of Stoic views on language, logic and categories.

The Stoics drew a distinction between language and logic.¹⁴⁸ Language includes written text, speech, utterances, words and so on, is corporeal, material and sensible and hence part of the real world. On the other hand logic is incorporeal and propositional, and consists of statements (*lekta*

¹⁴⁷ *Diss.* 3.22.20-21 (cf. Lesses (1998), Frede (1983))

¹⁴⁸ *SVF* 1, 74i; 2, 140-41, 144a

and sayables), which have meaning but do not have full being; they exist intra-mentally, are intellectual.¹⁴⁹ More detailed discussion is contained in Bobzien, Blank, Graeser, Frede, Menn and Long/Sedley.¹⁵⁰

Stoic logic is concerned with the relationship between the signifier and the signified, which broadly contains rhetoric (the art of persuasion), dialectics and formal logic, respectively. Within this theory a predicate is defined as what is said or asserted of something, or a state of affairs attachable to something or some things.¹⁵¹ An incomplete predicate joined on to a nominative case yields a proposition (one form of *lekton*). Some predicates are constructed with the passive voice, as 'I am heard', 'I am seen'. Neutral predicates are such as correspond to neither of these, as 'thinks,' 'walks.' Reflexive predicates are those among the passive, which, although in form passive, are yet active operations, as 'he gets his hair cut', and here the agent includes himself in the sphere of his action. A proposition is that which is either true or false, or a thing complete in itself, capable of being denied in and by itself, as Chrysippus says in his *Dialectical Definitions*: a proposition is that which in and by itself can be denied or affirmed.¹⁵² There is a difference between proposition, interrogation and inquiry. A proposition is that which, when we set it forth in speech, becomes an assertion, and is either false or true; an interrogation is a thing complete in itself like a proposition but demanding an answer, e.g. 'Is it day?' and this is so far neither true nor false. Thus 'It is day' is a judgement, 'Is it day?' an interrogation. Epictetus deploys the above theory of Stoic logic in association with language in his teaching style¹⁵³ and for demonstrating how arguments and reason have a bearing on life¹⁵⁴ - be it in the form of propositions, dialectic or through the art of persuasion. As already noted his use of language sayables is extensive and diverse, as is the nature of his style of teaching. In 3.3 we shall be demonstrating the technical agility of Epictetus in his use of the active and passive, in what proves to be evident in our claim that language, and what we say, especially to ourselves, affects our mental state and our moral choices and indifference.

1.6.2 *Lekta*

Turning to the psychological aspect of the *lekta*, impressions are thoughts with propositional content and it is the propositional content of these mental impressions and images that we assent to. For the impression arises first, and then thought, which has the power of talking, expresses in language what it experiences by the agency of impression.¹⁵⁵ A *lekton* is what subsists in accordance with a rational impression, and a rational impression is one in which the content of the impression can be exhibited in language:¹⁵⁶ these can be complete such as a proposition or incomplete such as

¹⁴⁹ DL 7.41-4, 7.63-81

¹⁵⁰ Frede (1994); Bobzien (2003); Blank and Atherton (2003); Graeser (1973); Long and Sedley (1987); Frede (1994); Menn (1999)

¹⁵¹ DL 7.63-64 (SVF 2.183)

¹⁵² DL 7.65-66 (SVF 2.193)

¹⁵³ *Diss.* 1.25.11-13

¹⁵⁴ *Diss.* 1.7ff., 2.12ff., 2.16ff, 2.19ff. (cf. Bobzien (2001) pp.99-100)

¹⁵⁵ DL 7.49 (SVF 2.52)

¹⁵⁶ Sextus Empiricus 8.70 (SVF 2.187)

active and passive predicates.¹⁵⁷ A predicate is what is asserted of something, or a state of affairs attachable to something or some things, or an incomplete *lekton* attachable to a nominative case for generating a proposition.¹⁵⁸ An important aspect for this thesis is this Stoic theory of meaning, the semantic content in our language related to logic and the *lekta*, and this relates to the propositional content of our thoughts and what we say to ourselves and to others. The Stoic theory posits a triad of 'sign', 'significate', 'object'¹⁵⁹ or what Frede refers to as 'sign', '-sense', 'reference':¹⁶⁰ what is said, what this signifies (what it means, the impression that arises in the mind about what is said), what it refers to. And so, what is said, whatever is affirmed or denied in our thoughts concerning the propositional content of what is said, can delight and distress us emotionally. As Epictetus maintains: when the intellect meets with sensible objects we do not merely have their forms impressed upon us but our intellect can make a selection from among them, and subtract and add, and make various combinations by using them.¹⁶¹

1.6.3 Categories

This discussion leads us on to the Stoic categories,¹⁶² which although generally used (as Long quotes)¹⁶³ with the corporeals, might also have been meant to apply to the incorporeals. Further to this, Long remarks, we have some interpretations that link the categories to Stoic grammar (substrate to pronouns, qualified to nouns and the dispositions to verbs). Graeser¹⁶⁴ relates the syntactic parts of language to semantic counterparts using the terms subject, qualification, disposition and relation, which serve as basic types of meaning signified by linguistic expression. Hence, 'Socrates is feeling happy' is a reference to the subject's soul being in a certain disposition. More detailed discussion of Stoic categories is contained in Graeser, De Lacy, Menn and Long/Sedley.¹⁶⁵

From Chrysippus, Annas¹⁶⁶ understands that an impression is articulated as a linguistic expression or proposition. Furthermore from Diogenes Laertius¹⁶⁷ we understand that an impression is a modification of our rational capacity and that this is related to a proposition the content of which describes what affects this capacity. We argue that this is consistent with Epictetus' use of language. Epictetus resolutely reminds us that our impressions and thoughts must face a reality test, and we must assent to a given proposition (complete *lekton*) of what concerns the impression. If a man

¹⁵⁷ DL. 7.63

¹⁵⁸ DL 7.64

¹⁵⁹ Sextus Empiricus 8.11-12 (SVF 2.166)

¹⁶⁰ Frede (1994)

¹⁶¹ *Diss.* 1.6.10

¹⁶² The term 'categories' here refers to Stoic ideas in regard to four categories of being: (1) substrates (primary matter, formless substance), (2) qualified (the way in which matter is organized to form an individual object), (3) the disposed (particular characteristics, not present within the object), and (4) relatively disposed (characteristics, which are related to other phenomena): see Simplicius *On Aristotle's Categories* 66,32-67,2 (SVF 2.369 part).

¹⁶³ Long and Sedley (1987) p.165

¹⁶⁴ Graeser (1973)

¹⁶⁵ De Lacy (1945); Menn (1999); Graeser (1973); Long and Sedley (1987)

¹⁶⁶ Annas (1991)

¹⁶⁷ DL 7.49-51 (SVF 2.52, 55, 61)

assents to the combination of a false impression and propositional content, this leads him to a false belief or opinion about something. He can be led into a range of deluded or false views or opinions about things, leading him to go astray in his thoughts and his thinking, resulting in precipitancy and consequently dissatisfaction.

1.6.4 Focus on Passive/Active Interplay

In this thesis our focus is restricted to language and thinking in terms of how we perceive and experience suffering: in the passive state, how our mind is conditioned by mental impressions and dispositions, and in the active state, the conditions that lead to this conditioned mind – here we see an interesting interplay and synergy between Epictetus' use of the active (*poieō*) and the passive (*paschō*), and the active and passive formation of the conditioned mind found in Buddhist *sankhara* (2.2 and 1.7) and the nature of our being and becoming – to be acted upon to become a conditioned self – 'due to existence of this, that arises'.¹⁶⁸ The use of linguistic expressions surrounding the active and passive carries meanings of particular importance and significance to the problem of suffering. In the next section we shall see in more detail how this is as true of Buddhism as it is of Epictetus.

1.7 Buddhist Language and Logic

1.7.1 Common Areas of Interest

The Buddhist epistemologist and logician Dignaga is claimed to have created the first system of Buddhist logic¹⁶⁹ and epistemology (*pramana*). In Dignaga's view perception and inference are the means to access correct knowledge. There are many good references to the works of Dignaga including Hayes (1982), Chu (2006) and Hattori (1968). Kalupahana also provides a useful commentary in several areas of interest including Dignaga's epistemology and logic, objects of knowledge, language and linguistic analysis, and knowledge.¹⁷⁰ The theory of Buddhist language and logic are key factors for the pursuit of the *Four Noble Truths* (1.2) where the underlying goal of each truth is that 'vision, discernment, wisdom, knowledge and illumination'¹⁷¹ needs to arise within us if we are to be free of suffering. The attainment of 'vision, discernment, wisdom, knowledge and illumination' is through theory, practice and realisation (*pariyatti*, *patipatti* and *pativedha*) and the equivalences in Epictetus as discussed in 1.3.

1.7.2 Aggregates and Sankhara

In unlocking the truth and psychology behind the *Dukkha* we need to consider the Buddhist concept of five aggregates (*khandhas*), which is discussed in 1.2.3 and 2.2.3.4, and *sankhara*, which can either represent the idea of the conditioned mind 'that which has been put together' or 'that which puts together'. The concept of *sankhara* is discussed in this chapter because of its significance to the linguistic aspect of the passive and the active and its close association with Epictetus' use of

¹⁶⁸ Tashi Tsering (2005) p.94

¹⁶⁹ Wei-Hong (2011)

¹⁷⁰ Kalupahana (1992) pp.45-49, 52, 194-205, 237 (epistemology and logic), pp.78-84 (objects of knowledge), pp., 47, 60-62, 70, 73, 196 (language and linguistic analysis), pp.30-52 (knowledge and understanding)

¹⁷¹ SN 56

the passive and the active (3.3). The concept of *sankhara* is also related to our discussion on dispositions (2.3) and the *prohairesis* (4.4).

The term *sankhara* has no direct English equivalent (*san* – together and *khara* doing/making).¹⁷² It can be thought of as ‘co-doings’ – ‘things that are made by a combination of other things’ or ‘things that act in concert with other things’: ‘things that are put together’ and ‘things that put together other things’ and hence the take on a passive and an active role. Common interpretations in the passive sense are ‘conditioned things’, ‘dispositions’, or ‘mental impressions’¹⁷³ and in the other sense they are active volition or intention through *kamma* and Dependent Origination (1.2.3), or through the fourth aggregate (*sankhara-khandha* – 2.2.3.4).¹⁷⁴

Language, logic and epistemology play key roles in the nature of the *sankhara* and consequently in the psychology of suffering or awakening.¹⁷⁵ The *sankhara*¹⁷⁶ are the formations that individuate a personality and belong to the causally conditioned mental dispositions: these dispositions shape individuality out of the sense and sensibilities of conditioned phenomena and experiences; they make or create personality. In the passive sense *sankhara* (mental formation or disposition) is the fourth of the five aggregates (*khandas*)¹⁷⁷ and in the active sense *sankhara* (or *sankhara-khandha*) is part of the theory of Dependent Origination (2.2.3.4). As discussed in 1.2.3, attachment to the five aggregates constructs a sense of personal identity and our clinging to these aggregates can be thought of as a cognitive process of identification and appropriation. This leads towards what Buddha calls ‘I-making’ or ‘mine-making’ and the conceited self (see 1.2.3) and so to linguistic and cognitive formations like ‘this is mine’, ‘this I am’, ‘this is myself’. Subsequently we are in danger of associating or relating everything that is a product of *sankhara* and the five aggregates with ‘I am’ in the conceited sense or with an identity view, that leads to problems of attachments (*upādāna* – 2.2.3.4) and leads to suffering.¹⁷⁸

We might think of the passive sense of the term *sankhara* as those phenomena or impressions that condition, influence, shape and compound our thoughts and feelings and hence are responsible for the arising of our conditional suffering (*sankhāra-dukkhataa* – 2.2.3.4). The *sankhara*, as mental formations, are impermanent and so having arisen they will cease at some point in time; hence they cannot provide stability from disturbing thoughts and feelings, or provide the security of a serene life. Our ignorance conditions our thoughts, feelings, mental formations and consciousness that we ultimately experience suffering and the unsatisfactoriness that is the nature of all conditioned existence. From ignorance follow volitional actions (*kamma*)¹⁷⁹ and this can ultimately sow the seeds

¹⁷² Rhys Davids and Stede (1921) pp. 664–665

¹⁷³ Kalupahana (1992) pp.71-72

¹⁷⁴ Waldron (2003) pp.19-23; Bodhi (2005b) pp.45-47

¹⁷⁵ SN 12, 22, MN 39, 76 (cf. Kalupahana (1992) pp.53, 58, 64, 69-70, 78-80, 87-88, 92-94, 98, 105-106, 140, 163, 197, 223)

¹⁷⁶ Kalupahana (1992) pp.71-72 (c.f. Bodhi (2000))

¹⁷⁷ SN 22.79, AN 4:232; II 230-32, Five aggregates - form, feeling, perception, mental/volitional formations, and consciousness.

¹⁷⁸ cf. ā *Bhagavad Gita* verses 13.5-6, 13.8-9

¹⁷⁹ AN 4:232; II 230-232; Bodhi (2005) pp.145-151

of our suffering. Our ignorance causes us to identify ourselves with the five aggregates and we continue to crave, to identify and be attached to them, we continue to build up a conditioned reality from which we continue to experience suffering. Another way of expressing the *sankhara* is the collection of all volitional, emotional and intellectual elements of our mental life and existence, and our consciousness is our awareness that is indispensable to all our cognitive activity.

The *Four Noble Truths* (1.2) pivot around the notion of *dukkha* (suffering) and the *First Truth* is underpinned by the five aggregates as these are affected by conditioned clinging and so are suffering (2.2.3.4). The *First Truth* highlights the result of our being acted upon and the *Second Truth* highlights the cause (the *kamma* or action) the active *sankhara* (see Figures 1 and 2). When a man experiences a change, we can say that he is acted upon by the action of something else. The man who is cold and then experiences direct sunlight becomes warm, a change of feeling and sensation. Likewise, when a man hears a sudden explosive sound close by, he is acted upon with a sense of fear, the change in sound produces a feeling in him, affects him with uneasiness. Therefore, being acted upon (through volitional and *kammic* actions) produces the passive *sankharas*¹⁸⁰ and these create a change in the state of his thinking and feeling and also create a certain movement in how he feels and is affected.

1.7.3 Aggregates, Sankhara and Epictetus

The passive and active sense of the thoughts, words and actions that sow the seeds of suffering, as discussed and argued above, are mirrored in the language used by Epictetus, although not all the concepts from Buddhism correspond to Stoic ideas, specifically with regards to some aspects of the 'self' (1.2.2-1.2.3). We therefore have a linguistic relationship and parallel psychological thinking between *sankhara*, the active (*kammic* and volitional actions) and passive (dispositions), and the language of Epictetus *poiein* (to act) and *paschein* (to be acted upon) and the dispositions (2.3) and the *prohairesis* (Chapter 4): both go hand in hand with our everyday experience of suffering and are connected through the *Four Noble Truths* (1.2). This can be translated as the idea that the active constructs the feelings, perceptions, volitional formations and consciousness. The active can be in the form of bodily, verbal or mental actions, which as discussed in 5.2.2, can be performed skilfully (*kusala-kamma*) or unskilfully (*akusala-kamma*).¹⁸¹ Hence the clear importance of language in the life of human suffering, and the role of the active and the passive common to both in Buddhism and Epictetus. Our inner conversations (1.5.3, 4.5, 5.3.5), and what we say to ourself, and the volitional language we use (4.5), conditions and shapes our mental formations.

Our past active existence has formed various degrees of ignorance; we act upon our present passive existence, producing mental formations (opinions, thoughts, feelings, desires, aversions) and through our dispositions and volitional formations we crave, attach and cling to things and ultimately we become our suffering self.

¹⁸⁰ SN 22:79

¹⁸¹ AN 10.176

Epilogue to Chapter 1

This chapter has introduced the Buddhist *Four Noble Truths* as a basis for comparing and recasting Epictetus' thinking on suffering of the mind. Each of these truths will be used in the subsequent chapters to compare the thinking between the two schools of thought and to show both schools of thought have the same mission, to free men from sickness of the mind and that they arrive at a common understanding regarding the prime factors causing suffering. They also arrive at similar regimes of exercise and practice that work towards the cessation of suffering. I claim that recasting Epictetus using the Buddhist *Four Noble Truths* enhances our appreciation and understanding of his teaching and presents his thinking in a more systematic way, using a similar but different method and approach.

This chapter has also introduced the role that language plays in the psychology of suffering. Our impressions and thoughts, feelings and emotions, of what we experience are expressed in language.¹⁸² As such language can reveal our psychological state of mind, reflect how we are disposed towards particular circumstances in life and hold the key to our experiential existence. This aspect will continue to feature in the subsequent chapters as we investigate in detail the *Four Truths*.

Chapter 2 will focus on the truth of suffering, that is, there is suffering in the world, which manifests as a constant stream of dissatisfaction in life. In Section 2.3 we shall also consider the pathological aspect of this dissatisfaction by considering Stoic views on dispositions and how we are disposed in our thinking and judgements towards the things in our life. This brings in a discussion of the language of disposition, in particular, in relation to *echō*, the meaning of which includes 'to have or possess a certain state or condition of the body or mind'. Chapter 3 will focus on the cause of suffering, that is, dissatisfaction in life originating from desires and aversions, attachments and repulsions, cravings and clingings. Section 3.3 discusses the language of cause and effect, the active and passive (*poiein* and *paschein*). Chapter 4 will focus on the cessation of suffering, that is, it is possible to cease the dissatisfaction in life, opening the way to a sense of well-being and happiness. Sections 4.4 and 4.5 discuss the language of volition and decision making, and the significance of what we say, do and think in relation to achieving a sense of well being and happiness.

¹⁸² DL 7.49

Chapter 2 Epictetus and the First Noble Truth

2.1 Prologue

In chapter 1 we introduced the Buddhist *Four Noble Truths* (1.2) as our model for investigating human suffering and the importance of language in the context of these truths and suffering. This current chapter goes into more detail regarding the *First Noble Truth* in the context of Epictetus' approach to suffering. We shall start by unravelling the Buddhist sense behind the *First Noble Truth*, by discussing *dukkha*, the essence of the first truth (loosely translated in the Western world as 'suffering'). We consider what it means to be awake to the existence of suffering: accepting the real presence of suffering in our lives and having such insight and understanding is indispensable to being able to deal with the causes and circumstances surrounding suffering and its subsequent treatment. This chapter also looks at the three types of suffering as classified by the *First Noble Truth* and shows how these are reflected in Epictetus.

Dukkha arises from the desire and pursuit of things we believe to be good. It is our misunderstanding and flawed judgement of good and evil, and our disposition of mind, that lead us astray in our actions and thinking and that results in dissatisfaction. In both Buddhism and Stoic ethics only things that are virtuous are good, and the only evil is vice, and both teachings connect our lack of understanding of the good and evil, either to the different types of suffering defined in the *First Noble Truth* or to the Stoic *pathē*, which are considered to be flawed judgements about the good. This chapter considers the pursuit of good and evil in relation to the pathological aspect of dissatisfaction related to our disposition of mind and whether this is virtuous or vicious (wholesome or unwholesome in Buddhist terms); this links with the language of possessing a certain state of mind, virtuous or otherwise.

Our investigation brings attention to the pathology of the soul in terms of our dispositions, habits, infirmities and the like, all of which contribute to the individuation of us as a person. They are indicative of how we are disposed towards apprehending, understanding and processing our impressions and what subsists in our thoughts about these impressions. We shall discuss the similarity of view between Epictetus, in regard to dispositions and habitual behaviours related to suffering, and Buddhist teaching about the five aggregates and the *sankhara* (1.7.2-3). In Chapter 3 we consider the *Second Noble Truth*, and the continuing role that language plays in our dispositions and how these identify with our thinking and feelings.

The Stoic *pathē* are briefly considered as an example of the complex emotions that cause us suffering as we pursue a desire for things we consider good. This goes beyond the general feelings (pleasant or unpleasant) that cause us suffering that is rooted in a conditioned mind.

Finally we return to the medical model referred to in 1.4, in particular the aspects of diagnosis and symptoms are discussed in regard to the *First Noble Truth* and the views of Epictetus.

2.2 Truth of Suffering

2.2.1 Nature of Dukkha

There is Dukkha – ‘incapable of satisfying’

Dukkha is a Pali noun, which in Buddhism is frequently translated as ‘suffering’, but this is a gross simplification as there is no specific English translation that would accurately represent and convey the full sense and meaning of this word. *Dukkha* can mean general discontent or dissatisfaction, anguish or dis-ease with life, and these various translations provide greater scope for meaning and interpretation of the experience of what we in the western world refer to as human suffering. What this means is that the scope of the word *dukkha* encapsulates a broader meaning than the western word ‘suffering’. We can find in Epictetus that suffering has also a broad scope of interpretation, which it is argued in this thesis equals that of the Buddhist word *dukkha*. The topic of suffering has challenged many western minds with more questions than answers, leading one to conclude that it is not definable, or at the very least to suggest that to experience it might be easier than to make sense of it with definitions and semantics. Suffering, in the Buddhist view of the concept, reveals many hidden dimensions, depths and senses, making it a very profound human experience. In comparison, suffering in the sense of the traditional Stoic passions (*pathē*) is a subset of those experiences one might come across in one’s journey through life – a notion that should become clear as we investigate the language of Epictetus later in this thesis.

The *First Noble Truth*¹⁸³ points to the need for understanding, insight, knowing about suffering (*dukkha*) and its nature: it is based on three insights – firstly there is *dukkha*, secondly *dukkha* needs to be understood, and thirdly *dukkha* has been understood.

Investigation into the first insight should aim to gain a realisation that suffering does exist and acknowledge that it is part of all life to nobly accept our suffering, and have the insight that we experience it through being incapable of satisfying (*dukkha*) our desires or aversions, the feeling of dissatisfaction, of something happening or not happening in our lives that we deem to be pleasant or unpleasant. These experiences we have as we journey through life bring us face to face with the impermanent nature of life, ignorance of what is in our control and what is not, and with the effects of *kamma*.

Comprehending Dukkha - Nature of Our Dissatisfaction

Dukkha can be gross or subtle, mild or severe. It can manifest itself in many ways and can be deep-rooted within us and we do not recognise it; sometimes we try to repress it, hide it away from view or intentionally choose not to recognise it. Consequently if we are to discover the causes of our suffering and deal with *dukkha* we need to first recognise there is *dukkha*, understand *dukkha* and its nature and recognise it for what it is, and finally to acknowledge and accept that *dukkha* has been understood.

¹⁸³ SN 56

There is *dukkha*; and understanding *dukkha* and its very nature connects with our innate concern for our own existence, our fears, anxieties, seeking well-being, happiness and peace of mind and avoiding pain, discomfort and unpleasant things, and our everyday feelings of discontent, disquiet or being disgruntled, annoyed or irritated in some way. *Dukkha* covers all forms of dissatisfaction that afflict the mind of man. Death is an inevitable reality of our lives ('in accord with nature' as the Stoics say), however, this thing called death causes the majority of human beings immense suffering: it becomes a taboo subject to talk about, too uncomfortable to think about; it raises fears in man and hits at the heart of man's thinking about his existence and human condition, raising questions as to the meaning of life and what is man's moral purpose.

Given the subtlety of some human experiences it is not always an easy task to understand the nature of our suffering. *Dukkha* can be deep-rooted in our subconscious, be difficult to detect, describe or understand, can manifest itself in delicate, vague or extremely gross ways. In life we search out pleasure ('what I want') as a means of achieving happiness but this can be an enigmatic task and what we think of as pleasure is sometimes a source of displeasure. We think we have got what we want, but think it is not complete in some way and we continue searching. Also if we get what we want we are concerned as to whether we can keep it. Pleasure and displeasure go hand in hand and we need to understand the connectedness and duality between pleasure and displeasure if we are to gain insight into our *dukkha*.

To fail to respond to *dukkha* is to neglect what it means to be a human being and this means a failure to commit to our moral obligations. We fail to acknowledge that our actions have consequences (*kamma*) not only for ourselves and our well-being but also our moral duties towards others.

Dukkha has been comprehended.

To reiterate, the *First Noble Truth* is about understanding, knowing, giving insight, wisdom and seeing the light regarding *dukkha*: it is not concerned with finding the cause of *dukkha* or solutions to help the cessation of *dukkha*. This *First Truth* requires us to look deeply with a reflective mind to fully understand and be awakened to *dukkha*: the third insight (*dukkha* has been comprehended) is knowing that we know – we have mentally grasped what we know, the reality of *dukkha* and nobly accept that this is our reality, as it is with all mankind. Sometimes the not knowing is referred to as the beginner's mind – in the same way that Epictetus refers to the person that is uneducated and has yet to start his spiritual journey of awakening.¹⁸⁴

The *First Noble Truth* is about a serious and reflective examination of *dukkha* to gain insight and an enlightened appreciation of the truth about *dukkha*.

Epictetus' Response

How do we interpret Epictetus in regard to this *First Noble Truth*? His teachings clearly try to provide insight into the true nature of the disturbed and unpleasant states of mind and freedom from

¹⁸⁴ *Ench.5*

such states of mind, about good and evil, moral purpose and duties, indifference, use of externals and what is and is not in our control, use of impressions and many other topics, all of which relate to *dukkha*. His *Discourses* provide a large quantity of teaching material on these issues and to support a better understanding of the nature of *dukkha*. His teachings, we claim, reflect man's actual experience of *dukkha*, and it is evident that this is not some theoretical, abstract set of notions and issues. To this extent his teachings put more emphasis on a practical stance of understanding by putting ourselves in the position to understand the nature of, as well as the problems associated with, *dukkha*, a stance very much based on learning and understanding through example and experience.

Epictetus places great emphasis on education as the pathway to freedom of a troubled mind¹⁸⁵ as well argued in Long.¹⁸⁶ Even more so, his emphasis is on moral practice and exercise rather than theory or academic learning.¹⁸⁷ This approach particularly aligns well with the insights of the *First Noble Truth* of understanding, knowing and embracing the reality of *dukkha* – to understand that suffering is a part of us, not as an academic exercise, but an exercise in our own 'art of living'. He warns of being 'uneducated in life'¹⁸⁸ – to have a beginner's mind or to have a mind where we have gained insight into *dukkha*, and, as Long points out,¹⁸⁹ philosophy is not a question of choosing a profession but of selecting a certain lifestyle.

Epictetus warns us about the lure and dangers of desires, in particular passionate desires and aversions, and emphasises the need for us to be educated¹⁹⁰ in order to understand what is our own and what is not, how this relates to our suffering and our wants and 'must haves', and 'don't want' and 'mustn't have' and so on.

Arguably Epictetus places freedom at the top of his list of things to do: being free, in Epictetus' sense,¹⁹¹ comes through education, which ultimately concerns understanding the truth of *dukkha*. Here is a sample from Epictetus, he says 'the free man who has seriously examined the matter, and, as you might expect, had discovered the truth about it. But if you look for it where it does not exist, why be surprised if you never find it?'¹⁹² So here we have him reflecting on discovering the truth through examining our self; the search is within us not without us in the externals.

2.2.2 Awake to the Understanding and Insight into Dukkha

In Buddhist parlance we need to be awake (enlightened) to the truth of *dukkha* – to make direct contact with it – we must not deny its existence or find a scapegoat to escape from it. The *First Noble Truth* talks about the arising of vision, insight, wisdom, knowing and light within us regarding *dukkha*. We will argue that Epictetus' thinking is the same, replacing our ignorance with knowledge and

¹⁸⁵ *Diss.* 2.2.13, 2.1.21-25, 4.1ff., *Ench.* 5

¹⁸⁶ Long (2002) pp.97-125

¹⁸⁷ *Diss.* 2.17.26-28

¹⁸⁸ *Diss.* 3.19.6

¹⁸⁹ Long (2002) p. 109

¹⁹⁰ *Diss.* 4.5.7

¹⁹¹ *Diss.* 4.1.

¹⁹² *Diss.* 4.1.31-33

wisdom through being educated in the matters of life. The same message of learning from the lessons of life already appears in Aeschylus: '*suffering that leads to the understanding of one's fault*', or put another way '*wisdom comes through suffering*'.¹⁹³

The theme of knowledge and ignorance appears as dualities in many ways in other schools of thought: the Hindu *Bhagavad Gita*¹⁹⁴ talks of 'light and darkness' in the sense of light as the lamp of wisdom and knowledge and darkness as ignorance: that is, to understand and appreciate the 'light', we need to experience the 'darkness'; wisdom is knowing what is to be done and what is not to be done, what is fear and what is courage, what is bondage and what is liberation;¹⁹⁵ ignorance has no clear vision of what is right and what is wrong, what should be done and what should not be done;¹⁹⁶ wisdom obscured in darkness when wrong is thought to be right and when things are thought to be that which they are not;¹⁹⁷ ignorance darkens the soul of all men;¹⁹⁸ and so on. .

We need to have access to an awareness, a knowing and light within ourselves that comes from a reflective mind and not from a psychologically muddled or confused mind. At this stage of our investigation of *dukkha* we are trying to understand and gain knowledge and insight by reflecting on the concept of suffering and not to leap in and consider ourselves as the subject matter of suffering. We first need to get the right perspective and consciously acknowledge the presence of suffering, as Buddha said, '*This is suffering*', not '*I am suffering*'. Therefore, looking at life through understanding *dukkha* is a process of knowing and assimilating an understanding of the problem: if we do not do this first then we shall not be skilful in solving our own problems. The *First Noble Truth* is not something to superficially gloss over or to dispense with and to quickly move on to something else supposedly more advanced. Knowing and assimilating an understanding of the problem is a practice that is ongoing and requires time and commitment.

We should not be too optimistic about this task of recognition; it is not necessarily a simple matter to recognise one's suffering, since by its very nature suffering can be deep-rooted either in the subconscious (it can be so habitual and normalised we fail to recognise it) or hidden behind many masks and layers of a conditioned mind and protected by our ego. Both Epictetus and Buddhism staunchly share the same view that in order to deal with our suffering we must first recognise, acknowledge and accept our suffering for what it is, a part of life, unavoidable, inevitable - to Buddhists this means having understanding, insight and knowing what is behind our suffering, that is, the essence of the *First Noble Truth*. Epictetus' teaching responds with a similar notion that we need to recognise that there are things in life that are outside our control and if we cling to things outside of our control then suffering is inevitable. Epictetus' teaching talks about securing the fruit of man's mind over time¹⁹⁹ and tells us that through education, reflection and self-contemplation²⁰⁰ we

¹⁹³ Arist. *Ag.* 200-10

¹⁹⁴ *The Bhagavad Gita* (1962) Chapter 10, verse 11

¹⁹⁵ *The Bhagavad Gita* (1962) Chapter 18, verse 30 (cf. *Diss.* 1.11.28-29)

¹⁹⁶ *The Bhagavad Gita* (1962) Chapter 18, verse 31 (cf. *Diss.* 1.11.33)

¹⁹⁷ *The Bhagavad Gita* (1962) Chapter 18, verse 32

¹⁹⁸ *The Bhagavad Gita* (1962) Chapter 14, verse 8

¹⁹⁹ *Diss.* 1.15.7-8

can make progress by knowing and insight about our *dukkha*. Man complains that he is dissatisfied with life because of his difficulties and asks Epictetus for advice.²⁰¹ Epictetus is very direct: 'It is difficulties that show what men are'²⁰² and our struggle means we must contend with our circumstances as men. His response is one of uncompromising realism but also trying to awaken us. Epictetus argues time and time again that we must master the art of living: 'living an examined life and not to accept any impression unexamined';²⁰³ 'know thyself by reflecting within and turn your thoughts upon yourselves, find out what preconceived ideas you have';²⁰⁴ 'look towards yourself for the injuries you suffer';²⁰⁵ a man must scout around within himself to accurately comprehend and return with the truth,' not driven by fear to designate as enemies those who are not such, nor in any other fashion be distraught or confused by his external impressions';²⁰⁶ 'we need to have an effective grasp of our own suffering and weaknesses, set vividly before our own eyes'.²⁰⁷ All these bring man in touch with what he has difficulties with and why he is dissatisfied. In dealing with these requirements Epictetus' strategy and purpose is a practical one, to discipline one's mind towards the practical goal of applying our understanding, knowing and insight regarding the truth of suffering (*dukkha*) into practice in our own life, in order to deal with those experiences and situations that might involve hardship, fear, sadness, grief, anger and greed. Long remarks that Epictetus is equipping man with an art of living for all seasons.²⁰⁸

2.2.3 Types of Suffering

2.2.3.1 Introduction

The *First Noble Truth* is a response to the struggles and strains that lie at the heart of the human condition, *dukkha*, of which the following are types:

- Birth, ageing, illness and sickness, and death is *dukkha*;
- Being in union with the unpleasant, with what displeases us is *dukkha*;
- Separation from the pleasant is *dukkha*;
- Not to get what we desire is *dukkha*;
- The clinging *five aggregates* (one of material form, and four related to the mind - feelings, perceptions, mental formations/impulses/volitions and consciousness/discernment) is *dukkha*.

These are sometimes classified in more general terms:

²⁰⁰ *Diss.* 1.20.4-7 and 12-14

²⁰¹ *Diss.* 1.24 ff.

²⁰² *Diss.* 1.24.1

²⁰³ *Diss.* 3.12.15

²⁰⁴ *Diss.* 3.22.39

²⁰⁵ *Diss.* 3.7.36

²⁰⁶ *Diss.* 3.22.25

²⁰⁷ *Diss.* 3.23.29

²⁰⁸ Long (2002) p.244

- Ordinary suffering (*dukkha dukkha* – ‘suffering of suffering’) concerned with the cycle of human life (from birth, illness, old age through to death, and all that happens in between); This is the suffering that arises in us due to our aversion to both physically and mentally unpleasant experiences: for example, we want to avoid the pain of growing old;²⁰⁹
- Suffering of change (*viparinama dukkha*) is the suffering that arises in us due to not wanting things to change and for our pleasant experiences, desires and cravings for these experiences to continue to be satisfied;²¹⁰
- Pervasive suffering (*sankhara dukkha*) is the suffering that goes beyond just *dukkha dukkha* and involves us in forming intentional stressful and anxious thoughts and these arise from us wanting things to be as we want them to be; we desire the pleasant experiences and are averse to the unpleasant experiences, and trying to control things so that our experience is a pleasant one can only increase our suffering; it is referred to as all-pervasive as it is the basis for the other two categories of suffering.²¹¹

Buddha’s wish is to arouse in us an ethical awakening to bring our attention to deal with these struggles of the human condition. We shall now examine Epictetus’ thinking regarding these types of Buddhist suffering and explore his extant works to illustrate examples of these. It should be noted that his focus is greater in some areas than in others and the terminology is sometimes different but nonetheless his response to this first truth on suffering, with a few exceptions based on cultural differences, is uncompromisingly close to that of the Buddhist Dharma.

2.2.3.2 Ordinary Suffering and the Human Life Cycle

The first type of suffering for suffering (*dukkha dukkha*) is that based on the cycle of life, from birth through to death. Epictetus repeatedly reflects upon this type of suffering as one of the unpleasant facts of life that we cannot escape from. However, at the same time it is difficult for man to acknowledge and accept that he will grow old, fall sick and die. This truth about the human life cycle brings man much fear, anxiety and suffering. One of the most terrible of horrors that man has is that of death. Epictetus’ famous statement ‘it is not the things that disturb us, but our judgements about the things’²¹² is at the heart of why we suffer. So death is neither terrible nor the cause of our suffering, it is our own judgement and opinion about death that disturbs us. This statement of Epictetus holds for all circumstances and for all three of the categories of suffering.

In an interesting passage Epictetus discusses the body and mind heritage we have been given from our birth.²¹³ In choosing between the two elements, man for the most part tends to incline towards an attachment to the former element rather than the latter element and through this towards the externals. Man’s attachment to the bodily element places good and bad in the

²⁰⁹ SN 3.3, 3.25, 3.35

²¹⁰ SN 36.6, AN 8.6, SN 22.7

²¹¹ AN 2, DN 21, DN 15, AN 3.69

²¹² *Ench.* 5

²¹³ *Diss.* 1.3.3-6

externals, and not in what is important, the moral purpose (*prohairesis*). This thesis aims to show that Buddha and Epictetus both argue that this attachment to the bodily element is likely to result in a life of discontent and suffering. It is in our very nature that we do not want to die, to get old or to get sick – man struggles with having to live with the mortal aspects of life. His standard objection to how we approach life is that we crave for our life to be different; however we are not 'immortal, ageless or exempt from disease'.²¹⁴ He frequently argues that we crave for the pleasant things in life, how we want things to be and not how the inevitable turns out to be and so we become averse to the inevitable and this makes us suffer. For emphasis he deliberately refers to our paltry body (*σωμάτιον*) - 'let it not escape thee – this body is not thine own, but only clay cunningly compounded'²¹⁵ - to draw attention to its unimportance. He further labours the point by his statement about the unimportance of the body with phrases such as 'My paltry body (*σωμάτιον*) is nothing to me; the parts of it are nothing to me',²¹⁶ 'you are a little soul carrying around a corpse (*νεκρόν*)'²¹⁷ or referring to the body as a mere 'husk (*κελύφει*) which we wear'.²¹⁸ Equally other Stoics used pejorative terms to draw attention to the insignificance of the body: Seneca's 'heavy and earthly prison'²¹⁹ or a 'chain that manacles one's freedom'.²²⁰

Some of the evident points being made here by Epictetus are: (i) we need to understand what is not under our control and in particular 'our body',²²¹ (ii) we should live in accord with nature; obedient to it also is our body, both in sickness and health, and through stages of our growth, development and ageing²²² and (iii) life and death are a part of the natural life-cycle: 'what is born must also perish'.²²³

Man's incessant preoccupation with classing things as evil can be seen in remarks such as 'death appears to be an evil [...] death is an inevitable thing [...] And where can I go to escape it? [...] I cannot avoid death';²²⁴ Epictetus' response is that there is no need to fear it, it's a bugbear²²⁵ and the best we can do is to accept the truth of death, it is certain to come and it is not evil, and we should think rationally about our fear of it. In the Buddhist canon the following is a remark about human life: 'It is short, limited and brief; it is full of suffering, full of tribulation. This one should wisely understand. One should do good and live a pure life; for none who is born can escape death'.²²⁶ I suggest that Epictetus' thinking expresses the same thing.

²¹⁴ *Diss.* 2.8.27-29

²¹⁵ *Diss.* 1.1.11-12

²¹⁶ *Diss.* 3.22.21

²¹⁷ *Fr.* 26

²¹⁸ *Diss.* 1.23.1

²¹⁹ *Ep.* 102.22

²²⁰ *Ep.* 65.21

²²¹ *Ench.* 1

²²² *Fr.* 3

²²³ *Diss.* 4.7.27

²²⁴ *Diss.* 1.27.7-10

²²⁵ *Diss.* 2.1.17

²²⁶ AN 7:70

The same truths apply to all the other inherited forms of suffering - sickness, disease, illness and old age - which man struggles against with a continual aversion, as Epictetus explains:

'... but if you try to avoid disease or death or poverty, you will experience misfortune ... withdraw, therefore, your aversion from all matters that are not under your control, and transfer it to what is unnatural among those which are under your control.'²²⁷

The Buddhist Dharma²²⁸ asks What is death? Death is the passing away, disappearance, completion of time, casting off the body, and interruption in the life faculty. What is ageing? Ageing is whatever decrepitude, brokenness, greying, wrinkling, decline of life-force, weakening of the faculties we may experience in old age. What is illness and pain? Whatever pain, discomfort, ailment, infection, disease may afflict our body or bodily functions.

No one who is born is free from ageing and death, irrespective of wealth, status, beauty, possessions and property: 'The beautiful chariots of kings wear out, this body too undergoes decay.'²²⁹ Realisation of this truth should break through the illusion we are under as a result of sensual pleasures, external materials, wealth and power: we should also recognise that our body is nothing more than something paltry, a vehicle for our soul, and through the years it may suffer pain and illness, and surely it will age and will certainly die, all in accordance with what nature intends. We can use our wealth for personal adornment, make our body beautiful for our own pleasure and that of others but such beauty is temporal, it will fade, wither and die, and become dust to be re-cycled by nature. Epictetus asks²³⁰ 'How treat your paltry body, then? As its nature is', but we should not interpret this as meaning we should neglect our body; rather, it is in the charge of someone else [God] and, as Long remarks,²³¹ we need to treat our mind as the exclusive locus of our human identity.

In summary, Epictetus addresses this first class of suffering in some depth, in fact more than has been covered here in this section. The unpleasant and inevitable things that happen in the cycle of life are something we cannot control:

'For if he avoids anything that is not a matter of choice, he knows that some time he will encounter something in spite of his aversion to it, and will come to grief'²³²

Indeed if we can accept the fact that the cycle of life is what it is, that we cannot change what happens, and the only thing we can change is our response to it (4.2-3), then it will ease the suffering caused by the fact of life that we are not immortal, ageless or exempt from disease. Not accepting this fact is being averse to the cycle of life, acting out of harmony with it.²³³ As Gill remarks 'pursuing

²²⁷ *Ench.* 2

²²⁸ MN 141

²²⁹ SN 3.3

²³⁰ *Diss.* 3.1.43

²³¹ Long (2002)

²³² *Diss.* 1.4.2-3

²³³ *Diss.* 1.4.14-15, 1.4.18, 1.4.29, 1.11.8-9, 1.12.17

what is up to us leads to peace of mind, whereas pursuing what is not leads to passions (suffering).²³⁴

Death is not up to us; it is according to nature.

2.2.3.3 Suffering Regarding Change

Suffering due to change (*vipariṇāma-dukkhataa*) is based on the lesson of impermanence (*anicca* – ‘a’ nothing, ‘nicca’ meaning constant, continuous, permanent), which is the notion that all of conditioned existence, with no exceptions, is transient, subject to change. Buddha taught that because all things are impermanent, our attachments to things, whether physical or mental formations, will ultimately lead to suffering. This type of suffering thus arises when we are enjoying what we desire and the pleasurable experiences in life and we want this experience to continue as long as possible if not forever: we become attached to this experience, we personally identify with it (1.2.3). When change happens and we become separated from what pleases us, what we crave for, what we are attached to, this separation causes us to suffer. What is it that is attached? Is it a physical or psychological attachment? We say ‘I am suffering’ or ‘I suffer’. Who or what is this ‘I’ that is attached to these things that is suffering? ‘What is impermanent is suffering ... feeling is impermanent ... perception is impermanent ... this is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self’: so says the sutra on impermanence.²³⁵ The five aggregates are the processes that connect the body and mind through a stream of physical and mental aggregates and consequently these aggregates can lead to a state of suffering: we attach ourselves to this stream and identify an enigmatic ‘I’ with this attachment and consequently with this suffering. As argued and explained in 1.2.3, despite different views about the self/non-self in Buddhism and Stoicism, such metaphysical issues are not relevant to our pursuit of using the *Four Noble Truths* or the five aggregates. Discussing the ‘I’ or ‘me’ that is suffering only distracts from any comparison between Buddhism and Epictetus and the problem of suffering due to change and impermanence. The same arguments as discussed here (and in 1.2.2) about self/non-self²³⁶ also apply to the suffering considered in 2.2.3.4 and elsewhere in this thesis where we compare Buddhism and Epictetus.

The philosophies of Buddha and Stoicism both believe in the transitory nature of life, that we should accept things as they are, and we should not try to change things out of our sphere of control. We become attracted to desirable objects and as time passes we can become so attached to them that we dare not think of our life without them, we crave for them to continue without recognising or accepting the reality of impermanence. Over time these objects are likely to change, in the very same way that we ourselves change, as is the nature of things, although we want them to remain the same. But changes happen and maybe even our view of the object, our feeling towards the object, changes. Maybe the pleasant things disappear, change to become less pleasant or unpleasant. All

²³⁴ Gill (2006) p.381

²³⁵ SN 22.45

²³⁶ Buddhists talk in SN 22.45: What is non-self should be seen as it really is with correct wisdom - This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.

these changes can make us dissatisfied. The more we crave, grasp at and attach ourselves to pleasant things, the more likely we are to increase the suffering in our life.

We always feel comforted by what we know, what we are familiar with and what we have, love and own. Even the thought and uncertainty about things changing and being taken away from us causes us anxiety and suffering. We feel at ease and more secure if we know that things will not change. Many things that change are simply out of our control and our clinging to such things will cause us suffering. So the truth behind this suffering is man's inability to accept the impermanent nature of life (things and experiences) and our attachment to them becomes the cause of our suffering – in other words man needs to acknowledge and accept he has no control over things that are inconstant, unsteady and impermanent. Teachings on the perpetual state of change, or impermanence, are found in many philosophies and belief systems including Buddhism, Hinduism, Daoism and Stoicism. In Buddhist tradition impermanence (*anicca*) is one of the three marks of existence, the others being suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anattā*).²³⁷

Epictetus has several views on this:

'Recognising that what is born must also perish. For I am not eternal, but a man; a part of the whole, as an hour is part of a day. I must come on as the hour and like an hour I must pass'.²³⁸

'Whenever you grow attached to something, do not act as though it were one of those things that cannot be taken away ... In such fashion do you too remind yourself that the object of your love is mortal; it is not one of your own possession; it has been given you for the present, not inseparably nor for ever'.²³⁹

Presenting these views Epictetus wants us to recognise the inevitable truth of impermanence and attachment. He is unequivocal in this and wants us to be in no doubt that this applies to everything in life and our suffering; the object of our love or attachment may not be a person, but a material possession.

Those things that are subject to hindrance, deprivation and compulsion are not our own, but those that cannot be hindered are our own, says Epictetus,²⁴⁰ following the principle of what is and is not in our control. Epictetus' account emphasises that to think that possession and ownership is eternal is a serious flaw in our thinking; it is a temporal possession that can be taken away or removed at any time. Such an error in thinking causes us to suffer badly, especially as we get emotionally and personally attached and we identify our self with these attachments.

Epictetus, like the Buddhists and others, says that all that comes into existence will eventually change into something else, as life turns into death: all will follow this natural law of change and impermanence. What we have in the present moment will be separated from us at some other moment in time:

²³⁷ Fronsdal (2005) verses 277-279

²³⁸ *Diss.* 2.5.13

²³⁹ *Diss.* 3.24.84-88

²⁴⁰ *Diss.* 3.24.3, 4.1.81

'For all these things are changes of a preliminary state into something else; it is not a case of destruction, but a certain ordered dispensation and management. This is what going abroad means, a slight change; this is the meaning of death, a greater change of that which is, not into what is not, but into what is not now'.²⁴¹

Man, who has a lack of insight into the truth that things in the external world are forever in flux and changing, has no respite from his restless and discontented life. Epictetus would remind us that the three tenets of Stoicism that we should have in mind are those of control, fate and impermanence. Trying to control what happens and wish for things not to change is a recipe for discontent. As Epictetus insists: 'For the origin of sorrow is this – to wish for something that does not come to pass.'²⁴² Not surprisingly Epictetus follows through with: 'Do not seek to have everything that happens as you wish, but wish for everything to happen as it actually does happen, and your life will be serene'²⁴³ and 'I want something, and it does not happen; and what creature is more wretched than I? I do not want something, and it does happen; and what creature is more wretched than I?'²⁴⁴

Unfortunately our attachment to things confronts us daily. Our mind tightens its grasp on the things we crave or the things we do not want to lose. The greater our emotional dependency on our attachment to a thing, the tighter our grip and hence the greater our fear of loss and suffering.

2.2.3.4 *Suffering of the Conditioned Mind*

This lesson of suffering relates to the conditioned mind (*sankhāra-dukkhataa*) - *sankhāra* is the Pali word meaning the formation, fashioning, fabrication of things (physical or mental) and refers to anything formed or fashioned by conditions, commonly referred to as Dependent Origination²⁴⁵ (or Dependent Arising or Interdependent Co-Arising): from the arising of that, this arises due to the presence of specific conditions; this arises as the effect caused by that arising; that being, this comes to be; that being absent, this is not (3.2). Dependent Origination²⁴⁶ is a well-formed Buddhist theory and is central to the understanding of the arising of *dukkha*: a mental state arises and exists due to the presence of certain circumstances, factors and conditions (see also 1.2.2).

Spiritual ignorance conditions the five aggregates²⁴⁷ (Pali *khandas*), that is, our body and our four mental states (feelings, perceptions, mental formations, consciousness):

- Form (*rūpa*)²⁴⁸ – in general material objects, and in particular their appearance;
- Feelings (*vedana*)²⁴⁹ – pleasant, unpleasant or neutral feelings, sensations;

²⁴¹ *Diss.* 3.24.92-93

²⁴² *Diss.* 1.27.10-11

²⁴³ *Ench.* 8

²⁴⁴ *Diss.* 2.17.17-18

²⁴⁵ SN 12:1, 12:20, 12:33, 12:38, 12:65; Bodhi (2005) p.187

²⁴⁶ Bodhi (2013) pp.292-328; Nhat Hanh (1998) pp.206-232; Kalupahana (1992) pp.78-80, 87, 88, 92, 94, 105-6

²⁴⁷ SN 43.1-44, AN 6.62, SN 22, SN 56, SN 12, MN 28, MN 44, DN 33, DN 15; Kalupahana (1992) pp.69-72; Nhat Hanh (1998) pp.164-171; Tashi Tsering (2005), pp.40-41 (cf. Brazier (2003)) interprets these aggregates as a cycle of 'how we see the world (*rūpa*)', 'how we react to the world (from feeling to perceptions)', 'our mental formations (dispositions)', 'how we approach the world (consciousness)'.

²⁴⁸ MN 13, 9, SN 22:56, 22:82, Bodhi (2005) pp.187-188

²⁴⁹ MN 13, 9

- Perceptions (*sañña*)²⁵⁰ - perceiving the quality or distinguishing features of an object;
- Mental formations (*sankhāra*)²⁵¹ – passive sense: in general conditioned phenomena and in particular all mental dispositions, conditioned things, fabrications or volitional formations; active sense: *kamma* that leads to Dependent Origination;
- Consciousness (*viññāna*)²⁵² – consciousness, mental life force, mind, or discernment.

The *Nidance Samyutta*²⁵³ presents a sequence of twelve conditioned and conditioning links of *Dependent Origination*. These twelve links are cause-effect links; each element conditions the next link in the chain: from ignorance arise volitional formations; then arises consciousness; and so on to the arising of sensory stimulation; then arise feelings; then arises consciousness; then arise cravings; then arises grasping; and so on to suffering (*sankhāra-dukkhataa*). In a similar way we can trace backwards from the question 'What is the origin of *sankhāra-dukkhataa*?' to the answer 'spiritual ignorance'. The following is an example of some of these conditioned links:

- The senses (*salayatana*) are a condition for contact (to experience external impressions);
- Contact (*phassa*) is a condition for feelings (regarding our experience of external impressions);
- Feelings (*vedana*) are a condition for craving of externals;
- Craving (*tanhā*) is a condition for clinging to become attached to externals;
- Clinging (*upādāna*) is a condition for action or becoming (*bhava*).

From a linguistic perspective of suffering the first three of these reflect a passive state of life and the other two reflect an active state of life (this active and passive perspective is explored in detail in 3.3). It is feelings that trigger craving and it is craving that is the seed of clinging, which arrives at a state of becoming and action, and the basis for our suffering.

If we now turn to Epictetus the first thing to note is that Dependent Origination is not a concept known by this name by Epictetus. However, we can argue that it is a concept embedded in his teaching and is clearly an essential element of it: to see this we only need to consider many interrelated areas of discourse such as the role of the use of the suffering in the context of active and passive language and Stoic categories (3.3), the pathological states of mind²⁵⁴ (Chapter 3) and the psychology of moral choice (4.4). We can immediately see this concept in his teaching²⁵⁵ on the proper use of our impressions, our judgements, impulses and actions, and attachments to desires: the cause of our doing or not doing something, saying or not saying something, being elated or cast down, avoiding or pursuing something is due to conditioning, conditioning of our mind. As Epictetus argues, our sense impressions cause feelings and emotions to arise in us, and these in turn cause desires to arise, and in turn lead us to grasp at and become attached to these desires. Each of these

²⁵⁰ MN 75, SN 22:56, 22:82, 22:95

²⁵¹ AN 4:232, 4:94, MN 9, SN 22:56, 22:82, 22:95, 56:42; Bodhi (2005) p.259

²⁵² SN 12:65, 22:56, 22:82, 35:234, 12:38, MN 9, 140

²⁵³ NS S.II.1-133; Nhat Hanh (1998) pp.206-232

²⁵⁴ For example, Stoic formations such as dispositions, habits, emotions and passions are conditioned states.

²⁵⁵ *Diss.* 1.11.28-37, 3.9.2-6, 1.29.30-32

feelings, desires and attachments involves a determining cause. Supporting this argument is the following from Epictetus: 'Things seen by the mind (which the philosophers call φαντασίαις), whereby the intellect of man is struck at the very first sight of anything, which penetrates to the mind, are not subject to his will, nor to his control, but by virtue of a certain force of their own thrust themselves upon the attention of men; but the assents (which they call συγκαταθέσεις), whereby these same things seen by the mind are recognised, are subject to man's will, and fall under his control'.²⁵⁶

This, albeit in Epictetus' words, captures the Buddhist notion of Dependent Origination' (2.2.3.4). We can, when confronted with 'things seen by the mind', assent to them or we can dissent from them, reject them or be indifferent to them: it is up to us. 'External impressions come to us in four ways; for either things are, and seem so to be; or they are not, and do not seem to be, either; or they are, and do not seem to be; or they are not, and yet seem to be' to quote Epictetus.²⁵⁷ And what is the reason that we assent to anything? Because it appears to be so (cf. 4.4.3, 4.5.1, 5.3.5.3).²⁵⁸ 'Things seen by the mind' (impressions), although they might appear to be so, might deceive us: the measure of every action is the impression of our senses and this may be rightly or wrongly formed; and 'things seen by the mind' condition the arising of suffering. Epictetus continually insists on our proper use of impressions, as does the Buddhist Dharma, insisting that suffering is due to our clinging and attachment to our mental impressions, opinions, thoughts, feelings and the like, that are irrationally formed. Gill adds that irrationality inheres in the defectiveness, or falsity, of beliefs that underlie the impression.²⁵⁹ We cling on to our opinions or beliefs (and in general *doxa*) about situations and circumstances, and sometimes we cannot let go of these, because they are so strongly attached to mental formation, 'things seen by the mind'.

Both Epictetus and Buddhism teach that *dukkha* is conditioned by our mind, our thoughts, wishes and desires: hence we can make ourselves suffer if we wish. Again we have Epictetus repeating the argument, 'No one will harm you without your consent; you will have been harmed only when you think you have been harmed'.²⁶⁰

Our conditioned mind is built up through our experiences, opinions, beliefs and prejudices that we form about life, opinions and beliefs that may be built upon ignorance of what we don't know and distorted thinking of what we do know. This conditioned mind causes us to struggle with the affairs of life and the things of real consequence in life,²⁶¹ causing us to act rightly or wrongly, to prosper or face hardship, to succeed or fail.²⁶² For all causes there are likewise effects and so for anything we do wrongly we can ascribe our action 'no other cause than the decision of our will'. Epictetus' words²⁶³

²⁵⁶ *Fr.9*

²⁵⁷ *Diss. 1.27.1-2*

²⁵⁸ *Diss. 1.28.10*

²⁵⁹ Gill (2006) p.252

²⁶⁰ *Ench.30*

²⁶¹ *Diss. 2.11.1-2*

²⁶² *Diss. 1.29.30-32*

²⁶³ *Diss. 1.11.35*

again sound very similar to the Buddhist principle of Dependent Origination: this arises because of that. As Epictetus remarks,²⁶⁴ we all have views of:

'what ought to be done and what ought not, good and evil, fair and foul, and on these grounds assign praise and blame, censure and reprehension, passing judgements on fair and foul practices, and discriminating between them.'

Regarding this he suggests that we should get rid of any conceited opinions we have: we may need to unlearn how we think and perceive things to avoid our preconceived ideas leading us to be troubled.

Our suffering, as argued by Epictetus and in Buddhism, is all of our own making, our own doing, fabricated by our thoughts, feelings, cravings and actioned by the choices and decisions, the sequence of conditioned links; suffering is the product of the mind. So as the Buddhist *Dhammapada* reminds us:

'All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage. All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him'.²⁶⁵

²⁶⁴ *Diss.* 2.17.2

²⁶⁵ Müller (1881) pp.3-4

2.2.3.5 Summary

Types of Suffering and Feelings

The following table summarises the types of suffering and associated feelings discussed in 2.2.3.2-2.2.3.4, showing how the Buddhist scheme can also be found in the discourses of Epictetus.

Suffering	Aspects	Feelings and Emotions	Discourses
Ordinary suffering	Death, ageing, illness, sickness, poverty. Ill-fortune	Fears and griefs, sadness and sorrow, misery, uncertainty of the future, distress, sense of loneliness, isolation, depression, abandonment, dejection, despair, loss of dignity, sense of danger	1.2, 1.4, 1.6, 1.9, 1.11, 1.24, 1.25, 1.27, 1.29, 2.1, 2.6, 2.7, 2.19, 3.2-3.3, 3.5, 3.9, 3.10, 3.24, 3.26, 4.1, 4.4, 4.7, 4.9, 4.12
Suffering due to change	Union with what we dislike and separation from what we like	Things not under our control, fate and destiny, actions of others, dissatisfaction, unhappy and unpleasant experiences, need for continued existence	1.1, 1.4, 1.12, 2.6, 2.24, 3.2-3.3, 3.6, 3.9, 3.12-3.14, 3.22, 3.24-3.26, 4.1, 4.4, 4.6, 4.8, <i>Ench.1, Ench.8, Ench.10, Ench.11, Ench.20</i>
Suffering due to the conditioned mind	Not getting what we want, in brief mental formations subject to clinging (attachment)	Jealousy, envy, anger, lust, elation of externals, yearning, craving, anxieties and fears, wretchedness, unhappiness, grief, stress, sadness and sorrow, misery, dejection, sense of failure or worthlessness, abjection, inferiority, deprivation, despair, depression, disgrace, self-pity, confusion, mental turmoil, lack of confidence, feelings generated by others' words (including insults, accusations, blaming, censuring, fault-finding),	1.1, 1.3-1.4, 1.6, 1.8, 1.12, 1.17-1.20, 1.22, 1.24, 1.27-1.28, 2.1, 2.2, 2.6, 2.8-2.9, 2.13-2.19, 2.22, 2.26, 3.2-3.3, 3.6, 3.12-3.14, 3.20, 3.22-3.25, 4.1, 4.3-4.6, 4.8, 4.10, 4.12, <i>Ench.1, Ench.5, Ench.6, Ench.12, Ench.16, Ench.20</i>

Table 1: Types of Suffering and Underlying Feelings

Aggregates, Sankhara and Epictetus

The following table shows a correspondence between the five aggregates and concepts in Epictetus.

Aggregates (<i>khandha</i>)	Epictetus (Concepts) ²⁶⁶
Form (<i>rūpa</i>) - Body and material form. <i>Rūpa</i> means both materiality and sensibility. ²⁶⁷ It includes: (i) <i>rūpa-khandha</i> 'material forms' one of the five aggregates, (ii) <i>rūpa-āyatana</i> 'visible objects' and (iii) <i>nāma-rūpa</i> 'name and form' or 'mind and body'.	corporeals (<i>sōmata</i>) ²⁶⁸ , material quality and sensibility
Feeling (<i>vedana</i>) - Represents the affective quality of the human experience, which can be pleasant, painful or neutral.	<i>Paschō, pathē, aisthēsis</i> (Chapter 3)
Perception (<i>sanna</i>) - Awareness, recognition, conceptualization or cognition of objects through the senses; perceiving the qualities of an object.	<i>aisthēsis</i> (sense perception, sensation), <i>aisthēma, phantasia</i>
Formations (<i>sankhara</i>) - Conditioned phenomena generally but specifically all mental formations, mental states and conditions, volitional formations	dispositions (<i>diathesis, diatithemai, diakeimai, hexis, echōn</i>), <i>arrostēma</i> (Chapter 3), <i>prohairesis</i> (Chapter 4)
Consciousness (<i>vinnana</i>) - Consciousness, life force, mind, discernment	<i>prohairesis</i> (Chapter 4), <i>hēgemonikon, pneuma</i> , ²⁶⁹ self-consciousness ²⁷⁰ <i>dianoia</i> , mind ²⁷¹
<i>Sankhara</i> ²⁷²	Epictetus
In the passive sense generally refers to conditioned phenomena but more specifically to all mental dispositions. These are formations as a result of volition. <i>Sankhara</i> is translated as 'conditioned things', 'determinations', 'fabrications' and 'formations' (or, particularly when referring to mental processes, 'volitional formations'). In the active sense refers to <i>kamma</i> (<i>sankhara-khandha</i>) and it is this that leads to Dependent Origination.	language (<i>paschō poieō</i>) Stoic categories dispositions (<i>diathesis, diatithemai, diakeimai, hexis, echōn</i>) <i>prohairesis</i> (Chapter 4) Stoic logic ²⁷³ causal-determination ²⁷⁴

Table 2: Aggregates, Sankhara and Epictetus

²⁶⁶ These are related concepts (in some sense): not necessarily a one-to-one correspondence, but accommodating similar and common ideas and principles.

²⁶⁷ *Rūpa* is perceived through our senses and so some interpretations include self-image, physical identity.

²⁶⁸ Sellars (2006) pp.81-83, 86-89; Graver (2007) pp.18, 20-21, 96, 98-99, 143-144; Long (2002) pp.207-208, 212, 219-222

²⁶⁹ Long (1982), (1987)

²⁷⁰ Gill (2006) pp.37-46, 361-362

²⁷¹ Long (2002) pp.25-26, 118, 130, 134-135, 147-148, 156-161, 212-213

²⁷² AN 4.232, MN 9, SN 22.56, SN 56.42, Kalupahana (1992) pp. 30-52, 69-72, 92, 194-205; Nhat Hanh (1998) p.67 (cf. 1.7.3)

²⁷³ Bobzien (2008); Crivelli (2007); Rist (2010) pp.133-151

²⁷⁴ Bobzien (2001); Graver (2007) pp.42-46, 62, 68-69, 75-81, 167-169; Rist (2010) pp.112-132

2.3 Pathological Elements, Conditions and Relationships

2.3.1 Disease

Nosos

In this section we address the pathological aspect of suffering by considering mental dispositions, that is, those inclinations and qualities of the personality and character that condition us to produce feelings of dissatisfaction. According to the Buddhist *Law of Karma*, every effect has a cause and a condition. This active and passive relationship is inherent in all aspects of our lives and is important to understand for knowing the existence of suffering in our lives. Understanding dispositions, the conditioned mind, provides insight into suffering and its existence in our lives. What we do, think and say are conditioned by our mind, and the active and passive relationship inherent in the cause and effect of life can produce feelings of dissatisfaction or well-being.

Returning to our early definition of suffering (2.2), a diseased thing is something that lacks ease: something that is not functioning in a relaxed and orderly state; in our case it is in a state of mental disorder. Subsequently, Epictetus leaves us in no doubt that when we are in such a state our *prohairesis* is dysfunctional leaving us morally harmed or injured in some way (4.6.2). Our evidence for this in Epictetus is well attested by his repeated and characteristic challenges to prove that the *prohairesis* is the key to our moral existence (4.4), and the force of this claim can be linked to the dynamic interaction between the active and the passive (3.3), thus rendering us acting upon ourselves, our dispositional choice compelling us to be morally right or wrong. Epictetus disclaims any notion that the soul could ever be healthy if the *prohairesis*²⁷⁵ is not healthy, that is, functioning in accord with nature and our own reasoning faculty as our true nature.

The term *nosos* can variously mean sickness, illness and disease. Sometimes the word *nosos* is specifically used to denote illness, which in common modern day usage is often applied interchangeably with 'disease', although one is able to argue that they can be distinguished: illness is more a subjective feeling (e.g. feeling of anxiety without any reason, a feeling about some present evil, ill-ness: wicked, malevolent, harmful) whereas disease is often related to a specific condition with a pathological reason and causation and symptoms. Our specific interest is in the sense of *nosos* being a moral defect of the soul. In the writings of Epictetus we see the word *nosos* used in the sense of both 'disease' and 'illness'.²⁷⁶

Galen and Philo used the term *nosos* both in the context of the wider philosophical tradition and in reporting the Stoic view. Galen applies the term *nosos* only to the condition that is opposite to health by which he means that the function is damaged: through an ordered and undamaged function we have health and through a disordered and damaged function we have disease.²⁷⁷ Philo talks of *nosos* of the mind being graver and more long lasting than *nosos* of the body.²⁷⁸ Looking at

²⁷⁵ For a fuller discussion of the *prohairesis* see Chapter 4

²⁷⁶ *Diss.* 3.5.5, 4.12.10, *Ench.* 9

²⁷⁷ *Gal. Meth. med. II*, 90k (cf. *Diss.* 3.5.5)

²⁷⁸ Philo *On the Virtues* 379.26

the wider philosophical tradition, Aristotle talks about evil taking many forms but good just taking one form: *hygieia* (health), for example, being of a singular thing but *nosos* being a manifold thing, as with virtue and vice.²⁷⁹ This introduces us to the notion that the extent of man's *nosos* is varied and complicated by various individualised pathological elements and personality factors, and as such *nosos* is the loss in the quality of the soul's condition: a diseased state is a contrary characteristic to a healthy state: the condition of a man's soul can be in a good or healthy state in contrast to a soul in a bad or unhealthy state.²⁸⁰ Plato says a soul is diseased, by way of being damaged regarding proper or right reasoning, and as he says in the *Timaeus* 'he brings himself time after time many pangs and many pleasures owing to his desires and the issue thereof, and comes to be in a state of madness for the most part of his life because of those greatest of pleasure and pains, and keeps his soul diseased and senseless by reason'.²⁸¹ As Plato remarks in the *Laws*, disease is a lack of good sense: 'it speedily ruins the soul itself and annihilates the whole of its power'.²⁸² Disease is portrayed in both these cases as a lack of common sense, having no discernible meaning or purpose for the state of madness, and destroying the power of the mind to function properly and as a consequence damaging and injuring the soul.

We have Epictetus asking us 'What is injury?' We need to move away from the notion of an injury being damage or harm to the body or possessions and view injury as follows: 'So-and-so injured himself by doing me some wrong, shall I not injure myself by doing him some wrong?'²⁸³ In this sense injury is related to what lies in the moral purpose, the good or the evil and whether the choices we make render us good or evil; if we get this understanding wrong then we have created a moral defect in our thinking (cf. Buddhist Right View 5.2.1). In other words the injury is the loss or damage that affects our moral purpose, which limits our discussion of injury and loss to that within us and not without in the externals; the defect is within us and our thinking and attitude. Disease in the context of the soul not only damages the moral function of the man's soul; it profoundly damages him in the sense of being a man. This means to suffer damage of his moral purpose and 'lose self-dignity, self-respect and gentleness';²⁸⁴ loss of these qualities is a loss of his manhood. Long addresses this issue in terms of integrity and freedom (see also 4.4.5).²⁸⁵

Epictetus considers injustice to be a *nosos* as it reflects the soul of a non-virtuous person: it is a disorder of the soul to act in accordance with nature and to incline towards the good. Likewise cowardice is also a disease of the soul: again the soul's natural functioning towards the moral good is damaged.

Language of Disease

We have evidence in Epictetus of his direct question and examination approach in discussing

²⁷⁹ Arist. *MM* I.XXIV

²⁸⁰ Arist. *XI*, 14a2-7

²⁸¹ Pl. *Ti*. 86C-D

²⁸² Pl. *Lg*. 691D

²⁸³ *Diss*. 2.10.25

²⁸⁴ *Diss*. 2.10.15 (cf. 2.8.23, 3.7.27, 2.22.19-20)

²⁸⁵ Long (2002) pp.222-229

nosos, for example, 'Watch out that you don't get ill: it's bad'²⁸⁶ reflecting man's misunderstanding of the good and the evil. The language of disease is very commonly used by Greek philosophers to express a multitude of problems. In the *Platonic Epistles*, we find 'the *nosos* of insanity'²⁸⁷ as the mind is deranged and not functioning as it should and in Plato's *Gorgias* 'the *nosēma* of his injustice'²⁸⁸ reflecting man's wrongdoing to himself and possibly others, needing attention before it becomes a deep incurable ulcer in his soul. In Zeno 'nosēma is a fond imagining of something that is desirable',²⁸⁹ a tendency of the soul to turn towards things of pleasure, an irrational elation towards these things. In Plutarch we are told 'not to intensify the passion, as we would a disease, by tossing about and making a clamour',²⁹⁰ and not to surrender our anger. In Philo, we are told that 'cowardice, too, is a disease, graver than any that affects the body'.²⁹¹ These different uses of 'disease' not only reflect an eclectic mix of characteristics that parallels the tone of Epictetus' thinking but also points to his question 'What will you make of disease?'²⁹² The sort of person a man is depends on the condition of his soul and whether this condition is contrary to nature, in which case his soul is disordered and damaged, in other words it is in a state of disease. If man gets the right idea about disease and its character as a moral defect he can begin to make progress in recognizing the truth behind his suffering and put him on the right track to act in accord with nature – as with the Buddhist notion of Right View and Right Reasoning (5.2.1).

For Epictetus and other Stoics disease (*nosos*) and the associated infirmity (*arrostēma*) are moral defects that lead the soul to be moved to a *passion* (*pathos*), but such defects are affected by the human personality, which has in part been shaped and processed by our dispositions (as discussed in 3.2.2).

Pathology of Impressions, Perceptions and Disease

As discussed (1.3.3, 1.7.2, 2.2) disease (*nosos*) is caused by our ignorance: wrong impressions, perceptions, judgements, actions and the like. Epictetus, in a *Discourse* on struggling with external impressions, gives us the notion of *nosos* and infirmity (*arrostēma*) of the soul in relation to the psychology of being confronted with external impressions:²⁹³ this relates to how we might be disposed towards such impressions, that is, those inherent qualities and characteristics of ourself that pull us towards or push us away from these impressions. He plays out the significance of impressions and our processing of them, in particular, the pathology of the language we might use, to express our thoughts about impressions and what we might say to ourselves, as our thoughts wrestle with facing and confronting our impressions, and also how we deal with their propositional content. The pathology associated with the language we use has a bearing on how we deal with our

²⁸⁶ *Diss.* 3.20.16

²⁸⁷ *Pl. Epistles*, 331C

²⁸⁸ *Pl. Grg.* 480B

²⁸⁹ *DL* 7.1.216-217

²⁹⁰ *Plu. Mor.* 106-107

²⁹¹ *Philo, On the Virtues*, 178-79

²⁹² *Diss.* 3.20.13-14

²⁹³ *Diss.* 2.18

impressions and perceptions, and on the affective content of our experience: 'for impressions arise first, and then thought, which has the power of talking, expresses in language what it experiences by the agency of the impression'.²⁹⁴ The cognitive impression is the criterion of things and of truth:²⁹⁵ this helps us to secure discriminations between truths and falsehoods, and the application of impressions, perceptions and preconceptions to particulars.²⁹⁶

Infirmity and Impediment

Associated with disease are certain weaknesses or impediments that hinder achieving a healthy soul. The term *arrostēma* is used by Epictetus for infirmity or weakness, in particular, in the sense of a moral weakness, defect or debility of the soul that is fettered by ignorance and vice, acting contrary to nature and without reason. The question arises whether there is a difference between *nosos* and *arrostēma*, both of which are generally defined as illness or sickness. Stobaeus²⁹⁷ defined infirmity (*arrostēma*) as a disease accompanied by a 'weakness' (*astheneia*). The Stoics preferred to think of a person's weakness in the sense of lacking the ability to act and control one's own impulses, one's desires, passions or vices. According to Diogenes Laertius, Zeno referred to *arrostēma* as 'a disease accompanied by weakness'; and by disease is meant 'a fond imagining of something that seems desirable'.²⁹⁸ Kidd, Graver and Ranocchia present interesting arguments about the Stoic concept of proneness to vice in the sense of our suffering.²⁹⁹

The above discussed *arrostēma* in the sense of a disease but we can consider it as a condition of the soul. Zeno is said to have remarked, 'As in the body there are tendencies to certain maladies such as colds and diarrhoea, so it is with the soul, there are tendencies like enviousness, pitifulness, quarrelsomeness and the like.'³⁰⁰ Chrysippus reportedly refers to *arrostēma* as a condition of the soul where a false or faulty judgement occurs together with the condition of not having the strength or discipline of will to control one's moral purpose in a virtuous way.³⁰¹ In this context he refers to the soul being of a certain quality in terms of 'lack of tone' (*atonía*) and 'weakness' (*arrostēma*) when because of the judgement made the soul either yields or persists intolerant to the commands of correct reasoning. We may be excited and aroused by certain external impressions in a way that makes us envious and jealous. Such an arousal is caused by a faulty judgement, a failure to realise the evil behind our envy together with an underlying moral weakness of the soul towards being envious. On the other hand we may make the right judgement about the external impression and have the strength of will not to allow ourselves to become envious. If we allow ourselves to become

²⁹⁴ DL 7.49 (cf. Gill (2006) pp.139-140)

²⁹⁵ DL 7.54, 7.46.

²⁹⁶ *Diss.* 1.22ff.

²⁹⁷ Stobaeus *Ecl.* 2.7.10e (93W) (cf. Cic. *Tusc.* 4.23-26; Brennan (1998) pp.39-44; Graver (2002) pp.148-163)

²⁹⁸ DL 7.115

²⁹⁹ Kidd (1983) pp.107-113; Graver (2007) pp.142-144; Ranocchia (2012) pp.74-76

³⁰⁰ DL. 7.115

³⁰¹ Gal. *PHP.* 4, 5, 24-26

envious when aroused by certain external impressions then our infirmity strengthens the envy, states Epictetus,³⁰² since habits and corresponding actions will become intensified and made strong.

Epictetus, consistently with Chrysippus, uses the term moral infirmity (*arrostēma*) in the sense of a weakness of the soul through some impediment whereby it cannot achieve the good it should but produces the evil it should not. So moral infirmities are imperfections of the soul's functioning in a good and proper state. As Epictetus reflects:

'Disease is an impediment to the body, but not to the moral purpose, unless that consents. Lameness is an impediment to the leg, but not to the moral purpose. And say this to yourself at each thing that befalls you; for you will find the thing to be an impediment to something else, but not to yourself.'³⁰³

Epictetus' text distinguishes between impediment as a moral obstruction and impediment as a physical hindrance: an impediment in the sense of the body is a hindrance by external physical forces to the normal performance and functioning of the body; the other sense of impediment is that in relation to the normal performance and functioning of the moral purpose. Here he is most intent to convey the idea that externals cannot impede the moral purpose (the *prohairesis*) (to be discussed in Chapter 4). It is generally agreed that ignorance is by far the greatest of man's impediments when it comes to proper use of external impressions and making judgements, as we shall discuss in 3.2.5.

Epictetus builds on this view to further clarify this notion of self-determination and freedom of moral purpose by saying, 'Where our heart is set, there also our impediment lies.'³⁰⁴ If we set our desires on things that we wish to achieve or on things we wish to avoid, and these things are not in our control then we will be hindered, we will fail in these desires and wishes. However, things not in our control cannot hinder our moral purpose, cannot be an impediment to us and cannot cause disease. Health of our body, the Stoics would remind us, is not totally in our control, but the moral health of our soul is fully under our control. The right use of external impressions cannot be hindered by outside forces, they are in our control: we can secure against them being an impediment to the health of our soul; our proper use of them brings us moral strength. Buddhism talks about the five impediments or hindrances (*pañca nīvaraṇāni*) that hinder the development of the mind towards insight and freedom from suffering.³⁰⁵ These Buddhist five impediments function in a similar way to how the notion of impediment is used in Epictetus: a hindrance or obstruction to man's moral development.

2.3.2 Disposition, Habits and Hexis

2.3.2.1 Dispositions

Diathesis and Diakemai

³⁰² *Diss.* 2.18.7-11

³⁰³ *Ench.* 9

³⁰⁴ *Diss.* 4.4.15

³⁰⁵ AN 5:51, 4:61, 5:23, MN 10

In order to understand more fully Epictetus' view on disease (*nosos*) and the stream of dissatisfaction in our life, we must consider his use of mental dispositions. Again the parallel with the Buddhist notion of *sankhara* and the conditioned mind (2.2.3.4) is strikingly similar. This section introduces us to the language of disposition in the terms of how we are disposed (*pōs echōn*) in our thinking, judgements and actions, towards the things in our life.

Epictetus' concern with ethics and moral virtue centres, in part, on questions regarding the way we are disposed (*pōs echōn*) in our thinking and judgements. These questions relate to the choices we make and the actions we take because of this disposition in regard to our use of impressions. Like Aristotle, Epictetus regards one's state or condition of mind (one's disposition) as a measure of moral condition and virtue. Says Aristotle, 'Dispositions, however, are qualities easy to move or to change such as heat, cold, disease, health and so on'.³⁰⁶ In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle emphasises the role of habit and disposition in moral behaviour and conduct.³⁰⁷ Dispositions can of course become second nature, they become hard to displace, they become a habit, a relatively permanent or stable condition.³⁰⁸ So if we are disposed towards a certain feeling of passion, say anger, our peace of mind becomes disturbed and if this disposition becomes ingrained and habitual, the more lasting the disease becomes, more hardened and fixed.

Epictetus, time and time again, puts forward the imperative of the good, relating to living in accord with nature and the law of reason as a definition of a virtuous life, having complete autonomy.³⁰⁹ He questions whether we are disposed in the right way towards being able to make the right life-style choices in regard to things that are up to us and those not up to us and accordingly whether these choices will dispose us to being morally strong or infirm, healthy or diseased. In Aristotle's view, virtue and vice are states that are concerned with choices, good or bad, thus resulting in the moral constitution or disposition of the soul.³¹⁰ As Long comments, Epictetus emphasises our natural autonomy to choose and act, and to assign values to things; and the proper condition of the *prohairesis* is complete autonomy.³¹¹

The language and words of Epictetus regarding the notion of disposition are varied: the term *diathesis* refers to a disposition or condition of the mind or the soul,³¹² the passive term *diakeimai* is to be disposed in a certain way or state of mind,³¹³ to be affected in a certain manner, or to be inclined towards something. There are also related terms such as *hormē*, a natural impulse or propensity to do something. Other relevant forms include *echō*, to have and possess something, including to have or possess a certain state or condition of the body or mind. In particular this means to possess mentally, to understand or to have or possess a thought; and finally one of the derivatives of *echō*,

³⁰⁶ Arist. *Cat.* VIII, 8b36-39

³⁰⁷ Arist. *EN* 1105b, 25-26, 1106a, 26-b28

³⁰⁸ Arist. *EN* 1103b, 23-25, *Met.* 5.1022b

³⁰⁹ *Diss.* 2.22.6, 3.3.7, 3.22.5-6, 3.25.6

³¹⁰ Arist. *EN* 1098b, *Met.* 5.1022b

³¹¹ Long (2002) pp.214-220

³¹² *Diss.* 3.23.30,

³¹³ *Fr.* 20

hexis, a state, disposition or habit of the body or mind, which is interpreted as being a more permanent state of mind.

Buddhism and Dispositions

Buddhists refer to *sankhara* (1.2 and 1.7.2-3) in the passive sense (dispositions or mental formations) and in the active sense to *kamma* and volitional actions (see 1.2.1, 2.2.3.4, 1.7.2). Buddhists talk of the individuation of a person in the sense of discovering the psychic or pathological person we are and our human personality,³¹⁴ based on the different aspects of experience, feeling (*vedana*), perception (*sanna*), disposition (*sankhara*) or consciousness (*vinnana*). In Table 2 (2.2.3.5) we illustrated these elements with a link to concepts in Epictetus. Buddhist theory of personality³¹⁵ argues that:

- Dispositions, although causally conditioned and processing the other factors of personality, are significant to individuation;
- Epistemologically, dispositions are a valuable means for us to deal with the world of experience;
- Ignorance determines the way dispositions function;
- Dispositions determine our perspectives and provide meaning of the sensible world;
- Our personality is shaped and processed by dispositions;
- The development of pure and impure characteristics of personality rests with one's disposition;
- Dispositions and consciousness combine to our becoming, the creation or cessation of our suffering.

Taking account of our discussion in 1.2, this Buddhist view resonates with the thinking and language of Epictetus, regarding the conditioned mind: our power of volition (moral choice) and that how we feel, think and act reflects how we mould our personality. The nature of the subject (the self or the human person), who experiences suffering, is a discussion involving many metaphysical differences and controversial views as revealed by modern scholarship. This is why, as explained in 1.2.2-1.2.3, we have avoided a comparative discussion on the metaphysical aspects, and why we have remained with the *Four Noble Truths* (1.2), which provide a neutral ground for comparison. In particular, in 1.2.3 we also restricted our discussion of 'self' and 'non-self' in the context of Buddha's teaching strategies to avoid being distracted from the pragmatic goal of dealing with our suffering.

For Buddhists, the type of person I am depends partly on my dispositions (*sankhara*) how I experience them and being able to discern dispositions with insight.³¹⁶ We do note that conditioned phenomena require cultivating insight through observing, investigating and discerning dispositions, feelings, perceptions and the mind:³¹⁷ this requires exercise and practice (1.3); we have claimed this is

³¹⁴ Kalupahana (1992) p.69

³¹⁵ Kalupahana (1992) pp.74-76

³¹⁶ AN 4:94

³¹⁷ Bodhi (2005) pp.259-263

comparable to Epictetus' approach (1.4, 5.2.2). Our conditioned self defines the sort of person we are and the choices we make about the kind of life we wish to lead, and if this is to be a virtuous one we must follow a path to liberation and cessation of suffering (5.2).

Several writers deal with the Stoic perspective on human personality in detail.³¹⁸ A full discussion of this is out of the scope of this thesis, and would only divert our attention from our discussion of suffering. Instead, we shall turn to a closer examination of the Stoic understanding of 'disposition'.

State of Mind

The Stoics defined four categories of being or becoming: substance (*hypokeimenon*), quality (*poion*), disposition (*pos echon*), and relative disposition (*pros ti pos echon*). De Lacy, Menn and Graeser provide a useful explanatory account of how these types of dispositions are used as principles of procedure to deal with problematics of an ethical nature.³¹⁹ The account by De Lacy is general and not particularly aimed towards suffering; nevertheless it offers an insightful interpretation for the arguments that follow. As we see, two of these relate to disposition: to possess a certain state and to possess a certain state towards or relative to something else. We see a reference to these categories appropriately placed in Epictetus' discourse *Of Freedom*:³²⁰ 'All that are not under our control, either to have, or not to have, or to have of a certain quality, or under certain conditions'. This part of the discourse *Of Freedom* highlights the key problem of making choices, and the freedom we have to make the choices in a way that causes us suffering and in either a virtuous or vicious way depending on how we are disposed, what we possess regarding the opinions we have (*hypolepseis*) and judgements (*dogmata*).³²¹ Goodness (in the moral sense) of a man reflects his soul being of a virtuous disposition and the opposite quality, badness, reflects a soul of vicious disposition. If he is disposed in a good and virtuous way he can enjoy a tranquil, well-flowing life in harmony with nature and if he is disposed in the opposite way then he will enjoy a disturbed, disconnected, dissatisfied life discordant with nature. So we can be disposed in a way that makes us feel bad or good in ourselves, sad or happy, angry or calm. And so if a man's soul is in a good condition (it is healthy) he will endure passion (*pathos*) but if his soul is in a bad condition (it is diseased or infirm) he will succumb to the passion (*pathos*). Such is the nature and scope of disposition to do this thing or that, to react in this way or that, to feel this way or that, depending how we are conditioned by the state of our mind. Epictetus, in accordance with ancient tradition, conforms to the view that the disposition of our soul in regard to virtue and vice refers in a less normative sense to our happiness and suffering and various other qualities related to us, such as health and disease. The healthy soul is a soul of virtuous disposition and the unhealthy soul is one that is diseased with vice, subject to

³¹⁸ Frede (2007) pp.154-168 (cf. Gill (2006); Sorabji (2008), (2007), (2002); Nussbaum (2009) pp.363, 394-396, 423-426)

³¹⁹ De Lacy (1945); Menn (1999); Graeser (1973) (cf. Rist (2010) pp.152-172)

³²⁰ *Diss.* 4.1.129, cf. *Diss.* 1.17.21

³²¹ Bobzien (1998) provides an excellent discussion on the will's freedom from fate (cf. the discussion in Long (2002) pp.220-222, and Fate and Necessity in Rist (2010) pp.112-132)

suffering and perturbed by *pathē*. Hence health, disease and infirmity are themselves types of disposition.

We find other instances of what Epictetus refers to as a good condition, such as those that are disposed towards the other with a 'frame of mind' that neither meddles nor interferes with the affairs of others.³²² A cautious state of mind for what we must face related to our own matters of moral well-being and facing all other matters with confidence is a good state to be in.³²³ This can be further illustrated by Epictetus' use of the word *διάκειμαι* for the contrary state, a bad quality of soul, as in 'sorry state' (*κακῶς διακείμενος*)³²⁴ reflecting how the person might be qualified or disposed to act when anxious about circumstances related to externals.

In another case Epictetus reflects upon the bad state of a man's soul that has been trapped by the man's own opinions and judgements and so is unable to see an argument relating to the truth of a matter. In such a case the man's soul may be numbed: to be 'in such a state of mind (*διακείμενος*) that he cannot follow an argument step by step or even understand one, we regard him too as being in a bad way (*κακῶς ἔχειν*)'.³²⁵ Man's disposition may be such as to leave him worse than a dead man, argues Epictetus: there is a 'deadening of the soul' (*τῆς ψυχῆς δ' ἀπονεκρουμένης*).³²⁶ He argues that man may or may not realise his condition; the man that does not realise it is indeed in a bad way but he that does realise and yet does nothing to improve himself is in an even worse state: his disposition has made the reasoning faculty malignant and diseased. Epictetus is maintaining here that our disposition can be such that we are deadened to reality, we know not whether we can sense we are awake or in a dream as our sense of reality has the same impression. If the soul is deadened or ravaged by some madness or despair and feels nothing, man's disposition is such that he cares not about his condition or his ignorance of his condition; similarly if the soul is awake to a state of healthy reasoning his disposition is such that he cares about his situation and his happiness.

Likewise Epictetus talks about being disposed in a certain frame of mind 'due to some madness or despair' to contrast the effects of an unsound or deranged mind with those of a rational one.³²⁷ Madness can produce an attitude of mind that cannot reason about situations and circumstances, which may be diagnosed as a delusional mind or just a foolish mind; wisdom is a good and folly is an evil.³²⁸ Graver remarks that for the Stoics anyone with a moral failing can be called insane; madness is an ignorance.³²⁹ Diogenes Laertius remarks, 'All the senseless are mad, for they do not have sense but do everything in accordance with madness, madness being equivalent to senselessness'.³³⁰

³²² *Diss.* 3.22.97

³²³ *Diss.* 2.1.30-33

³²⁴ *Diss.* 3.23.19

³²⁵ *Diss.* 1.5.5

³²⁶ *Diss.* 1.5.4-5

³²⁷ *Diss.* 4.7.5-6

³²⁸ *Diss.* 1.2.6-7

³²⁹ Graver (2007) pp.116-120

³³⁰ DL 7.124

Of course our disposition preserves us accordingly; if the modest man acts in an immodest way he destroys his modest disposition and character.³³¹ A good disposition, such as that of the modest man, reflects a soul in good condition and contrariwise a bad disposition a soul in a bad or diseased condition.

Echō

Study of the language Epictetus uses to express what is to be in a certain state provides further clarification of his notion of disposition. Epictetus' frequent use of the verb *echō* and its derivatives, as well as *hexis*, and his dialectical style of teaching (1.6.1, 3.3.3.2) show the importance he attached to having or possessing a certain moral state or condition of mind or soul, having a right and proper disposition or quality of mind. As De Lacy remarks, 'The whole of moral conduct, for Epictetus, consists in attaining and preserving the proper disposition toward the world'.³³² For example, 'show me how you stand (δεῖξον, πῶς ἔχεις) in regard to desire and aversion, whether you do not fail to get what you wish, or do not fall into what you do not wish'.³³³ The words 'how you stand' (πῶς ἔχεις) mean 'how you are disposed towards your choices and refusals'.

Epictetus' use of *echō* and its derivatives is deployed in a wide variety of ways: in a general sense it means to have or possess or in a more specific sense to reflect upon and compare certain states, be it related to a soul, the mind, being in a good or a bad condition and of course it might relate to one's moral disposition as part of one's ethical education. There is also the sense of cherishing something: 'if I cherish an evil judgement, take it away' (ἔχω κακὸν δόγμα ἄφελε αὐτό) advises Epictetus.³³⁴ We may possess sound judgements (ὀρθὰ δόγματα ἔχεις) or unsound (φαῦλα) judgements;³³⁵ our judgements may lack examination and consequently we may possess malicious opinions (πονηρὰ ἔχεις δόγματα);³³⁶ where there is ignorance and lack of knowledge we cannot possess well-founded, right views and judgements (καλῶς ἔχει) and hence we are not disposed to act in a right way,³³⁷ and whenever we wish to realise how careless we are (θέλης γνῶναι, πῶς ἔχεις) about the good and evil, and how zealous about indifferents, we should fix our attention and observe how we feel (ἐπίστησον πῶς ἔχεις) about being blind, beguiled and deluded, and we will discover that we are far from feeling as we ought (πεπονθέναι – from πάσχω) in relation to good or evil;³³⁸ but there are many things about which we do not have these judgements (οὐκ ἔχεις τὰ δόγματα ταῦτα)³³⁹ and we continue to make mistakes and suffer misfortunes.

³³¹ *Diss.* 2.9.10-12, cf. 4.46-7, 3.7.27,

³³² De Lacy (1945) p.256

³³³ *Diss.* 2.1.31

³³⁴ *Diss.* 3.9.13

³³⁵ *Diss.* 3.9.2

³³⁶ *Diss.* 3.9.10

³³⁷ *Diss.* 1.11.4-5, 13-15

³³⁸ *Diss.* 1.20.12-13

³³⁹ *Diss.* 4.1.138

Epictetus continues to emphasise how we deal with the affairs of life and our dependency on our state of mind. On the one hand it may be diseased: a man in a bad way (κακῶς ἔχειν),³⁴⁰ a man of a disturbed and anxious mind,³⁴¹ or a man of sick mind uncertain of which way it is inclined (ἀσθενῆς ψυχῆ, ὅπου μὲν κλίνει, ἄδηλον ἔχει).³⁴² On the other hand Epictetus stresses the importance of the mind being free from hindrance (ἀκώλυτα ἔχει),³⁴³ in a friendly state (οἰκείως ἔχεις),³⁴⁴ in a splendid state (κομψῶς ἔχεις),³⁴⁵ and healthy (ἔχει τῷ τοῦ ὑγιαίνοντος).³⁴⁶ Such is the power of our resource that we are self-sufficient: I am able to get greatness of soul and nobility of character from myself (ἐγὼ οὖν ἔχων ἐξ ἑμαυτοῦ λαβεῖν τὸ μεγαλόψυχον καὶ γενναῖον).³⁴⁷ This powerful resource we possess is firmly in our control (ἔχεις αὐτεξούσιον),³⁴⁸ and only we have authority over it (ἔχω ἐξουσίαν),³⁴⁹ it takes care of our soul,³⁵⁰ it keeps what is mine safe (τὰ ἐμὰ ἀσφαλῶς ἔχει),³⁵¹ it is a gift of nature providing knowledge of what is noble and base³⁵² and these are the things that we should seriously care for which no one has authority over (ἐξουσίαν οὐδεὶς ἔχει); but the things over which other men have authority (ὧν ἐξουσίαν οἱ ἄλλοι ἔχουσιν) do not concern us.³⁵³ Consequently this is how we should dispose ourselves; this should be our principle and guiding state of mind.

Of course, the ethical question Epictetus raises focuses on having an excellent disposition of the soul, making the right distinctions between preferred indifferents and the good (that is, virtue). How we are disposed towards things (πῶς ἔχεις) determines how we make use of our impressions and how we assent to the propositions the mind has formed:

‘When, therefore, you wish to realize how careless you are about the good and the evil, and how zealous you are about that which is indifferent, observe how you feel about physical blindness on the one hand, and mental delusion on the other, and you will find out that you are far from feeling as you ought about things good and things evil.’³⁵⁴

Following on from this, Epictetus raises the question of the ethical basis of man’s actions and whether they are rightly performed, that is, in accord with nature ‘for our losses and our pains have to do only with the things, which we possess.’³⁵⁵ He remarks we should be possessed of the right provisions for the journey of life.³⁵⁶ Epictetus’ recurring concern regarding man’s ethical use and application of our moral purpose presents itself in who we are, our character, our disposition and how

³⁴⁰ *Diss.* 3.10.14, 1.6.9, 3.22.31, 2.1.17

³⁴¹ *Diss.* 2.16.12

³⁴² *Diss.* 2.15.20

³⁴³ *Diss.* 4.7.8

³⁴⁴ *Diss.* 2.22.7

³⁴⁵ *Diss.* 3.10.14

³⁴⁶ *Diss.* 4.9.4

³⁴⁷ *Diss.* 1.9.32

³⁴⁸ *Diss.* 4.1.69-70

³⁴⁹ *Diss.* 4.10.30

³⁵⁰ *Diss.* 2.12.22

³⁵¹ *Diss.* 4.10.30

³⁵² *Diss.* 2.11.7

³⁵³ *Diss.* 1.25.2-3

³⁵⁴ *Diss.* 1.20.12

³⁵⁵ *Diss.* 1.18.16, 1.11.5-6, 1.15.5, 2.1.7, 4.1.58, 4.13.24

³⁵⁶ *Diss.* 3.21.9

we decide what is best for us. So what appears to be better, to be 'in a disgraceful state'³⁵⁷ and uncontrolled state of mind or in a good and controlled state of mind 'he held his peace'?³⁵⁸ You might say 'but the wicked man is better off'.³⁵⁹ Better off than whom, the man who is disposed to be 'faithful and considerate'? The answers should be obvious but the application of preconceptions and the resources we have at hand suggest something different. Epictetus discusses how we might be disposed in applying our preconceptions of the good to particular cases to avoid conflicts with others, as is the case between Agamemnon and Achilles: right and proper actions are what should be done, all can agree, but applying this to particular circumstances does not always meet with agreement. Being able to distinguish what is in our control and in accord with nature and being qualified and disposed to do so are what is needed.³⁶⁰

Reason is the most important thing we have, the most superior of all man's features and we should be disposed towards making it beautiful, being disposed in such a way as not to be possessed of wretched judgements (πονὴ ρὰ ἔχεις δόγματα)³⁶¹ but possessed of sound judgements (ὀρθὰ δόγματα ἔχεις).³⁶² Of all the possessions man has his reason and judgement is uniquely his to control.³⁶³ Everyone possesses this greatness of mind and character (μεγαλοψυχίαν ἔχων καὶ γενναιότητα)³⁶⁴ to use on things that may happen to them. However, as Epictetus is quick to remind us, 'things proportionate to the faculty which you possess (δυνάμει ἣν ἔχεις) are brought before you, but you turn that faculty away at the very moment we need it, when you ought to keep it wide open and discerning'.³⁶⁵ We should be both responsible and accountable only for those things in our control – the proper use of impressions; to do otherwise is to make trouble for ourselves.³⁶⁶

Epictetus consoles us with the thought that 'all security is yours, every facility yours, you have no troubles' (πᾶσά σοι ἀσφάλεια, πᾶσά σοι εὐμάρεια, πρᾶγμα οὐκ ἔχεις)³⁶⁷ as long as you maintain a will to guard those things under your control and make them conformable to nature. Man's soul, however, may be petrified, his disposition so hardened as to make his opinions trapped, immovable and rigid to change; he is regarded as 'being in a bad way (κακῶς ἔχειν)³⁶⁸ and he is in such a wretched and miserable way ... 'His self-respect and sense of shame have been destroyed and his reasoning has been brutalised. Am I to call this a strength of character (ταύτην ἐγὼ δύναμιν εἶπω)?³⁶⁹ Certainly not, as your will is not in accord with nature and you have lost your security and replaced it with troubles, you have gained an 'ugly disposition' (κακοηθίζηται)? However, if you are seeking to be beautiful then look to where you have your reason 'seek it there where you have your

³⁵⁷ *Diss.* 3.1.12

³⁵⁸ *Diss.* 3.1.15

³⁵⁹ *Diss.* 3.17.2-3

³⁶⁰ *Diss.* 1.22.6-11

³⁶¹ *Diss.* 3.9.10

³⁶² *Diss.* 3.9.2

³⁶³ *Diss.* 3.9.17

³⁶⁴ *Diss.* 1.12.30

³⁶⁵ *Diss.* 1.12.31

³⁶⁶ *Diss.* 1.12.32-35

³⁶⁷ *Diss.* 2.2.3

³⁶⁸ *Diss.* 1.5.5

³⁶⁹ *Diss.* 1.5.9-10

choices and refusals, desires and aversions. For this part is something of a special kind which you have within you'.³⁷⁰

Past and Future Dispositions

Epictetus uses the aorist tense of ἔχω (ἔσχον) to question past dispositions and actions resulting from these, including our use of judgements, impressions and preconceptions and so on³⁷¹ and whether we have had enough time to prepare and train ourselves for the future (ἔσχες εἰς τοῦτο ἰκανὸν χρόνον) and whether we will win the contest of life, putting into practice what we have learnt and testing how well we have trained ourselves.³⁷² He also uses the future tense of ἔχω (ἔξω) to provide therapeutic advice³⁷³ to help us be prepared and exercise for whatever happens with the right disposition of mind. In addition he gives us warnings and commands³⁷⁴ about the future we should take note of and questions we need to address in our training and future therapy and practice.

He also issues a cautionary note regarding the conflicting types of role we adopt. Do you play the role of a philosopher or that of a layman? 'You must be one person, either good or bad; you must labour to improve either your own governing principle or externals; you must work hard either on the inner man, or on things outside.'³⁷⁵

What should the future target of our training be? The target should be towards our moral purpose, and not turned outwards, towards things that are not in the realm of moral purpose; otherwise 'you will have neither your desire successful in attaining what it would, nor your aversion successful in avoiding what it would';³⁷⁶ 'we will not have 'self-respect and good faith' but 'shamelessness and bad faith'³⁷⁷ and we should aim at having 'full confidence' in our moral purpose.³⁷⁸ Epictetus also gives lessons on life, for example, on the useless pursuit of envy, jealousy and flattery and the futility of lamenting over things you do not have.³⁷⁹ you should learn the criterion of what is in accord with nature³⁸⁰ and you shall apply that criterion.³⁸¹ Our lessons should teach us how we should live in the future, what our focus should be, and what we should let go. 'You cannot be continually giving attention to both externals and your own governing principle. But if you want the former, let the latter go; otherwise you will have (ἔξεις) neither the latter nor the former, being drawn in both directions'.³⁸²

Prosechō and Parechō

³⁷⁰ *Diss.* 4.11.26-27

³⁷¹ *Diss.*, 2.16.40-45, 2.20.31, 3.5.3, 3.12.5, 3.24.12-16, 3.24.943

³⁷² *Diss.* 4.4.30

³⁷³ *Diss.* 3.18.1, 4.3.1

³⁷⁴ *Diss.* 2.16.23, 3.9.15-17, , , 4.8.41, 4.12.15

³⁷⁵ *Diss.* 3.15.13

³⁷⁶ *Diss.* 3.12.5

³⁷⁷ *Diss.* 2.10.29

³⁷⁸ *Diss.* 3.26.24

³⁷⁹ *Diss.* 1.9.20

³⁸⁰ *Diss.* 1.12.20, 4.5.5

³⁸¹ *Diss.* 1.11.15

³⁸² *Diss.* 4.10.25-26

We will now turn our attention to discuss some of the compounds of *echō*. The first compound we consider is the verb *prosechō* (προσ+έχω) to be disposed towards something in the sense of turning one's mind, thoughts or attention to something. We shall in 5.3 consider the therapeutic aspect of turning one's mind and thoughts towards curing our suffering and where we use the related noun *prosochē*, which simply means attention.

In the case of Epictetus, *prosechō* relates to focusing our mind or thoughts to whatever is important regarding our moral purpose. 'At the instant I am being called to do something; at this instant I shall go home with the purpose of observing (προσέξω) the due measure which I ought to maintain, acting with self-respect, with security, apart from desire and avoidance of things external';³⁸³ also 'in the second place I observe (προσέχω) men, what they say, how they move, and this is no malignant spirit (κακοήθως) nor in order to have something to censure or ridicule, but I look at myself the while to see if I too am making the same mistakes'.³⁸⁴ This paying attention to myself as well as others is to ensure I hold fast to all that is important and that I am well disposed towards the affairs of life and do not turn my mind towards an ill disposed state (κακοήθης). Paying constant attention (προσέχει) to the affairs of life is needed to check whether we go wrong or not, and to discriminate between things that are capable of making us go wrong.³⁸⁵ This can help us realize if we are being careless about the good and evil, and about that which is indifferent.³⁸⁶ Turning our thoughts to the things that are important to ensure a virtuous life such as keeping our moral purpose in a good state is to pay attention and attach oneself to these things; we ought to attach ourselves to the general principles and have them at our command at all times.³⁸⁷ Not paying attention or deferring attention³⁸⁸ is a bad state to be in, and if done regularly becomes a habit and we turn away, rather than towards, the things that are important. It is far better to be attentive and to turn the mind towards the affairs of life, to be continuously on guard (προσοχήν φυλάσσεις) than to be off-guard (μὴ προσέχειν).³⁸⁹

The compound *parechō* (παρ+έχω) is used by Epictetus in various ways, for example: the state of submitting or giving myself up;³⁹⁰ granting or accepting someone or something;³⁹¹ bringing forward as a witness;³⁹² and generally being disposed in the sense of supplying, providing or causing something, presenting or offering something. We may be subject to others submitting or presenting to us things that affect us or we ourselves may be doing this. 'Why do you trouble me (τί μοι πράγματα παρέχεις)?'³⁹³ Why do you submit me to such circumstances when I am already in a sad state? Why do you produce for yourself a situation that confines you? 'Do you realize that you are

³⁸³ *Diss.* 4.4.6 (cf. Stephens (2007) pp.47-73)

³⁸⁴ *Diss.* 4.4.6

³⁸⁵ *Diss.* 1.20.9-11

³⁸⁶ *Diss.* 1.20.12

³⁸⁷ *Diss.* 4.12.7

³⁸⁸ *Diss.* 4.12.2

³⁸⁹ *Diss.* 4.12.4-5

³⁹⁰ *Fr.* 22

³⁹¹ *Diss.* 1.7.17-19

³⁹² *Diss.* 12.26.6

³⁹³ *Diss.* 2.6.27

making close quarters for yourself (ὁρᾷς ὅτι σὺ σαυτῷ στενοχωρίαν παρέχεις), that you are crowding yourself? ... Why do you make trouble for yourself (τί πράγματα ἔχεις)?³⁹⁴

2.3.2.2 *Hexis*

Definitions

Hexis, a derivative of *echō*, conveys either an act of having or possession of something (in general) or being in a certain state or permanent condition as produced by practice (*praxis*). This latter definition of a stable condition is in the sense of an acquired habit, making our disposition habitual, as opposed to a state that arises through passing conditions as we have with the other derivatives of *echō* such as *schesis* (which is an alterable state). The *hexis* can thus be seen as, for example, a state of mind or an acquired skill as a result of doing something; it can also be seen in the sense of 'way of being'.

The term *hexis* plays an important role in Aristotle's thought and he discusses its definition, use and application. Gill, Sachs, Rorty, Polansky, Ross, Hutchinson and Russell provide some commentary on the use of *hexis* in Aristotle (with some informative comparison with *diathesis*).³⁹⁵ It is claimed that Aristotle got the word from Plato and sophistry on the one hand, and Hippocratic physicians on the other hand.³⁹⁶ Aristotle maintains that 'we conceive the supreme good to depend on possessing virtue or on displaying it – on *hexis* or on the manifestation of a *hexis* in action'³⁹⁷ – hence moral virtue is made up of *hexis*. Aristotle points out, to which the Stoics agree, 'Habits (*hexeis*) are also dispositions; but dispositions are not always habits'.³⁹⁸ However, Aristotle and the Stoics do have different views about *hexis* and *diathesis*. Aristotle makes the distinction the degree of endurance and stability: here he is saying the *hexis* is longer lasting and more enduring, and *disposition* can more easily be subject to change.

The Stoics on the other hand make a different distinction as pointed out by Simplicius:³⁹⁹ *hexis* can be heightened/increased and reduced/decreased but *diathesis* cannot: *diathesis* can change but there cannot be more or less of it: a stick can be bent or straightened, but being straight cannot be reduced or heightened; so virtues are *diatheseis* because they cannot be heightened or increased.

Stobaeus discusses the difference between *hexeis* and *diatheseis* in terms of our moral well-being and ethical conduct:⁴⁰⁰ some goods of the mind are *hexeis* and some are *diatheseis*, some are neither; virtues are *diatheseis* and habitudes are *hexeis*, and activities in accordance with virtue are neither; likewise of bad things some are *hexeis* and some are *diatheseis*, and some neither; all vices are *diatheseis* whereas proclivities, sickness and infirmities are *hexeis*. Graver contends that the conditions both of the good and bad listed by Stobaeus, some of which are *diatheseis* and some

³⁹⁴ *Diss.* 1.25.27-28

³⁹⁵ Gill (2006) pp.231, 235 n131, 321 n136; Sachs (2002) pp.xi-xvii; Rorty (1980) Chapter vii; Polansky (2007) pp. 240, 273, 458-465; Hutchinson (1986) p.35ff

³⁹⁶ We have in Hippocrates *Regimen in Acute Diseases* XLIII. 'the affections again, with their manifold forms, that our individual constitution and habit (*hexis*) engender.'; Rodrigo (2011)

³⁹⁷ Arist. *EN* 1098b

³⁹⁸ Arist. *Cat.* VIII, 9a11-12

³⁹⁹ Simplicius commentary on Aristotle *Categories* VIII237-238

⁴⁰⁰ Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.5

hexeis, provide the best candidate for genuine traits of character:⁴⁰¹ they help to explain feelings and behaviour; they can be variable as between one individual and the next; they can be present in one person and not in another, or to a lesser extent.

Epictetus follows to a greater extent the orthodox Stoic view regarding *hexis* and *diathesis*, and as with all of this teaching he is inclined towards the practical impact and influence of habits and dispositions of our mental well-being. His exhaustive use of *hexis* varies from the context of a habit, to possessing something through to the state or condition of something.⁴⁰²

Habits

Aristotle argued 'Moral goodness ... is the result of habit ... none of the moral virtues is engendered in us by nature, since nothing that is what it is by nature can be made to behave differently by habituation ... moral virtues, then, are engendered in us neither by nor contrary to nature, we are constituted by nature to receive them, but their full development in us is due to habit'.⁴⁰³

Epictetus remarks: 'Every habit and faculty is confirmed and strengthened by the corresponding actions'.⁴⁰⁴ This leads us to one of Epictetus' key observations 'In general, therefore, if you want to do something, make a habit (*hektikon*) of it; if you want not to do something, refrain from doing it, and accustom yourself to something else instead'.⁴⁰⁵ In other words we do things out of habit: continuous practice of these things we do will sustain them; they become fluent and they become the currency of our behaviour, and we also become consumed by them. If the particular *hexis* is a vice then we confirm and strengthen this vice by actions that tend towards the things that exercise and strengthen this vice: Epictetus warns us: 'You can strengthen the habit'.⁴⁰⁶

Buddhism talks of profitable and unprofitable habits, acts and behaviour generating wholesome (*kusala*) or unwholesome mental formations and positive and negative seeds of consciousness; the profitable habits we should nurture and the unprofitable ones we should extirpate.⁴⁰⁷ The Dhammapada reflects the same thoughts: 'having done evil, don't repeat it, don't wish for it, evil piled up brings suffering, having done something meritorious, repeat it, wish for it, merit piled up brings happiness'.⁴⁰⁸

Epictetus' continuous emphasis on self-control and mastery comes across again in these words: 'Test yourself, first of all, what kind of man you want to be?' After deciding what you want to be 'then go ahead with what you are doing'.⁴⁰⁹ In other words we achieve the skill or the art we want as a result of practice and exercise (1.3, 5.2-3); if we want to be good at this skill we need regular

⁴⁰¹ Graver (2007) pp.137-139

⁴⁰² *Diss.* 1.4.22, 1.9.20, 1.11.15, 1.24.15, 2.1.12, 2.18.1, 2.18.5, 2.18.7, 2.18.12, 2.18.31, 2.23.35, 3.4.9, 3.12.6, 3.23.3, 3.24.57, 3.24.82, 3.25.8, 3.26.24, 4.2.2, 4.4.25, 4.5.5, 4.7.41, 4.10.26, 4.11.13,

⁴⁰³ Arist. *EN* 1103a 16-27

⁴⁰⁴ *Diss.* 2.18.1

⁴⁰⁵ *Diss.* 2.18.4

⁴⁰⁶ *Diss.* 2.18.6

⁴⁰⁷ MN 20, MN 135, AN 1,17, DN 26; Nhat Hanh (1998) pp. 48, 69, 92, 192-196, 221-222

⁴⁰⁸ Fronsdal (2005) verse 9

⁴⁰⁹ *Diss.* 3.23.1

practice and exercise, we must turn this into a trained or acquired experience or habit (*hexis*). So in the case 'I must act as a man'⁴¹⁰ then we must acquire the skill of being a man which Epictetus reminds us we must practise at, making our moral purpose good and making right judgements in accord with nature. Whatever we regularly practise regarding the affairs of life can become an acquired experience or habit, and depending on the judgements we make and the actions we perform, tend us towards being disposed with a virtuous or vicious state of mind. As Simplicius notes, the soul, through its good or bad education of its better or worse *hexis*, is to be held responsible for the actions arising from this *hexis*, as it follows its own self-motion (the prudent towards the prudent, licentious towards the licentious);⁴¹¹ by diagnosing the actions of people we understand their *hexis*.

In reviewing the Skeptical position found in Sextus Empiricus *PH* 1.23-24 Nussbaum provides some remarks: habits can push, move and sway us, without any concern for rightness and truth: it may be that our natural bodily feelings and desires are not a signal of the bad but a push from our instinctual nature.⁴¹² Our fixed and ingrained habits can mean we neither assent to nor refuse the impressions presented, without using our reasoning power, having no reasons for taking action, that is, views we are committed to as correct. Epictetus would contend that our habitual energies can lead us astray and unlike the Skeptics we should not leave impressions unchecked and act with good reasons.

Feeding Bad Habits

Aristotle remarks that repeated episodes of *pathē* engender particular vices – 'they render us apt to do the same actions as those by which they are produced.'⁴¹³ Epictetus, along the lines of Aristotle, uses the *hexis* to make a similar point: he is brutally honest about the power and influence of our habits and what we need to do to combat the energy of those bad habits.⁴¹⁴ As clarified by Epictetus 'when you are angry, you may be sure, not merely that this evil has befallen you, but also that you have strengthened the habit (*hexin*), and have, as it were, added fuel to the flame'.⁴¹⁵ Unfortunately when we give way to things that are associated with the vice we are feeding our lack of restraint and control gives it additional power and strength. 'It is inevitable that some habits and faculties should, in consequence of the corresponding actions, spring up, though they did not exist before, and that others which were already there should be intensified and made strong.' Epictetus points out 'In this way, without doubt, the infirmities (*arrostēmata*) of our mind and character spring up.'⁴¹⁶ Epictetus' message is clear and direct: if we do not want some evil or misfortune to befall us, then we should not feed the habit that brings the infirmities and weakness to the forefront of the mind and spurs them into action. The *hexeis*, in the sense we are referring to here in this discussion, are the vices and

⁴¹⁰ *Diss.* 3.23.4

⁴¹¹ Simplicius in *Epict.* 11.38-41

⁴¹² Nussbaum (2009) pp.292-293

⁴¹³ Arist. *EN.* 1114b27-28

⁴¹⁴ *Diss.* 3.12.6, 3.12.7-8

⁴¹⁵ *Diss.* 2.18.5

⁴¹⁶ *Diss.* 2.18.7

virtues, states of our character that are concerned with the choices we make. We have the choice as to whether we feed our angry temperament. This example from Epictetus on anger makes his point:— 'If, therefore, you wish not to be hot-tempered, do not feed your habit, set before it nothing on which it can grow. As the first step, keep quiet and count the days on which you have not been angry. I used to be angry every day, after that every other day, then every third, and then every fourth day. For the habit is first weakened and then utterly destroyed'.⁴¹⁷ Again, the advice is sound, but the practice requires discipline and strength of mind without which the irascible habit wins. Since habit is a powerful influence over us, we must set a contrary habit to counteract our old habits.⁴¹⁸

Impressionable Habits

Our impression of a situation will depend on the state of mind we have formed and our reaction to the situation. Our disposition towards the man reviling us⁴¹⁹ is based on our judgement of the situation, as Dobbin remarks,⁴²⁰ and we should not misdiagnose impressions and hold false impressions because of them: Epictetus insists we should not get caught in the habit of accepting the plausibility of impressions which lead us to think they are correct when they are not; we should listen to the arguments, tear ourselves away from wrong impressions and adopt a contrary view and habit.⁴²¹ If we discipline ourselves to adopt this point of view and exercise accordingly we shall acquire the experience or habit (*hexis*) of possessing Right View and Right Thinking/Intention (1.2.1 and 5.2) towards our revilers. Epictetus repeatedly places emphasis on training: to decide what we want to be and then act accordingly, working towards both the development of good habits, as in the case just discussed, but also the abandonment of bad habits. If our reasoning is unseated by some powerful external impression and this occurs time and time again then the wretched state we are left in will continue to haunt us. It leaves us with a bad habit (*hexis*) of mind and our wrong opinions and judgements and provides us with arguments to justify our conduct in how we respond. In this case we have made a practice of doing what we do not want to do, and at last we will be in a wretched state (ἔξεις κακῶς)⁴²² and so weak that we will not notice that we are doing wrong; we have strengthened the habit of being in this state.

One of the points that Epictetus is most determined to get across is that the practice of good and wholesome habits can create within us a moral purpose that is in a state (*hexomen*) characterised by self-respect and good faith, or shamelessness and bad faith⁴²³ and if the latter, we accustom our soul to a state of suffering. This said, he also emphasises that moral life is overridden by ignorance, lack of knowledge and instruction in matters, which are indispensable to leading such a life, in keeping with the Buddhist notion of Right View (5.2).⁴²⁴ Making a habit (*hexis*) of learning the criteria

⁴¹⁷ *Diss.* 2.18.12-14

⁴¹⁸ *Diss.* 3.12.6

⁴¹⁹ *Ench.* 42

⁴²⁰ Dobbin (2007) p.215

⁴²¹ *Diss.* 1.27.2-6

⁴²² *Diss.* 2.18.31

⁴²³ *Diss.* 2.10.29

⁴²⁴ MN 9; Kalupahana (1992) pp. 103-105; Tashi Tsering (2005) pp.135-137

through practice of what is important, and applying the criteria in each special case that relates to the affairs of life removes our ignorance and builds our knowledge of what is good and fitting,⁴²⁵ to keep us in a state in harmony with nature (*kata physin hexei*).⁴²⁶

Transforming the Habit

As discussed earlier, the Buddhist position on *kamma* and the conditioned mind (*sankhara*) is linked to habitual tendencies, dispositions and energies (*vashana*). Our volition (*cetanā*) and actions (*kamma*) depend on our way of thinking and this depends on our habitual tendencies.⁴²⁷ *Kamma* is a sequence of impulses and behaviour that make us do, say or think something, based on our habits and dispositions (*sankharas*). Treatment and therapy to counter our negative habits is a necessary part of our pathway to liberation and cessation (5.2, 5.3).

2.4 Pursuing the Good and Avoiding Evil

2.4.1 The Good and The Wholesome

In this section we address the notion of the good and the evil to broaden our understanding of the problematic basis for the root of suffering. Again the parallel with Buddhist thinking is included, in particular with the notion of the wholesome. We also discuss the Stoic *pathē* as they are linked with faulty views and judgements (3.5.2) about the good and evil, and in the Stoic world are symptomatic of the problem of suffering.

The Stoic definition of good and evil is similar to the Buddhist concept of good (*kusala*) and bad (*akusala*) in terms of moral quality. The Buddhist good (*kusala*) is generally defined in terms of being wholesome, morally skilful and meritorious, and bad (*akusala*) with that of being unwholesome. As discussed in 2.4.3 and 3.5.3, emotions are the result of *sukha vedana* (pleasant feelings) or *dukkha vedana* (painful feelings). In Buddhism, the *kilesa*⁴²⁸ are the mental states that manifest in unwholesome actions (*akusala-kamma*), often referred to as the three roots of evil: attachment, aversion and ignorance;⁴²⁹ these are related to the unwholesome bodily, verbal and mental actions we shall discuss in 5.2. These roots of evil are the source of afflictions and emotions such as anxiety, fear, anger, jealousy, desire and depression. Epictetus' thinking on the passions may be compared to that of the *kilesa*, and the causal wholesome and unwholesome decision-making,⁴³⁰ as related to the *prohairesis* (Chapter 4).

Epictetus remarks there is a failure in our thinking that results from not considering what is the nature of your good and evil and that 'The nature of the good as well as of the evil lies in the use of the impressions of the senses, but the things which lie outside the province of the moral purpose

⁴²⁵ *Diss.* 1.11.13-15

⁴²⁶ *Diss.* 4.5.5

⁴²⁷ Nhat Hanh (1998) pp.57-58

⁴²⁸ *SN* 27; *Kilesa-samyutta*; Bodhi (2005) pp.85, 146-147

⁴²⁹ In earlier Buddhism the three roots of evil were said to be greed, hate and delusion. *AN* 3:69; I 201-202

⁴³⁰ *DN* 15 15; *Mahanidana Sutta*; II 58

admit neither the nature of the evil, nor the nature of the good.⁴³¹ Following Epictetus' view on this we could conclude that this pursuit of the good and bad in the external world (things we can't control) is in itself an empty pursuit, it is a dream of wanting the world to be according to us. It is a dream of how we want 'I' and 'self' to exist, as this is not realistic according to Epictetus' 'not up to us'.

For Epictetus, Buddhists and others, the origin and root of the problem of suffering is our ignorance.⁴³² 'Suffering is not a basic element of existence but a feeling'⁴³³ but suffering pervades all aspects of our lives; it is not always present but our ignorance and our insistence on things being permanent makes it present. Buddhists think of the life of a person in bondage as that of someone who is engulfed in ignorance (*avijjā*).⁴³⁴ Ignorance is a precursor to our emotional response to the world and our dispositional tendencies create desires and aversions to things good and evil.

For the Stoics, the problem of our disturbing experiences revolves around our notion of good and evil, in particular the discernment of genuine good and bad, and false present and future goods, and present and future evils. Of course this view is not universal as some might argue that being emotional makes us human, whereas Epictetus argues that suffering makes us human, and these are entirely different things, and we, of course, need to distinguish between feelings such as joy and feelings such as hate and fear. Epictetus is insistent: ignorance of what is a true good or evil and our careless disregard for the good and evil are what create thoughts and feelings with emotive content and hence our disturbing mental state.⁴³⁵ Like the Buddhists,⁴³⁶ Epictetus links our internal struggle with trying to unite our attachment to things (grasping, *upādāna* – see 2.2) with the impermanence of life and the loss of or separation from these things:⁴³⁷ such contradictions and conflicts arise because of our muddled thinking, judgements and ignorance;⁴³⁸ we sometimes think and assent to one thing and then do the opposite.⁴³⁹ He also situates the problem of the good and evil within us (and its solution) in a world of moral choice, our own world of the *prohairesis*.⁴⁴⁰ 'You want good and evil then get it from yourself, not from someone else', admonishes Epictetus.⁴⁴¹

2.4.2 Stoic Pathē

The Stoics defined a subclass of the general form of suffering (*paschō*), the so-called *passions* (*pathē*) and their subspecies: lust (*epithumia*), pleasure (*hēdonē*), fear (*phobos*) and distress (*lupēe*). Zeno viewed *pathos* as an irrational and unnatural movement in the soul, or again as impulse in

⁴³¹ Diss. 2.1.4

⁴³² Thesis sections 1.2-1.7, 2.2.3.2-2.2.3.3, 2.3.3.2, 2.3.4-2.3.5, 3.2.1-3.2.2, 3.3, 3.5.5, 3.6.5, 4.3.4, 4.4.5, 4.5.2

⁴³³ Nhat Hanh (1998) pp.131-2

⁴³⁴ Kalupahanna (2011) pp.74-77

⁴³⁵ Diss. 1.20.12-19, 2.8, 3.22.31-34

⁴³⁶ SN 22.7, III 15-18; Bodhi (2005) pp.306-8, 328-29; Tashi Tsering (2005); Nhat Hanh (1998)

⁴³⁷ Diss. 2.1.3, 3.24.84-85, 4.5.27-28

⁴³⁸ Diss. 1.22

⁴³⁹ Diss. 4.10,, 3.3.3, 3.12.13

⁴⁴⁰ Diss. 1.22.11-21, 1.25.1, 1.29.1-3, 1.30.3-5, 2.1.4-6, 2.5.4-5, 2.8, 2.10.24-29

⁴⁴¹ Diss. 1.29.4

excess.⁴⁴² In referring to the Stoic view, Cicero remarks⁴⁴³ that *pathos* is an agitation of the soul alien from right reason and contrary to nature, a movement of the soul, which is not obedient to reason, and in the literal sense a disease.

We shall not go into any great detail and specifics of the Stoic passions, and their subspecies, as such analysis is treated elsewhere in the literature: ancient⁴⁴⁴ and modern.⁴⁴⁵ Our aim in dealing with our passions is to achieve a sense of moral freedom from disturbing passions leading to a state of tranquillity (*apatheia*).⁴⁴⁶ This subclass of suffering highlighted by the Stoics relates to how we perceive or think of things, in terms of how we perceive their apparent present good or evil or an apparent future good or evil, or a prospective good in the future, or equally a prospective evil. We shall throughout this thesis consider different aspects of good and evil, in relation to our suffering: the prospects of pursuit and avoidance and equally important how we pursue and avoid. This involves the question of what we mean by good and evil, and in the case of Epictetus, this relates to the moral condition of our soul (see Chapter 4 on the *prohairesis*) – whether it be in a good or bad condition now and the prospect of a continuation or worsening of this condition.

We might say we are moved by 'passion and emotion'. This phrase is a loose interpretation of what underpins the Stoic theory of the soul that it is in motion (*kinēsis*) and is in a state of tension (*tonos*). The analogy is used to describe the traditional four Stoic emotions.⁴⁴⁷ Chrysippus viewed the passion of lust (*epithumia*) as the irrational stretching (desire) or pursuit of an expected good, and pleasure (*hēdonē*) as an irrational swelling, or fresh opinion that something good is present, at which people think it right to be swollen (elated).⁴⁴⁸ Joy on the other hand is, according to the Stoics, a good feeling, the opposite of pleasure in that it is a well-reasoned swelling/elation. In the same way the Stoic good feeling of wishing is the opposite of lust in that it is a well-reasoned stretching /desire. So the passions of lust and pleasure are impulses, which are considered excessive and disobedient to the dictates of reason, or a movement of the soul, which is irrational and contrary to nature.⁴⁴⁹ Equally, the Stoic description of fear (*phobos*) is an irrational shrinking/aversion or avoidance of an expected danger, and distress (*lupē*) is an irrational contraction or fresh opinion that something bad is present, at which people think it right to be contracted/depressed. The passions of pleasure and distress follow from the passions of lust and fear. Whenever we fail to avoid the objects of our fear or we fail to get the objects of our lust the result is distress. In a similar way pleasure arises from the passions of lust and fear. Again Epictetus brings us back to moral choice:

⁴⁴² DL. 7.1.110

⁴⁴³ Cic. *Tusc.* 4.5, 3.7, *De Fin.* 3.35 (cf SVF III 381, 3.378, 389)

⁴⁴⁴ Andronicus *On Passions* I (SVF 3.391, part); Cic. *Tusc.* IV III-XI; DL 7.116 (SVF 3.431); Plut. *On Moral Virtue* 446F-447A (SVF 3.459, part); Gal. *PHP* 4.2.10-18 (SVF 3.462, part), 4.3.2-5, 4.5.21-5 (SVF 3.480, part), 5.5.8-26, 4.7.12-17 (SVF 3.466, part); Stobaeus 2.88,8-90,6 (SVF 3.378, 3.89, part), 2.90,19-91, (SVF 3.394, part)

⁴⁴⁵ Gill (2006) pp.207-290; Long and, Sedley. (1987); Long (2002) 137-8, 164-5, 189-96, 212-17, 244-54, 257-8; Graver (1999) pp.318-23; Sorabji (2000) pp.66-73; Frede (1986) pp.93-110; Brennan (2005) pp.82-113; Nussbaum (1994)

⁴⁴⁶ *Diss.* 1.4.29, 2.8.23, 2.17.31, 3.2.3-4, 3.5.7, 4.4.10, 4.6.16, 4.8.27, 4.10.26,

⁴⁴⁷ *Tusc.* IV.VII.14-15

⁴⁴⁸ Andronicus, *On passions* 1 (SVF 3.391, part); Galen, *PHP* 4.2.1-6 (SVF 3.463, part)

⁴⁴⁹ Stobaeus 2.88, 8-90,6 (SVF 3.378, 389, part)

'Whoever shall regard as good anything but the things that fall within the scope of his moral purpose, let him envy, yearn, flatter, feel disturbed; whoever shall regard anything else as evil, let him sorrow, grieve, lament, be unhappy'.⁴⁵⁰

2.4.3 Content-Free Passions

One of the recurrent ideas of Epictetus about the passions is that they are experiences through which suffering is born, developed, dissipated and dies or ceases. Epictetus reminds us that without thought mental pain or suffering is not experienced as pain or suffering but just as an experience, it is thought that makes our suffering so, through a fabrication of our own notion of reality (cf. the Buddhist theory of aggregates and *sankhara* – 1.2.3, 1.7.2-3, 2.3.2.1).

Suffering is an affliction of the mind because of thought and judgement: this cornerstone of Epictetus is shared with the Buddhists. This is embodied in Epictetus' famous aphorism: Ταράσσει τοὺς ἀνθρώπους οὐ τὰ πράγματα, ἀλλὰ τὰ περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων δόγματα: 'It is not things that disturb us, but our judgements about these things.'⁴⁵¹

So do our emotions contain anything of value or do they just tell us about our ignorance and misunderstanding of good and evil? The main thrust of the *Four Noble Truths* is exactly this, to look deeply into our suffering, to discover our ignorance. Is there anything permanent or substantive in the passions? Is there anything of solid and firm content or of value in our passions? What we should see is the essential nature of the underlying phenomena that we are experiencing. Our passions arise because of attachment to conditioned phenomena such as feelings, perceptions, mental or volitional formations about things we view as good or evil. Buddhists view our attachment as being an act of identification and appropriation, in the sense of 'this is mine' and 'this is my self'.⁴⁵² Buddhists further argue that all conditioned phenomena are empty of any permanent existence:⁴⁵³ feelings admit an emotive content and this can be pleasant, unpleasant or neutral but all are impermanent, unsatisfactory (in the long term) and subject to change; hence suffering is a feeling; and so feelings have no intrinsic value beyond pointing to our ignorance about the good and evil, and consequently they make us realise our errors in belief and judgement; as soon as we remove the distinction between 'self' and 'other', then negative feelings and their emotive content regarding things such as good and bad, pleasant and unpleasant become meaningless. Although Epictetus does not use the same language as the Buddhists, we have, as discussed in Chapter 1 and in this chapter, parallel thinking regarding emotions being empty of any permanent existence. The *pathē* are essentially irrational, and their content might be an assemblage of errors, mistaken beliefs and wrong or deluded views, or the voice saying 'I am this or that' that lurks in the background of our mind (cf. 1.5), the voice defining our selfhood in terms of 'good' and 'bad' (4.5.1) or the voice of our inner tyrant (4.5.5).

⁴⁵⁰ *Diss.* 3.11.1-3

⁴⁵¹ *Ench.* 5, cf. 5.2.2.1 on Right View

⁴⁵² Bodhi (2005) pp.307-308

⁴⁵³ AN 8:6, IV 157-59; Bodhi (2005) pp.188

2.5 Diagnosis and Symptoms

2.5.1 *Diagnosis*

We now revisit the medical model (1.4), which is a strategy⁴⁵⁴ for diagnosis and remedial treatment and therapy for the problem of our suffering, in order to continue comparing Epictetus with the Buddhist approach:

- Diagnosis (2.5) - the identification of the nature of our disease and suffering by examination of the symptoms (reflecting the Truth discussed in 2.2);
- Aetiology (3.5) - the identification of the cause or the manner of causation of our disease and suffering (reflecting the Truth discussed in 3.2);
- Prognosis (4.6) – there is a cure for our disease and suffering (reflecting the Truth discussed in 4.2);
- Treatment (5.3) – the cure is the Eightfold Path (Buddhism) and the Three Exercises of the Soul (Epictetus) (reflecting the Truth discussed in 5.2);

Diagnosing the nature of our dissatisfaction and our suffering soul is coming face to face with the truth of our suffering. This diagnosis is a first and important step in opening our mind to the problems we face that cause our dissatisfaction, our disease and our illness. Of course in the broader sense diagnosis must necessarily involve not only understanding the true nature of our disease, but also discerning the symptoms and the causes and conditions producing the disease. Later stages of diagnosis must therefore involve assessing and distinguishing the characteristics of the pathological elements (2.3) and the behaviour that reflects the disease before we can pass judgement on the therapy required to treat the disease. Of course the diagnosis must also relate to an aetiological investigation (3.5) to understand the causes and lead to some form of prognosis (4.6) on the likely course of the disease as part of the decision-making process and remedies for treatment (5.3).

Epictetus' diagnostic arguments start, on the one hand, with being able to distinguish between the good and the bad⁴⁵⁵ and consequently being able to pass correct judgement. To understand the nature of our disease requires us, in part, to be able to distinguish between these two qualities, and to understand why our ignorance and inexperience in doing this leads to our suffering. Supporting this strategy Simplicius remarks upon the disposition of the uneducated 'Knowledge of the good and bad comes first, because this is the activity of our reason'.⁴⁵⁶ Related to this diagnostic strategy is the lack of education to be able to distinguish between what is and what is not in our control⁴⁵⁷ and again being able to pass correct judgement: not understanding the link between this and our choices in life provides another part of the truth. Further to this, making evaluative judgements and decisions in regard to these parts of the truth is key to both the cause of the disease and its

⁴⁵⁴ Thanissaro (1999)

⁴⁵⁵ *Diss.* 2.3.1, 2.19.13, 2.8, 2.16

⁴⁵⁶ Simplicius *in Epict.* 30.6-34

⁴⁵⁷ *Diss.* 1.1

symptoms and consequences, and so is another part of the truth to be discovered through a diagnosis of our disease.

Epictetus is right to remind us that our unrivalled diagnostic faculty, by which we have the ability to unravel the truth of our suffering, is our reason. This diagnostic faculty enables us to bring to the fore the truth behind suffering with appropriate discernment and natural distinction between the healthy and unhealthy soul. Epictetus, paraphrasing a passage from Plato's *Sophist* (228c),⁴⁵⁸ says 'for every soul is unwillingly deprived of the truth'.⁴⁵⁹ As Epictetus expresses it, this resourceful diagnostic faculty is the resource that nature has given us to find the truth.⁴⁶⁰ So in accord with the nature of the intellect, we will agree to what is true and be dissatisfied with what is false.

Epictetus furthers his diagnostic arguments by emphasising that we have the capacity to deliberate and contemplate what is in our power and what is not, what is good and bad, on the basis of convincing sense impressions and those to give our assent to; and this is part of our self-diagnosis, of identifying the true nature of our disease and illness, understanding the truth behind causes and symptoms of our disease. 'I have the faculty, which the man must have who is going to appraise those who handle syllogisms properly. But in everyday life what do I do? Sometimes I call a thing good, and sometimes bad. What is the reason? The opposite of what was true in the case of syllogisms, namely, ignorance and inexperience'.⁴⁶¹

Additionally, we can argue that Epictetus makes clear that the truth of our suffering also reveals itself when we understand the consequences of our faulty reasoning and the resulting suffering, and appreciate these consequences: the premisses of our reasoning may 'give occasion to the unthinking to be disconcerted, if they do not see what follows in consequence. Why is it necessary? In order that in this matter we may not behave unsuitably, nor at haphazard, nor confusedly'.⁴⁶²

2.5.2 Symptoms

There are a variety of things that may give an indication of the condition of a man's soul. Such *symptomata* are signs, used at the stage of diagnosis, to indicate that man is in a state of suffering: these may be bodily indicators, or signs reflected in our thinking, feelings, actions and behaviour, and signs expressed in language, speech, words, and sayables and presented as having propositional content. The word *symptomata* has several meanings including 'anything that happens, a chance occurrence, mishap' and so on, and derives from the word *sympipto*, which means 'to fall upon, to befall, happen to', and is used of ailments. In our context it is a departure from the normal functioning of our soul in the sense that our soul is disturbed, troubled, lacks peace and serenity, all of which indicate the presence of disease and suffering.

⁴⁵⁸ Epictetus draws upon Plato's dialogues and Socratic discourse, as Long (2002) says, 'to an extent that is quite without parallel' (p.34). Long remarks that Epictetus quotes, paraphrases or alludes to around 100 passages from 16 Plato dialogues (p.69).

⁴⁵⁹ *Diss.* 1.28.4-5, 2.22.36

⁴⁶⁰ *Diss.* 4.1.51

⁴⁶¹ *Diss.* 2.3.4-5

⁴⁶² *Diss.* 1.7.21

Epictetus has specific examples of symptoms throughout his discourses reflecting the cause/effect, active/passive nature of suffering. Clearly jealousy (*zēlotypia*) and envy (*phthonos*) are *symptōmata* of a man who is suffering, the causes of which may be many and varied. As already discussed in 2.3, an affection that first arises in a man may turn into a disease depending on his disposition but repeated episodes of this affection and his disposition and propensity to react to this affection may result in disease, and the *symptōmata* act as indicators of the condition of a diseased soul. Of course some *symptōmata* may come and go, may be persistent and stubborn: the potential degree and state of the soul's condition may vary and the disease may be a short-term occurrence (acute disease) or long-term occurrence (chronic disease). The list of indicators of the existence of a suffering or diseased soul is as diverse as it is profound, and both gross and subtle. Psychological symptoms of fear, for example, include various forms of worry, being anxious, feeling troubled, feeling unsafe and insecure,⁴⁶³ and being stressed if things do not happen, as we want them to happen.⁴⁶⁴ As Epictetus comments,⁴⁶⁵ we worry about getting old because we lose our friends and then eventually we face death. When we become attached to something we love we get anxious and fear for its loss.⁴⁶⁶ Feelings⁴⁶⁷ of despair, helplessness or being spiritless are all symptoms of being swept off into a state of suffering.

Being overpowered by pleasure⁴⁶⁸ and desire for things external and so on leads us down a path of craving and clinging, and the becoming of our suffering: for example, the anxiety, fear and anger of not getting what we want, or losing what we already have.

Man may be quick to defend himself when he hears someone is speaking ill of him,⁴⁶⁹ and this may be an indicator of his irascibility or a feeling of inferiority or being carried away by irritation. Epictetus points to the feeling of inferiority as a potential indicator of disease, depending on how the person deals or copes with this feeling. Being better or worse off than someone else can be a mere fact of life: someone may have more money, a better position or more friends but this does not mean they are better off than you from the point of view of being virtuous. As Epictetus says, 'Why, then are you indignant, man, when you have the better part ... apply the following truth, that this is a law of nature for the superior is by definition always better off than the inferior.'⁴⁷⁰ Epictetus says 'I am not subject to restraint, or to compulsion',⁴⁷¹ reflecting that our making our *prohairesis* pure makes us better off than the inferior. Feelings of inferiority, being of lower status, rank, second-class, subservient,⁴⁷² can be symptomatic of many problems of anxiety, jealousy and envy,⁴⁷³ self-disparagement,⁴⁷⁴ bitterness and discontent, which can also lead to anger and resentment.

⁴⁶³ *Diss.* 4.1.92-94

⁴⁶⁴ *Ench.* 8, cf. *Diss.* 1.12.15, 2.14.7, 2.17.17-18, 4.1.89-90, 4.7.20

⁴⁶⁵ *Diss.* 3.24.28-29

⁴⁶⁶ *Diss.* 4.9.5, 4.9.7-10, cf. *Diss.* 4.31-5, *Ench.* 11, *Diss.* 2.13, 3.26, 4.7

⁴⁶⁷ *Diss.*, 3.13ff, 4.7.5, 4.9.14-15

⁴⁶⁸ *Diss.* 3.24.70-71

⁴⁶⁹ *Ench.* 33

⁴⁷⁰ *Diss.* 3.17.1-8

⁴⁷¹ *Diss.* 3.2.16

⁴⁷² *Diss.* 4.4.1-2

Trembling with excitement or apprehension at some desire or aversion may be *symptōmata* of some underlying disease of the soul, or it may be a natural reaction to something that is transitory and will pass by, such as a storm, loud thunder. What is also important here, as Graver⁴⁷⁵ and others point out, is that some emotional phenomena can be first triggered by physiological changes and so involuntary and so the affective phenomena are a subset of the symptoms. As a result of impetuous actions, feelings and emotions can manifest themselves in an overwhelming and disturbing way, which in the case of anger can be self-destructive and lead us to harbour feelings of resentment - as discussed by Seneca.⁴⁷⁶

We shall discuss in Section 5.2.1 the Buddhist practice of Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration, the object of which is the practice of mental perception. This practice can provide signs (*lakshana* – indications, symptoms). In the Diamond Sutra four signs are enumerated – self, person, living being and life span⁴⁷⁷ - hence signs tell us much about the perceiver as the object of perception. These Buddhist practices make us aware, draw our attention to our thoughts and feelings, and hence provide an indication of our suffering and a door into the cause of our suffering: and of our unwholesome (*akusala*)⁴⁷⁸ states of mind. Having negative thoughts and emotions can be *symptōmata* of someone with feelings of despondency and dejection, hopelessness and inadequacy or despair (that is, depression). These indicators, signs, messages are possible warnings of an underlying problem. Given these signs, indicators, *symptōmata*, we can carry out a diagnosis to find out what the issue is, what its nature is and then its possible causes.

Having negative thoughts and feelings displaces us, disturbs us, but as Epictetus reminds us 'Behold you have been dislodged, though by no one else but yourself'⁴⁷⁹ and he goes on to ask 'are you not willing to come to your own rescue?'⁴⁸⁰ Our own assessment should enable us to come to our own diagnosis, to recognise the symptoms and to discover the underlying cause. Nothing can stop us, if we are willing to allow our power of choice and differentiation of what is up to us to do its work and come to our rescue.

Epilogue to Chapter 2

The truth about suffering has been the central theme of this chapter. The essential practice of the *First Truth* is that of gaining insight, understanding and knowing related to the truth of suffering, or more precisely the truth and reality that there is suffering. This discussion has looked at the core messages behind the first truth: the nature of suffering, being awake to the fact that it exists, and the types of suffering that exist. The discussion has juxtaposed Buddhist teaching to that of Epictetus to show how both schools share the same insight and understanding. Having the wrong view, outlook

⁴⁷³ *Diss.* 3.11.2, 3.22.13, 3.22.61

⁴⁷⁴ *Diss.* 3.22.104

⁴⁷⁵ Graver (2007) pp, 86-87

⁴⁷⁶ *Sen. Ira.* 1.1.1

⁴⁷⁷ Such signs (*lakshana*) can also be used in a prognostic sense.

⁴⁷⁸ AN 3.65, SN 42.11, DN 26, MN 135, MN 82, AN 1, SN 46.55, AN 3.100, MN 20, MN 10, MN 9

⁴⁷⁹ *Diss.* 4.9.11

⁴⁸⁰ *Diss.* 4.9.12-13

and attitude is a major stumbling block in gaining insight, understanding and knowing of the *First Truth*. It is ignorance and the wrong view through which produces suffering. In this chapter we have discussed the Stoic teaching on having the wrong view and understanding of good and evil, and what is mine and not mine, that is, what is in my control. We shall further elaborate in the chapters that follow this wrong view both in the Buddhist and Stoic sense.

In this chapter we have also discussed the pathological elements that contribute to a state of suffering. In particular, we have considered Epictetus' teaching on mental dispositions, *hexis* and how the verb *echō*, and its compounds, are used and applied to having or possessing or being in a certain state of mind (following on from our language discussion in 1.5-1.7). We have considered the connections between our actions and intentions, and our intentions and dispositions of mind. If the disposition is inclined towards an unwholesome state or attitude of mind, then it has the wrong view, then our subsequent intention will not be right, and subsequently our actions. To gain insight and understanding of the nature and existence of suffering we need to understand the mental disposition of the mind, that is, the pathological basis that conditions the mind towards a state of suffering.

We have related this discussion to the concept of *sankhara*, which is related to the Buddhist theory of dispositions and human personality and this parallels the thinking of Epictetus to the extent discussed in 1.2. Our insight and understanding of the first truth is greatly underpinned by the truth behind the role these pathological elements play in our individual psychology and having or possessing or being in a certain state of mind.

In the next chapter we explore the *Second Noble Truth* (the origin of suffering), and this will address the causal relationship between the conditioned mind and suffering.

Chapter 3 Epictetus and the Second Noble Truth

3.1 Prologue

This chapter addresses the *Second Noble Truth*, which is concerned with the causes of suffering. We shall start by discussing the Buddhist notion of cravings (desires) and the clings (attachments) to these cravings, as the principal causes behind suffering. This view is strikingly similar to that of Epictetus. Both Epictetus and Buddhist thought go further than this to identify the source of our craving and clinging to be our ignorance. Our aim in this chapter is to demonstrate a harmony of view between Epictetus and Buddhism on the causes of suffering.

We shall also continue our discussion of suffering and the role of language in regard to the cause and effect of suffering: everything that exists is either active or passive and a thing either acts (*poieō*) or is acted upon (*paschō*). Our analysis of the active/passive linguistic relationships helps us to understand the semantics behind suffering: giving sense to the series of cognitive cause/effect relationships that can exist (cf. *kamma* – 1.2.1); as well as insight into our ignorance and volitional actions (cf. aggregates and *sankhara* – 1.2.3, 1.7.2). The active/passive relationship between language and what subsists in our thoughts as expressed in language⁴⁸¹ and the relationship with ‘thing said’, ‘the thing thought’ and ‘the meant (*lekta*)’ (1.6.2) adds context to the causal nature of suffering. This linguistic aspect is similar to that found in the language and logic of Buddhist philosophy (see 1.7) and aligns with the Buddhist notion of *sankhara*, and the principle of Dependent Origination,⁴⁸² and the ‘act of forming’ or ‘having been formed’, reflecting both the active and passive sense of our conditioned existence.

Finally we return to the medical model for suffering (1.4) to consider the aspect of aetiology, assigning the cause of something happening that results in suffering.

3.2 The Causes of Our suffering

3.2.1 *The Arising of Suffering*

The *Second Noble Truth* (*Samudaya saccā*) is a lesson in finding the truth relating to the arising of our *dukkha* - its origin, source or cause. This origin is typically explained as suffering caused by craving (*tanhā* – thirst, appetite, desire) conditioned by our ignorance (*avijjā* – ignorance, delusion). The origin is the craving⁴⁸³ that leads to renewed existence, accompanied by delight and lust, seeking delight here and there; that is, craving for sensual pleasures, craving for existence, craving for extermination. This truth also covers three insights: the insight of grasping; the insight of the need to let go (5.3.6); and the insight that we have let go of desire. From what follows in the subsections

⁴⁸¹ SVF 2.187, SVF 2.52

⁴⁸² SN 12, 23, MN 39, 76, Section 1.3.1

⁴⁸³ SN 56.11

below, it is apparent that Epictetus proceeds to teach the same insights as Buddhism, as is discernible from his *Discourses*.

3.2.2 *Craving Desires*

This *Second Noble Truth* talks of three classes of *tanhā* related to *dukkha*:

- The senses (*kama tanhā*);
 - Desires that excite or please the senses,
- Being or becoming (*bhava tanhā*);
 - Desire to become something other than what you are now,
- Non-being or not becoming (*vibhava tanhā*);
 - Desire to get rid of something that we don't like or avoid something we don't like.

These three classes should be seen as different aspects of desire reflecting various ways of causing us *dukkha*. The first two classes of desire relate to attachment (sense-craving and craving to be) and the last class relates to aversion (craving not to be). Again, as with the *First Noble Truth*, practising the *Second Truth* is concerned with gaining the right insight, knowledge and wisdom that relates our desires, cravings for what we desire and grasping for our desire to *dukkha*.

As with Buddhism, the craving and desiring of something or being averse to something is equally of principal concern to Epictetus. Both share the same apprehension and sense of misgiving about man's ability to fully deal with his desires and the underlying truths and insight connecting their desires to *dukkha*; but at the same time both are hopeful that man will learn from his experiences of *dukkha* and want to transform his life. What we desire can easily transform the way we lead our life: why we desire what we do; what personal values we have; how we pursue these values; and so on. Do we desire to lead a simple and less stressful life? Do we seek out a life of luxury, pleasure and material wealth? Do we desire to have a life of power, status or fame? Do we desire to rid ourselves of jealousy, fears and anxiety? Do we desire not to be seen as a failure? All these kinds of desire, and the like, can lead us down a path of thoughts, feelings, conditional mental formations and the birth and production of *dukkha* when our desires are left unsatisfied. What is the point of pursuing a life of luxury and material wealth if such a lifestyle can be rarely satisfied or content: having luxury makes man cling to it (not wanting to lose it), and makes him crave for more luxury; it is an unnatural craving which can never be satisfied, unlike a natural desire like being thirsty which can be satisfied by having a drink.

Simplicius, in his interpretation of Epictetus, points to the soul having three relations that are expressed in three kinds of life and three kinds of desire: these relations of the soul are towards the worse (that is, bodily, sensual and irrational), towards itself and towards the better.⁴⁸⁴ These relations equate to the life we lead: the life made vicious by its worse desires (bad life); and the life made virtuous by its better desires (good life). Epictetus and Buddhism both reasonably declare it is up to us to desire in this or that way, thus conditioning the type of life we will lead. Both also

⁴⁸⁴ Simplicius in *Epict.* 10.10-30, *Ench.* 1

recognise this ambiguity in the notion of 'desiring things', especially strong feelings of wanting, or not wanting, that are not properly directed to a virtuous life and our confusion between things out of our control and things in our control. Both Epictetus and Buddhism argue that feelings of desire, craving and the like, can lead to *dukkha*, and their arising originates from ignorance (Dependent Origination – see 1.3.3.4, 1.5.2 and 2.2.3). According to Buddhism, we will experience the vicissitudes (pleasure and pain, gain and loss – Table 6, 5.2.4) throughout life no matter what our plans or actions might be.

3.2.3 Clinging to Desires

The Buddhist Dharma talks about *upādāna*, the clinging, grasping and attaching ourselves to sense pleasures, self-doctrine, wrong views, irrational thoughts and feelings, and the like. As already discussed (2.2.3.3), clinging is considered to be the result of *taṇhā* (craving), and is part of the sequence of conditioned links that lead us to *dukkha*. Likewise *bhāva* (emotion, sentiment, state of mind, disposition) is considered to be the result of *upādāna* (clinging): the clinging becomes, produces or gives birth to emotion, state of mind and the like.

Epictetus embraces similar views to that of Buddhism regarding these conditioned links that lead us to a state of suffering or *dukkha*. He constantly warns us to make proper use of our impressions and to guard against being carried away with them as they may lead us to crave, cling and attach ourselves to desires that lead us to assume a state of mind that disturbs us and makes us suffer. He warns against attaching ourselves to our opinions and consequently being irritated by our judgement of our own opinions.⁴⁸⁵ Epictetus remarks, 'it is his judgement about each of these things which is the thing that hurts him, that overturns him'.⁴⁸⁶ The arising of our weeping and sighing, our accusing, fault finding, jealousy, ill-will, our foolishness are all conditioned by our view, opinions and judgements.⁴⁸⁷ Equally Epictetus' view of man's pleasures, lust, sensual gratification, pride, conceit and his sorrow, grief, fear and anxiety is again that it is caused by his conditioned mind:⁴⁸⁸ those conditioned links of craving of desire (or aversion), clinging to his opinions, views and judgements regarding his desire (or aversion), all leading to a state of mind, any of the Stoic emotions and the like, that 'weigh upon us and drive us out of our senses'⁴⁸⁹ causing us to suffer.

Examining his argumentation further, he reasons the case in terms of the pleasure of the soul: if it is in mental objects, the essence of the good has already been found; it is impossible that we are elated by pleasure unless it is good, or if the cause is not good, the effect should be good; to justify the consequence as being good the antecedent should be good.⁴⁹⁰ Epictetus argues that doctrines,

⁴⁸⁵ *Ench.* 20

⁴⁸⁶ *Diss.* 4.5.28

⁴⁸⁷ *Diss.*, 3.2.3, 3.2.9, 3.2.16, 3.3.18-19, 3.11.2, 3.13.10, 3.22.13, 3.22.61, 3.22.104, 3.24.43, 4.1.4, 4.4.32, 4.12.21, *Ench.* 19, *Ench.* 31, *Ench.* 33, *Ench.* 42

⁴⁸⁸ *Diss.* 3.19.3-4, *Ench.* 33, 3.7.2-13, 4.1.150

⁴⁸⁹ *Diss.* 2.16.24

⁴⁹⁰ *Diss.* 3.7.6-7. Part of his argumentation here is against the Epicureans and their doctrine that the pleasure of the soul is pleasure in the things of the body and then they become matters of prime importance and the true nature of the good.

views and opinions can be very persuasive and have the ability to attract and overpower us, and condition us to unduly crave and cling to these things (pleasures of the body and materialist comforts) giving their existence and status greater power and potency of attraction.⁴⁹¹

3.2.4 *The Consequences of Clinging*

The consequence of our clinging is *bhava*, the coming to be: the production of a state of being resulting from our ignorance and all the subsequent causes and effects in the sequence of conditioned links. Man's habitual or emotional tendencies, mental dispositions and the like are all rooted in this coming to be. Ignorance is present in this coming to be, in the same way that our ignorance is present in our feelings, cravings and clings. If there were no ignorance, we would not cling to the things we crave, and subsequently without ignorance our *dukkha* would not be present. Craving is rooted in volitional actions, feelings and coming to be. Consequently every link in the chain conditions every other link, and all in the chain conditions all links. We can also say that feelings may arise from ignorance; on the other hand they might arise from understanding, in which case there is no craving or clinging.

At the centre of Epictetus' argument regarding control of suffering is the *prohairesis* (see Chapter 4). What is it that makes us become deaf and blind to insight and understanding?⁴⁹² Our *prohairesis*. What is it that becomes our moral vision, insight and understanding? Our *prohairesis*. What is it that becomes our only vice or only virtue?⁴⁹³ Our *prohairesis*. What is it that controls the will to desire or avoid?⁴⁹⁴ Our *prohairesis*. What is it that compels our will to decide to become conditioned to craving and to cling?⁴⁹⁵ Our *prohairesis*. As Long says 'we doom ourselves to frustration, lack of freedom, unhappiness and moral imperfection, all of which are misuses of our rationality'⁴⁹⁶ by consistently misunderstanding what is truly ours. But we grasp what is not ours and by implication frustrate ourselves, abrogating our 'self-generated freedom from external constraint and from consequential disturbance or self-inflicted enslavement to externals and the passions that ensue'.⁴⁹⁷

Following this argument further it is due to our own self-determination and will that we become conditioned, it is our reasoning⁴⁹⁸ about our judgements, views and opinions of things that is a factor in our becoming this or that: from sound judgements we will fare well, from unsound judgements ill. If a man's judgements determine everything, and if a man has unsound judgements, whatever be the cause such also will be the consequence; our opinions and the decisions of our will, cause us to do or not do anything;⁴⁹⁹ we can ascribe our actions to the decisions.⁵⁰⁰ We can tie this to another of Epictetus' remarks: 'it is his judgement about each of these things which is the thing that hurts him,

⁴⁹¹ *Diss.* 3.7.23

⁴⁹² *Diss.* 2.23.22

⁴⁹³ *Diss.* 2.23.19

⁴⁹⁴ *Diss.* 2.1.12

⁴⁹⁵ *Diss.* 1.17.25-26

⁴⁹⁶ Long (2002) p.208

⁴⁹⁷ Long (2002) p.217

⁴⁹⁸ *Diss.* 3.9.2-5

⁴⁹⁹ *Diss.* 1.11.33

⁵⁰⁰ *Diss.* 1.11.35

that overturns him'.⁵⁰¹ The production and the birth of our weeping and sighing, our accusing, our foolishness are all conditioned by our judgements.⁵⁰² Epictetus' view of man's sorrow, grief, fear and anxiety is again that it is caused by his conditioned mind:⁵⁰³ those conditioned links of craving of desire (or aversion), clinging to his opinions, views and judgements regarding his desire (or aversion), all leading to a state of mind, an emotion and the like that 'weigh upon us and drive us out of our senses'⁵⁰⁴ causing us to suffer.

3.2.5 Ignorance and Delusion

Avidya (Not Seeing, Not Knowing)

Buddhists view ignorance as the greatest corruption of the mind and the main cause of our suffering.⁵⁰⁵ Buddhism uses the term *avidya* (Pali *avijjā*), which is commonly translated as 'ignorance', but this literally means 'lack of light, darkness', or 'not to see' or 'not to know': derived from *vidya* which means 'to see' or 'to know' (like the Latin *videre*, 'to see'). Different Buddhist teachings do tend to explain *avidya* in different ways and on different levels. The basic Buddhist view is that *avidya* is a lack of knowing and understanding the true nature of reality. A more specific view is that it is a misunderstanding or misperception of the nature of self and of phenomena, and Dependent Origination.

This link between ignorance and suffering is equally shared with Epictetus, who fittingly sums this up by saying:

'The man who does not know who he is, and what he is born for, and what sort of a world this is that he exists in, and who he shares it with; and does not know what the good things are and what are the evil, what the noble and what the base; and is unable to follow either reason or demonstration, or what is true and what is false, and cannot distinguish one from the other; and will manifest neither desire, nor aversion, nor choice, nor purpose in accordance with nature; will not assent, will not dissent, will not withhold judgement – such a man, to sum it up, will go about deaf and blind, thinking that he is somebody, when he really is nobody. [...] Every mistake and every misfortune has been due to this type of ignorance'⁵⁰⁶

In this passage Epictetus draws upon many different facets of life and man's perception of reality that has a bearing on our suffering. Do we understand what is and is not in our control? Do we understand the impermanence of life and mortality? Do we know where good and evil reside? Do we know how to use our impressions correctly? And so on. These all have something in common: our not knowing or not understanding, our misunderstanding or misjudging of our impressions (and their nature) that can all lead to a state of ignorance or *dukkha*. The chain of conditioned links, and the

⁵⁰¹ *Diss.* 4.5.28

⁵⁰² *Diss.* 3.3.18-19

⁵⁰³ *Diss.* 3.19.3-4

⁵⁰⁴ *Diss.* 2.16.24

⁵⁰⁵ MN 9, SN 12.2; Fronsdal (2005) verse 18; Tashi Tsering (2005) pp.61-62

⁵⁰⁶ *Diss.* 2.24.19-21

direction they take us to, is based on our opinions, beliefs, perceptions, use of impressions, and the like: these all can situate ignorance to be present in our feelings, cravings, clingings, and all those other conditioned things that arise through ignorance. Man's anger, fear and anxiety are the host to some form of ignorance. 'Death' says Epictetus 'is nothing dreadful – but our judgement about death':⁵⁰⁷ our fear of death is related to ignorance that is present in our feelings about death, our desire to avoid it and clinging to life as if we were immortal: 'What, then, is the cause of my going astray? -Ignorance'.⁵⁰⁸ The mainstay of Epictetus' teaching is the issue of freedom:⁵⁰⁹ being free to live without grief, fear, envy, pity, desiring things and not getting them, avoiding things and getting them; free from being deceived, hindered or hampered; free from ignorance and the conditions that cause the arising of suffering. Ignorance deprives us of our freedom to live with an undisturbed mind: it conditions us to become slaves to deluded thinking, makes us go astray in matters of importance and chains us to a conditioned mind of suffering.

Opinions, Beliefs and Assents

Ignorance breeds deluded views and opinions, false beliefs and wrong perceptions about things: it is a want of understanding, insight, knowing, wisdom – all these are what the *Four Noble Truths* aim to achieve – not understanding *Four Noble Truths* is also *avidya*. The ignorance we are dealing with here is not an intrinsic or innate feature of our nature but is a 'learned' ignorance, created and developed through the beliefs, opinions and views we choose to adopt.

Stobaeus says of ignorance that it is changeable and weak assent,⁵¹⁰ whereas knowledge is a cognition that is secure and unchangeable by reason.⁵¹¹ The Stoics also link knowledge (*epistēmē*), opinion (*doxa*) and cognition (*katalēpis*), with the latter stationed between the other two.⁵¹² Given these claims we can note that the relationship between knowledge, opinion and ignorance has implications for our cognitions and cognitive impressions,⁵¹³ and so to the chain of Dependent Originations. We assent to an impression, depending on how the impression appears to us and how it makes us feel, which may or may not turn out to be correct. As Annas points out, the exact relation between ignorance and *doxa* (opinion) is tricky:⁵¹⁴ she holds them distinct but says the Stoics sometimes blurred the line between them. Vogt⁵¹⁵ provides some interesting analysis and observations to try and unravel some of the contemporary ambiguities.

Epictetus is no exception in blurring the lines in the relationship between knowledge, opinion and ignorance and where opinion sits; furthermore he sometimes uses *doxa* and *dogma* interchangeably for the notions of opinion, belief and judgement. However, for the purpose of this thesis and the very nature of *dukkha* and its arising we claim that this blurring quite rightly hits at the heart of the

⁵⁰⁷ *Ench.* 5

⁵⁰⁸ *Diss.* 1.26.7

⁵⁰⁹ *Diss.* 4.1 (general), and in particular 4.1.1-5, 29-45, 62-66, 98-101

⁵¹⁰ *Stob.* 2.111, 18-112, 8 (SVF 3.548)

⁵¹¹ *Stob.* 2.73, 16-74, 3 (SVF 3.112)

⁵¹² *Sext. Emp. Against the professors* 7.151-7

⁵¹³ *Cic. Academica* 1.41-2 (SVF 1.60); *Stob.* 2.68, 18-23 (SVF 3.663)

⁵¹⁴ Annas (1990) pp.186-193

⁵¹⁵ Vogt (2012), Chapter 7

problem of this conditional arising. We have an opinion and judgement about an impression, form a belief and viewpoint: these may turn out to be fact or to be fiction, or may turn out to contain some elements of fact but fall short of avoiding false beliefs and opinions about something, leading us to crave and cling to things and experience *dukkha* as a result. We fall into the trap that from the point of view of the thinker, what we think of as true is from our perspective.

Just a Matter of Indifference

Epictetus considers hypothetical reasoning as a matter of indifference; yet the judgement about it is not a matter of indifference but is either knowledge or opinion or delusion.⁵¹⁶ In like manner, says Epictetus, the same applies to life and our perception and understanding of reality. Our fears, anxieties and other troublesome states of mind, as Epictetus repeatedly reminds us, are judgements based on our perception of situations that apply to us. Saying things are indifferent is not the same as saying we should be indifferent to them⁵¹⁷ and equally saying things indifferent are not choiceworthy does not mean we should not pursue them or pursue some and avoid others.⁵¹⁸

Paraphrasing Epictetus we hear him argue that the remarks of others are a matter of indifference, but the use we make of these is not a matter of indifference; the remarks might be fact, opinion or fiction,⁵¹⁹ remarks we may interpret as insulting, fault finding, demeaning and so on; but our ignorance, our lack of knowing the true nature of these remarks means we go astray with our subsequent actions. Has it not been true that from time immemorial, every mistake and every misfortune has been due to this kind of ignorance? As Epictetus says: 'Why did Agamemnon and Achilles quarrel? Was it not because they did not know what things are expedient and what are inexpedient?'⁵²⁰ We all experience ignorance in our daily lives when our actions are conditioned by a deluded mind: our thoughts, feelings, cravings and clings are based on not knowing.

Not Knowing How to Use Impressions

'Things seen by the mind' (*phantasiai*) either are and seem to be so, or are not and do not seem to be so; or either they are and do not seem to be so or they are not and yet seem to be so.⁵²¹ Our conditioned mind may delude us by the 'things seen by the mind'. Sometimes the feelings that arise from 'things seen by the mind' can be very persuasive and convincing, and sometimes deceiving and dishonest. We assent or dissent to 'things seen by the mind' depending on whether they are so or not, or if we are not certain we suspend judgement. The same applies to an impulse towards a thing: we judge a thing expedient but desire another; and again we judge one thing fitting and yet are impelled by another and so on.⁵²² Here Dobbin draws attention to the parallel between assent and

⁵¹⁶ *Diss.*, 1.30, 2.5, 2.6.1-3, 2.9.13-15, *Ench.* 32, (cf. Rist (2010) pp.46, 49, 102-105; Long (2002) pp.239, 245; Reesor (1951))

⁵¹⁷ Graver (2007) p.48

⁵¹⁸ Graver (2007) p.139

⁵¹⁹ *Diss.* 2.6

⁵²⁰ *Diss.* 2.24.20-21

⁵²¹ *Diss.* 1.27.1

⁵²² *Diss.* 1.18.1

impulse, in asserting that both are psychologically determined and so this makes the case for indulgence of the morally misguided.⁵²³

'Things seen by the mind' take on a certain meaning; they can be typically influenced by adopted beliefs or preconceived ideas or past experiences. We become conditioned by 'things seen by the mind', which can lead us to crave and cling to things in misguided ways when we are ignorant of a particular situation.

What might seem plausible might lead us to believe things are good (or not, as the case may be) when they are not good (or otherwise) and this distresses us.⁵²⁴ When we assent to 'things seen by the mind' because they appear to be so, but in fact they are not so, then it is against our nature to do so, we are assenting to something that is false; in this case 'the soul is unwillingly deprived of the truth'.⁵²⁵ Our ignorance of 'what is so' leads us to blindly accept and believe 'things seen by the mind' as being true and correct, even though this is not the case, that is, 'things seen by the mind' are what is not so. As Epictetus insists 'But if their eyes are not opened, they have nothing superior to their mere opinion'.⁵²⁶ But to grasp 'things seen by the mind' as secure and unchangeable by reason is to grasp things as they really are. Given these truths, what is lacking from Epictetus' perspective is having the right knowledge to correctly understand, distinguish and recognise those things that condition us to be in a state of *dukkha*: furthermore, he is right to affirm, that these things are in our control. To understand this we can pick on specific aspects, such as the core assertion that the only thing in our control is 'the right use of external impressions'.⁵²⁷ But it is in this issue of right or proper use that we fail, which leads to a lack of knowing, misunderstandings, deluded thinking leaving us open to beliefs, feelings that 'carry us away'⁵²⁸ into a state of *dukkha*: we are unable to distinguish what is important to us and in our control. As Epictetus argues, our lack of knowing is related to whether our impression is what it appears to be.⁵²⁹ In another example, Epictetus uses the case of a child to illustrate the point:⁵³⁰ 'For what is a child? Ignorance. What is a child? Want of instruction' his point is that the very young lack experience, they are still learning about life, they are innocent, they lack a full education and instruction about life.

Chrysippus is reported to have said:

'An impression is an affection occurring in the soul, which reveals itself and its cause.'⁵³¹

Revealing itself and its cause means an impression is a state of awareness, and, as Long says, having an impression is an awareness of oneself as the locus of that impression.⁵³² A movement in the soul is

⁵²³ Dobbin (2007) p.169

⁵²⁴ *Diss.* 1.27.3

⁵²⁵ *Diss.* 1.28.4-5

⁵²⁶ *Diss.* 1.18.4

⁵²⁷ *Diss.* 2.20.32-23

⁵²⁸ *Ench.*18

⁵²⁹ *Ench.*1

⁵³⁰ *Diss.* 2.1.16

⁵³¹ *Aët.* 4.12.1-5 (*SVF* 2.54, part)

⁵³² Long (1982) p.47

a progression from 'something that was' to 'something else',⁵³³ an impression gives rise to such movement. Present in this impression (opinion, belief, judgement) is its cause: Epictetus and the Buddhist Dharma have broad agreement about such movements, believing that the cause, in the case of our *dukkha*, is our ignorance. A bad storm is but an impression; its image can leave a powerful imprint in our mind, unseating our reasoning, leaving us with thoughts of fear and anxiety of death.⁵³⁴

Not Knowing What Is In Our Control

The notion of 'what is in our power' is pivotal to Epictetus' thinking,⁵³⁵ and frequently discussed in the *Discourses*. Our ignorance of what is in our control will lead us to become naturally slavish, subordinate and emotionally attached to externals, 'tossed to and fro with them'.⁵³⁶

As argued by Epictetus, we desire things we cannot control and we want situations to be, to happen, to develop according to what we crave or shun. We want things to happen our way; this is a failure and error in our thinking and is due to our ignorance, lack of understanding of reality and the laws of impermanence and causality. Epictetus distinguishes between what is fated (what is ordained, for me to become ill and die) and what is chosen (by me, such as thinking about illness and death):⁵³⁷ even more so Epictetus' prime concern lies in our *prohairesis*,⁵³⁸ which is naturally free. A life of freedom or slavery is distinguished by knowing what is truly our own and in our control, and what is not in our control. As Thich Nhat Hanh says 'Ignorance has been the jailkeeper. Because of ignorance the mind has been obscured, just like the moon and stars hidden by storm clouds. Clouded by endless waves of deluded thoughts, the mind falsely divided reality into subject and object, self and others ... from these discriminations arose wrong views – the prisons of feelings, craving, grasping and becoming.'⁵³⁹ We are prisoners because of not knowing what we can or cannot choose from, control or not control.

Not Knowing About Impermanence?

The Buddhist understanding of impermanence finds a parallel in Epictetus. As he points out, it is the nature of things in life that 'it is not possible for the things that come into being to come into being otherwise than they now do'⁵⁴⁰ and man has participated in, and has had experience of, things that happen in life, the process of change and transformation, difficulties and situations that man struggles with. Therefore 'if a man endeavours to incline his mind to these things, and to persuade himself to accept of his own accord what needs befall him, he will have a very reasonable and harmonious life'. In the following Epictetus comments on our clinging to things impermanent:

⁵³³ *Diss.* 3.24.92-94

⁵³⁴ *Diss.* 2.19.29-30

⁵³⁵ *Diss.* 1.1,, 1.22.10-12, *Ench.*1

⁵³⁶ *Diss.* 1.4.19

⁵³⁷ *Diss.* 1.1, 1.4.118, 1.7.40, 1.12.32-35, 1.18.11-14, 1.22.10

⁵³⁸ *Diss.* 1.12.8-10, 1.17.21-27, 1.25.1-5

⁵³⁹ Nhat Hanh (1991) p.160

⁵⁴⁰ *Fr.*8

'Whenever you grow attached to something, do not act as though it were one of those things that cannot be taken away, but as though it were something like a jar or a crystal goblet, so that when it breaks you will remember what it was like, and not be troubled'⁵⁴¹

He turns this into a stark, uncomfortable truth that hits right at the heart of the problem: our attachment to those we love and are emotionally close to and intimate with; at the very moment you are kissing your child goodnight, remind yourself of the impermanence of life by saying 'Tomorrow you will die'.⁵⁴² Chilling must be one's first response to this passage, says Long.⁵⁴³ One of the important points here is being emotionally prepared for the inevitable, which brings us back to impermanence. It is a stark reminder of the reality of life that brings home the truth about the nature of things. If our thinking is possessive and expresses a desire that we possess those that we love and those that we have a relationship with, such as our friends and neighbours, then our thinking is faulty. We may have a relationship to someone and in that sense we are attached, but we do not own the person involved in the same way that we do not own the relationship.

Furthermore he argues that we should turn around our thoughts and beliefs on events happening not as we would wish: 'Do not seek to have everything that happens happen as you wish, but wish for everything to happen as it actually does happen'.⁵⁴⁴

Some of our ignorance is due to not understanding the reality and nature of things as they are, such as not wanting things to happen that are out of our control; this will inevitably result in our distress and *dukkha*, desiring and clinging to things we want to be permanent whilst ignoring or denying that we live in a world that involves constant change. Epictetus frequently states the phrase 'to live in accordance with nature (*kata phusin*)',⁵⁴⁵ in keeping with the Stoic definition of the good life. He considers this as normative to living a life of reason, bringing our mind and actions in accord with what nature demands.⁵⁴⁶ He characteristically embraces this maxim as a key component in his teaching and as a moral principle, drawing on the claim that things contrary to nature are things done badly and things done in keeping with nature are things done rightly⁵⁴⁷ and everything evil is what is contrary to its own nature: nature is the ultimate moral principle.⁵⁴⁸

Not Knowing What Is Good and Evil?

Epictetus notes many times our confusion over what the good things are and what are the evil, and what is true and what is false.⁵⁴⁹ Likewise Epictetus argues that wisdom enables us to contemplate those things that are the good or evil, or neither good nor evil (things indifferent):

⁵⁴¹ *Diss.* 3.24.84-85

⁵⁴² *Diss.* 3.24.88

⁵⁴³ Long (2002) pp.248-249

⁵⁴⁴ *Ench.* 8

⁵⁴⁵ *Ench.* 4, 13, 16, 30; Long (2002) pp.77-79, 118-119, 182-186; Rist (2010) pp.6-10

⁵⁴⁶ *Diss.* 1.26.1-2

⁵⁴⁷ *Diss.* 1.11.6

⁵⁴⁸ *Diss.* 4.1.121-2 and 125

⁵⁴⁹ *Diss.* 1.20.6, 1.20.13, 3.20.16-17, 3.22.23, 3.22.32, 3.23.28, *Ench.* 4.2

hence wisdom itself is considered to be a good and lack of wisdom is an evil.⁵⁵⁰ Subsequently the essence of good and evil is found in things in our control, that is, in our moral choices;⁵⁵¹ hence good and evil is only found within us, in that which is our own, in what is in our control;⁵⁵² and the good is found in intelligence, knowledge and reason and nowhere else can the good be found.⁵⁵³ Furthermore our wisdom should provide us with the right ideas about good and evil.⁵⁵⁴ We need knowledge of the good and evil, of true and false, and the wisdom to be able to discern the difference between these things, that 'even in regard to what is false there arises a good, that is, the knowledge that the false is false' and 'to be well for a good end is good, to be well for an evil end is evil'.⁵⁵⁵

Ignorance is present in our unwise judgements made about externals; it is present in our thoughts on things good or bad, profitable or unprofitable, pleasurable or painful: it is a lack of wisdom, of not knowing the truth, that hurts us, and disorders and overturns our mind and that deceives us in the most important of values.⁵⁵⁶ So if these things are understood, as Epictetus wants them to be, then where is there any longer need for contention or reviling?

'About what? About the things that mean nothing to us? Against the ignorant, against the unfortunate, against those who have been deceived in the most important values?'⁵⁵⁷

3.3 Language of Cause and Effect – Active and Passive

3.3.1 *Paschō*

This section addresses Epictetus' use of the active and the passive to understand more fully his views on the cause or origin of suffering. As is appropriate to this chapter on the *Second Noble Truth*, we are interested in the active and the passive in terms of the language of cause and effect which provides insight into the the parallel thinking with the Buddhist notions of *karma* and the *sankhara* (1.7.2, 1.7.3).

The subject of suffering, in the ancient Greek world, employs a multitude of terms, some of general significance, others more specific. The principal term for suffering is the verb *paschō*,⁵⁵⁸ which means 'to have something done to one, to be acted upon, to have an effect on someone', or in absolute terms, 'to experience suffering, to experience a feeling or sensation'.

Over time the word came to be associated with the notion of 'experience emotionally' and its derivative *pathos* generally came to mean 'emotion' or 'passion'. The word 'emotion', however, did not actually enter into the English language until the 17th Century from the French word *émotion* (from *émouvoir* 'excite' – as in 'having a strong feeling'), although modern scholarship on the ancient

⁵⁵⁰ *Diss.* 1.20.6, 3.3ff

⁵⁵¹ *Diss.* 1.20.15-16, 1.22.12, 1.25.1, 1.30.4-5

⁵⁵² *Diss.* 2.2.5

⁵⁵³ *Diss.* 2.8.2-3

⁵⁵⁴ *Diss.* 4.1.133

⁵⁵⁵ *Diss.* 3.20.3-4

⁵⁵⁶ *Diss.* 4.5.28-32

⁵⁵⁷ *Diss.* 4.5.32

⁵⁵⁸ See LSJ s.v. '*paschō*'

world tends to use this word and associate it synonymously with the word *pathos*. The literal meaning of *pathos* is more inclusive and more profound than that of the common meaning of emotion. This said, the notions of 'being acted upon' (*pathos*) and 'being moved' (*émotion*) have common significance to our discussion and both together reveal the nature of our being: us as an active being (how we act) and us as a passive being (how we suffer, experience, feel).

We now explore the richness and multiplicity of meaning of *paschō* as suffering and the diverse way it is used by Epictetus. The particulars of this diversity regarding the experience of suffering are congruous with those of the Buddhist notion of *dukkha*, which is free and open-ended, to the extent of defying definition and meaning, but existing merely as an experience, a feeling, an impression. Consequently this tallies with the general notion of suffering in the Buddhist sense that can be very blatant and gross, to the very subtle, sometimes consciously overwhelming or subconsciously consuming us (2.2).

The Stoics and Epictetus used *paschō* in the sense 'to suffer' to include a range of different affections such as emotions, feelings, mental formations and spiritual dispositions. In addition, we find Epictetus using *paschō* in a broad way and in different contexts, not all of which are associated with suffering in the narrow sense of 'passion' or 'emotion', but which are applicable to our wider sense of suffering: for example, some of his uses relate to the activity of being appealed to, being influenced or being persuaded. This in itself provides evidence of Epictetus' more holistic view of suffering.

The verb *paschō* is neutral as regards quality; it is our judgement of this experience, which makes us say the experience was good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant, or that we had a good or bad feeling. The earth heats up during the day because of the sun, so the earth can be said 'to suffer' as a result of the sun. The earth has accepted the rise in its temperature without any active response. This same sense of passivity means that inherent in the word *paschō* we can attribute a deeper and more profound level of interpretation to the notion of suffering. In this sense suffering may manifest as very subtle effects acting upon the mind, a concept that is well known in Buddhist philosophy and psychology, as suffering of the conditioned mind (2.2.3.1, 3.2) understood through subtle levels of impermanence.⁵⁵⁹

The suffering (mind) is something we experience due to something we do to ourselves, all of which is in our control. The suffering (*paschō*) we experience is by definition a passive activity of something done to us but at the same time the suffering is something we have done to ourselves in the sense of persuading ourselves. This use by Epictetus of *paschō* in a self-reflective/contemplative way should not seem odd at all if we consider Epictetus' own unique definition of the *prohairesis* as the self and its manifold nature as we shall discuss in 4.4. Evidence of the passive and 'acting upon oneself' nature of *paschō* appears in Epictetus, for example, in the sense of imagining or having a feeling about something. In the Long translation we have *pathē* used in the sense of 'persuasion' as in the following passages 'Imagine (persuade yourself) if you can, that it is now night' and 'Persuade

⁵⁵⁹Tashi Tsering (2005) pp.36-38

yourself or take away your persuasion that the stars are even in number'.⁵⁶⁰ In the Oldfather translation of the same passages *pathē* is translated as 'feel'.

Equally we may act upon (*peithō*) our self by convincing or compelling our self in a way that causes us suffering. From a linguistic point of view we can be both the agent of action (we act upon, *peithō*) as well as the patient (we are acted upon, *paschō*) – we convince ourselves that there is something in regard to an external impression we should be fearful or anxious about, which reiterates the point we started with - our suffering is something we do to ourselves.

3.3.2 *Pascho and Its Uses in Epictetus*

We now come to the crux of our examination of *paschō* and its derivatives. What follows are a number of examples from Epictetus to illustrate his broad appreciation of *paschō* related to suffering; we shall also consider some of the compounds. In 3.3.3 we shall consider how *poieō* ('to act') and *paschō* ('to be acted upon') complement each other and correlate with the active/passive relation behind our suffering – this is done (action) and that happens (something receives the results of the action), because of this that (cf. 1.2.1, 1.2.3 Law of Karma). There is a relationship between active/passive and the Stoic categories of being and becoming – the qualification of our being and how we are disposed and disposed in a way relative to other things.⁵⁶¹ In addition, this relationship has a bearing on the significance of what we say to ourselves in how we act and are acted upon (1.6, 3.3.3, 4.5).

As a general rule we often talk of suffering in the sense of negative affections (aversiveness) whereas Epictetus clearly shows recognition that suffering can be also in the sense of positive affections (attractiveness). Sometimes Epictetus uses *paschō* in the sense of being moved by a situation or circumstance, which lures us towards something we desire. He cites the example of a thief admiring the property of others: 'I reflected that the man who stole it was moved (*epathen*) by no unreasonable motive';⁵⁶² or in the case 'How did you feel (*epathes*)? Didn't you have a fever? Didn't your head ache?'⁵⁶³ As one would expect from the notion of experiencing being moved by *pathos*, Epictetus presents the case of not being moved as a state of *apatheia*, a state of mind undisturbed by passion,⁵⁶⁴ freedom from disturbance, be it from sorrow, anger, compulsion, hindrance or the like,⁵⁶⁵ being calm and tranquil (for example, in the case of not being moved by desire).⁵⁶⁶ Chrysippus argues that serenity arises and tranquillity comes when we are in harmony with nature,⁵⁶⁷ free from the deceptions and disturbances of externals; as Dobbin recalls, the earlier Stoics defined this as 'a good flow of life'.⁵⁶⁸ As Rist points out, a state of total *apatheia* would be a

⁵⁶⁰ Long (1890) 1.28.3-4

⁵⁶¹ 'miserable man that I am, what suffering (*paschō*) is mine, who am a slave to several' (4.1.37)

⁵⁶² *Diss.* 1.18.15

⁵⁶³ *Diss.* 3.25.7-8

⁵⁶⁴ *Diss.* 4.3.8

⁵⁶⁵ *Diss.* 3.13.11

⁵⁶⁶ *Diss.* 1.4.1

⁵⁶⁷ *Diss.* 1.4.25-29

⁵⁶⁸ Dobbin (2007) p.90

complete elimination of all feeling: all activities, including mental activities, would be suspended.⁵⁶⁹ He also points out that *apatheia* does not mean being insensible, as Epictetus makes clear: 'I ought not to be unfeeling like a statue'.⁵⁷⁰ In addition we have the notion of *eupatheia* and it is likely that Epictetus, following Chrysippus, had in mind *eupatheia* as being 'right sensibility towards rational states of experiencing good emotion/proper feeling'. For example, 'wish' is a 'well reasoned reaching' for something and 'joy' a 'well reasoned evaluation' about something.⁵⁷¹

Epictetus also includes compounds such as *sympaschō* ('to be sympathetically affected') and *prospaschō* ('to be devoted to, to be addicted to, feel affection for'). Having sympathy expresses the idea of experiencing shared or common feelings.⁵⁷²

Use Cases of Paschō

The following are examples indicating Epictetus' extensive use of the term *paschō* to provide supporting evidence of our claim that Epictetus teaching' embraces both the broad and narrow sense of the concept of suffering:

a) To (generally) experience

We have from Diogenes Laertius 'For the impression arises first, and then thought, which has the power of utterance, expresses in language what it experiences by the agency of the impression'⁵⁷³ and from Aëtius 'An impression is an affection occurring in the soul'.⁵⁷⁴ Epictetus also remarks that our experiences leave imprints on the mind, and the qualities, which make us human depend on the imprints we bring with us in our mind.⁵⁷⁵ As Epictetus asks, 'What imprint do his judgements bear?';⁵⁷⁶ our actions are shaped by these imprints. In Buddhism the *kamma* (actions) leaves us with experiences and *kammic* imprints,⁵⁷⁷ and future volitions and actions subsequently create further experiences and imprints (1.2.1 on *kamma* and 2.3.2 on dispositions). In 3.3.3-3.3.5 this *kammic* effect will be illustrated by examples from Epictetus' use of active/passive.

These things we experience (*paschomen*) can move us, touch us, influence us in various ways, they can make us joyful or sad and we form opinions, likes and dislikes and judgements concerning them. We can admire externals or be earnest about them, and these leave imprints on the mind, as Epictetus says, 'We too experience something of the same kind (Τοιοῦτόν τι καὶ ἡμεῖς πάσχομεν)',⁵⁷⁸ but do we feel joy or anxiety as a result of these experiences? It depends on how we have dealt with our experiences in the past. Children confronted with the fear of a mask are affected because of their ignorance or inexperience:⁵⁷⁹ we experience (*paschomen*)⁵⁸⁰ something of the same sort also in the

⁵⁶⁹ Rist (2010) p.35

⁵⁷⁰ *Diss.* 3.2.4

⁵⁷¹ Graver (2007) pp.51-53

⁵⁷² *Diss.* 1.14.2

⁵⁷³ DL 7.49-51 (SVF 2.52, 55, 61)

⁵⁷⁴ Aëtius 4.12.1-5 (SVF 2.54)

⁵⁷⁵ *Diss.* 4.5.15

⁵⁷⁶ *Diss.* 4.5.17

⁵⁷⁷ Tashi Tsering (2005) pp.77-78

⁵⁷⁸ *Diss.* 2.16.11

⁵⁷⁹ *Diss.* 2.1.15-17

general course of our life, we can also become affected (*paschomen*)⁵⁸¹ by the events and bugbears of life. We may experience the same fear as the frightened deer, and act like a deer (*λοιπὸν ἡμεῖς τὸ τῶν ἐλάφων πάσχομεν*)⁵⁸² and run away from the event. In these examples, we can understand Epictetus⁵⁸³ as saying we lack confidence in regard to things indifferent, a discussion taken up by Graver.

Of course experiences may not be seen or felt as suffering when they arise, remain or cease but they may be the cause of suffering (at some later time): this is the conditioned existence that Buddhists directly refer to and which occurs consistently in Epictetus through our mental dispositions (See 3.2.2).

b) To be persuaded

In the following extract Epictetus illustrates the use of *paschō* in the sense of being persuaded, and having a feeling about something:

'... assent from a persuasion (the feeling) (παθεῖν) that a thing is so ... dissent from a persuasion (the feeling) (παθεῖν) that it is not so ... suspended judgement from a persuasion (the feeling) (παθεῖν) that it is uncertain ...'⁵⁸⁴

This passage is pivotal to Epictetus' thinking: impressions arise in our feelings and thoughts in different ways: things are and seem to be, or not to be as the case may be; or things are not and yet seem so, or seem not so,⁵⁸⁵ depending on what has persuaded us, or given us this feeling about this impression. It is important here to note we are referring to feelings and so not necessarily emotions or passions. This proves to be critical to our argument of the broad scope of being subjectively aware of mental change in us. As with Buddhist theory on Dependent Origination, impressions condition feeling and feeling in turn conditions craving and desires.⁵⁸⁶ Similarly, Graver talks about our capacity to undergo a wide range of feelings.⁵⁸⁷ How we are persuaded (acted upon) to assent to something, or to dissent from something or to suspend judgement of something, depends on several things; Bonhöffer observes that our impressions and opinions may in part correspond to reality but also in part may not.⁵⁸⁸ Epictetus acknowledges that there are shades of belief, opinion, feeling and thought and so, when being acted upon (persuaded), our judgement may have been induced by an appeal to some emotion (*pathos*), or some reasoning (*logos*) or some disposition (*ēthos*), or a combination of these, in relation to this impression. A classic example Epictetus often gives is how we are persuaded and our soul moved by the emotion expressed in words and language: 'it is not the

⁵⁸⁰ *Diss.* 4.13.6

⁵⁸¹ *Diss.* 2.1.15

⁵⁸² *Diss.* 2.1.8

⁵⁸³ *Diss.* 2.1 (cf. Graver (2007) pp.48-49, 213-220)

⁵⁸⁴ *Diss.* 1.18.1-2

⁵⁸⁵ *Diss.* 1.27.1

⁵⁸⁶ Tsering (2005) pp.93-99

⁵⁸⁷ Graver (2007) pp.36-37

⁵⁸⁸ Bonhöffer (1996) p.145

word that I fear, but the emotion, which produces the word'.⁵⁸⁹ Our habits or disposition (*ēthos*) can have a powerful influence over us where the very slippery nature of sense-impressions is concerned, inducing and persuading us to employ desires and aversions upon externals.⁵⁹⁰ The crucial question Epictetus raises is the 'plausibility of things' and so being drawn away from the real affairs of life.⁵⁹¹ The danger, as Dobbin rightly remarks, is misdiagnosing our impressions, holding false opinions and being influenced by bad habits.⁵⁹²

When we are persuaded (acted upon), we have suffered and experienced some action and our very nature reveals itself through this suffering: how we are disposed (*ēthos*) towards an impression reveals itself, how we emotionally react (*pathos*) towards the impression reveals itself, or how we reason (*logos*) towards the impression is revealed. These things about us are revealed whether we are persuaded (acted upon) by what others say to us, through their rhetoric, or by what we say to ourselves through the words and language we use and the thoughts and propositions behind these things we say to ourselves. It is our reasoning that contemplates these things and determines whether we assent or dissent or suspend judgement.

Epictetus uses several words related to persuasion: *pathein* ('to be acted upon'),⁵⁹³ *peithō* ('to prevail on, win over, persuade, convince')⁵⁹⁴ and *pithanos* ('persuasive, plausible, convincing').⁵⁹⁵ Being persuaded (*pathein*), that is, experiencing that a thing is so is not exactly the same as convincing/persuading (*peithō*) oneself that the thing is so. In the latter case, we are persuading ourselves by changing our belief about something (that it is so) and the former is having the experience and feeling that it is so. With the former there are degrees of persuasion, depending on the level of conscious thought, for example, when we get a convincing sense impression (*phantasia katalēptikē*) as this carries with it a certainty of belief.⁵⁹⁶

Those that are easily carried away with their impressions of things are easily persuaded by the appeal of emotion rather than through a rational argument. We may be affected (persuaded) by the inspiring speeches of Cicero or by the threatening words of Caesar or a tyrant: 'I am the mightiest in the world'⁵⁹⁷ or 'All men pay attention to me'.⁵⁹⁸ Man may be persuaded by the sight of the tyrant's guards, the sound of the tyrant's voice or by things seen and heard by the mind regarding our perception of the tyrant. We also have the case where Epictetus is arguing against the Epicureans and the Academics:

⁵⁸⁹ *Diss.* 4.1.115-116

⁵⁹⁰ *Diss.* 3.12.6

⁵⁹¹ *Diss.* 1.17.2, 1.26.3

⁵⁹² Dobbin (2007) p.215

⁵⁹³ *Diss.* 1.28.13

⁵⁹⁴ *Diss.* 1.11.34

⁵⁹⁵ *Diss.* 4.6.7

⁵⁹⁶ *Diss.* 3.8.5

⁵⁹⁷ *Diss.* 1.19.2

⁵⁹⁸ *Diss.* 1.19.4

'I greatly fear that a noble-spirited young man may hear these statements and be influenced (*pathēi*) by them, or, having been influenced (*pathōn*) already, may lose all the germs of nobility, which he possessed'.⁵⁹⁹

We should stand by our judgement if rightly formed, but if our judgement is irrational we should change it: we should not cling to our judgement if it is wrong, and consequently we must only abide by right decisions, anything else can leave us disturbed, disappointed and diseased; our persuasions can lead us to incline us in one direction and then in another:

'if you are persuaded (*pathōn*) it is right, do not change your opinion, if that seems best to you, but abide by it and say that you ought to abide by your decisions'.⁶⁰⁰

c) *To be influenced, devoted or attached to something*

As discussed in 3.2, our craving and then clinging to things – people, possessions, feelings, judgements, mental formations – can cause us to suffer (cf. 1.2.3 attachment to the five aggregates). Epictetus' advice is, 'whenever you grow attached (*prospaschēis*) to something, do not act as though it were one of those things that cannot be taken away'⁶⁰¹ (cf. 2.2.3.3 on impermanence). This illustrates another important aspect, the dynamic nature of *paschō*, to be moved towards or away from something (as a result of the active/passive union or pairing of *paschō/poieō* (attraction or repulsion: see our discussion in 3.3.3 for more details of this relationship)-

What we experience through external events and circumstances can have a powerful influence over us, which can attract or repulse us. We can be influenced (*pathēi*) by what others say or having been influenced (*pathōn*) by what they have said can cause us to be moved and act in a wrong or improper way, we are affected (*paschomen*). Epictetus argues that we should not be devoted or addicted (*prospaschein*) to things that are not our own, but we should be influenced by true judgements (*πάσχειν ἀξίῳ, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ δογμάτων ὀρθῶν*),⁶⁰² as Long reminds us we are returning to the distinction between what is 'ours' and 'what is not ours', and material well-being is 'not ours', and so mistaking this difference means we misidentify our happiness.⁶⁰³ Being devoted to or yearning (*prospaschein*) for things not in our control is not what we ought to be doing⁶⁰⁴ if we are not to be affected by suffering and hindered from leading an untroubled life.

d) *To suffer by or to submit to something*

Continuing in a similar vein our external impressions create changes in us, *affections of the mind* (*psychēs pathōn*);⁶⁰⁵ as Long argues, impressions not only furnish the content of thought and action,⁶⁰⁶ they also help to constitute the thinker and agent i.e. the self. These arouse in us a desire of, or an aversion to, something, for example, continual worries or anxieties about some external

⁵⁹⁹ *Diss.* 2.20.34-35

⁶⁰⁰ *Diss.* 2.15.7-8

⁶⁰¹ *Diss.* 3.24.84

⁶⁰² *Diss.* 2.16.26-27

⁶⁰³ Long (2002) p.185

⁶⁰⁴ *Diss.* 3.24

⁶⁰⁵ *Diss.* 2.18.11

⁶⁰⁶ Long (2008) p. 577 (cf. Barney (1992); Sorabji (1990))

thing, or the covetousness of some external thing, such as the desire for money.⁶⁰⁷ If we continue to be aroused by these impressions every time they appear then our affections (*psuchēs pathōn*) become habitual, this condition is hardened and our weakness for this will be strengthened and so disease and suffering sets in. Epictetus warns of suffering (*pathē*) through admiration of things external.⁶⁰⁸ We also see his use of *paschō* used in the context of man's proper use of externals: 'then if you come forth without having suffered (*pathōn*) any harm, the others will congratulate you on your escape'.⁶⁰⁹

Epictetus states that once man submits (*paschei*) himself to externals he becomes their slave and gets what he deserves (*axios*), and as he continues in this way he submits (*paschei*) to all that a jailbird is worthy of and deserves.⁶¹⁰ The key argument is that the externals he submits to become his masters; they have control over what he desires, and he also has masters in the form of circumstances and these are many. Hence, it must follow that those too who have authority over some one of these circumstances are our masters: from his submission to slavery we learn what the fellow suffers (*γνώση οἷα πάσχει*).⁶¹¹

Likewise Epictetus illustrates the suffering that can ensue by submitting ourselves to externals, in this case, to gain the friendship of others. Here he is referring to that fact that to become a friend of Caesar man must carry out several tasks and suffer as a consequence: his suffering relates to all the worries, distress and anxieties he must endure to avoid failure to gain companionship; he must impress and flatter Caesar, convince Caesar of his loyalty, prove his worth, his value to Caesar:

'... the number of things must I suffer (*pathein*) and endure to become his friend.'⁶¹²

e) To bear something

Epictetus uses the example of Socrates to show that despite his treatment, he was still was able to experience and bear himself with a noble soul (*gennaiōs paschei*). However, the other man is the one who suffers harm, the man who is subjected to the most pitiful and disgraceful experience (*οἰκτρότατα πάσχων καὶ αἴσχιστα*).⁶¹³ Bearing oneself in a noble and dignified way against all odds, against temptation and the lure of externals is to be subjected to suffering but at the same time not to suffer damage or harm. This is to bear and forbear,⁶¹⁴ to be free from suffering harm. Epictetus' counter example is 'what we suffer (*paschomen*) we suffer (*paschomen*) with fears and groans':⁶¹⁵ we moan and groan about 'circumstances', about things going in our favour, about situations that happen out of our control; we do not bear (*paschei*) these things that are out of our control, we wish to make ourselves suffer because of them.

⁶⁰⁷ *Diss.* 2.18.8

⁶⁰⁸ *Diss.* 1.4.26

⁶⁰⁹ *Diss.* 2.5.22-23

⁶¹⁰ *Diss.* 4.1.38-39

⁶¹¹ *Diss.* 4.1.59-60

⁶¹² *Diss.* 4.1.96

⁶¹³ *Diss.* 4.1.127

⁶¹⁴ *Fr.* 10

⁶¹⁵ *Diss.* 2.6.17

The above examples (a – e) provide a sample of evidence towards our claim that *paschō* in its deployment in Epictetus is diverse: it is as broad as it is narrow. In this sense, the resulting suffering is a subjective passive experience that could be a gross, strong and painful disease or a subtle disease with a deeper and more pervasive sense and sensibility towards our feelings, perceptions and cognitions (cf. three types of suffering: 2.2.3.2 suffering of suffering, 2.2.3.3 suffering of change, and 2.2.3.4 all- pervasive suffering).

3.3.3 *The Active and Passive*

We shall now consider the verb *poieō* ('to do/act/make')⁶¹⁶ and its relationship to *paschō* to further our argument and claim that language is a key factor in our suffering mind. The concepts of the active and passive appear in Epictetus at times as inseparable items and at other times as related through distinct separable ideas. As already discussed (1.7.2-3), the active and passive *sankharas* function in the same way; the active constructs the mental formations that apprehend the quality of the feelings, perceptions and impressions experienced.

3.3.3.1 *Agent and Patient*

In using *poieō* Epictetus explores a full range of meanings and effects from 'doing and acting' through to 'making, producing, creating, causing', all of which can result in a range of effects/affections. We can of course create an action of body, speech or mind: what is done, said or thought can result in a pleasant or unpleasant feeling or reaction in us. The two verbs *poieō* and *paschō* represent a causal relationship between that which acts/does something (agent) and that which is acted upon/affected (patient) – (cf. 1.2.1 cause (*kamma* - action) and effect (*vipaka* - consequences)). We have noted that the two verbs are thus correlated and dynamically dependent on each other in that they share a causal relationship with each other. One concerns natural activities of various kinds (do, make, create, produce, cause, act) while the other concerns the states of being moved, of experience and affection; the activity of 'this' causes 'that' to be affected, and 'that' is affected (acted upon) by the action of 'this'; if 'this' then 'that'. The natural world has many examples of this active/passive relationship: the sun heats the stone and the stone is heated by the sun, the stone experiences the warming rays of the sun; the wind blowing across a stretch of water disturbs the surface of the water. The whole of Epictetus' teaching of *prohairesis* (moral purpose or volition) is premised on the dynamics of the relationship between our active and passive existence. As discussed in 1.4.5 ignorance leads to volition and to afflicting emotions and negative states of mind, such as jealousy, anger or fear. According to Diogenes Laertius' summary of Stoic doctrines, 'reflexive predicates are those among the passive, which, although in form passive, are yet active operations ... for here the agent includes himself in the sphere of his action, he asserts something about himself'.⁶¹⁷

⁶¹⁶ See LSJ s.v. 'poieō'

⁶¹⁷ DL 7.65

As a comparison the *sankhara* (1.7.2) that leads to our dispositional tendencies and our conditioned mind also displays this passive/active reflexivity. This is analogous to Epictetus' ideas about the active/passive nature of our being and the mental condition of our mind (1.4, 1.7, 4.2). We shall explore this again in further parts of this thesis.

3.3.3.2 Use Cases of *Poieō* in Epictetus

The causal relationship of act and acted upon in Epictetus is not always as obvious as expressed above but nevertheless it is present: sometimes *poieō* is embedded in a series of questions as part of his dialectical style of teaching. 'What, then, should I do?' (τί οὖν μοι καθήκει ποιεῖν):⁶¹⁸ accept a feeling that something is wrong, false; 'What do you wish me to do?' (τί με θέλετε ποιεῖν)⁶¹⁹ to avoid the fear of death: what I should do is not wish for something that does not come to pass; or in the case of adapting our preconceptions to individual instances, who knows 'what we ought to do and what we ought not to do.'⁶²⁰ As part of a dialectical discussion man's goal is said to be 'To live securely, to be happy, to do everything as he wishes to do, not to be hindered, not to be subject to compulsion'.⁶²¹

We can identify from this sample of uses in Epictetus that the potential development of the causal effect of this suffering is due to that situation happening; this suffering is due to man doing/not doing something; this suffering comes about because of that being produced. As already discussed in 1.5 and 1.6, the language-thought-feeling-action relationship through the use of the active/passive pair (*poieō* and *paschō*), what we say (*legō*) and the meaning of what we say (*lekton*) is, in Epictetus, part of his distinct mix of linguistic teaching styles and methods: for example, inner dialogues, the *protreptic*, *elenctic* and *didactic*, and the like, all of which constitute a demonstration of the experience of language and suffering.⁶²²

It is an interesting fact, but not entirely surprising, that within the *Discourses* there are far more occurrences of the word *poieō* ('to do/act') than the word *paschō* ('to be acted upon'): see Appendix B. This supports the claim that Epictetus is attempting to do what the Buddhists have also attempted, that is, find the cause for man's suffering, and so is examining the actions, the things are done, in an attempt to unlock the meaning of what is behind our suffering. Equally the word *legō* (see Appendix A) is also frequently used in Epictetus: again our interpretation about such use is that his prime focus is on the causes of suffering and what we say to ourselves is significant in this respect. The meaning of this (*lekton*) and the associated propositional content, which may or may not be deemed as true or false, can either lead us on a road towards craving and clinging, and hence suffering, or towards freedom from suffering.

⁶¹⁸ *Diss.* 1.7.14

⁶¹⁹ *Diss.* 1.27.9

⁶²⁰ *Diss.* 2.11.3

⁶²¹ *Diss.* 4.1.46

⁶²² Long (2002) discusses in detail Epictetus' teaching styles on the one hand specifically oriented towards a Socratic style of dialogue (pp.67-94) and on the other hand towards a refutational style he used to confront the Sceptics (pp.104-107). Sellars (2003) discusses doctrines and exercises in relation to education (pp.108-110, 132-133).

In addition, Epictetus' dialectical teaching style leads the student through a path of discovery to unravel the question why man has been affected (acted upon): because of this doing (action) that has happened (been affected). 'Why man what are you about/doing?'⁶²³, says Epictetus, leading us to question our actions as part of a path of questions of discovery to find out why we are suffering, why we are unhappy and why disease comes into our life.

Due to the Production of This, That is Produced

Again the Buddhist discourse on Dependent Origination says, 'Due to the existence of this, that arises. Due to the production of this, that is produced. It is thus: due to ignorance there is volition.'⁶²⁴ Due to the attractiveness of external things, positive affections (desires) arise in us and due to the unattractiveness of external things, negative affections (aversions) arise in us. This Buddhist thesis on the formation of conditional arising is in broad agreement with Epictetus' view and we argue that desires and aversions are produced in the mind due to our being acted upon by the impression we have that something appears pleasurable or agreeable to us, or that something appears disagreeable or unpleasant to us. Someone's distasteful behaviour towards us can produce a dislike and hate for that person. Making good remarks about you or making rude remarks affects your feelings; making you elated, happy or cheerful and miserable, sad or depressed.

The use of *poieō* to describe the production of a good or bad state of mind is commonly seen throughout Epictetus. On one occasion he leads his reader through a line of reasoning illustrating the importance of moral choice (*prohairesis*) and arguing that it is through choice that we are unfortunate or fortunate, we praise or blame one another. His line of argument concludes with 'it is this which, when ignored, produces wretchedness, but when attended to produces happiness.'⁶²⁵

A further point being made by Epictetus is the use of *poieō* in the context of judgements, beliefs and opinions, which lead us to produce, create or make something happen. Here are examples from Epictetus: 'judgements producing love in the household';⁶²⁶ 'Can you, then show anything higher than your opinion which will make it possible for us to apply our preconceptions better?'⁶²⁷ and 'what, then, is it which makes a man free from hindrance and his own master? For wealth does not do it, nor consulship [...] but something else has to be found'.⁶²⁸ In this last example the word *poioun* is used in the sense of making something endowed with a certain quality, in this case 'being free' and the question Epictetus wants us to consider is what needs to be done to produce this freedom. In reinforcing his point, Epictetus talks about the musician being anxious in anticipation of the audience's response to his performance: ' "This man's desire and aversion are affected, he is not getting along well, he is feverish."... For there is nothing else that changes a man's complexion, or

⁶²³ *Diss.* 2.15.7-8

⁶²⁴ Tashi Tsering (2005) p.18

⁶²⁵ *Diss.* 2.23.26-29

⁶²⁶ *Diss.* 4.5.35

⁶²⁷ *Diss.* 2.11.12

⁶²⁸ *Diss.* 4.1.62

makes him tremble, or his teeth to chatter, or to “shift from knee to knee and rest on either foot”,⁶²⁹ In this extract we see again the use of the active and passive in operation: *τρόμον ποιεῖ* ('makes him tremble'). Epictetus is ceaseless in his dialogues in involving the active voice to argue and to illustrate that man's actions can hinder him, lead him astray in the use of impressions and the formation of irrational and unwholesome thoughts.

What Am I Doing?

Doing things makes things happen: things that can affect not only us, but also others. Making moral choices (*prohairesis*) about what we do, make, produce, create can cause things to happen that will bear fruit (cf. the Buddhist notion of an effect (*vipaka*) - 1.2.1, 5.2.1) at some point in time (cf. *kamma* in 1.5 and *sankhara* in 1.7). Doing things with a certain intention bears with it a certain moral character and attitude, be it good, bad or neutral.

Epictetus exploits the moral intent and result of doing things (*poieō*): 'making men witness, reflect, examine and question what they are doing'⁶³⁰ to discover why they are wretched. Understanding the basic motive and cause behind their doing is clearly at the heart of his teaching, as is illustrated in the following: 'What, then; was the motive nothing at all which actuated you and induced you ... we ought not to look for the motive anywhere outside of ourselves, but in all cases it is one and the same thing that is the cause of our doing a thing or our not doing it, or of our saying things, or our not saying them, of our being elated, or of our being cast down, of our avoiding things, or of our pursuing them.'⁶³¹ Epictetus advises us to be proactive, making use of questions to ask and check our reasoning, to see for ourselves what the causes of our going astray are: why we do what we do (say, think and act) and why this can make us elated in one instance, or cast down in another instance: 'to consider the cause of our doing, or of our not doing,'⁶³² to examine our judgements, opinions and decision, to practise and realise the truths of our suffering (1.3). One of the key reasons we should self-question and self-examine is for self-discovery:⁶³³ why do I have the desires, judgements, beliefs and thoughts I have? Epictetus asks 'Man what are you about (what are you doing?'⁶³⁴ Am I making rational or irrational decisions about things? If my judgement is irrational then why do I not change it? My judgement can cause suffering, so if I know this then why not change this judgement? But if I have persuaded myself that I am right and I cling obstinately to this decision, despite it being false, then I will act 'like a sick man'.⁶³⁵ We should ask 'What am I about?', reflect on what the right decisions are and then understand and know 'what I ought to do'.⁶³⁶ The more obstinate we become about our opinions and judgements, the stronger our grip, the tighter we

⁶²⁹ *Diss.* 2.13.13

⁶³⁰ *Diss.* 3.22.26, 3.22.77

⁶³¹ *Diss.* 1.11.27-29

⁶³² *Diss.* 1.11.33

⁶³³ Long (2002) pp.90-91

⁶³⁴ *Diss.* 2.15.7-8

⁶³⁵ *Diss.* 2.15.14-15

⁶³⁶ *Diss.* 2.15.16

cling and refuse to change: 'I have decided'⁶³⁷ ... 'Talk to me about anything else, but on this point I have made my decision' (cf. 3.5.3).⁶³⁸

Much of our doing becomes habit forming; fixed dispositions and habits become confirmed and strengthened by the corresponding actions 'πᾶσα ἔξις καὶ δύναμις ὑπὸ τῶν καταλλήλων ἔργων συνέχεται καὶ αὔξεται'.⁶³⁹ Hence a cycle of habit and suffering goes hand in hand, as does habit and well-being: 'In general, therefore, if you want to do something make a habit of it; if you want not to do something, refrain from doing it, and accustom yourself to something else instead'.⁶⁴⁰ As Epictetus argues, affairs of the mind are determined by what we do and what we do acts upon us, affects us, creates feelings, thoughts and suffering in us. The continuous habit of doing something that affects us in a bad way, intensifies and strengthens (ἐπιτείνεσθαι καὶ ἰσχυροποιεῖσθαι)⁶⁴¹ the habit but also the affect in us.

We don't naturally want to be dissatisfied, to have unpleasant experiences or feelings; we would like the opposite of these things. If we are doing something that causes us some disease, we are not doing something we wish (δῆλον ὅτι ὁ μὲν θέλει οὐ ποιεῖ).⁶⁴² If we are being rational this situation will be contradictory to us and we can stop doing what is contradictory. If we do not see this contradiction then we will continue to do things we do not wish. It is therefore our ignorance that prevents us from renouncing the false and so we assent to a falsehood as if it were the truth.⁶⁴³ So we need to see that not doing what we wish and doing what we do not wish causes us to err and this can lead us to suffer. If we present such a contradiction to our governing faculty it will desist through the strength of rational argument.⁶⁴⁴ As Epictetus says, 'He... who can bring home to <a man> how he is not doing what he wishes and is doing what he does not wish, is strong in argument and... effective in encouragement and refutation.'⁶⁴⁵

I Am What I Do

Epictetus wants us to gain insight and understanding by self-interrogation of our experiences and impressions, and to take our philosophy of life seriously. He says: "My desire is not different from what it used to be, nor my choice, nor my assent, nor, in a word, have I changed at all, in my use of external impressions, from my former state." Think this and say this about yourself, if you wish to think aright. If not, keep on playing at hazard and doing what you are doing now; for it becomes you.⁶⁴⁶ (cf. Right View in 5.2). Similarly in Buddhism our clinging and attachment to things (*upādāna* – see 2.2.3.4) includes attachment to our views (interpretations of our experience) and views are the

⁶³⁷ *Diss.* 2.15.14

⁶³⁸ *Diss.* 2.15.17

⁶³⁹ *Diss.* 2.18.1

⁶⁴⁰ *Diss.* 2.18.4

⁶⁴¹ *Diss.* 2.18.7

⁶⁴² *Diss.* 2.26.2

⁶⁴³ *Diss.* 2.26.3

⁶⁴⁴ *Diss.* 2.26.7

⁶⁴⁵ *Diss.* 2.26.4-6

⁶⁴⁶ *Diss.* 3.21.24

result of mental formations (*sankhara*). For Epictetus, whatever you want to become depends on what you do: craving and clinging will make you suffer (2.2, 3.2.2-3), so if you wish to suffer then keep on craving and clinging to your desires, choices, assents and use of external impressions and your views. As Epictetus points out, 'Tell yourself, first of all, what kind of man you want to be; and then go ahead with what you are doing'.⁶⁴⁷ A man wants to be an athlete so he acts and practises his skills accordingly: he wants to be a carpenter, so his actions should be commensurate with those of a carpenter; and if he wants to be a good and excellent man then he must be trained in the things that are conducive to making him this (1.3).⁶⁴⁸

One of the reasons for Epictetus' insistence on our acting in the right way (cf. Buddhist Right Action in 5.2.) is the importance of making the right moral choices (4.4). Acting with right choice in regard to externals is something that should be a good habit to get into (2.3.2) and being self-sufficient in our own virtue is something emphasized by Chrysippus.⁶⁴⁹ This, says Epictetus, means that everything we do we should be done with reference to some standard to meet some fixed purpose, to have some target to aim at and not done to act at random. So what are the standards against which we should act and aspire to? First 'I must act as a man ... not... act as a sheep, gently but without fixed purpose; nor destructively, like a wild beast' and second the standard applies to our individual pursuits, customs, ways of living and our moral purpose (*prohairesis*).⁶⁵⁰ The point of this discourse is that we should be doing things with a particular purpose and this needs to be the right purpose, in Buddhist terms with the Right Intention and with the Right View (5.2). The occupation of a carpenter means he needs to act as a carpenter; that is his purpose. Whatever we are doing we need to do according to the right purpose and our standard of judgement needs to be the right one. What I am is shaped by what I do and what I do affects how I feel and suffer and how I experience things.

Things Done with a Certain Quality

Another aspect supporting Epictetus' call to do things in the right way is to act and do things where there is a certain quality behind what we produce or create and it is endowed with a certain quality, that is, the results are afforded with certain attributes, value or aspects of quality – to do good or to fare badly.⁶⁵¹ What I do can make me ugly or beautiful, not in appearance but in moral character, the excellence that characterises man, or as Epictetus would say what it means to be a man. Epictetus questions us: 'Observe who they are whom you yourself praise, when you praise people dispassionately; is it the just or the unjust ... the temperate or the dissolute ... the self-controlled or the uncontrolled?'⁶⁵² Our answer should be the just, temperate and self-controlled:

⁶⁴⁷ *Diss.* 3.23.1

⁶⁴⁸ *Diss.* 3.2.1-2

⁶⁴⁹ Reesor (1951) pp.103-104

⁶⁵⁰ *Diss.* 3.23.5-6

⁶⁵¹ *Diss.* 4.1.122

⁶⁵² *Diss.* 3.1.8

these are the characteristics of being beautiful.⁶⁵³ If we adorn ourselves externally to make ourselves beautiful for the purposes of appearance only then we shall suffer, as this type of beauty is impermanent, and we are making ourselves slaves to something that is not entirely under our control and which can be taken away from us. 'Make your *prohairesis* beautiful':⁶⁵⁴ our action should be to eradicate our worthless opinions and secure ourselves against disease, freeing ourselves from hindrance and being compelled 'to do everything as he wishes to do'.⁶⁵⁵

Epictetus frequently puts emphasis on the quality of what is being done to stress the causal effectiveness: 'the act which proceeds from correct judgements is well done, and that which proceeds from bad judgements is badly done.'⁶⁵⁶ Hence things done in a bad or wrong way produce bad results, things done in a good or right way produce good results (cf. Buddhist *kamma* – 1.2.1-3). The Buddhist Eightfold Path that will be discussed in 5.2 similarly stresses the quality of doing things in the right way to achieve wholesome (*kusala*) moral quality rather than unwholesome (*akusala*): Right View (5.2.2.1), Right Action (5.2.2.2), Right Effort (5.2.2.3) all are aimed at affecting us in a way that produces peace of mind and a flourishing life and frees us from our suffering: wrong view clouds our perception, can generate excessively subjective views and unbridled attachment to things (*upādāna* – 2.2.3.4), right views are inclined towards opposite objectives and outcomes; right view of the five aggregates and *sankhara* avoids the problems of 'This I am', 'This is mine' and so on.⁶⁵⁷

This notion of quality and judgement is a prime instance in Epictetus of why we go wrong - 'I shall cause those women sorrow?' *You* cause them sorrow? Not at all, but it will be the same thing that causes sorrow to you yourself - bad judgement. What, then, can you do? Get rid of that judgement and, if they do well, they will themselves get rid of their judgement; otherwise, they will come to grief and have only themselves to thank for it'.⁶⁵⁸

Good and evil resides in our moral character, but we often assign these quality values to outside things: something is good or bad, beautiful or ugly. 'But in everyday life what do I do? Sometimes I call a thing good and sometimes bad.'⁶⁵⁹ It is for this very reason that disappointment and dissatisfaction arise because we assign quality values to external things through ignorance and inexperience. We should ask ourselves what is our standard of measurement for judging the value or quality of something, for example, are they a good or a bad man? Certainly whenever we attach value or cling to the value of something 'it makes no difference what the external object be, the value you set upon it makes you subservient to another'.⁶⁶⁰

Creations Without (That Act Upon Us)

⁶⁵³ *Diss.* 3.1.24-28

⁶⁵⁴ *Diss.* 3.1.42-43

⁶⁵⁵ *Diss.* 4.1.46

⁶⁵⁶ *Diss.* 4.8.3

⁶⁵⁷ Bodhi (2005) pp.306-308

⁶⁵⁸ *Diss.* 2.16.40

⁶⁵⁹ *Diss.* 2.3.5

⁶⁶⁰ *Diss.* 4.4.1-2

Continuing with Epictetus' appeal to do things in the right way we must take care of our reactions and responses to things done to us. We are affected (acted upon) with a sense of fear, but what action caused this? The tyrant's presence creates a certain impression, the citizen receiving this impression is affected by fear. Here in Epictetus *poiei* is being used of the creation of an impression: 'What makes (poiei) the tyrant an object of fear?' The response is: 'His guards, someone says, and their swords, and the chamberlain, and those who exclude persons who would enter.'⁶⁶¹ Is it their physical presence that affects us? Is it their behaviour, their voice or the mere sight of them that affects us? We are acted upon by our thoughts creating a sense of fear.

Epictetus' teaching clearly stresses the importance of understanding the causal effectiveness of *poieō* and *paschō* and how by investigating this relationship between the two we should see the underlying problems of our suffering: the one acts relative to the other, and one is acted upon relative to the other. The cause and effect relationship between the active and passive signifies a certain movement or change: the one causes the movement or change in the other. Epictetus stresses the effects of 'things seen by the mind',⁶⁶² things that penetrate the mind – some are subject to man's will and under his control and others not: some terrifying sound comes from the sky, or from the collapse of a building, or sudden word comes of some peril or other, and so man cannot help but be disturbed, and especially by swift and unconsidered motions which forestall the action of reason.

Epictetus remarks 'some sense impression comes and immediately I go and act upon it'.⁶⁶³ From this he argues that by haphazardly following our impressions we do and suffer evils. We act upon a sense impression and this has an effect on us (and on others). For example, we observe someone else making an error, we take action and react, we get angry and we suffer a disturbed peace of mind – to which Epictetus comments 'What tragedy has any other source than this?'⁶⁶⁴

Creations Within (That Act Within Us)

We now return to the claim of Epictetus, which cautions us regarding 'things seen by the mind';⁶⁶⁵ (cf. 4.2.2) we have the situation of things that we produce or create in the mind (*empoiei*), maybe through senses, cognition, persuasion of the philosopher's discourse.⁶⁶⁶ These things produced or created in the mind (thoughts, feelings, images) act upon us in good or bad ways, and persuade us that we are in a good or bad way. Things produced in the mind might persuade us that things are as they are or not as they are: what is seen by the mind may give us the feeling that we are right.⁶⁶⁷

⁶⁶¹ *Diss.* 4.7.1-3

⁶⁶² *Fr.* 9 (cf. with the Buddhist notion of *sankhara* – 2.2.1, 1.7)

⁶⁶³ *Diss.* 1.28.31

⁶⁶⁴ *Diss.* 1.28.32

⁶⁶⁵ *Fr.* 9 (cf. with the Buddhist notion of *sankhara* – 2.2.1, 1.7)

⁶⁶⁶ *Diss.* 3.23.28

⁶⁶⁷ *Diss.* 2.26.6

In addition, suffering produces memory (*μνήμην ποιεῖ*), as in the case of slaves, the pain causes the remembrance (*ἐνταῦθα μὲν γὰρ ὁ πόνος τὴν μνήμην ποιεῖ*).⁶⁶⁸ The worse we are affected by what has acted upon us the worse memories we have, as is the case with any form of physical or mental abuse towards us.

Keeping Desires and Aversions Under Control

A repeated concern for Epictetus is those impressions that can affect us, with pleasure and delight, or sadness and fear, and importantly our actions, reactions and responses as a result of this affective experience. The extent to which we are affected by what is done to us is up to us and is a matter of our judgement and perception of the situation, having the feeling that this or that is the case: 'The judge will do some things to you, which are thought to be terrifying; but how can he make you try to avoid what you suffer? When, therefore, desire and aversion are under your control, what more do you care for?'.⁶⁶⁹ We need to keep in mind the general principles of 'What is mine? What is not mine?'.⁶⁷⁰ Desires and aversions should be kept intact, focusing on what is in my control to have and not have. Epictetus' claim is that if I do not do this and I do not accomplish what I desire then this makes me unfortunate and unhappy. If the desire is accomplished, then I become vain, as I am elated about things about which I should not be elated; and if I am impeded or hindered in my desires then consequently this makes me wretched because I fall into that which I would not fall into.⁶⁷¹ Such is the truth behind being affected by our desires, being acted upon: wanting and wishing for things out of our control.

Laying Claim to Things

Our discussion here looks at some of the compounds of *ποιεῖν* and not just the simple verb. For example, *antipoieō* is used by Epictetus to mean 'to lay claim (or make a claim)' to something, or 'to seek after or exert oneself' about a thing: it should be noted he uses it in the middle form and not the active form. Epictetus' usage takes two forms:⁶⁷² firstly in the sense of laying claim to something that does not belong to you, and in the second sense making a claim about something, exerting oneself about a thing, seeking after it or contending with some one for a thing. Epictetus points again to the fact that laying claim to anything that is not your own is likely to end in disappointment and be the cause of suffering: not wanting to let go of things or to lose things, be it people or possessions, but also clinging to thoughts, opinions and judgements.

Epictetus consistently highlights the autonomy we have to be naturally free (psychologically), unhindered and unimpeded.⁶⁷³ But he insists we must draw the distinction between the internals and the externals, what does and does not depend on us. He says 'to guard what is his own, not to lay

⁶⁶⁸ *Diss.* 3.25.10

⁶⁶⁹ *Diss.* 2.2.5-6

⁶⁷⁰ *Diss.* 4.5.29

⁶⁷¹ *Diss.* 4.4.35

⁶⁷² *Diss.* 1.24.12, 2.6.25

⁶⁷³ Long (2002) pp.207-229 (cf. Bobzien (2001) pp.330-345; Stephens (2007) pp.7-16, 47-54)

claim to what is not his, but to make use of what is given to him, and not to yearn for what has not been given; when something is taken away to give it up readily and without delay, being grateful for the time in which you had the use of it'⁶⁷⁴ – this advice we need to practise as part of our daily exercises (see 1.3).

The action of attaching ourselves to something acts upon us and affects us with feelings of pleasure, desire, greed or delight. If that thing is taken away from us or we get detached from it in some way then we are affected with a sense of displeasure, unhappiness and loss. Epictetus adds to his arguments that things outside of ourselves make us act as if we were like slaves: 'but <he> immediately gives up what is not his own; he makes no claim to what is slavish.'⁶⁷⁵, 'Slavish' here is used in the sense of our being slaves to our attachments (see 2.3.3.4, 3.2.3 clinging to desires).

So the principle here is that we experience a disturbed mind by our own action of wanting something that is not ours to own, clinging to it as if we have a right to own it – 'Why, then, lay claim to that which is another's? If you always bear in mind what is your own and what is another's you will never be disturbed.'⁶⁷⁶

In one instance he uses this word in the context of our duties as citizens, telling us never to claim against our brother any of the things that lie outside the realm of our free moral choice (μηδέποτε ἀντιποιήσασθαί τινος πρὸς ἐαυτὸν τῶν ἀπροαιρέτων, ἀλλ' ἡδέως ἐκεῖνα προίεσθαι)⁶⁷⁷ we should let go of such claims, give them up; if not we have forgotten who we are and our duty. In other cases we have claims over authority and laying claim over others judgements.⁶⁷⁸

We hit at the heart of the theme of Epictetus' life, freedom and slavery, when we talk of being attached to people and things. We experience suffering through our attachments. Does a man attach himself to people and things to give him comfort and security?⁶⁷⁹ Things not in his control cannot provide him with this, but nevertheless man suffers and endures in order to find refuge in these things.⁶⁸⁰ So what should man attach himself to and what do we mean by 'attach himself':⁶⁸¹ to everything that is his own, under his control, to all within his moral purpose (*prohairesis*). Creating an attachment, addiction, affection (*προσπάσχω*) to or for something as if it cannot be taken away can only preempt and be a possible precursor for future suffering⁶⁸² - we should remember (*ὑπομνήσκω*) that nothing is permanent and act in a way that reminds us that these things are not our own possessions.⁶⁸³

Securing Things

⁶⁷⁴ *Diss.* 2.16.27-28

⁶⁷⁵ *Diss.* 3.22.103

⁶⁷⁶ *Diss.* 2.6.8, 2.6.24

⁶⁷⁷ *Diss.* 2.10.8

⁶⁷⁸ *Diss.* 1.29.9-12

⁶⁷⁹ *Diss.* 4.1.91-92

⁶⁸⁰ *Diss.* 4.1.93-96

⁶⁸¹ *Diss.* 4.1.99

⁶⁸² *Diss.* 3.24.84

⁶⁸³ *Diss.* 3.24.86

The action word *peripoiein* means ‘to procure, acquire or secure’ things, ‘cause to keep safe, preserve’ things. Epictetus uses this word in several contexts such as in the case of others that have the power to secure for us what we desire or prevent us from getting what we desire ‘τοῖς ἐκεῖνα περιποιεῖν ἢ κωλύειν δυναμένοις’.⁶⁸⁴ This means we are made subject to the whims of another’s control: acted upon to change according to their inclinations and desires, and tossed to and fro accordingly. However, in matters regarding our moral purpose, which are in our control (τὰ προαιρετικὰ δὲ πάντα ἐφ’ ἡμῖν), we have security and no man can claim things under our moral control, they cannot act upon us either to take away things from us ‘that are under our moral control’, or make us do things ‘under our moral control’ (καὶ οὐτ’ ἀφελέσθαι τις ἡμῶν αὐτὰ δύναται οὔτε περιποιῆσαι ἃ οὐ θέλομεν αὐτῶν), so there is no room left for anxiety.⁶⁸⁵ The sight and sound of the tyrant, his guards do not affect us once we win ourself security against grief and fear.⁶⁸⁶ Protecting and securing (*peripoiein* what is in our control, that is, our moral choice, we are master and authority over our moral choice but no one else’s moral choice (4.4).⁶⁸⁷

3.3.4 Consequences of Doing What We Will

So far in this chapter we have presented and discussed the use of the words *poieo* and *pascho* in the context of the experience of suffering: a doer creating, producing, causing something (agent) and a receiver receiving (patient); an agent acting and a patient being acted upon; the basic semantics behind this causal experience and the linguistical mechanics behind the fact that our suffering is our own affair, acts and deeds (*pragmata*) are in our control.⁶⁸⁸ If I want (*thelō*) to suffer I can will myself to suffer so turning around the words of Epictetus ‘If I wish (*thelō*) anything, I will speak to your master’⁶⁸⁹ – okay I can speak to my *prohairesis*.

3.3.4.1 Revealing Something About The Doer and the Done

If a man does anything, then this implies there must be something which is acted upon by this doer of the action – in *Gorgias* Socrates asks, ‘If a man does anything, must there be something which is also acted upon by this doer of the thing?’⁶⁹⁰ to which Polus responds in the affirmative. The nature of action reveals something about the nature of the thing performing the action, and it can also reveal something about the thing being acted upon. Another question Socrates raises with Polus is this: ‘Do people wish merely that which they do each time, or that which is the object of their doing what they do? Do those who take medicine by doctor’s orders wish, in your opinion, merely what they do, to take the medicine and suffer the pain of it, or rather to be healthy, which is

⁶⁸⁴ *Diss.* 1.4.19

⁶⁸⁵ *Diss.* 2.13.10

⁶⁸⁶ *Diss.* 3.24.17

⁶⁸⁷ *Ench.* 14

⁶⁸⁸ *Diss.* 4.4.35-37

⁶⁸⁹ *Diss.* 1.1.20

⁶⁹⁰ *Pl. Grg* 476b

the object of their taking it?⁶⁹¹ Clearly people wish to be healthy, to which Socrates adds, 'If a man does something for an object, he does not wish the thing that he does, but the thing for which he does it'.⁶⁹² This dialogue attempts to illustrate several messages, including that if a man does not want to have a diseased soul, he needs to realise that he has done something wrong to cause the disease: you reap whatever you sow; ignorance produces the volition to act (2.2). The dialogue between Socrates and Polus in *Gorgias* is closely echoed in Epictetus and this is particularly evident in regard to examples of the doer and the done.⁶⁹³ Long states that Epictetus' use of *Gorgias* was an indication of Socrates' influence on his own ethical teaching.⁶⁹⁴ Again, using the dialogue in *Gorgias*, it is asked 'And does it [the patient] suffer what the doer does, and is the effect such as the agent's action makes it?'⁶⁹⁵ When we are acted upon, we are affected in some way, have an experience, which in the general sense and in different degrees should be classed as suffering.

In the case of people, if the action is evil then this says something about the nature and moral character of the doer, likewise with a good action. What is done is a reflection of the doer, and sometimes directly reflects what the doer wants to achieve, the effect they wish to produce or create. The tyrant wants to create fear in his subjects.⁶⁹⁶ This tells us something about the tyrant: his intention is to create fear to gain power, to control others, to demonstrate his authority. His motives and intentions come across through his voice, which is terrifying, or his aggressive expression of the face, or his forceful behaviour or dictatorial commands and orders, or his authoritarian manner.

If the paradigm wrongdoer, the tyrant, makes a terrifying command with his voice, with the aim of raising fear in others and a person listening becomes fearful, then the effect on the person is such as the tyrant makes it and intended it. But of course not all people are acted upon (affected) in the same way and some people listening to the tyrant's voice are not affected by a feeling of fear; nevertheless there is an effect: it might be consciously drawing our attention to the tyrant's physical presence, or that the tyrant is impatiently craving attention or needing someone to take action. Epictetus' analogy here of a terrifying formidable sound from the sky, maybe a clap of thunder, suffices to make the point.⁶⁹⁷ The wise man is disturbed for a short time but soon after rejects any thought of danger when he examines his impressions and uses his reason to conclude that he sees nothing in them to cause him fear. It is only the fool, the uneducated person that thinks the cruel 'things seen by the mind'⁶⁹⁸ are what they appear to be.

3.3.4.2 To Affect and Be Affected

⁶⁹¹ Pl. *Grg* 467c

⁶⁹² Pl. *Grg*. 467d

⁶⁹³ *Diss.* 4.1.3 (*Grg.* 468), *Diss.* 2.26.31-2 (*Grg.* 468d), *Diss.* 4.1.122-123 (*Grg.* 474c ff.), *Diss.* 4.1.122-123 (*Grg.* 474c ff.), *Diss.* 1.18.1-2, 3.3.2-4 (*Grg.* 468b)

⁶⁹⁴ Long (2002) pp.70-74

⁶⁹⁵ Pl. *Grg.* 476d

⁶⁹⁶ *Diss.* 4.7.1

⁶⁹⁷ *Fr.*9

⁶⁹⁸ *Fr.*9

How the person who is acted upon is affected reveals something about the nature of that person; in the tyrant case above, all in his presence are affected, but how they are affected will be different to varying degrees: one person in fear and another not. Hence the active and the passive are mutually related in terms of action and suffering, feeling and affection and also they reveal the presence of contraries and differences. An action may result in a man being acted upon with a feeling of pleasure or of pain and sorrow. A good action could be received with the sense of a good feeling as it is our human nature to be drawn towards the good and repulsed from the evil. Of course the doer may believe their action is good and just but in fact it is not. The person acted upon may, by persuasion, have a feeling (*pathein*), see that this is so or it is not so⁶⁹⁹ (that the action is good and just, or it is bad and wrong); they suffer either way. Similarly in the Buddhist theory of Dependent Origination⁷⁰⁰ craving is conditioned by feeling, and feeling is conditioned by an impression (1.2.1, 1.7.2, 2.2.3.4). The action of the doer reflects whether they are a wrongdoer or have lost their way in their perception of right and wrong. The tyrant acts in ways that reveal his character, wanting power, control, fame and egotistical self-interest, and the effects on those acted upon are fears, anxieties, distress and abuse.

In the examples given by Epictetus in the *Discourses*, it is clear that his intention is to educate on the causal effect of our actions, which can be a movement of the soul, a qualitative change in a person's feelings, thinking, mood, and emotions; the thing being acted upon expresses their mode of being altered or modified in some way, most importantly not forgetting that the active and passive could be in the reflexive sense on ourself, our psychological freedom.

3.3.4.3 *He Is Not Doing What He Wishes*

Examining Epictetus' method and use of the active and passive leads us to much evidence as to the impact of our own conditioning in the sense of how our language and logic affects us: what we wish, want or will (*thelō*) creates thoughts, produces judgements and makes us do things (*poieō*) and this subsequently influences how we are affected (*paschō*). But, as Epictetus points out, errors of thinking arise and so 'He is not doing what he wishes and is doing what he does not wish'.⁷⁰¹ We may be doing (*poieō*) what we do because of our desire to achieve what we want or wish (*thelō*) or because of our aversion to avoid what we do not want. But our ignorance, bad judgement, wrong use of impressions can sometimes end up with our doing or not doing something or getting or not what we don't want: all distinctive characteristics of error. This happens when we want something not in our control; we have not regulated and maintained our wants within the sphere of those things in our control (what has not been given me outright).⁷⁰² Sometimes 'you wish not to be hindered'⁷⁰³ but

⁶⁹⁹ *Diss.* 1.18.1-2

⁷⁰⁰ Tashi Tsering (2005) pp.93-99

⁷⁰¹ *Diss.* 2.26.5

⁷⁰² *Diss.* 4.1.101

⁷⁰³ *Diss.* 2.2.4

'you wish also to maintain what is external';⁷⁰⁴ we suffer a misfortune, falling into something we do not wish.⁷⁰⁵

As Epictetus presents the story, the citharode is anxious because he wants something (audience applause), which is not in his power. 'For if he did not want something that was outside of his control, how could he still remain in anxiety?'⁷⁰⁶ There are many things we may wish for: 'success in a meeting, whilst being in control and maintaining our calm';⁷⁰⁷ 'to do good or be praised';⁷⁰⁸ '(for things under your control) to have it when you want it, as long as you want, and in the condition that you want';⁷⁰⁹ 'to be self-respecting and honourable ... not to be hindered nor compelled'.⁷¹⁰ If what you wish and desire is in your control who is it that will not allow you these things?

Suppose we compare ourselves with others, say to those that acquire many possessions, titles, and yet still need others, and then ask 'What, then, do I need?'⁷¹¹ Do you wish and need what is not in your control, and if so act to get these things but with the possibility of experiencing feelings of disappointment, suffering vexation, being drawn this way and that? Do we wish either to be free or a slave?⁷¹² So our wants, desires, needs, wishes (*thelō*) underpin and influence what we do, how we act, what we create and cause to happen (*poieō*) and how we are affected, and the consequences (*paschō*)?

Epictetus depicts the case of our innate desire to be right; naturally we do not wish to err⁷¹³ but to be right: 'it is clear he is not doing what he wishes' (δῆλον ὅτι ὁ μὲν θέλει οὐ ποιεῖ).⁷¹⁴ The argument is that we do not naturally want to make mistakes in our judgements but we do make mistakes and errors, the effect of which is that, we suffer fears and anxieties. The problem is that due to ignorance we do not know what we ought to be doing, and also through our ignorance and irrational judgements we are convinced that our decisions to act in a certain way are correct.

Epictetus' famously apt maxim for living a serene life is a recipe for a life free of suffering: 'Do not seek to have everything that happens happen as you wish, but wish for everything to happen as it actually does happen and your life will be serene.'⁷¹⁵ Sellars offers a good discussion of this, in particular regarding simple-fated and conjoined-fated things, and that Epictetus explicitly reminds us that we cannot control the outcome of the latter.⁷¹⁶ We also have the following line of argument from Epictetus that gives the strongest proof of trouble and misfortune, whilst illustrating the unfortunate plight and suffering of Medea⁷¹⁷: 'Do you at this moment desire (*theleis* what is possible

⁷⁰⁴ *Diss.* 2.2.9

⁷⁰⁵ *Diss.* 4.4.35

⁷⁰⁶ *Diss.* 2.13.1

⁷⁰⁷ *Diss.* 2.2.1-4

⁷⁰⁸ *Diss.* 3.23.7-8

⁷⁰⁹ *Diss.* 4.1.67

⁷¹⁰ *Diss.* 2.2.4-5

⁷¹¹ *Diss.* 3.9.16-17

⁷¹² *Diss.* 2.2.12-13

⁷¹³ *Diss.* 1.8, 1.18, 2.26, 3.2.2

⁷¹⁴ *Diss.* 2.26.2

⁷¹⁵ *Ench.* 8

⁷¹⁶ Sellars (2003) pp.137-138

⁷¹⁷ *Diss.* 2.17.17-22 (cf. Gill (2006) pp. 424, 428-429, 430-435)

in general and is possible for you in particular? If so why are you hampered? Why are you troubled? Are you not at this moment trying to escape what is inevitable? If so, why do you fall into any trouble, why are you unfortunate?' Then ask yourself, 'Why is it that when you want (*thelontos*) something it does not happen and when you do not want (*thelontos*) it, it does happen?' And so, 'I want (*thelō*) something, and it does not happen; and what creature is more wretched than I? I do not want (*thelō*) something, and it does happen; and what creature is more wretched than I?'

And so to the suffering of Medea:

'She did not know where the power lies to do what we wish (ποῦ κεῖται τὸ ποιεῖν ἃ θέλομεν) – that we cannot get this from outside ourselves, nor by disturbing and deranging things, Give up wanting to keep your husband and nothing of what you want fails to happen (μὴ θέλε τὸν ἄνδρα, καὶ οὐδὲν ὧν θέλεις οὐ γίνεται).'

The plight of Medea is that of seeking revenge for failing to get what she wanted. Consequently if you give to externals your desires and aversions you will fail to get what you wish and fall into what you want to avoid.⁷¹⁸ Again and again, we must learn that 'nothing shall be that you do not wish and that nothing shall fail to be that you do wish (*thelontos*)'.⁷¹⁹ If you wish (*theleis*) anything external you will follow it with anxiety and groaning, as it is stronger than you are.⁷²⁰

'Will you (*thelei*) not act (*poieī*) like a sick man and summon a physician?'⁷²¹ Should Medea have consulted her physician on how to relieve her disease? The sick man should consider 'what I ought to do (*poiein*)' and 'what I ought to be doing (*poiein*)?'⁷²² So what we wish or want (*thelō*), what we do or ought to be doing (*poieō*) and how this affects us (*paschōo*) are all mutually related, as part of the chain of cause and effect, which moves us into our suffering but can also move us away from our suffering.

Epictetus' use of this language of wishing/wanting, doing/acting/creating and of acted upon/affection/suffering is extensive, revealing and illustrative of different nuances of meaning and principles inherent in his teaching. His approach is, as always, practical and not analytic; this is not a problem as it more than serves its purpose of unlocking the cause-effect basis of suffering. The Buddhist theory of *kamma* and Dependent Origination exhibits similar features of the active and passive, in particular in the sense it has for our suffering self.

3.3.5 Suffering As the Active/Passive Relationship

The *Second Noble Truth* relates to the principle of cause and effect where the intent and actions of an individual (the cause) influence the experience of that individual (the effect). In Buddhist terms this is *kamma*, the experience of the result of cause and effect (1.2.1, 1.7.2, 1.7.3, 2.2.3.4) and relates to the Buddhist notion of conditioned things as developed through an active and passive existence, the *sankhara* (1.7.2, 1.7.3). This principle can be expressed in terms of the active and passive

⁷¹⁸ *Diss.* 2.17.24

⁷¹⁹ *Diss.* 2.17.28

⁷²⁰ *Diss.* 2.16.47

⁷²¹ *Diss.* 2.15.15

⁷²² *Diss.* 2.15.16

language as explored in this section through consideration of Epictetus' use of *poieō* and *paschō*: although it is outside the scope of this thesis, active and passive language is used in Buddhism to express the principle of *kamma* and the *sankharas*.

In this section we have addressed the use of active and passive language to analyse and reveal the nature, sense, quality and experience of suffering: how someone acts that causes the experience to take place and how they react when the experience has taken place.

It has been our claim throughout this thesis that Epictetus' teaching conveyed suffering in the fullest sense of what is universal, general and specific about the mental experience of suffering, from day to day feelings of dissatisfaction with life to the complex emotions as defined by the Stoic *pathē*. It is clear his teaching does cover the sense of suffering with the fullest of meanings as conveyed by (*paschō*) and by the Buddhist notion of *dukkha*. This exploration into active and passive language supports this claim and provides further evidence of the parallel thinking between Epictetus and Buddhism: between the active and passive, and cause and effect, all of which are relevant to understanding the *Second Noble Truth*.

Epictetus announces 'What, then, is the cause of my going astray? Ignorance'.⁷²³ As Buddhists argue, the existence of ignorance, the active element of our past existence (cf. 1.4.5), produces the volition (*cetanā*) to act, and this produces mental formations (*sankhara*) and through Dependent Origination we have craving and then clinging to the five aggregates and the becoming of our suffering existence. Our ignorance can be gross and superficial, but there are levels below this down to the subconscious.⁷²⁴ Likewise Epictetus unravels the problematic of suffering through the active/passive state of our conditioned existence: we expose, through the language of the active/passive, our ignorance: the cause must be similar to the effect in the sense that an ignorant or deluded mind will produce the volition to act badly. The Buddhist analogy of ignorance is often represented by the blind person walking. We have a similar analogy used in Epictetus: a blind man looking in the wrong place.⁷²⁵ Through the natural process of *kamma* and volition, happiness or suffering happens since volition and *kamma* are part of the process:⁷²⁶ it is part of the active/passive sense of our existence. Similarly we have volition (*prohairesis*) in Epictetus.⁷²⁷ Our blindness (ignorance) can hinder our vision and consequently can lead us to suffer (cf. *sankhara* in 1.7.2, 2.2.3, 3.2.1). Similarly, if we know and understand what is in our sphere of control, we are on course for a life of serenity. Epictetus' educational goal is to correct our ignorance (*agnoia*)⁷²⁸ and to instruct us in what we should know (*oida*).⁷²⁹ Again there is parallel thinking with the Buddhist approach to gaining understanding, insight and knowing through the *Four Truths*, through discourse and theory, practice and then realisation.

⁷²³ *Diss.* 1.26.7

⁷²⁴ Tashi Tsering (2005) pp.59-64

⁷²⁵ *Diss.* 3.22.26

⁷²⁶ Tashi Tsering (2005) pp.72-73

⁷²⁷ *Diss.* 2.23.18-19

⁷²⁸ *Diss.* 1.11.14, 1.26.7, 2.3.5, 2.24.19-21

⁷²⁹ *Diss.* 1.1, 1.10.1-2, 1.17, 1.22.21-22, 1.26.5, 1.26.10-11, 1.27.17-19, 2.1.16-17, 2.3.4, 2.5.3-5, 2.14.18-19, 2.19. 5-7, 2.21, 3.1.17, 3.22.106, , 4.1.68-69, 4.1.150

So it is through the active/passive process of existence starting with ignorance, through our volitional actions,⁷³⁰ use of impressions,⁷³¹ judgements,⁷³² not knowing what is and is not in our power,⁷³³ not understanding good and evil,⁷³⁴ through to attachments and clinging,⁷³⁵ not understanding impermanence⁷³⁶ that our state of suffering comes about.

3.4 Aetiology

3.4.1 Causes and Consequences

We again revisit the medical model (1.4) to consider the identification and analysis of the causes of disease, in this case the problematic of the suffering mind, and in order to continue comparing Epictetus with the Buddhist approach.

Aetiology is the investigation into the causes or origin of a disorder, that is, the factors that create or predispose someone towards the disorder. Here the disorder is our suffering mind and this follows the law of cause and effect (1.2.1) and is applicable to circumstances and conditions, whether as a result of what we do, think or say.

There are causes for each and every thing that happens and for all consequences there is a cause (cf. *kamma*, *sankhara*, Dependent Origination 1.2.1, 1.7.2). To resolve the problems of our suffering mind resulting from these consequences we need to identify and acknowledge the root of the cause (*aitia*) to enable us to effectively treat the problem.

Maybe our actions fail to get us what we want or what we want to avoid. When this happens it is altogether inevitable that we want to blame something or someone for the cause of this failure; we want to assign the cause (*aitia*) to someone or something. Epictetus' textbook argument is that we should not blame anyone for our disappointment for things outside our control.⁷³⁷ Our ignorance is the cause of our cravings, which in turn causes us clinging and a chain of events that will inevitably lead to disappointment, dissatisfaction and disease.⁷³⁸ Epictetus argues that it is our ignorance, judgements and the decisions of our will that result in our suffering:

'In brief, it is neither death, nor exile, nor toil, nor any such thing that is the cause of our doing, or of our not doing, anything, but only our opinions and the decisions of our will'⁷³⁹

3.4.2 Pathē as Judgements

Diogenes Laertius remarked 'The main, or most universal, emotions, according to Hecato in his treatise *On the Passions*, book ii, and Zeno in his treatise with the same title, constitute four great

⁷³⁰ *Diss.* 1.12.9, 1.17.26-27, 1.19.16, 1.29.24-25, 2.1.12, 2.5.6-8

⁷³¹ *Diss.* 1.27,, 2.18, 2.26

⁷³² *Diss.* 1.19.8, 1.28.25, 1.29.3, 1.29.11-12, 1.29.15, 1.29.19, 1.29.22, 2.1.14, 2.15, 2.16, 2.22.28, 4.1.113-115, 4.5.20-21,

⁷³³ *Diss.* 1.1, *Ench.* 1

⁷³⁴ *Diss.*, 2.1.4-7, 3.23.28-29

⁷³⁵ *Diss.* 2.15, 3.24.30, 3.24.58-63, 3.26.34-35,

⁷³⁶ *Diss.* 2.5.13-15

⁷³⁷ *Ench.* 31

⁷³⁸ *Ench.* 31

⁷³⁹ *Diss.* 1.11.33

classes, grief, fear, desire or craving, pleasure. They hold the emotions to be judgements, as is stated by Chrysippus in his treatise *On the Passions*.⁷⁴⁰ The Stoic claim that the passions are defined by their propositional content, that is, a passion is a judgement about either a present or a future state of affairs, has attracted much attention amongst modern scholars.⁷⁴¹ Sellars discusses the fact that Chrysippus held emotions to be judgements whereas Zeno held that the emotions were the product of judgements.⁷⁴² Groenendijk and de Ruyter consider that Chrysippus' view was that emotions were evaluative judgements.⁷⁴³ Nussbaum, Sorabji, Graver amongst others, have discussed this claim.⁷⁴⁴ Also of particular interest is Nussbaum's remark that the Stoic view is 'overly focused on linguistically formulable propositional content':⁷⁴⁵ as Epictetus makes reference to the language aspect on several occasions, 'It is not the word that I fear, but the emotion, which produces the word'.⁷⁴⁶

Epictetus remained faithful to this Stoic position, as is evident in the following: 'But wherever worthless judgements are held, there all these passions must necessary exist';⁷⁴⁷ 'What is misfortune? A judgement';⁷⁴⁸ 'But it is man's own judgements that disturb him';⁷⁴⁹ 'What is it, then, that disturbs me? The expanse of sea? No, but my judgement ... What, then, are the things that weigh upon us and drive us out of our senses? Why, what else but our judgements?'⁷⁵⁰

The Buddhist view of emotion is not too far removed from that of the Stoics, and of Epictetus in particular. One Buddhist way of expressing this is that emotions are states of a deluded mind⁷⁵¹ – such states of mind when they arise leave us disturbed, confused and unhappy. The feeling aggregate is a state of mind, which labels mental experiences as pleasant (*sukhaa vedanaa*), unpleasant (*dukkhaa vedanaa*), and neutral; these give rise to actions such as attachments (*upādāna* – See 1.3.3.4), aversions or doing nothing, being indifferent. Our experience forms or creates an opinion or judgement and an impression in the mind of the object of our experience. A deluded mind is having a wrong understanding or wrong views of reality; our deluded mind forms a mental impression, which creates a subjective reality that is contrary to rational argument. Epictetus claims we go astray and become dissatisfied when we make judgements, having the wrong view of 'what is up to us', wrong understanding of things as they really are, and making the wrong use of impressions. We also have Epictetus, like Buddhist psychology, claiming that we assent to the feeling (*pathein*), our belief, that something is or is not so;⁷⁵² Dobbin remarks that Epictetus treats

⁷⁴⁰ DL 7.1.216-217

⁷⁴¹ Graver (2007) p.4

⁷⁴² Sellars (2006) pp.115-116

⁷⁴³ Groenendijk and de Ruyter (2009)

⁷⁴⁴ Nussbaum (1994) pp.366-372, 352-353, (2004) pp.183-199; Sorabji (2002) pp.29-54; Graver (2007) pp.35-48

⁷⁴⁵ Nussbaum (2001), p.36

⁷⁴⁶ *Diss.* 4.1.115-116

⁷⁴⁷ *Diss.* 3.22.61

⁷⁴⁸ *Diss.* 3.3.18

⁷⁴⁹ *Diss.* 1.19.8

⁷⁵⁰ *Diss.* 2.16.23-24

⁷⁵¹ Tashi Tsering (2005) pp.57-68, 83-87; Brazier (2003) pp.33, 36-37, 100, 117, 136, 145

⁷⁵² *Diss.* 1.18.1-2

the cognitive and affective states as two aspects of the same thing and he further remarks that the Sceptics used *pathos* and *pathein* in the same sense to denote the basis of one's beliefs.⁷⁵³

According to the theory of dispositions presented in Cicero, there are two related forms of judgement: occurrent judgements and dispositional judgements. *Pathē* are qualified as 'recent', 'fresh', 'occurrent' judgements⁷⁵⁴ made momentarily in time about whether something is worth regarding as good or bad; they are movements or impulses of the soul towards a perceived good or bad. On the other hand, disease is something more persistent and longer-lasting based on the individual's disposition; inherent qualities of mind and character incline us one way or the other and hence we have the notion of dispositional judgements. Again we use the example, avarice is a disease following a dispositional judgement which has been bred through man's desire for, and opinion about, money; avarice as Cicero defines it is '*opinatio vehemens de pecunia, quasi valde expetenda sit, inhaerens et penitus insita*,⁷⁵⁵ an intensely strong and deep-seated opinion that money is something that is very much to be desired. So it is the case with other intense opinions related to the *pathē* and perturbations of the sou, which cause disease.

A disease of the soul is thus a disorder of the soul, a certain disposition towards something or someone that adversely affects us, from which we consequently suffer. Again, Cicero offers a summary of the Stoic view: 'they define sickness of the soul as an intense strong opinion, persistent and deeply rooted, which regards a thing that is not desirable as though it were eminently desirable'.⁷⁵⁶ Closely parallel to this idea, Epictetus says that a deep-rooted desire for material gain, such as avarice, or our desire to do or not do something, can leave us in a chronic state of anxiety and fear.⁷⁵⁷

3.4.3 Clinging Judgements about Good and Evil

Judgements (*dogmata*) about things that are good and evil (2.4), are subject to our *prohairesis*: this is the nub of Epictetus' argument throughout the *Discourses*. It is man's failure to understand wherein good and evil are to be found that causes disease and illness of the mind and results in our suffering. In looking for the good and evil we look outside of ourselves. The anxious man seeks his peace in externals but does not know what anxiety is. We admire and are earnest about externals and we become experienced in them; yet we are still subject to fear and anxiety because of judgements of them. Anxiety is merely a judgement we make about things we consider evil:

'...ever seeking outside yourself for peace, and never able to be at peace. For you seek peace where it is not, and neglect to seek it where it is'.⁷⁵⁸

For Epictetus if we are to find peace then we must understand that correct judgements are stronger than incorrect judgements; and our *prohairesis* cannot be overcome by anything else outside itself.

⁷⁵³ Dobbin (2007) p.169

⁷⁵⁴ Cic. *Tusc.* 3.11.25

⁷⁵⁵ Cic. *Tusc.* 3.12.26

⁷⁵⁶ Cic. *Tusc.* 4.11.26

⁷⁵⁷ *Diss.* 2.11ff, 2.13

⁷⁵⁸ *Diss.* 2.16.47

Correct judgements make a good moral purpose and incorrect judgements an evil moral purpose.⁷⁵⁹ Therefore it is the quality of our judgements that is most important. Therefore if we follow incorrect judgements then we will never be at peace. The quality of our judgements relates to whether we are in a healthy or unhealthy state, and the unhealthy is when we are ill or diseased. Epictetus' standard argument is that the tyrant cannot bring about fear; it is only our judgement can bring about fear in us.⁷⁶⁰

Judgements can be rightly or wrongly formed and, as our *prohairesis* is naturally free, we are free to make our judgements as we wish and not be subject to compulsion, influence and interference by others. This is the main thrust of Epictetus' view: hence, when we come to a sound and reasoned judgement we should be steadfast and stand by this sound judgement.⁷⁶¹ Unfortunately, men do not always make judgements that are sound and sometimes, once these are formed, they are sometimes unwilling to let them go and obstinately cling to them. Epictetus makes reference to such a situation as madness (*phrenitis*) and describes those possessing such madness as exhibiting 'the tone or vigour of a madman'.⁷⁶² But this is not the tone of a healthy body but the feeble debility of someone that is ill. This, Epictetus says, is typical of those whose mind is affected (*paschō*) and who hear wrongly or imperfectly the wisdom of the Stoic discourses and precepts. Epictetus is making reference to an illness, a mind in disease and a pathological impairment or infirmity to the person's moral purpose (2.3).

Some men are so determined in what they believe in that they cling vehemently to their judgements; they have made up their mind that what they believe is the right view and they must abide by their decisions that they have the right view and so will defend their judgements however wrong, irrational and unreasoned these might be. They defend their view, blocking out reason and sense (*phronēsis*), the opposite of *mania* 'to be senseless or witless': the virtue of good sense is having a disposition to act properly, morally, in all circumstances.⁷⁶³ Diogenes Laertius states, 'All the senseless are mad, for they do not have sense but do everything in accordance with madness, madness being equivalent to senselessness'.⁷⁶⁴

Epictetus wants to emphasise that this 'madness' is a pathological condition whereby man is showing a dogged determination not to change his attitude or position on something, in spite of hearing good reasons to do so. As Graver points out,⁷⁶⁵ madness is said to be the same thing as ignorance or senselessness, ignorance in the sense that it renders impulses unsettled and fluttery.⁷⁶⁶

Epictetus' remarks: 'a fool you can neither persuade nor break ... the more firm their decision is about what is false, the more hellebore they need ... these are the sinews of madness not health'.⁷⁶⁷

⁷⁵⁹ *Diss.* 1.29.3-4

⁷⁶⁰ *Diss.* 4.12.7-11

⁷⁶¹ *Diss.* 2.15.1-2

⁷⁶² *Diss.* 2.15.3

⁷⁶³ Stobaeus *Ecl.* 2.7.5b1 (59W), 5b5 (63W)

⁷⁶⁴ DL 7.124 (cf. Cicero *Stoic Paradoxes IV* 'That every foolish man is mad')

⁷⁶⁵ Graver (2007) p.118

⁷⁶⁶ Stobaeus *Ecl.* 2.7.5b13 (68W)

⁷⁶⁷ *Diss.* 2.15.13-18

so the fool is not amenable either to reason or force. There is nothing harder to handle or more obstinate and immovable than the fool and the mad man: "I have decided," he says! Why yes, and so have madmen; but the more firm their decision is about what is false, the more hellebore they need.⁷⁶⁸

Men get caught up in their ideas and views and preconceptions; they become attached to their decisions based on their views. The very tone of determination behind the phrase, 'I have decided', sets the scene for being too rigid in seeking and not being respectful of the truth, not accepting that they may need to change false views and impressions. Again senseless ignorance and dogged decisions dispose man to act in the wrong way: "I have decided", precisely as in a diseased body, suffering from a flux, the flux inclines now in this direction and now in that. Such is also the sick mind; it is uncertain which way it is inclined, but when vehemence also is added to this inclination and drift, then the evil gets past help and past cure.⁷⁶⁹

Chrysippus comments that people who have strong desires say things like, 'they want to indulge their feelings', 'let them be, whether it is better or not' and 'they have to do it no matter what, even if it is a mistake and not to their advantage' and, 'let us follow our desires and do whatever occurs to us'.⁷⁷⁰

The madness that Epictetus refers to is symptomatic of moral ignorance, a pathological condition that is characterised by episodes of suffering from diseases of a mind disposed towards irrational behaviour, a mind in flux, of fluttery ignorance, inclining this way and that: hence the Stoic-held view that virtually everybody is mad to a certain degree. This madness is exaggerated and senseless impulses, wavering and unsettled, inclined towards things indifferent, which are seen as being good or bad.

Epilogue to Chapter 3

The cause or origin of suffering has been the central theme of this chapter reflecting upon the Buddhist teaching of the *Second Noble Truth*. This has highlighted that the primary origin of suffering is a craving of desires conditioned by ignorance. We have considered the cause and effect nature of suffering which takes us through a sequence of conditioned links: from our craving conditioned by ignorance comes the clinging to desires conditioned by craving, and so through the subsequent cause and effect sequence we enter a cycle of suffering. This chapter places the Buddhist teaching in the context of Epictetus to show both schools share the same understanding regarding the causes and effects in the conditioned mind, with ignorance being at the heart of the problem.

This chapter has also discussed the cause and effect of suffering in terms of how the language of the active (*poieō*) and passive (*paschō*) is used in Epictetus. This has been a useful tool for investigating the philosophical psychology of suffering in Epictetus, particularly to explore the causal

⁷⁶⁸ *Diss.* 2.15.14-15

⁷⁶⁹ *Diss.* 2.15.20

⁷⁷⁰ Gal. *PHP* 4.6.24-34, quoting from Chrysippus, *On Emotions*

relationship between the active and passive and suffering. For example, it has enabled us to highlight the development of mental formations and identify and differentiate aspects of our character in the way we are disposed towards ourselves and in relation to others. The results of this active/passive investigation link with our discussion in Section 2.3 on the pathological elements and conditions that contribute to our suffering.

This chapter has further continued our comparative assessment of Epictetus and Buddhism, by way of referencing the passive and active *sankharas* and the chain of *kamma* (actions). These two types of *sankhara* function in a similar way to the active (*poieō*) and passive (*paschō*) in Epictetus in relation to what we do, say and think about something, and the suffering that can develop as a consequence. The active *sankhara* is the *kammic* action (or doer) that acts upon and produces mental formations.

In the next chapter we shall address the notion that suffering can be overcome and that satisfaction and contentment in life can be attained. When we give up our relentless desire for things that cause suffering, that we have discussed in this chapter, then we can become free from our psychological cravings and attachments and hence from our dissatisfaction with what life offers us.

Chapter 4 Epictetus and the Third Noble Truth

4.1 Prologue

This chapter looks at the *Third Noble Truth*, which is concerned with the cessation of suffering. Our investigation here starts with consideration of the main ideas behind the third truth compared with the teachings of Epictetus to reflect his approach to cessation. This discussion covers the nature of cessation, that is, suffering and that its cessation can be realised by the ending of craving and attachment, in particular the attachment to 'I, me and mine'. Once we realise the possibility of cessation then there is hope for the healing of our suffering mind: without this prospect there is no use in exercise and practice (1.3). Ultimately the realisation of cessation is the refraining from cravings that create suffering through determined volition and practice (*Fourth Noble Truth*); this is a key factor to cessation.

This leads us on to a second part of our discussion on cessation, that is, having the right intention or volition, which carries with it the notions of decision-making and that which depends upon us. From the Stoic perspective we shall consider the notion of faculty of choice as conveyed by the ancient Greek term *prohairesis* and in particular Epictetus' unique use of this term.

In 4.4 we shall discuss in detail the use of the *prohairesis* in Epictetus in regard to the theme of suffering. There are various interpretations and views on the *prohairesis* found in modern scholarship. For example, Oldfather takes the term *prohairesis* to mean 'moral purpose'⁷⁷¹ and other writers have variously interpreted the term as 'faculty of choice - choosing one thing before another',⁷⁷² 'decision', 'resolution', 'a characteristic of moral action – moral character',⁷⁷³ 'volition',⁷⁷⁴ 'self'⁷⁷⁵ all of which relate to the 'how to' and realisation of cessation as we shall discuss. In this thesis the term *prohairesis* is primarily being used to mean a faculty of choice, the power to make decisions or choices regarding the use of impressions and understanding their use.⁷⁷⁶ It should be noted that we do also use *prohairesis* in the context of Epictetus' moral theory, where the good and bad decisions and actions reside in what is in our control, what is our choice to make. Other debates and interpretations of the term *prohairesis* are duly recognised in what follows but these only serve a secondary purpose for our main discussion of Epictetus and the cessation of suffering. We should also recognise that Epictetus' use, or at least Arrian's written version of his teaching, is not wholly free of multiple interpretations and so his use appears to be inconsistent in places. In this regard we should note that Epictetus, in his presentation of the *prohairesis*, brings together many elements of his philosophy including aspects that relate to the essence and function of the human personality and identity, without making any clear distinction between the *prohairesis* as 'something I have' or

⁷⁷¹ Oldfather (1928)

⁷⁷² Sellars (2006) p.114; Dobbin (2007) p.76

⁷⁷³ Dobbin (2007) p.96

⁷⁷⁴ Long (2002) p.28; Stephens (2007) pp.16-25; Gill (2006) p.96

⁷⁷⁵ Sorabji (2007) pp.87-90; Stephens (2007) pp.16-25

⁷⁷⁶ *Diss.* 2.8.4-8, 2.23.6-15, 2.23.20-29

'something I am' or both, reflecting different and alternate perspectives in his teachings. This sometimes makes discussion of the *prohairesis* confusing and generates inconsistent interpretation. Our prime concern here is *prohairesis* in the sense of 'something I have', a faculty to make rational decisions to act appropriately with moral responsibility and character towards a path of cessation. This adopted interpretation reflects a specific and particular direction of freedom and a moral responsibility towards dealing with our suffering: a kind of freedom as offered by Epictetus in terms of those inner determinisms and dispositions and the decisions and choices we make based on these that affect and influence our peace of mind.

Our selected meaning of *prohairesis* allows us to compare it with Buddhist thinking about volition (*cetanā* – 1.2.1)⁷⁷⁷ and volitional formations (*sankhara* – 1.7.2-3), and right views, intentions and actions (5.2.1) in the use of impressions. *Cetanā*, *kamma*, *sankhara* and *prohairesis* are linked to man's sphere of moral purpose and so to the moral quality of his actions. The results of *kammic* action, be it bodily, verbal or mental, are consequently either of wholesome/good (*kusala*) or unwholesome/bad (*akusala*) quality (5.2.1-2 and 1.7.3): through attachment, aversion and ignorance unwholesome thoughts can arise, and corresponding actions arise. Hence from the Book of Causation (*Samyutta Nikaya*) we have: 'According to the seed that's sown, So is the fruit you reap therefrom, Doer of good will gather good, Doer of evil, evil reaps, Down is the seed and thou shalt taste the fruit thereof.'⁷⁷⁸ Taking this into account it should be clear that the truth of cessation lies in a way of distinguishing and separating things, and the dependency of things, that cause suffering, to enable us to make the right moral choices, to establish and maintain a healthy *prohairesis*.

In this chapter, as in previous chapters, we consider the role of language. This is a critical factor in the cessation and letting go of 'my wants' and 'my views' and in adopting the right view and right intention. It is through the language of the active and passive relationship that we form what-we do, think and say, and this feeds into and drives our decision-making, what depends on us, our choice, in a word, our *prohairesis*. Our use of language and this active/passive relationship, embodying our thoughts and feelings, relates to our suffering, as well as our peace of mind. As revealed by Epictetus' view, 'we are our own *prohairesis*' – we are sovereign over whether we suffer or not.

Later in this chapter we connect the language of suffering to our internal dialogue. We consider language and the reflexive nature of the *prohairesis*. When our decision-making goes awry and wrong choices are made, the *prohairesis* becomes morally dysfunctional. This is analogous to an inner tyrant dominating and taking over our language of moral choice and our ruling faculty. Getting our *prohairesis* morally functional, making the right choices to free us from the cravings and attachments of the inner voice constantly harassing the mind with demands of 'I, me and mine' is the goal of cessation for Epictetus.

⁷⁷⁷ *Cetanā* is commonly thought of as 'volition' or 'intention'. It is by intention or volition that man acts bodily, verbally and mentally. AN 4:232, II 230-232; AN 3:415; SN 22:56, III 58-61

⁷⁷⁸ SN I.227

Finally we again return to the medical model for suffering (1.4) to consider the aspect of prognosis, to know what the likely course of our remedial actions and treatment will be regarding our suffering.

4.2 Our Suffering Can Be Overcome

4.2.1 *Third Noble Truth*

The *Third Noble Truth*⁷⁷⁹ is a lesson in the cessation of suffering (*nirodha saccā*) and it is a realisation that our suffering can be overcome. This truth concerns the fading away and cessation of suffering due to the craving of desires: rejecting, relinquishing, letting go and renouncing this craving. In Buddhism developing a reflective mind is a core element of the realisation of letting go of cravings and delusions: to recognise that the attachment to desires can be overcome is the result of a reflective mind and practice of this *Third Truth*.

The Buddhist scriptures say 'all that is subject to arising is subject to ceasing',⁷⁸⁰ in other words everything is the subject of impermanence, nothing has a permanent existence. The *Third Truth* wants us to apply a reflective mind to our suffering and the nature of attachment to desire and to realise that attachment to desire is suffering. With a reflective mind we see that there is a beginning and ending to everything, and with reflective insight that allows attachments to go we realise non-suffering, the cessation of suffering. The Buddhists also believe we can break out of this cycle if we can change our thoughts, opinions, attitudes and feelings about impermanent things that cause us to suffer; we suffer because of ignorance and delusion, and thus our attachment to thoughts, opinions and attitudes about desires.

We argue in this section that Epictetus' teaching addresses philosophical exercises for the cessation of suffering similar to those found in the Buddhist teaching. Also we can find parallels between his views and Buddhist views as regards the insight that is gained through contemplation and opening up the mind to the power of indifference and its importance to the ceasing of attachment to desires.

The cycle of suffering can never be broken whilst we want to satisfy our desires for things that are impermanent and not in our control (2.2.1-2, 3.2). Epictetus' language explains cessation in these ways: 'freedom from suffering is not acquired by satisfying yourself with what you desire but by destroying your desire',⁷⁸¹ by 'overcoming our desires',⁷⁸² 'wiping out our desires',⁷⁸³ by 'learning to give up our passionate desires'.⁷⁸⁴ However, it is the craving of these desires we need to let go of, as is implied by Epictetus. From our ignorance arises craving: we set our sights on desires for things

⁷⁷⁹ Bodhi (2008) pp.68-69, 76-77, 326, 353, 358; Tashi Tsering (2005) pp.101-120; Nhat Hanh (1998) pp. 11, 43, 114, 119

⁷⁸⁰ MN 56.18

⁷⁸¹ *Diss.* 4.1.175-176

⁷⁸² *Diss.* 3.15.10-11

⁷⁸³ *Diss.* 3.22.13

⁷⁸⁴ *Diss.* 4.1.23

that are subject to hindrance and compulsion,⁷⁸⁵ things not in our control: this is ignorance (3.2.5). Once again the *Discourses* of Epictetus express his strong leaning towards practice (*askēsis*) over theory, to transform our cravings and clingings by resolute practice.

The epitome of not clinging or non-attachment is indifference. We should keep away from such desires otherwise we deliver ourselves to a life of slavery,⁷⁸⁶ a cycle of wanting and craving to fulfil our desires, and of clinging and emotional dependency and attachment to our desires, a cyclic search for satisfaction or recurrent episodes of dissatisfaction. Further to this, the role of practice (*askēsis*) is significant for the acquisition and success of cessation of suffering. As Sellars explains in his analysis of the Socratic origins of the art of living, it is more than just merely explaining what human excellence is but also engaging in some form of practice if one wants to acquire it fully.⁷⁸⁷ The cessation of suffering requires the practice of exercises (see 1.3) that will transform the suffering; this may involve periods of trial and error and setbacks but self-discipline and persistence will help us to succeed. Simplicius explains we should be absolutely undistracted from the practice of education if we are to master it completely,⁷⁸⁸ otherwise we shall continue to suffer through our ignorance.

4.2.2 Dependent Origination and Mortality

Arising and Ceasing

The Buddhist discourse on conditioned things (*Pratītyasamutpāda*) (2.2, 3.2) states that 'This is, because that is. This is not, because that is not. This comes to be, because that comes to be. This ceases to be, because that ceases to be'.⁷⁸⁹ Conditioned things include physical, physiological and psychological phenomena and all are subject to birth and death;⁷⁹⁰ the arising of craving has feeling as a prerequisite, clinging has craving as a prerequisite, becoming and action has clinging as a prerequisite and so on⁷⁹¹ leading to a state of *dukkha*.

The *Pratītyasamutpāda* and this notion of impermanence, and the idea that whatever is subject to arising is subject to ceasing, reflect a cycle of birth and death; what we attach and cling to, what arises as cravings, will in time cease to be, so why suffer through our attachments and our fear of losing our attachments when death is inevitable? Unfortunately man has a tendency to identify with what is mortal and this is in itself an unsatisfactory attachment and makes him suffer (1.2.3, 3.2.3).

This brings into focus one of the problems of human existence: our mortality. If we reflect deeply on the desires that we crave and our attachments to these cravings, we should bring to mind that all conditioned phenomena are mortal and will cease at some point in time: all our passions and emotions are mortal; they are all conditioned phenomena, subject to birth and death. So why subject ourselves to suffering? Our innate problem with death and our subconscious fears about

⁷⁸⁵ *Diss.* 4.1.75

⁷⁸⁶ *Diss.* 4.1.77

⁷⁸⁷ Sellars (2003) pp.47-50

⁷⁸⁸ *in Epict.* 18.35

⁷⁸⁹ Nhat Hanh (1999) pp.220-221

⁷⁹⁰ Nhat Hanh (1999) pp.115, 141-142, 206-232

⁷⁹¹ SN 12.23 *Upanisa Sutta: Prerequisites*

death make us cling to life (*dukkha dukkha* - 2.2.3.1-2). We suffer because we don't want things to change (*viparinama dukkha* – 2.2.3.3) and we suffer because we cling to our conditioned world, our mental formations (*sankhara dukkha* – 2.2.3.4)

Death and Separation

Epictetus is equally vocal about man's obsession with death and the desire to cling to life. Discourse on conditioned phenomena is evident in many places in Epictetus:⁷⁹² we cling to our judgements and yearn for things outside our control and our separation from things not in our control. He says 'all these things are changes of a preliminary state into something else'.⁷⁹³ here he is saying that when the current state ceases to exist, it turns into something else that does not currently exist, rephrasing the case of impermanence and change. We will be separated from the things we are attached to, either now or later; such is the nature of death and the impermanence of life.⁷⁹⁴ Similarly, when hardship is involved, that too changes and is destroyed⁷⁹⁵ and we should note it is not the death or hardship that we should fear.⁷⁹⁶ Epictetus attributes suffering to our carelessness about our thoughts, feelings and fears: we place our attention and wariness on what is out of our control rather than what is in our control; hence we allow our mind to be conditioned and attached to external things, that are in and of themselves mortal.⁷⁹⁷ He argues that we are obsessed by fear and anxiety not to be detached from things that are mortal; we should separate ourselves from our opinions and decisions of will that cause these attachments and our suffering.⁷⁹⁸

'And where can I go to escape death?'⁷⁹⁹ Nowhere. As Epictetus argues that death comes to all and everything, it cannot be avoided. The arising of all subjects (such as our attachments) is subject to ceasing: everything has an evolving, decaying and dying nature.⁸⁰⁰ The Buddhist teaching of 'When this is, that is; This arising, that arises; When this is not, that is not; This ceasing, that ceases'⁸⁰¹ can be expressed as whatever is subject to arising is subject to ceasing. This Buddhist teaching is not some metaphysical discourse but a point of reflection on what actually happens and to be applied to life and to our experience. Recalling our early discussion (1.2.2 and 2.2), there is nothing abstract or esoteric about suffering and the *Four Noble Truths*. There is suffering, it arises in our lives and it can subsequently cease. If we truly understand the arising of feeling, craving and clinging, its origin and prerequisites, and then the mortality of such things, their ending, ceasing and disappearance, then we come face to face with our problem of blindly attaching ourselves to one of man's greatest fears, that of death.

⁷⁹² *Diss.* 1.20, 1.22, 1.24, 1.27, 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 2.6, 2.8, 2.13, 2.15, 2.16, 2.17, 2.18, 2.21, 2.23, 3.24, 4.1

⁷⁹³ *Diss.* 3.24.92-94

⁷⁹⁴ *Diss.* 2.1.16-19

⁷⁹⁵ *Diss.* 2.6.17

⁷⁹⁶ *Diss.* 2.1.14

⁷⁹⁷ *Diss.* 2.1

⁷⁹⁸ *Diss.* 1.11.33

⁷⁹⁹ *Diss.* 1.27.9-11

⁸⁰⁰ Kalupahana (1992) p.65

⁸⁰¹ Nhat Hanh (1999) p.221

4.3 Choosing A Quality of Life

In the sections that follow we move on to a fuller discussion of the *prohairesis* than that addressed in 4.1. The role of the *prohairesis* in Epictetus' teaching and of parallel ideas in Buddhism is linked to the cause and effect relationship between the *Third* and *Fourth Noble Truths*: the Eightfold Path (Chapter 5) together with right volition (intentions) leads to the cessation of suffering (see Figure 2). We have control over our *prohairesis* and hence over the choices and decisions we make regarding our disposition, character and conditioned mind and this together with the practice and exercise of the Eightfold Path (Epictetus' three spiritual exercises) can lead us to cessation.

Epictetus points out that we are a man 'who has no quality more sovereign than *prohairesis*'.⁸⁰² This statement reflects the central prominence and status of the *prohairesis* regarding our moral life, and that objective authority that lies within ourselves, that sets the standard for our moral accountability.⁸⁰³ For Epictetus the *prohairesis* is our moral compass, where goodness and badness are dispositions of the *prohairesis*. The natural or proper working condition of the *prohairesis* is complete autonomy.⁸⁰⁴ Epictetus entertains the view of *prohairesis* acting as an inner voice that interrogates (1.5, 4.5, 4.6) and guides us towards a state of suffering or of peace, that asks: 'Is anything disgraceful to you which is not your own doing?'⁸⁰⁵ In stating, 'injustice in itself is a great injury to the unjust man',⁸⁰⁶ Epictetus expresses a thought that goes back at least to Plato.⁸⁰⁷

What makes something good or bad, beautiful or ugly, superior or inferior? Epictetus maintains that all things that exist can achieve a degree of excellence in terms of their own nature and even though each thing may have a different nature, each one of them can be beautiful in a different fashion,⁸⁰⁸ a remark by Epictetus put forward to argue a view about what makes a horse, dog or man beautiful. 'What, then, makes a man beautiful? Is it not the presence of a man's excellence?':⁸⁰⁹ this excellence is moral excellence (*arete*), and the term used for beautiful in this case is *kalos*, used in the moral sense: doing things in the right way,⁸¹⁰ being righteous,⁸¹¹ doing things in a noble way.⁸¹² This notion is similar to that found in the *Four Noble Truths* (1.2), being good and excellent in a moral and noble sense (*kusala*) through Right View, Right Action and Right Intention (5.2).

In 2.3 we considered aspects of the pathology of the soul that are relevant to man's suffering and in considering this suffering we should bear in mind that the pursuit of the eudaimonistic goal is that of preserving man's humanity in terms of moral excellence (*arete*). As pointed out by Epictetus, man can take one of two routes, following his *prohairesis* regarding his desire or aversions or pursuing and avoiding things that are *aprohaireta*: the former holds out the promise to create happiness and calm

⁸⁰² *Diss.* 2.10.1-2

⁸⁰³ Bonhöffer (2000) pp.11-18

⁸⁰⁴ Long (2002) p.214

⁸⁰⁵ *Diss.* 3.26.8

⁸⁰⁶ *Diss.* 4.5.10

⁸⁰⁷ Familiar ideas found in Pl. *Crito* 48e 49b, *Rep.* 366E and 367D, *Grg.* 479C, 509B

⁸⁰⁸ *Diss.* 3.1.3-4

⁸⁰⁹ *Diss.* 3.1.6-7

⁸¹⁰ *Diss.* 3.10.9, 3.10.12-13

⁸¹¹ *Diss.* 1.22.3

⁸¹² *Diss.* 1.22.5-6

and serenity or if he avoids anything that is not a matter of free choice he knows that at some time he will encounter something in spite of his aversion to it and will come to grief.⁸¹³

Our goal should be to lead a virtuous life in accord with nature, a life of moral quality/excellence, a life worth living. There is nothing aproharetic that can stop us achieving a quality of life based on moral excellence; only the proharetic can stop us achieving this quality of life. The wise man (the sage) is given as the prescriptive ideal, the man that has achieved this eudaimonistic goal. He sets the pedagogical standard to be measured against, for men to strive towards, but of course very few can reach this ideal. Nevertheless all men have the necessary reasoning faculties to make progress towards a certain quality of life that might not bring them the full measure of the ideal state of human flourishing, but which can certainly provide degrees of relief from their suffering. The desire for *apatheia* is for a quality of life we all set our hearts upon but the full measure of such a quality depends on us and how well we prepare ourselves in our own act of living, our own way of dealing with life, how we think about things, what thoughts we discuss with ourselves. All these are dependent upon the distinction between the things under consideration being proharetic or aproharetic.

Our discussion here is limited and focused on a quality of life that was mentioned earlier, that is, a life based on the moral imperative for man to deal with his suffering so as to work towards a life of moral worth and human good and towards a state of *eudaimonia*, human flourishing. This relates to achieving a quality of life of moral worth that transforms a poor quality of life, full of suffering, into a good quality of life, that is, a well-flowing life that improves our well-being, some might call it the good life. As Socrates points out 'a life is worth living if the soul is in a good state or not worth living if the soul is ruined by wrongdoing'.⁸¹⁴ The Stoics, embracing Socrates' views on a morally virtuous life, encompassed the notion of the eudaimonic life, to lead a life in accordance with man's experience of what happens by nature.

The meaning of quality, in the sense of a quality of life worth living, is a moral judgement and choice as to whether we are living a good life – 'now good things are virtues and everything that partakes in the virtues' and a good life is a life of moral excellence.⁸¹⁵ Revealingly, Epictetus relates this to the extent to which we have inner peace (*apatheia*) and a feeling of well-being. He extends this to say, 'if I am where my prohairesis is, then ... will I be the friend and son and the father that I should be' and my interests will be to the common good of all.⁸¹⁶

Epictetus makes the point that achieving a quality of life worth living is related to our moral life and our moral progress through life, and we are the master of our own moral progress and our own moral purpose, and it is only within this sphere or moral purpose that we find our s good and evil, as Epictetus frequently demonstrates through his arguments.⁸¹⁷ So we can embrace a good or bad

⁸¹³ *Diss.* 1.4.2-4

⁸¹⁴ *Pl. Ap.* 28b-c

⁸¹⁵ *Diss.* 2.9.15-16

⁸¹⁶ *Diss.* 2.22.19-20

⁸¹⁷ *Diss.* 4.12

quality of life, and the kind of quality depends on how we are disposed: our habits, dispositions, states and conditions of the soul; the quality of whether we are 'such and such' a person, of this 'kind, sort or nature'; whether we have a proneness or propensity towards passions and vice, and as such whether our soul is diseased or is healthy. The quality of a man's life, from a moral perspective, can only be procured by man himself and no one else; he is his own moral judge.

Epictetus' arguments insist that we need to reflect and ask ourselves what kind or sort of person we are and what type we want to be, what qualities of character we have, whether we neglect ourselves so we are a person of poor quality and bad standards, whether we want to be beautiful or ugly. Am I that kind of person? The kind of person that seeks to be characterised as having good quality, the quality of excellence that characterises a man.⁸¹⁸ But this, argues Epictetus, is to have moral beauty, to have the qualities of being just, temperate and self-controlled – 'supreme excellence in terms of its own nature'⁸¹⁹ – but as long as you neglect these qualities 'you must needs be ugly'.⁸²⁰ This leaves us asking, 'Am I that kind of person?' the kind that will listen to the truth, or do I want to be deafened by the sound of ignorance?⁸²¹ This is how we should understand Epictetus: my ignorance makes me ugly, it can distort what is by nature true and real, leaving my quality of life in a poor state and my *prohairesis* morally ugly (*aischros*); on the contrary, to achieve a good quality of life, we need to make our *prohairesis* morally beautiful (*kalos*). Epictetus translates this into:

'Not to distort utterly nor to take useless pains about that which is already right, but to leave the man a man, and the woman a woman, the beautiful person, beautiful as a human being, the ugly ugly as a human being. Because you are not flesh, nor hair, but moral purpose; if you get that beautiful, then you will be beautiful.'⁸²²

4.4 Choosing One Thing Before Another

4.4.1 What Is Depending On Us

We shall not enter into detailed discussion of the various interpretations in modern scholarship of the *prohairesis* as used by Epictetus or the difference in use between Epictetus and that of Aristotle. Such discussion can be found in Bobzien (freedom and determinism), Bonhöffer, Braicovich (rhetorical-pedagogical expressions of Epictetus' intellectualism), Dihle, Dobbin, Dragona-Monachou, Gill, Girdwood (psychology and epistemology of Epictetus), Kahn, Long (volition, autonomy and integrity), Pohlenz, Rist, Sorabji and others.⁸²³

⁸¹⁸ *Diss.* 3.1.8

⁸¹⁹ *Diss.* 3.1.3

⁸²⁰ *Diss.* 3.1.9

⁸²¹ *Diss.* 3.1.24

⁸²² *Diss.* 3.1.39-41

⁸²³ Bobzien (2001) pp.345, 397, 402-406; Bonhöffer (1996) pp.19, 23, 28-29, 67; Braicovich (2010) pp.202-220; Braicovich (2013) pp.39-56, Dihle (1982) pp.133-135, 239; Dobbin (1991) pp.111-135; Dragona-Monachou (1978-79) pp. 265-310; Gill (2006) pp.96-98, 142, 329, 337, 371-391; Girdwood (1998) pp.6-156; Kahn (1988) pp. 234-260; Long (2002) p.28, .160-161, 191, 199, 207-222, 227-230; Pohlenz (1966) p.153; Rist (1975) pp.103-122; Rist (2010) pp. 228-232; Sorabji (2007) pp.87-90

Epictetus' use of the term *prohairesis* is somewhat unique not only in the Stoic tradition but also in ancient Greek and Roman philosophy in general and divergent from some of the earlier views. Both Aristotle⁸²⁴ and Epictetus developed their own interpretations of the term based on the general definition of 'choosing one thing before another' and between them extended the definition to give greater technical meaning to the term. Epictetus' use is certainly not equivalent to that of Aristotle and is in several respects divergent. For example, in the interpretation of 'what is up to us' (τὰ ἐφ' ἡμῖν) as a key element in the decision making process, his objective is purposely directed towards decisions of the will relating to moral and immoral acts of choice. As Dragona-Monachou points out, *prohairesis* denotes the autonomous inner disposition and attitude, volition, moral choice distinguishing it from Aristotle's notion of deliberate, rational choice.⁸²⁵ Generally, Aristotle's definition of *prohairesis*, whilst it might be argued to be of importance to suffering, lacks the depth of definition inherent in Epictetus' concept of free choice, which lends itself well to the idea of the suffering self and the medical analogy that promotes the notion of self-therapy. Furthermore, it might be argued, the Aristotelian definition fails to grasp some of the subtleties of Buddhist thinking on suffering, which on balance Epictetus is more in tune with. We should note that Buddhist *kamma* and *cetanā* concern actions that are driven by intentions and volitions that are 'up to us', that is: we are the owner of these actions, we are the originator, we are bound to them and they are our refuge.⁸²⁶ A common misunderstanding of *kamma*, particularly in western society, is that *kamma* is related to fate and destiny. *Kamma* in the Buddhist sense means our own 'action' or 'doing' which is entirely 'up to us', which aligns with the scope of Epictetus' *prohairesis*.

The varying lines of argument provided by these interpretations from modern scholarship, though not in complete agreement with each other, and whilst not offering any conclusive agreement and understanding of the full potential of what Epictetus might have intended by this term, do offer insight into the basic scope of his ethical approach to the psychology of the mind and the language of moral decision-making and choice. These lines of argument also offer a comparison with other Stoics and with the general thinking of Aristotle and others. However, we should come back to Epictetus' language of *prohairesis*, from a 'what depends on us' perspective, which is concerned with the basic problem of dealing with our suffering, that is, controlling how we deal with those impressions that compel us to be disturbed. We should remind ourselves (4.1) that the term *prohairesis* for the purposes of this thesis is primarily being used to mean a faculty of choice, the power to make decisions or moral choices regarding the use of impressions and understanding their use. Our prohairesis choice is for us to determine and not forced from outside unless we are so disposed and infirm (2.3.2) and we make a bad choice through ignorance, error or by mistake. A prohairesis choice is without external compulsion or influence towards our decision of what is good

⁸²⁴ Arist. *EE* 2.10 1226a20-30, *EE* 2.8, *EN* 3.1, 1109b35-1110a26, *EN* 3.3, 1112b15-27, *EN* 3.3, 1112a30-31, 3.3, 1113a5-7, *EN* 5.8, *EN*, *EN* 6.2, 1139b4-5, *EN* 7.10, 1152a17-19, *MM* 1.17, 1187b, *MM* 1.17, 1189a, *MM* 1.17, 1189b;; Sorabji (2007) pp.90-94; Dobbin (2007) pp.76-77; Kahn (1988) pp. 234-260; Long (2002) pp.212-213; Dragona-Monachou (1978-9)

⁸²⁵ Dragona-Monachou (1978-9), (2007) pp.112-113

⁸²⁶ MN 135

or bad; there is no nature of the bad in the cosmos.⁸²⁷ Simplicius in his commentary on Chapter 27 of the *Encheiridion*, regarding the nature of evil, says: 'If prohairesis is the cause of badness, and it is a self-willed activity of the soul, and not shoved about by force, can we say that anything other than the soul is the cause of badness?'⁸²⁸ The argument here is around the notion that there is no nature of the bad in the world and it is my judgements and choices that make it so. Seddon provides a useful perspective and discussion on this, which he brings back to the notion behind Epictetus' *prohairesis* and the definition of virtue and viciousness: the external world to my *prohairesis* is not a source of evil unless I decide to make it so.⁸²⁹

We have power to choose or select (*hairesis*), to prefer one thing over another thing (*prohairesis*), a choice that is determinative of other choices. As Epictetus informs us what is in our control and what is not corresponds to the sphere of choice of the *prohairesis*. The problem of choosing is, as we discussed (2.4), in our perception of the good and bad and distinguishing whether it is a true good or not; as Simplicius reminds us 'It is through the choice of pleasure as a good that all our errors arise and through the choice of genuine goods that all of our right actions come about.'⁸³⁰ It is therefore our choice whether our soul is moved by desire or aversion,⁸³¹ the proper use of our sense impressions is our choice under our control.⁸³² So Epictetus delimits his teaching to an internally determined, prohairesis choice, and this, in itself, can result in beneficial as well as harmful choices, and correct or erroneous actions. Simplicius provides inspiringly sound arguments⁸³³ for his defence of the above and the essence of the self-determining soul that bring out Epictetus' main goal, that of freedom of the soul and the release of suffering as being 'up to us,' our prohairesis choice. We can argue that even Epictetus' mantra on the good flow of life ('Seek not that things which happen should happen as you wish; but wish the things which happen to be as they are, and you will have a tranquil flow of life')⁸³⁴ is consistent with this notion of prohairesis choice and release from our suffering. As Simplicius interprets this, everything happens according to some value, either of nature or of *prohairesis*, however we seek what happens to conform to our own desires and aversions, in particular things that are not up to us and therefore not of our prohairesis choice and so we should not seek for things to happen as we wish or want.⁸³⁵ Epictetus' concept of *prohairesis*, as freedom of choice, is well argued with many and varied examples appearing in the *Discourses*, for example, the threat of the tyrant that says 'I will chain your leg'.⁸³⁶ The response to this is of course, if it benefits the tyrant then, fine, do it but such action will not chain my *prohairesis*, unless my prohairesis choice

⁸²⁷ *Ench.* 27

⁸²⁸ Simplicius in *Epict.* 79.20-30

⁸²⁹ Seddon (2005) pp.106-108

⁸³⁰ Simplicius in *Epict.* 7.20-23

⁸³¹ *Ench.* 1

⁸³² *Diss.* 1.1.7-8

⁸³³ Simplicius in *Epict.* 8.38-14.53

⁸³⁴ *Ench.* 8

⁸³⁵ Simplicius in *Epict.* 35.6-44.39

⁸³⁶ *Diss.* 1.19.8

wishes it to be chained; in other words external forces can harm the body but our *prohairesis* is free to make choices without subordination to such forces.

4.4.2 Moral Choices

From Epictetus' concept of *prohairesis* emerges the idea of our freedom to make moral choices. This is discussed in Sorabji, Long, Dobbin and Braicovich.⁸³⁷ Epictetus' unique definition of this concept as our moral agency, and its use in the *Discourses*, reveals a strong and accomplished line of argument that *prohairesis* is by nature free to make the right choices about use of externals whilst denying such freedom to anything external; hence it forms the cornerstone of his teaching of what it is to be free and how it is to be free from our internal struggles and disturbances.

There are various features of the *prohairesis* that we will highlight and summarise here that are important to the cessation of suffering.

The first feature regarding the *prohairesis* is that it is by nature a free agent in the sense of being able to make internal cognitive choices, decisions and judgments independent from external influence, opinion or views: only the *prohairesis* can compel, hinder and make itself pure or impure; nothing else, nothing external, can do this. The *prohairesis* is thus reflexive and so able to determine its own choices or refusals, and it has the freedom to be subordinate to something/someone else. The *prohairesis* can contemplate or make a judgement about itself and its choices or refusals.

The second feature of the *prohairesis* is the function it plays in developing moral character and responsibilities⁸³⁸ in making the right choices in accordance with nature and right reason. Everything related to our moral conditioning is determined and processed by the *prohairesis* as a result of its sovereign power to make choices determinative of its own moral state and quality. And it is this power that processes the choices that relate to our suffering.⁸³⁹ This concerns choosing a path towards virtue, that is, making the right choices and preferring the right things as regards the good and bad. This becomes meaningful in the scope and context of our *prohairesis* as the centre of our moral decision-making.⁸⁴⁰ What is in our control is what is affecting our choices (as *prohairesis*) and so we recognise that a pure *prohairesis* will dispose us toward the good and an impure *prohairesis* will dispose us toward the bad. Rist remarks that Epictetus' development of the *prohairesis*, that includes these features, results in a moral self, moral personality or moral character.⁸⁴¹

A third aspect is that the *prohairesis*, as a faculty of choice, can be thought of as a ruling faculty or rational, reasoning faculty in the sense and scope of choosing a path towards virtue. It is free to exist and rule itself, free to reason what choices to make and free to choose whether to suffer, with reference to nothing else than itself.⁸⁴² As argued by Engberg-Pedersen,⁸⁴³ Epictetus' emphasis on

⁸³⁷ Sorabji (2007) pp.87-98; Long (2002) pp.28-30, 92, 191-192, 207-208, 220; Dobbin (2007) pp.174-176; Braicovich (2010)

⁸³⁸ *Diss.* 1.29.3-4, 1.29.9-10, 1.29.22-26, 2.1.4-7, 2.1.12, 2.5.4-7, 2.13.40, 2.15.1, 2.22.26-27

⁸³⁹ *Diss.* 1.29.3-4, 1.29.9-10, 2.1.4-7, 2.1.12, 2.1.40, 2.13.40, 2.15.1, 2.22.26-27, 2.23.9-19

⁸⁴⁰ *Diss.* 1.29.9-10, 1.29.22-26, 2.1.4-7, 2.1.12, 2.1.40, 2.10.27-29, 2.15.1, 2.16.1-2, 2.22.18-20, 2.23.27-28

⁸⁴¹ Rist (1975) pp.103-122

⁸⁴² *Diss.*, 1.29.9-10, 2.10.27-29, 2.22.18-20

⁸⁴³ Engberg-Pedersen (2010) pp.109-121

the *prohairesis* as the core control centre for our moral choices reflects a strong sense of freedom of the mind: the *prohairesis* contrasts the world (the externals) with the freedom of cognitively deciding and choosing for oneself how to evaluate and react to our experiences of the world.

Epictetus' rendering of the *prohairesis* as faculty of choice can by extension be seen as simply our moral responsibility and volitional choice to attend to our suffering and our goal of wellbeing and human flourishing. This perspective fits in well with our aim of comparing and investigating parallel thinking between Epictetus and the Buddhist view, whilst avoiding the problems and complications highlighted in 1.2.2-1.2.3 on the self and metaphysics.

The three features of the *prohairesis* mentioned above convey the essence of being sovereign over our moral character and being able to rule over our choices to create a path to virtue. The *prohairesis* is a certain type of moral state (pure or impure) based upon the good or bad choices that are made: the essence of the good is a certain type of *prohairesis* (good moral character) and the essence of the bad is another type of *prohairesis* (bad moral character). For Epictetus, any strict and formal debate about free-will and determinism was not on his agenda; it did not fit into his scheme of dealing with the psychology and suffering of our soul as it applies to our moral freedom and our autonomous freedom of choice. As Simplicius remarks,⁸⁴⁴ belief and impulse, desire and aversion are all referred to choice and *prohairesis*, since they are all internal motions of the soul, and not external shoves; hence the soul is in control of them. He goes on to argue that Epictetus was right to make the division between 'up to us' and 'not up to us' since everything refers back to this: our suffering and diseased soul, our well-being, our right actions and wrong actions, our errors of judgement, all refer back to this division and are distinguished by choice and *prohairesis*.⁸⁴⁵ Further to this, he goes on to present detailed and lengthy arguments by those that raise objections to Epictetus, those not wanting there to be anything 'up to us', choice and *prohairesis*, and constructs convincing arguments against such objections.⁸⁴⁶

We can object to using philosophical labels such as deterministic or indeterministic in relation to Epictetus' *prohairesis*, and the notion of a moral self, on the grounds that (i) there is a lack of easy translation or correspondence, with regard to the *prohairesis*, (ii) such a labelling is unnecessary as it goes beyond what is needed to resolve the problem of suffering as a psychological problem of the individual and (iii) we can in fact go as far as to say that our discussion shows an approach in terms of suffering that works better than one based on determinism (see 1.2.1-1.2.3).

The full extent and potential of Epictetus' *prohairesis* and its links with the idea of moral self are indisputable within the scope of his own scheme of Stoic philosophy of freedom and responsibility; the choices that are made and the actions that are taken provide much scope for problem-creation and problem-solving and for the development and perfection of moral character both good and bad. We have the freedom to judge things that are under our control in whatever way we wish to judge them: if we wish to have fearful thoughts we can have them or if we have fearful thoughts we have

⁸⁴⁴ Simplicius in *Epict.* 7.35-37

⁸⁴⁵ Simplicius in *Epict.* 7.50- 8.5

⁸⁴⁶ Simplicius in *Epict.* 8.6 -14.53

the power to get rid of them. So we can create the problem of fearful thoughts and we solve the problem of our fearful thoughts. So in applying *prohairesis* in the sense of making a moral choice of choosing one thing before another, desiring or avoiding this thing over that thing, in deciding what is good or bad in such an individualised, subjective way then the possibility of suffering arises or otherwise as the case may be, linked to our moral character. So it should be clear that the *prohairesis* holds the key to both the problem behind, and solution to, our suffering⁸⁴⁷ – a dysfunctional *prohairesis* to our destruction or downfall, and a proper functioning *prohairesis* to our deliverance, and salvation.

4.4.3 Nothing Compels the Prohairesis but Itself

An interesting aspect of Epictetus' theory of the *prohairesis*, as noted above and discussed by Sorabji⁸⁴⁸ and others, is the reflexivity of the *prohairesis*: it is independent from outside influence; none can restrain or hinder it, or put it in chains and so it is free within its own moral boundaries.⁸⁴⁹ The following is one statement by Epictetus, which bears out this interpretation:

'It is the decision of your own will [judgement, opinion] which compelled you, that is, moral purpose compelled moral purpose'.⁸⁵⁰

It is worth referring at this point to an often confusing aspect that can arise as regards Epictetus and the *prohairesis*, namely, the lack of any precise status or technical distinction in the use of terms related to *prohairesis* and the *hēgemonikon*, the governing principle. This latter term could be interpreted as synonymous with that of the *prohairesis* as in the *Discourses* they appear to share many common aspects, for example, purity of function, accord with nature, use of impressions. As discussed and argued by Long, Epictetus preferred *prohairesis* to the *hēgemonikon* with regard to the concept of the mind and rationality, despite many common points of reference.⁸⁵¹ It is in this context that this thesis supports *prohairesis* as a primary focus and as a *dynamis* – a faculty of control, a 'ruling authority' of reasoning that makes moral choices – this assumption is convincingly and overwhelmingly supported in Epictetus.⁸⁵²

The contemplative nature that Epictetus⁸⁵³ assigns to the function of our *prohairesis* is a mental or cognitive act that acts upon itself and that takes account of the pathological elements as discussed before: it 'will take knowledge both of itself, what it is and of what it is capable'.⁸⁵⁴ There is much evidence in Epictetus⁸⁵⁵ that attests to this including the quality of our disposition towards our use of impressions. To the question, 'for what purpose have we received reason from nature', he answers, 'For the proper use of external impressions' and from this he argues 'What then is reason itself?

⁸⁴⁷ *Diss.* 2.23.17-19

⁸⁴⁸ Sorabji (2007) pp.87-98

⁸⁴⁹ *Diss.* 1.12.8-12, 1.17.20-24, 1.19.8

⁸⁵⁰ *Diss.* 1.17.27

⁸⁵¹ Long (2002) pp.211-212

⁸⁵² *Diss.*, 1.7.7-8, 1.20, 2.23.8-11

⁸⁵³ *Diss.* 1.1, 1.20

⁸⁵⁴ *Diss.* 1.1.6

⁸⁵⁵ *Diss.* 1.1.8, 1.1.12, , 1,4,4, 1.20.4-6, 1.20.15-16, 1.28.10, ,, 2.1.4, 2.8.5-8, 2.18, 2.20.32-33, 2.23.40

Something composed out of a certain kind of external impressions. Thus it comes naturally to be also self-contemplative. Once more, what are the things that wisdom has been give us to contemplate? Things good, bad and neither good nor bad. What, then, is wisdom itself? A good. And what is folly? An evil. Do you see then, that wisdom inevitably comes to contemplate both itself and its opposite?⁸⁵⁶ We can compare the similar description in Marcus Aurelius: 'It sees itself, analyses itself, and makes itself such as it chooses; the fruit which it bears, itself enjoys' which reflects the powerful nature and capability of this contemplating faculty.⁸⁵⁷

At this point we could conclude that the status of the *prohairesis* is that of a human rational agency that reflects upon itself and can compel itself to go in one direction or another depending on its contemplation about things good, bad and indifferent; support for this claim is found in Kahn, Gill and other scholars.⁸⁵⁸ Prohairesis choice is a qualitative judgement based on the quality of views, thoughts and opinions and so forces us to be disposed in a particular direction: it is our choice that has compelled us (our *prohairesis*). The crucial idea is that the moral freedom of our *prohairesis* to make a choice is nothing else but a reflection of our moral self. This self-determining nature of the *prohairesis* makes sense because of the active and passive nature of the *prohairesis*. Along the same lines Epictetus underlines the crucial point that no one is a master of another's *prohairesis*; we are our own master in charge of our moral character.⁸⁵⁹ Only I can control my *prohairesis*, I am in charge of how I respond to the ethical imperative to live in accord with nature and to attend to my own well-being and my suffering. No-one else can control my judgements and only I can control my judgements. In a rather interesting turn of phrase Epictetus says:

'You fail to realize that the judgement overcame itself, it was not overcome by something else; and nothing else can overcome moral purpose, but it overcomes itself'.⁸⁶⁰

This self-conquering aspect of the *prohairesis* can overcome the judgements it makes including the judgements of itself. We (*prohairesis*) are what our (*prohairesis*) makes us, we are self-determining – we develop our own moral character through the freedom we have to make moral choices and decisions.

This brings us to another key point of Epictetus:

'The essence of the good is a certain kind of moral purpose, and that of the evil is a certain kind of moral purpose'.⁸⁶¹

If your choice, your *prohairesis*, is inclined towards the good then you are compelled by the good, but if your *prohairesis* is inclined to the bad then you are compelled by the bad. Your *prohairesis* is not being compelled by anything outside of your *prohairesis* but only by you, your *prohairesis* is your moral master. If your *prohairesis* wishes to involve you in the bad then that is the direction you will be compelled to go; likewise if it wishes to involve you in the good then this is the way you are being

⁸⁵⁶ *Diss.* 1.20.5-6

⁸⁵⁷ *Med.* XI.1

⁸⁵⁸ Kahn (1988); Gill (2006)

⁸⁵⁹ *Diss.* 1.25.1-2

⁸⁶⁰ *Diss.* 1.29.12

⁸⁶¹ *Diss.* 1.29.1-2

directed. This all implies that the *prohairesis* can be an active agent as well as a passive agent, it can act upon itself, demand things of itself, hinder or injure itself,⁸⁶² hurt itself,⁸⁶³ have control, govern or dominate over itself like master and slave, and like reasoning can contemplate itself.⁸⁶⁴ Nothing outside the province of our *prohairesis* has this power to hinder, harm, injure or control our *prohairesis*.⁸⁶⁵

4.4.4 Suffering is a Personalised Judgement of Reality

As discussed, the prohairesic choice is a qualitative judgement that is responsible for whether we suffer or live in peace: this prohairesic choice plays a decisive role in our experience of suffering. This prohairesic choice is that sovereign power we have to make judgements and decisions based on our beliefs and perceptions of reality regarding our impressions. Long suggests that Epictetus' emphasis on our use of impressions provides an interpretation of the individuality of the perceiving subject as the fundamental feature of the mental affections of the individual: affections are the personal and individualised decisions.⁸⁶⁶ In our previous discussion we argued that our suffering or peace is personalised and based on internal decisions. Our suffering is personalised also by the relationships of the passive and active language (3.3) and the pathology of our language, thoughts and moral disposition (2.3). Now the subjective quality of our prohairesic choice means not only that our judgements and decisions are personalised but also that they may be subject to error through lack of knowledge and as discussed in 3.2 our suffering is located in our ignorance, that is, our lack of knowledge, of things we believe to be so. This lack of knowledge leads us to false conclusions and incorrect judgements. Hence we suffer from a deluded mind and misguided thoughts of how things seem to us as opposed to how things are. Epictetus reminds us that mental affections of impressions come to us in four ways:

'for either things are, and seem so to be; or they are not, and do not seem to be, either; or they are, and do not seem to be; or they are not, and yet seem to be'.⁸⁶⁷

The mental affections resulting from these four outcomes are very much personalised and individual: 'what is up to us', 'what is ours' are within and limited to the scope of the *prohairesis* and of our prohairesic choice. As discussed by De Lacy, our moral actions according to Epictetus belong to existence and being, quality of existence and actions/disposition of existence.⁸⁶⁸ As such our capacity for deciding and choosing options related to our existence and experiences of the world brings our thoughts into a state of peace or disturbance (3.3 and 2.3). What Epictetus succeeds in reinforcing is the need to persistently examine and evaluate our subjective (inner) experiences of the world, in particular 'things seen by the mind'.

⁸⁶² *Diss.* 3.18.2-3

⁸⁶³ *Diss.* 3.4.9

⁸⁶⁴ *Diss.* 1.20

⁸⁶⁵ *Diss.* 1.17.22-23

⁸⁶⁶ Long (1996) pp.266, 275

⁸⁶⁷ *Diss.* 1.27.1

⁸⁶⁸ De Lacy (1945) pp.257-258

So whether we are in a good or bad state of mind is related to the personalised judgements we make about the impressions we have of things, since impressions in themselves are just impressions, neither good nor bad; the critical issue is the judgements we make of them, which reflect a good or bad *prohairesis*. As indicated by Epictetus, it is probable that two individuals confronted with the same situation may arrive at different conclusions and judgements about the situation depending on their beliefs, attitude and experience of similar situations in the past and so a situation may cause suffering in one individual and not in the other. The fear manifested in one individual regarding an external situation may not manifest as fear in another since fear is merely a matter of judgement. The anger of one individual regarding an external situation may not manifest as anger in another; it is merely a matter of judgement based on ignorance.

Epictetus provides an interesting analogy of the impressions and judgements that are used to describe disturbance of the soul:

'The soul is something like a bowl of water, and the external impressions something like the ray of light that falls upon the water. Now when the water is disturbed, it looks as though the ray of light is disturbed too, but it is not disturbed'.⁸⁶⁹

He also comments 'Where is the nature of good and evil to be found? Where truth also is'.⁸⁷⁰ Such analogies of the soul and light reflecting or disturbing the water surface are also quite common in Zen Buddhism, including the 'no-water no-moon' analogy.⁸⁷¹

A man has an anxiety attack from his experience due to the impression of some external object or thing: what disturbs the man is his thoughts about the impression; his thoughts are a mere reflection of the reality of the external object. We choose to be disturbed or have something to disturb us. The choice is determined by the *prohairesis* even though the impression that we were attracted to or repelled from what caused our disturbing thoughts was not of our doing and not in our control. We are free to make the choice to be disturbed or not; even more so it is a moral choice of what should be good or bad for us. Suffering is a personalised judgement of reality determined by the choices we make and our disposition. Our soul, like the bowl of water, can contain all the impressions and reflections of the world, and so our soul provides a personalised interpretation of the world as it is, an individualised impression of what it seems or appears to be, in a distorted or undistorted way.

As discussed (3.3) there is a single principle that supports these acts of choice that cause us our suffering, that is, feeling (*pathein*), which is the source of our thoughts and actions:

'[...] in all men thought and action start from a single source, namely feeling (*pathein*) – as in the case of assent the feeling (*pathein*) that a thing is so, and in the case of dissent the feeling (*pathein*) that it is not so [...] in the case of suspended judgement the feeling (*pathein*) that it is uncertain, so also the case of impulse towards a thing, the feeling (*pathein*) that it is expedient for me and that it is impossible to judge one thing expedient

⁸⁶⁹ *Diss.* 3.3.20-21

⁸⁷⁰ *Diss.* 2.2.14

⁸⁷¹ Watts (1957) pp.138-139

and yet desire another, and again, to judge one thing fitting and yet be impelled to another [...].⁸⁷²

In this passage the *term* (*pathein*) (from *paschō* – ‘to be acted upon’ – see 3.3) is translated as ‘feeling’ in Oldfather but can equally be translated to mean ‘persuasion’, or ‘to be acted upon by an impression’. This passage thus refers to us being persuaded that a thing is so or is not so. Epictetus’ aim here is to illustrate that the very nature of the *prohairesis* is this individualised view of the world where we persuade ourselves that a thing is so or is not so; this means that through this process of thoughts and actions having their origin in our feelings, we can persuade ourselves into a state of mind of being disturbed or undisturbed. This might, for example, lead us to having a feeling of fear or anxiety because we have persuaded ourselves that a certain thing, an impression we have of something, is something we should be fearful or anxious about irrespective of the true nature and essence of the thing itself. We can be persuaded and acted upon by our *prohairesis* to be affected in a certain way so as to experience suffering, a disturbance of the mind. The strength of our own persuasive powers should be beyond doubt as Epictetus says:

‘But only talk to yourself, the man most likely to be persuaded, to whom no one is more persuasive than yourself.’⁸⁷³

His argument is clearly that our choices can be controlled by this power of persuasion, a capability which comes about by the self-determining and reflexive nature of the *prohairesis*. You may be in great anxiety about things outside your control; your mind is disturbed, as your thoughts are swept off by feelings of worry, nervousness and unease:

‘You have been dislodged’

Epictetus says further, but who has dislodged you? No one but your *prohairesis* has dislodged you. We can come to our own rescue, save our self from this suffering:

‘Fight against yourself, vindicate yourself for decency, for respect, for freedom [...] are you not willing to come to your own rescue?’⁸⁷⁴

Once again Epictetus brings us back to what the self-determining and reflexive nature of the *prohairesis* can surrender us to, or deliver us from, a state of suffering; we, our *prohairesis*, have the means to rescue us from our anxiety. Of course, rescuing one’s self from suffering requires effort and strength of mind and willingness, which requires education and training. As discussed in 4.2, recognising and accepting the existence of your suffering is the first step in transforming your suffering, then showing yourself a willingness to change and rescue yourself. We need to build up our strength of will to re-examine our impressions, feelings and thoughts, and, as Epictetus says, if we fall or are thrown once or twice in our attempt at rescuing ourselves then as the gymnastic trainer would say ‘get up and wrestle again till you get strong’.⁸⁷⁵ As Epictetus points out:

⁸⁷² *Diss.* 1.18.1-2

⁸⁷³ *Diss.* 4.9.13

⁸⁷⁴ *Diss.* 4.9.11-12

⁸⁷⁵ *Diss.* 4.9.15-16

'React in some such way yourself, for I would have you know that there is nothing more easily prevailed upon than a human soul. You have but to will a thing and it has happened, the reform has been made.'⁸⁷⁶

There is nothing more powerful than the *prohairesis* dialogue with the self, reacting to the self, convincing and persuading the self, willing the self, acting upon the self. This self-reflective dialogue holds the secret of both our destruction (towards suffering) and our deliverance (from suffering).

So our suffering is firmly embedded in the supreme power and capability of the *prohairesis* to make choices, to make decisions, because that is where we transfer judgement about the good and bad whereas that which is neither good nor bad lies outside the province of the *prohairesis* (*aprohairesis*). If I persuade myself the good is in desiring something *aprohairesis* then it is not my good that I wish to attain but that of someone else which I have no authority over and so it is likely that I will fail to attain this good which is outside of my *prohairesis*. Inevitably, our suffering arises when we fail to get what we choose to have or we get what we choose to avoid; this situation is certain to distress us. Likewise with any situation where the choices we make in desiring or avoiding things *aprohairesis* will inevitably lead to us suffering in some way or other. 'Apply the rule', says Epictetus, 'Is it outside the province of the *prohairesis*, or inside (ἀπροαίρετον ἢ προαιρετικόν)?'⁸⁷⁷ He claims that if we 'transfer <our> judgements to matters that lie within the province of the *prohairesis*,' we shall not be disturbed by external things we cannot control.⁸⁷⁸

4.4.5 Moral Character and Integrity

So far we have observed that the *prohairesis* plays the central role in our personal decision-making in respect of our moral choices, it provides freedom of choice and independence from externals. Can we now draw the conclusion that the *prohairesis* is defined as or determinative of moral character? It certainly can be said that Epictetus supposes that it acts as an agency enacting our moral responsibilities and making the proper moral choices (4.4.2). This would point to the conclusion that our moral character is active when we are making choices, deciding on a path towards virtue and, in one way or another, *prohairesis* is the embodiment of our moral character. If we follow the line of argument of Rist we can think of the *prohairesis* not primarily as an act of choosing but as a moral disposition or moral character from which good or bad choices actually arise.⁸⁷⁹ Defining the *prohairesis* as moral character from which good or bad choices arise leads us to view the role of the *prohairesis* as to either make impure or perfect those qualities of excellence that characterise a man:⁸⁸⁰ being just, temperate and self-controlled. In fact Epictetus identifies the core essence of a human being with that of the *prohairesis* ('you are not flesh, nor hair, but moral

⁸⁷⁶ *Diss.* 4.9.16

⁸⁷⁷ *Diss.* 3.3.14-15

⁸⁷⁸ *Diss.* 3.3.18-19

⁸⁷⁹ Rist (2010) pp.228-230

⁸⁸⁰ *Diss.* 3.1.8

purpose'),⁸⁸¹ and holds that the *prohairesis* is our ruling principle and the supreme governing authority; it constitutes our moral character:

'Consider who you are. To begin with, a Man; that is one who has no quality more sovereign than moral choice (*prohairesis*), but keeps everything else subordinate to it, and this moral choice (*prohairesis*) itself free from slavery and subjection'.⁸⁸²

The *prohairesis* as the supreme governing authority we have is responsible for our moral development and its perfection. Therefore our moral character can be identified with the *prohairesis*, that individualised supreme power in our control that is responsible for making quality decisions and choices, whether rightly or wrongly, that can bring about a shameful or self-respecting, dissolute or self-controlled character.⁸⁸³ Extending this line of argument, it becomes clear that suffering is a matter of morality and our moral character is the result of the good or bad choices. And again, what clearly underpins Epictetus' intentions, is that suffering is an ethical imperative in our control and bound by the choices we make: 'Behold, you have been dislodged, though by no one else but yourself. Fight against yourself, vindicate yourself for decency, for respect, for freedom'.⁸⁸⁴

The decision-making function of the *prohairesis* is primary to the character-building process, which leads, cumulatively, to the effect of making one moral choice after another, forming, shaping and perfecting the inner qualities of the individual such as self-respect, dignity and integrity to arrive at a moral character identifiable with the self. Our *prohairesis* needs to maintain these inner qualities by continuously applying acts of moral choice appropriately to each and every thing we do, every action we take, to guard against their loss and the damage or corruption of the moral character: again another indication of Epictetus' use of *prohairesis* as your sovereign force: 'For it is within you that both destruction and deliverance lie'.⁸⁸⁵

Our moral character is distinguished by the quality of our individualised choices and preferences and embodies how we deal with those feelings, affective emotions or dispositions of this self: feelings good or bad, unconcerned or anxious, calm or angry, superior or inferior, joyful or sad, are created by our use of impressions and our thoughts, views and judgements.

Another aspect related to the *prohairesis* is integrity, the quality of being of scrupulous, honest, sound moral principles but also being wholesome, intact and undivided. This subject is discussed by Kamtekar, Long and Gill.⁸⁸⁶ The vocabulary we have in Epictetus conveys what we might refer to as certain qualities of integrity: self-respect (*aidōs*),⁸⁸⁷ dignity (*katastolē*),⁸⁸⁸ decency (*euschēmosunē*),⁸⁸⁹

⁸⁸¹ *Diss.* 3.1.41

⁸⁸² *Diss.* 2.10.1

⁸⁸³ *Diss.* 4.9.17-18

⁸⁸⁴ *Diss.* 4.9.11-12

⁸⁸⁵ *Diss.* 4.9.16-17

⁸⁸⁶ Kamtekar (1998); Long (2002) pp.222-229; Gill (2015)

⁸⁸⁷ *Diss.* 1.4.4, 2.10.16, 3.22.15, 4.3.9, 4.9.12; *Fr.*14. Long argues that Epictetus diverges from traditional Stoicism as regards *aidōs* and points to the fact that Kamtekar makes a convincing case for *aidōs* as meaning 'conscience' (cf. Konstan (2007) pp.96-98)

⁸⁸⁸ *Diss.* 2.10.16

⁸⁸⁹ *Diss.* 4.9.12

being faithful (*pistos*)⁸⁹⁰ and noble (*gennaios*).⁸⁹¹ These all convey a notion of wholesomeness, that which can be thought of as characterising moral well-being, rational thinking and being virtuous, free from unhealthy disturbing passions and emotions.

Long's account of Stoic integrity goes on to point out various factors human beings are endowed with, instinctual impulses for virtue or 'seeds' of virtue, and so Epictetus urges us to cultivate what appears to be an innate moral sensibility, and our integrity like our sensibility requires training and exercise. As Epictetus says, 'Have we not a natural sense of self-respect ... fidelity?'⁸⁹² Further, our lack of integrity is a deviation from nature's standards, a self-inflicted loss, failure to use what is ours. Integrity, like freedom, is up to us, natural, and independent of externals. It is through our *prohairesis* we are capable of conscience and self-consciousness; to fully know ourselves; and to reflect and contemplate the mind. Another quote from Epictetus brings some of these ideas together: 'Pay attention, therefore, to your sense-impressions, and watch over them sleeplessly. For it is no small matter that you are guarding, but self-respect, and fidelity, and constancy, a state of mind undisturbed by passion, pain, fear, or confusion—in a word, freedom'.⁸⁹³

Gill does not give a definition of Stoic integrity but highlights three important interconnected markers:

- A high level of unity and consistency: the unified or inter-entailing virtues inform the mind, personality, life and actions of the person concerned (without remainder);
- Transparency: (as regards value-beliefs, attitudes, actions) between inner intention and outer behaviour, between personal commitments and social engagement;
- Wholeness: integrity informs the personality as a whole, ranging from overall life-goals, 'ground projects' (all the way up), to emotions and desires (all the way down); also informs interpersonal and communal relationships and actions.

An interesting remark from Gill is the following: 'Stoics think that ethical development will enable us to achieve complete 'wholeness' or 'consistency' of motivation, of a kind that will 'go all the way down' into the depths of the personality as well as 'all the way up' as regards our life-goals (indeed, these two achievements go hand in hand).'⁸⁹⁴ There is an interesting comparison here with Buddhism and the notion of wholesomeness. Buddhists talk of wholesome (*kusala*) and unwholesome (*akusala*) thoughts and attitudes, concentrating on healthy or wholesome events for the development of well-being.⁸⁹⁵ The unwholesome thoughts are considered as morally reprehensible and unproductive to a healthy state of mind⁸⁹⁶ and a distraction from our noble quest to live a virtuous life, free from *dukkha*.⁸⁹⁷

⁸⁹⁰ *Diss.*, 1.4.19-20, 3.18.3, 3.23.18, 4.9.18, 4.13.20, ,

⁸⁹¹ *Diss.* 1.2.32, 4.6.33, 3.24.58

⁸⁹² *Diss.* 2.10.22-23

⁸⁹³ *Diss.* 4.3.7-8

⁸⁹⁴ Gill (2015) p.1

⁸⁹⁵ Kalupahana (1992) pp.107-108

⁸⁹⁶ Bodhi (2008) pp.146-147

⁸⁹⁷ MN 20:1 118-122

In Epictetus we have several references to what 'lies outside the sphere of the moral purpose'.⁸⁹⁸ In some cases the 'sphere of the moral purpose' regards how to exercise ourselves to deal with sense impressions: in other cases it emphasises our sphere of control. Epictetus also refers to the 'sphere of assent' as if we were surrounded with sense impressions, some convincing and others not.⁸⁹⁹ Our decision making power is at the centre of this sphere of control, it is the scope of the *prohairesis* and our task is to keep this beautiful, right and pure, free from disturbance and distortion. So although Epictetus talks about the *prohairesis* in different ways and from alternate perspectives, the scope remains the same, defined by what is in our control and by our being absolutely free to make moral choices. He asks, 'What is it that destroys the whole man? *Prohairesis*.'⁹⁰⁰ Making the *prohairesis* wholesome, consistent and united is achieving our moral purpose, preserving its integrity.⁹⁰¹ We can relate this notion of moral character to Buddhist thinking, in particular to the five aggregates (*khandas*) and disposition (*sankhara*), which fabricates a sense of personal identity; and through *cetanā* (volition) and *kamma* (action) distinguishes if our character is of a wholesome moral quality (*kusala-kamma*) or unwholesome moral quality (*akusala-kamma*).

4.5 Prohairesis Language and Thought

4.5.1 Our Inner Voice Is Calling Us

There are many aspects of Epictetus' use of language that have a psychological dimension and function which can be used to illustrate the nature, cause and cessation of suffering. We have already had presented in Chapters 2 and 3 many examples of his use of language in relation to our experiences, thoughts, feelings and needs. The purpose of our discussion here in is to explore the world of our inner voice of 'what we say to ourselves'. This inner voice can influence our decisions and choices regarding how we use and understand our impressions. Desires and aversions expressed by the internal dialogue of this voice can have an effect on our choices and hence can impact whether cessation can be achieved. 'What we say to ourselves' may direct our thoughts into having the wrong view of our impressions or lead us into having the wrong intention behind how we use our impressions or into making the wrong choices, all of which is not conducive to cessation. The reflexive nature and influence of our inner-voice is an instance of our *prohairesis* at work, to determine and bear upon itself and its choices.

As discussed (1.2.3) we attach ourselves with thoughts and feelings, desires and aversions and so every time our inner voice expresses itself using the language of 'I', 'me' and 'mine' we are developing an identity with these thoughts and feelings, they become a reference point for our decision making. It is through the persuasive nature of the language and the inner voice we use (1.5, 3.3) to express our thoughts and feelings about things, whether these are right or wrong impressions, that we become

⁸⁹⁸ *Diss.* 3.8.2-4, 4.1.100

⁸⁹⁹ *Diss.* 4.4.13

⁹⁰⁰ *Diss.* 2.23.17

⁹⁰¹ *Diss.* 2.22.19-20

attached and cling to these impressions. Language in this instance assumes a certain influence and control over our decision-making, shaping the nature and direction of our choices.

One notion of our inner voice is that it reflects a powerful stream of conscious thinking producing a range of thoughts (ideas, opinions, concepts, images that appear in the mind) (1.5). This flow of subjective experiences in the conscious mind can and does produce an inner dialogue that is sometimes unsettling: thinking in words that are negative, critical and harmful to our inner peace, leaving us anxious and uneasy. Likewise this inner voice is associated with thinking that we identify ourselves with attachments to what we admire, revere and desire. This inner voice can project exaggerated thinking, imagining situations to be worse than they really are, presenting a situation to be more serious than it actually is, being overly demanding, and can be judgemental, or reflect a low level of tolerance and portray unhealthy negative emotions.⁹⁰²

We have already discussed (1.6) that what we say to ourselves can influence our thinking, feelings and behaviour, and our experience of suffering can sometimes be attributed to what we say to ourself. Ellis states, 'it is not what happens that creates our emotions and actions, but what we tell ourselves about what happens'.⁹⁰³ This sounds like a recasting of Epictetus' famous saying 'it is not what happens that distresses this man but his judgement about it'.⁹⁰⁴ As Ellis,⁹⁰⁵ Korzybski⁹⁰⁶ and others argue, we can become conditioned by what we say to ourselves and the language we use to define ourselves, which can all lead to disturbing and emotional thoughts: our ego-centric thoughts, non-factual overgeneralisations about ourselves and our situation, defining our selfhood in terms of 'good' and bad'. Ellis remarks that in terms of his work on REBT, 'people habituate themselves to poor language habits that interfere with their functional living, that they largely are responsible for their own dysfunctional language, feelings and actions, and that therefore they can change them'.⁹⁰⁷ More detailed discussion of Ellis and Korzybski in relation to Epictetus can be found in Robertson.⁹⁰⁸

From Horney's ideas of the inner voice and the neurotic glorification of the needs of the individual of 'what I should be', 'what I must be', or 'what I ought to be' emerges the notion of the language of the 'tyranny of the shoulds'.⁹⁰⁹ The inner voice can be persuasive, terrorising and have a powerful influence over us; it appears that we have an inner tyrant talking to us, taking control of our feelings, and transforming these into emotions and passions. This inner voice projects our negative thoughts that undermine any positive thoughts and opportunities for cessation: they can be critical, fault-finding, blaming, disparaging, accusing, doubting and reckless.⁹¹⁰ Care and attention is needed over this type of inner voice otherwise its influence over us can lead to unhealthy and emotive decisions, habits and judgements.

⁹⁰² Ellis and Ellis (2011) p.20

⁹⁰³ Ellis and Ellis (2011) p.20

⁹⁰⁴ *Ench.* 16

⁹⁰⁵ Ellis (2001a) pp.18-21, 99-113,

⁹⁰⁶ Korzybski (1951)

⁹⁰⁷ Ellis (2001a) p.108

⁹⁰⁸ Robertson (2010)

⁹⁰⁹ Horney (1945)

⁹¹⁰ *Diss.* 3.3.18-19, 3.22.48-49, 3.22.104-105, 3.24.79, 3.26.18-19, 4.1.108, 4.7.9; *Ench.* 1

Epictetus' *prohairesis* as the faculty of choice of what is in our control can be contrasted with his notion of a person (*prosōpon*) in the sense of 'what a person is' and 'what a person wants to be', taking on the role assigned to us or taking on a role beyond our control or measure. Again and again we are cautioned: 'Be not elated at any excellence which is not your own.'⁹¹¹ If our inner voice is expressing thoughts of elation about what our image ought to be, then we need to be careful and not be elevated, lofty, high-minded and carried away by external impressions that feed our thoughts and inner voice.⁹¹² On the other hand, one should not let one's inner voice be abusively disparaging about one's self. Does our inner voice ask: 'What conceit am I cherishing regarding myself? How do I conduct myself? Do I for my part act like a wise man? Do I for my part act like a man of self-control?' These are self-checking thoughts that Epictetus advises us to use.⁹¹³ Our *prohairesis* must be employed to guard itself against being carried away by impressions and imaginations.⁹¹⁴

Our inner voice can call us and grab our interest and attention towards things outside of our control. Epictetus warns: 'When your imagination bites you ... fight against it with your reason ... do not allow it to grow strong or to take the next step and draw all the pictures it wants, in the way it wants to do.'⁹¹⁵ This is a call against yearning for things outside of our control, things that our thoughts and imagination make attractive or repulsive. Our own individualised thoughts can destroy us with our own suffering or deliver us from our own suffering – the language of our inner voice can convince or persuade us, with its thought-provoking words, that what appears to us in impressions and thoughts in the mind is in fact so:—the reason why we assent to it because it appears to be so.⁹¹⁶ As Epictetus rightly makes the point: '...talk to yourself, the man most likely to be persuaded, to whom no one is more persuasive than yourself.'⁹¹⁷ If therefore our impressions are wrongly formed by our thoughts and thinking then we have gone astray and we will pay a penalty and suffer from the errors in our thinking;⁹¹⁸ the distinctive characteristic in human error is man 'not doing what he wishes, and ... doing what he does not wish'.⁹¹⁹

4.5.2 Self Serving Thoughts and Personal Pronouns

Wishing, wanting and needing are all driven by our desire for this or that to happen or not happen. Decisions and choices take account of these wants and desires, with some goal in mind. When our internal language, thoughts and feelings revolve around personalised goals and objectives that we wish this or that will (or will not) happen and when it does not happen (or does happen), we feel unhappy with the outcome of not achieving our goal and we are dissatisfied, discontented. We

⁹¹¹ *Ench.* 6

⁹¹² *Ench.* 19

⁹¹³ *Diss.* 2.21.9-10

⁹¹⁴ *Ench.* 34

⁹¹⁵ *Diss.* 3.24.108-109

⁹¹⁶ *Diss.* 1.28.1

⁹¹⁷ *Diss.* 4.9.13-14

⁹¹⁸ *Diss.* 1.28.10

⁹¹⁹ *Diss.* 2.26.4-5

are not ceasing our suffering; we are creating it through our mistaken belief that our wants and desires and identified goals will bring us happiness.

In general, we define or identify ourselves in terms of what we do, say and think, based on our wants and desires. Similarly Buddhists talk about kammic volition, wishing and wanting us to do, say and think something, based on attachments, aversions and ignorance, which can result in moral (*kusala*) or immoral (*akusala*) mental states, dissatisfaction and suffering. They talk about a craving and clinging self (3.2.2-3); a self-grasping mind;⁹²⁰ clinging to the five aggregates as possessions of 'my self, is suffering;⁹²¹ grasping in the sense of possession of a mysterious ego is suffering; the self-grasping mind is the 'I' in 'I am suffering' (1.2.3) and in the use of personal pronouns in our language (1.5). Buddhists also talk about the mind wanting to create a permanent self, premised on aggregates that are impermanent,⁹²² and it is the same mind that is responsible for the belief in the ego.⁹²³ Self-serving thoughts and personal pronouns are internalised and dictate the choices and decisions we make. For Epictetus, our faculty of choice (*prohairesis*) is used to choose something with a goal and objective in mind; something is chosen to reach some goal and in the case of Epictetus this goal is the path to virtue. Conflict arises when Epictetus' goal is at odds with our internalised wants and desires. The language and psychology of personal pronouns as used in everyday life can produce conflicts of interest as personal benefits are derived from actions or decisions which are different to the goal of choosing a pathway to virtue (the right goal of the *prohairesis*). In parallel with Buddhist thinking and their notion of 'I-conceit' (1.2.3 and 1.5.3), our choices and decisions reflect a state of mind at odds with a path towards cessation of dissatisfaction and suffering, a path which corresponds to the right goal of the *prohairesis*.

Now achieving our choice objectives, of wishing and wanting, depends on whether they involve 'what is in our control' or 'what is not in our control'. So the way we talk to ourselves, in a language of personal pronouns, 'I want X to happen' or 'I wish for X to happen' can make a big difference to our state of mind and how we feel: as well as being amplified by any emotional context that may be expressed or conveyed by what we wish or want. Further, we can add the Stoic notion of wanting something good or not wanting something bad to happen, which is confined to within us not without us. As Epictetus says, 'No one is dearer to me than myself' and so if 'I want X to happen' I am willing it to happen with my own self-interest in mind, as it would be absurd to let myself be hurt by something I wish not to happen'. Epictetus goes on to say: 'Whom then, do I wish to win the victory? The victor; and so the one whom I wish to win the victory will always win it'.⁹²⁴ The principle here is that whatever the subject matter of what 'I wish or want', I need to make sure I maintain the *prohairesis* in a good condition to achieve the pathway to virtue, which also means that not letting myself be hurt by something is referring to maintaining the *prohairesis* rightly.

⁹²⁰ Tashi Tsering (2005) p.144

⁹²¹ Kalupahana (1992) p.87

⁹²² As remarked earlier in this thesis we shall not delve into the complexity of the Buddhist concept of 'self', that is, the 'conceited I' which is attached to the five aggregates: see 1.2.3

⁹²³ Kalupahana (1992) p.181

⁹²⁴ *Diss.* 3.4.11

So conflict arises when our wishes and wants fail us and as Epictetus constantly reminds us the origin of our sorrow and suffering is this: 'to wish for something that does not come to pass.'⁹²⁵ It is our wrongly conditioned thoughts about wishing for externals that make us troubled in our mind and our thoughts if we 'want something it does not happen' and when we 'do not want it, it does happen',⁹²⁶ we feel hampered and we suffer by our thoughts wanting this or that to happen. We need to use our thinking and reasoning to unlearn all this, 'that nothing shall be that you do not wish, and that nothing shall fail to be that you do wish',⁹²⁷ and this is part of maintaining your *prohairesis*. Epictetus insists that we should not 'desire at haphazard that those things should happen which have at haphazard seemed best to me' as this is dangerously near being shameful and ignoble.⁹²⁸ If life were to accommodate every individual's whims it would be madness and not freedom.

Do you think 'I wish to be tranquil, unhampered, unconstrained, free'? If so then Epictetus' solution is to be occupied with nothing but my own moral purpose,⁹²⁹ understanding yourself, 'putting away certain bad judgements and taking on others' and transferring your status to what lies within your self, your moral purpose and 'if ever you say, "Alas!" you are speaking' for your own sake.⁹³⁰ When our inner voice speaks to us we are speaking and thinking on behalf of ourselves, and the thoughts we have are often a reflection of what we wish and what we want, and the self we want to be. When we say, 'I am in a bad way', what difference does it make what the external object is as regards the target of our wishes and wants? It is an aproharetic choice and so cannot secure me what I want in any way that does not make me subservient to the object and so cannot give any lasting satisfaction.⁹³¹ Anything aproharetic regarding our wishes and wants can make our thoughts say to us, 'I am discontented because I am deprived of it.'⁹³² However if you converse with yourself about your wishes and wants you need to exercise your sense-impressions and develop your preconceptions and to take heed: 'Why shall I will what is not in the province of the will, to keep under all circumstances what has not been given me outright?'⁹³³

4.5.3 Thinking that Causes Us Unrest

In Seneca and Marcus Aurelius, we can find thinking complementary to that of Epictetus regarding our impressions of reality and our judgements about impressions. Our inner voice, reflecting thoughts and imagination, can cause us unrest when it challenges us. The things we say to ourselves about what others think of us, their view and opinion of us, their lack of praise, their blame or criticism can all unrest or unseat us. The imagination is powerful, it can hinder us and compel us: it can take over our lives with illusions and false realities if we let it: as Seneca writes to his friend

⁹²⁵ *Diss.* 1.27.10-11

⁹²⁶ *Diss.* 2.17.16-18

⁹²⁷ *Diss.* 2.17.28

⁹²⁸ *Diss.* 1.12.9-16

⁹²⁹ *Diss.* 3.5.7-8

⁹³⁰ *Diss.* 3.5.4-6

⁹³¹ *Diss.* 4.4.1-4

⁹³² *Diss.* 4.4.5

⁹³³ *Diss.* 4.1.101

'There are more things in this world, Lucilius, likely to frighten us than to crush us. We suffer more in imagination than in reality.'⁹³⁴ We must take control over our thoughts and imagination for as Epictetus says, 'my mind is the material with which I have to work'.⁹³⁵ Our aim should be to live life in a well-flowing way free from suffering, to look after our self and to engage with the world around us and to form relationships with others. To have control over my thoughts and imagination is the domain of my *prohairesis* and 'control over the *prohairesis* is my true business.'⁹³⁶ With this we can compare the self-contemplative view of Seneca – 'mind needs to have confidence in itself, devote itself to its own matters.'⁹³⁷ Nothing or no-one can provide this confidence, we must get it from our self: the only thing in which we can have confidence is our own *prohairesis*.⁹³⁸ Man fears things that lie outside the *prohairesis* but, as Epictetus argues, we should be cautious of our thoughts and our imagination and how our *prohairesis* deals with these and our use of impressions and turn our confidence towards our *prohairesis* being able to deal with things outside its domain.⁹³⁹

We all make assumptions about things we see and hear, we try to make sense of our impressions, and of course we dress these up and embellish them with our own prejudices, ill-formed views and opinions and our estimates of how things are: Epictetus tells⁹⁴⁰ us to bear in mind that these are all of our own doing, our individual sense of things is in our control. Further Epictetus warns us to be on our guard regarding our individual sensibilities to other's words and views of us: 'It is not the man who reviles or strikes you that insults you, but it is your judgement that these men are insulting you ... when someone irritates you, be assured that it is your own opinion which has irritated you.'⁹⁴¹ Good advice to all of us not to get carried away by external impressions. What happens is that we have thoughts generated by these words of others that touch us in a personal way; they touch upon our feelings and sensibilities, and encroach on our identity and sense of self. As with the 'The soul is something like a bowl of water'⁹⁴² (4.4.4) the cause of our doing or not doing (the individual sensibility of our thoughts) is 'only our opinions and the decisions of our will' (our judgements).⁹⁴³ As Marcus Aurelius puts it, 'when you fret at any circumstance', remember 'that all is as thinking makes it so',⁹⁴⁴ and in this context he is referring to the fact we have something within us stronger than emotion; it is thinking that creates the emotion by our subjective judgement and so effaces this opinion, this judgement, which we have the power to do whenever we will or wish⁹⁴⁵ by our prohairetic choice, and, lo and behold, we are not disturbed and there is calm. Who or what is to

⁹³⁴ Sen. Ep. I.75

⁹³⁵ Diss. 3.22.20-21

⁹³⁶ Diss. 4.5.34

⁹³⁷ Sen. Ep. II.267

⁹³⁸ Diss. 3.26.25

⁹³⁹ Diss. 2.1

⁹⁴⁰ Ench.1

⁹⁴¹ Ench.20

⁹⁴² Diss. 3.3.20-21

⁹⁴³ Diss. 1.11.33

⁹⁴⁴ Med. XII, 26

⁹⁴⁵ Med. XII, 22

blame for inner unrest? Our opinion and sense of any circumstance makes it so,⁹⁴⁶ and hence life as we have an impression of it, how we make sense of it is an opinion, a judgement.⁹⁴⁷

Impressions and appearances are as important and significant as the reality of the world. As is well recognised by Epictetus in his conversations,⁹⁴⁸ how we use and manage appearances and our thoughts regarding them, however pleasant or unpleasant they may appear, is critical to our being rested or unrested in our mind and soul. As most people will appreciate, impressions, and our associated thoughts about them, can take a firm grip and hold on us, emotionally control our lives and undermine our well-being, and it takes an inner strength of a healthy and responsive *prohairesis* to deal appropriately with these impressions.

When a man is unsettled, tossed about and in turmoil by his thoughts and worthless things, where is his mind, his being (self)? As Epictetus remarks: 'In the field where there was hurt and help. "If," says he, "a man can hurt me, what I am engaged in amounts to nothing; if I wait for somebody else to help me, I am myself nothing. If I want something and it does not happen, it follows that I am miserable."⁹⁴⁹ We have from Marcus Aurelius that this man should be in the place where his own self-sufficient faculty, his *prohairesis*, should be in charge where his judgements are reasoned directing his thoughts to be free of suffering.⁹⁵⁰ So we need to be the thinker in charge of our thoughts and not to be subservient to them and not to be carried away with our imagination and let it unrest and unseat us: 'Let your mind and thoughts become what is happening now, be attentive to the present moment and stop the puppet strings of impulse.'⁹⁵¹

4.5.4 I Suffer Because I Think and Feel This Way

We can draw a number of parallels between Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus on thinking and its effect on our peace of mind and suffering. The language we use influences our thoughts and our thoughts in turn can drive us to make either subjective or objective judgements. Marcus Aurelius in an uncompromising stance asserts: 'All is as thinking makes it so ... and you can control your thinking ... so remove your judgements whenever you wish and then there is calm.'⁹⁵² His claim is clear: subjective judgements, influenced by our personal thoughts, may be positive or negative, and affect our feelings and emotions and cause inner unrest. Some believe (including Epictetus) that the process is two-way: thoughts can influence feelings and feeling can influence thoughts.

What I say to myself about my self reflects what sort of person I am in my own eyes, in thinking, in desiring, in avoiding.⁹⁵³ Is the person I am talking and thinking about the person I want to be? Are we being persuaded through emotional reasoning to be a certain sort of person by virtue of what we say to and about ourselves? Beck used the term 'emotional reasoning' to refer to a cognitive process

⁹⁴⁶ *Med.* XII, 8

⁹⁴⁷ *Med.* IV, 3

⁹⁴⁸ *Ench.* 1, 2.18.24-26

⁹⁴⁹ *Diss.* 4.8.25-26

⁹⁵⁰ *Med.* VIII, 48

⁹⁵¹ *Med.* VII, 29-30

⁹⁵² *Med.* II, 15; XII, 22

⁹⁵³ *Diss.* 4.6.18

whereby a person concludes that their emotional reaction (negative thinking) proves something is true, thus distorting any observed or objective evidence.⁹⁵⁴ I think/feel I am X therefore I must be X; I feel (i.e. think that I am) dull or stupid therefore I must be. Has my reasoning convinced me of this? We can condition our mind and our character if we make a habit of saying certain things to ourselves time and time again: 'Your mind will take on the character of your most frequent thoughts; for the soul takes its dye from the thoughts; so you dye your own with a succession of thoughts like these..⁹⁵⁵ Habit is a powerful influence on our thinking and our behaviour: hence, once we have accustomed ourselves to employ our thoughts of desire and aversion only to externals then we must intervene and deploy contrary thinking habits to counter the emotional pull of the external world.⁹⁵⁶ As Epictetus says, if you let your thoughts lead you to misguided, emotional reasoning, you have not yet acquired the right state of mind.⁹⁵⁷ If you have an attitude of mind that is led by a directing mind not subservient to the externals but enjoying the freedom of a healthy *prohairesis*, then your thinking can lead you to feel good, in the Stoic sense.⁹⁵⁸

Epictetus asks: 'Can it be that the thoughts themselves are unexercised and unaccustomed to face the facts?'⁹⁵⁹ This is a reminder that we must examine and exercise reason as part of the thinking process to avoid the inner voice leading our thoughts towards unrest. So what happens if we remove our judgements about our feelings? Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius believe that if we 'remove the judgement', then we 'have removed the thought (I am hurt), remove the thought and <we> have removed the hurt'.⁹⁶⁰

In addition, what I say to myself about myself may be influenced by what I think or hear others think or say about me. Am I persuaded by the opinions of others? Again Epictetus argues that the secret of knowing is closer to home: 'No one is closer to myself than I am,'⁹⁶¹ and urges us to start exercising our thoughts through reasoning and to avoid the belief that our feelings are a true reflection of how things are in reality. If we regularly say and think to ourselves negative things, these can become strong, habitual and fixed in our mind, 'for everywhere judgement is strong, judgement is invincible'⁹⁶² consequently the more we stray away from things as they really are, the more our thought-patterns can become irrational and our sense and perception of the world is prejudiced (as discussed in 4.2); we pay no attention or regard to our own self or observe our self.⁹⁶³ A typical case in question is the feeling of depression. Our feeling good or bad is 'nothing but what thinking makes it.'⁹⁶⁴

⁹⁵⁴ Beck (1991), (2011)

⁹⁵⁵ *Med.* V, 16

⁹⁵⁶ *Diss.* 3.12.6-7

⁹⁵⁷ *Diss.* 3.16

⁹⁵⁸ *Med.* II, 2

⁹⁵⁹ *Diss.* 4.6.14

⁹⁶⁰ *Med* IV, 7

⁹⁶¹ *Diss.* 4.6.11

⁹⁶² *Diss.* 3.16.8-9

⁹⁶³ *Diss.* 3.16.15

⁹⁶⁴ *Med.* XII, 8

One of the strongest, confidence-building things we can say to ourselves is – ‘I am in possession of my own’,⁹⁶⁵ in other words the sovereign power to make choices, that is, my *prohairesis*.⁹⁶⁶ I can shape it to my liking; I can make it whatever I wish it to be; it can gather for itself the fruit it bears; it achieves its own end; it is in charge of its own performance, sets its own programme for life, and fulfils it. This is not some paltry possession but a possession that is truly my own and whose security is in my hands.⁹⁶⁷ I have the ultimate power to change what I think and how I feel. I can choose to think and feel discontented or contented, whether I want to be angry or calm, sad or happy, joyful or miserable.

4.5.5 The Tyrant Within

The *prohairesis* is essential to Epictetus’ moral theory as the place where the choices are made on our path to virtuous life (4.4.2); in other words our moral pathway in life derives from or depends on our *prohairesis*. The quality and integrity of our life is determined by how our *prohairesis* distinguishes between those things that are ‘mine’ rather than ‘not mine’. Our *prohairesis* builds, develops and maintains an inner (cognitive and emotional) world, made up of a sovereign faculty that rules over whether there should be suffering or peace. This faculty is an inner sanctum fortified against outside interference; it is a stronghold of authority and power over its choices of whether there should be suffering or peace within its walls. Our cognitive and emotional life involves a continuum of inner voices, perceptions, thoughts, judgements, impulses and actions. The *prohairesis* with its power to persuade, compel, hinder and disturb itself directs this inner world and has the capability peculiar to itself to be the victim of its own reflexive nature; it can be dysfunctional and render tyranny over our pathway to peace and well-being. This tyranny can be thought of as that inner voice whose language terrorises and disturbs us: after all, the *prohairesis* is the authority that is unconstrained and rules our choices and decisions. Our inner voice can be the voice of reason or the voice of tyranny. It is the voice that we listen to, the voice that expresses and conveys our thoughts to us.

Plato talked about man’s soul being wholly enslaved by its inner tyrant.⁹⁶⁸ Aristotle says people are driven to tyranny by excessive desires and refers to such desire as like a wild animal, saying that passion warps and perverts the mind even for the best of men.⁹⁶⁹ Epictetus expresses similar feelings in the sense that we can lose or destroy the rational man in us by being taken over by excessive desires and ‘passions which make it impossible for us to listen to reason’,⁹⁷⁰ driving us to act like wild beasts, making us the victim and prisoner of unnatural lust and the inner tyrant in us. His

⁹⁶⁵ *Med.* XI, 1

⁹⁶⁶ *Diss.* 3.24

⁹⁶⁷ *Diss.* 3.18.4, 3.22.31, 3.22.38-39, 3.22.106, 4.5.15

⁹⁶⁸ *Pl. Rep.* 577e

⁹⁶⁹ *Arist. Pol.* 1287a30

⁹⁷⁰ *Diss.* 3.2.4

observation is: 'And if, instead of being a man, a gentle and social being, you have become a wild beast, a mischievous, treacherous, biting animal, have you lost nothing?'⁹⁷¹

The tyrant idea is introduced by Epictetus with claims of, "I am the mightiest in the world [...] All men pay attention to me".⁹⁷² The power of such language, enveloped by the psychology of personal pronouns, and the thoughts and feeling such language may induce underpin an inner voice, mental mood and feelings and emotions all vying for attention. Epictetus' reasons for referring to a tyrant are several: one is to illustrate that the victim of the tyrant risks having a disturbed mind and being enslaved by fearful thoughts brought on by the tyrant's threatening words; another reason is to bring out the egotistical nature of a tyrant mind; and a further reason is the inherent weaknesses in the mind of the tyrant, which leads us to proffer the notion of an inner tyrant and the neurotic nature of such an inner tyrant. We claim these are all metaphorically significant to Epictetus' teaching and to a dysfunctional *prohairesis*.

Epictetus refers to this inner tyrant destroying the 'citadel' of our own soul: 'the acropolis within us, and have we cast out the tyrants within us, whom we have lording it over each of us every day, sometimes the same tyrants ... here is where we must begin, and it is from this side that we must seize the acropolis and cast out the tyrants';⁹⁷³ destroying our 'inner citadel' is something we can avoid experiencing, as our thoughts and opinions are in our control.

The victim might be brave enough to ask the tyrant who claims to be the mightiest in the world:

'Can you secure for me desire that is free from any hindrance? How can you? Do you have it yourself? Can you secure for me aversion proof against encountering what it would avoid?'⁹⁷⁴

What is Epictetus actually saying here? The only thing that compels the *prohairesis* is itself: it can save itself and destroy itself; it is its own worst enemy, a personalised tyrant inside us. In other words the *prohairesis* can act as a conceited inner tyrant, with the ultimate power to control us with threats and fear, with judgements that feed neurotic and delusional tendencies. The *prohairesis* can habituate and strengthen what we do, say and think to appeal to and serve our wants and desires, both in a good and a bad way. Such is the nature of the *prohairesis*. If we want to do something we must get our *prohairesis* to make a habit out of it or if we do not want to do something we need to get our *prohairesis* to oppose it and do something different.⁹⁷⁵

When such an inner voice projects irrational thoughts and excessive demands that overrule and impair the proper functioning of our moral self, then this resembles the behaviour and characteristics of our image of a tyrant (4.5.1). Marcus Aurelius talks about tyrants betraying their country with evils and vices⁹⁷⁶; our inner tyrant betrays us, getting up to vicious activities and causing self-harm behind

⁹⁷¹ *Diss.* 2.10.14-17

⁹⁷² *Diss.* 1.19.1-5

⁹⁷³ *Diss.* 4.1.86-87

⁹⁷⁴ *Diss.* 1.19.2-3

⁹⁷⁵ *Diss.* 2.18.3-5

⁹⁷⁶ *Med.* III, 16

closed doors. Within the inner citadel (as Marcus Aurelius calls it)⁹⁷⁷ is meant to protect us from harm from the outside world, a retreat and refuge, there is a battle raging between the different selves represented by the *prohairesis*. As Epictetus points out, the citadel is destroyed not by iron, nor by fire, but by judgements; if we cast out the tyrants within us (who are 'lording it' over our *prohairesis* every day), we cast out what is hindering us and free ourselves from passions.⁹⁷⁸ So to make this acropolis within us a safe refuge, we must ask of ourselves⁹⁷⁹ 'to what use am I putting my soul? Ask this on every occasion. Examine yourself ... What sort of soul do I have after all? ... that of a child, a despot, a wild animal?' In exercising my will (my *prohairesis*) in a way that meets my ethical and moral imperative, I become the person, the citizen, the friend I should be⁹⁸⁰ and I adorn⁹⁸¹ myself with beautiful *prohairesis*. This inner tyrant is the result of a dysfunctional *prohairesis*, a *prohairesis* that is not functioning normally or properly.

The ability of the *prohairesis* to project different dispositions means that there is always the opportunity for a state of harmony or disharmony, peace or conflict to manifest itself within us. So in this way we might view this inner tyrant as an agent of the dysfunctional *prohairesis* causing disharmony and conflict within us in its quest to drive our choices and decisions towards its own self-interest. Epictetus states that nothing can hinder, harm or injure the *prohairesis* but itself, and the reflexivity of the *prohairesis* means, as Sorabji puts it, the 'you', which can destroy its *prohairesis*, can survive its destruction.⁹⁸² Thus this notion of an inner tyrant can exploit the reflexivity of its *prohairesis* to compel and hinder its *prohairesis* to be dysfunctional. This inner tyrant can compel the *prohairesis* to act abnormally and impair our thinking with a chain of irrational thoughts; it can make unreasoned judgements and remarks and enslave our feelings with emotive content. In fact it does all the things that run counter to the development of a pure and beautiful *prohairesis*, all the things associated with a perverted or bad *prohairesis*.

4.6 Prognosis

4.6.1 Art of Prognosis

We again revisit the medical model (1.4) to consider the *prognosis*, that is, the likely course of the suffering mind and of its cessation. Again this continues our comparison of Epictetus with the Buddhist approach. If we use and exercise our faculty of choice (*prohairesis*) to make the right decisions, have the right views and intentions regarding our use and understanding of impressions then the *prognosis* for progression towards cessation is good.

Epictetus does not use the term *prognosis*; however, the notion is clearly embedded in his approach to suffering. It is worth recalling from Galen that *diagnosis* relates to the present condition

⁹⁷⁷ *Med.* VIII, 48

⁹⁷⁸ *Diss.* 4.1.86-89

⁹⁷⁹ *Med.* V.11

⁹⁸⁰ *Diss.* 4.1.89-90

⁹⁸¹ *Diss.* 3.1

⁹⁸² Sorabji (2007) p.88

of a person and *prognosis* relates to a future condition of the person.⁹⁸³ In the general medical sense we make a prognosis of whether a patient will recover from their diagnosis. A doctor makes a prognosis, of the patient's state of health or illness based on current knowledge of the strength of their disease (*nosos*) and of their nature/character.⁹⁸⁴ It is clear then that recovery is dependent upon the degree of strength of the disease and the infirmity (*arrostēma*) and on the strength of the capacity or faculty (*dynamis*). This *prognosis* is not a prediction of what is going to happen, in the absurd sense of someone prophesying or by divination, but as Galen says,⁹⁸⁵ if everything happens, as it ought the disease will be resolved, and if it has not been resolved then continuation of the treatment is needed. Galen applies a more scientific method to the process of 'prediction', based on the time for recovery and its success rate being dependent on the strength of the disease or infirmity and of the capacity or faculty and which one will prevail. Of course, the father of the art of *prognosis* was Hippocrates of Cos: 'Disturbed awakenings with over-boldness and derangement of the mind are a bad sign, and announce convulsions'.⁹⁸⁶ His analysis shows a systematic procedure of identifying and observing a range of examples as signs and warnings, announcing the possible future condition of the patient's state of health. Hippocrates, although focused primarily on the sickness of the body, nevertheless is concerned with some of the possible effects of physical sickness on a sick mind and the warning signs of the future course of sickness: 'To do something outside one's custom, as for example to desire to have something that was not one's habit before, or just the opposite, bodes ill and indicates that delirium is near',⁹⁸⁷ 'Derangement of the mind concerning necessities is a very bad sign, and exacerbations that follow this are fatal'⁹⁸⁸ or 'In persons already greatly debilitated, derangement of the mind is a very bad sign'.⁹⁸⁹

4.6.2 Predicting the Future Condition of Our Soul

What in Epictetus is relevant to the discussion here on *prognosis*? Certainly the notions of seeking knowledge of the future through divination he would advise against as irrational and misguided as, by their very nature, events in the future are not within our control. Traditional Stoicism defended divination through their beliefs in providence⁹⁹⁰ and fate.⁹⁹¹ Whilst Epictetus does not challenge this traditional stance, he nevertheless raises questions regarding its usefulness. Why employ divination or an interpreter to tell me about the future? 'Have I not within me the diviner that has told me the true nature of good and evil, that has set forth the signs characteristic of both of them?'⁹⁹² In predicting what is going to happen regarding things that are not under our control, we need to bear in mind that what is going to take place is neither good nor evil, it is then something indifferent and is

⁹⁸³ Gal. *Art med.* 410K, 312-313

⁹⁸⁴ Gal. *Meth. med.* 293K, 116-117

⁹⁸⁵ Gal. *Meth. med.* 292K, 114-115

⁹⁸⁶ Hp. *Praen.* 82, 122-123

⁹⁸⁷ Hp. *Praen.* 47, 116-117

⁹⁸⁸ Hp. *Praen.* 97, 126-127

⁹⁸⁹ Hp. *Praen.* 99, 126-127

⁹⁹⁰ Cic. *Inv.* I 82-83

⁹⁹¹ Cic. *ND* I 52-55

⁹⁹² *Diss.* 2.7.3

nothing to us.⁹⁹³ So Epictetus would argue that a prognostic procedure related to the condition of the soul should solely focus on the noblest and most sovereign of matters at every point in time, that is, our focus should be on the condition of our soul and hence our *prohairesis*. We should observe and examine this condition and address any signs or warnings regarding changes to this condition, from good to bad, from bad to worse. He asks: 'Is not the future outside the sphere of moral purpose (*prohairesis*)?' And is not the true nature of good and evil within this sphere? Yes, remarks Epictetus in both cases⁹⁹⁴ and he goes on to point out that we are permitted to make use of every natural outcome, no one can prevent us; hence whatever takes place now or in the future we can turn to a good purpose. So it is of no value or purpose to go to an interpreter or diviner and say, 'Examine for me these entrails and tell me what signs they give'.⁹⁹⁵ Whatever future good or evil becomes of my soul is within my control and by nature free of outside influence. It is through proper use of my faculty of choice (*prohairesis*) that cessation can be realised.

4.6.3 Prognostic Procedure

The most important aspect of prognostic procedure is the methodological principles we can apply to determine whether the condition of our soul in the present moment can be improved over time: prognostic procedure should indicate whether or not we can make enough progress to secure and improve the future condition of our soul. It should be clear that whatever disease and infirmity we have, the strength and extent of these pathological elements compared to the degree of strength or weakness of our resolve to combat these will provide some indication of how prolonged the recovery from this disease will be. The weaker our resolve in comparison with our disposition, habits or attitudes related to the cause disease, the more difficult it is to recover. The greater the propensity and appetite for getting pleasure from external things in the present, the stronger is our attachment (cf. *upādāna* – 2.2.3.4) to these external things, the stronger becomes our habit and the greater our concern about failing to get what we desire from these things in the future.

Epictetus' statements of procedure and principle⁹⁹⁶ related to our practice and training indicate where our failings lie, what has been neglected or ruined, all of which can be used to determine the likely course of our disease and progress towards recovery. Our training, says Epictetus, should not divert into things unnatural but only consists in training in the things conducive to success in achieving our goal of securing a good condition of our soul:⁹⁹⁷ we should not let our training turn outwards to things not in our control, as our desire and aversions will inevitably fail, but we should focus our training solely inwards. Epictetus says, 'but in the affairs of life there are many things which draw us away', so we should not let our education, training and exercises stray; we should follow the 'law of life' and 'do what nature demands'. Carrying on with this focus of our training, Epictetus provides a statement of salvation: 'For if we wish in every matter and circumstance to

⁹⁹³ *Ench.* 32

⁹⁹⁴ *Diss.* 4.10.8-9

⁹⁹⁵ *Diss.* 1.17.20-21

⁹⁹⁶ *Diss.* 1.2, 1.22.9-14, 1.26, 1.27, 1.29, 1.30, 2.2.11-12, 2.17, 3.2, 3.10, 3.12, 3.15, 4.4.29-33, 4.12; *Ench.* 29

⁹⁹⁷ *Diss.* 3.12.1-6

observe what is in accord with nature, it is manifest that in everything we should make it our aim neither to avoid that which nature demands nor to accept that which is in conflict with nature'.⁹⁹⁸ And so our salvation says Epictetus is through our *prohairesis*: 'Do you see that in this sphere you have a moral purpose free from hindrance, constraint, obstruction?'⁹⁹⁹ We have in Epictetus the idea that our training, recovering from a diseased soul and making our *prohairesis* pure is our salvation, the way out of slavery of a diseased soul.

Our prognostic procedure must clearly take account of the pathological elements discussed in 3.2 as they apply to that, which naturally governs us. Our prognostic procedure should evaluate, based on the diagnosis of our present condition, whether we shall recover from the diagnosis of our disease or whether the condition will prevail and maybe get worse; it is an evaluation of the future good and bad condition of the soul. Part of our prognostic procedure must be to evaluate whether we are strong enough to come to our own rescue, to fight against oneself, vindicate oneself, free oneself from a diseased soul. The weaker we are in our resolve, the more work there is to be done. As we have in one of Epictetus' many metaphors, in this case regarding a gymnastic trainer: 'The boy ... is thrown; "get up" he says, "and wrestle again, till you get strong"'.¹⁰⁰⁰ Our prognostic procedure must also evaluate our propensity and proness to disease.

4.6.4 Strength Behind Our Infirmary

Feeding our indulgence, pleasure-seeking ways and showing lack of self-restraint and moderation makes our infirmity stronger which can only prolong our problem and makes recovery less likely in the short term.

'But count also the fact that you have fed your incontinence, you have given it additional strength. For it is inevitable that some habits and faculties should, in consequence of the corresponding actions, spring up, though they did not exist before, and that others, which were already there should be intensified and made strong'.¹⁰⁰¹

Epictetus' point is that our infirmity takes over reason and feeds our desire for the external and our aversions. The less we apply reason to this situation, the more likely it is that our desire, and our aversions, will repeat, arise more quickly with ease, unhindered and not challenged by us. As the following passage recognises and makes clear, our infirmity can grow stronger and stronger, overcoming us and the power of our mind to recover and break free: our desire for money is a certain weakness that can easily become habit forming; the more we get the more we want. As is the case with many passions, our weakness becomes an obsession, feeding on itself annihilating common sense: 'In this way, without doubt, the infirmities of our mind and character spring up, as the philosophers say'.¹⁰⁰²

⁹⁹⁸ *Diss.* 1.26.1-5

⁹⁹⁹ *Diss.* 1.17.23-24

¹⁰⁰⁰ *Diss.* 4.9.15-16

¹⁰⁰¹ *Diss.* 2.18.6-7

¹⁰⁰² *Diss.* 2.18.8-11

4.6.5 Weakness Behind Our Faculty

Our faculty to overcome our infirmity and cast out our illness and disease depends on us. But if our fear, desires, greed and anxieties are all stronger than us then we shall be compelled to follow these things: their strength powerfully affects our ability to deal with the state of our diseased soul and prolongs the absence of reason, which overcomes our moral weakness. The advice Epictetus applies is: 'you will follow that which is stronger than you are, ever seeking outside your self for peace, and never be able to be at peace'.¹⁰⁰³ Here he means we let the strength, attraction and persuasive pull of these things we follow be stronger than us, than our moral purpose. We act for the sake of our fear, desires, greed and anxieties: we follow these things like sheep, we act like sheep and degenerate to the level of sheep, suggests Epictetus.¹⁰⁰⁴

If we allow our moral purpose to degenerate to a point where we can no longer fight against moral illness, then the disease has a poor prognosis. On the other hand if we take control over our moral purpose, and are strong enough to fight against our moral illness, then the disease has a good prognosis.

Men, because of mere ignorance of their present condition, and ignorance of where this condition might lead them, continue as they are and as if they are content to live with their disease. The weakness of their capacity to recognise and overcome such ignorance leads to a postponement of therapy and, protracted with time, their disease may become chronic. As Epictetus says, ignorance is a symptom of deafness and blindness.¹⁰⁰⁵ It is interesting to note that in Buddhism, ignorance is represented as the blind man, in *The Wheel of Life*.¹⁰⁰⁶ Do we listen? Have we had practice in listening? Epictetus poses the basic question: 'What are you capable of hearing about?'¹⁰⁰⁷ Are you capable of hearing about good and evil for a man and what his nature is, that is, good in the sense of virtue and evil in the sense of vice? Or do we hear things in order to do things that are expedient to ourselves? As Epictetus continues to say, 'Do you see the sort of thing that ignorance of what is expedient leads to?'¹⁰⁰⁸ The prognosis of man's disease is poor if our moral weakness is stronger than our moral capacity and faculty to deal with its causes and such a balance of strengths and weaknesses is prolonged and protracted with time.

Failure to recognise the truth behind our suffering, to acknowledge its existence all adds up to a poor prognosis – it is also a failure to address the moral imperative to deal with our suffering. 'Against the ignorant, against the unfortunate, against those who have been deceived in the most important values',¹⁰⁰⁹ is, as Epictetus repeatedly argues, 'control over the moral purpose (*prohairesis*)'.¹⁰¹⁰

¹⁰⁰³ *Diss.* 2.16.47

¹⁰⁰⁴ *Diss.* 2.9.4-5

¹⁰⁰⁵ *Diss.* 2.24.19

¹⁰⁰⁶ TashiTsering (2005) pp.92-93

¹⁰⁰⁷ *Diss.* 2.24.11

¹⁰⁰⁸ *Diss.* 2.24.23

¹⁰⁰⁹ *Diss.* 4.5.32

¹⁰¹⁰ *Diss.* 4.5.34

Epilogue to Chapter 4

The cessation of suffering has been the central theme of this chapter reflecting the Buddhist teaching of the *third truth*. This chapter has discussed the realisation that suffering can be overcome, that we have the opportunity for being free from the conditioned mind that keeps us attached to a cycle of suffering and that we can be released from our endless chasing, the craving of desires. In the context of Epictetus we have reflected upon this truth from different perspectives, but again we observe parallel views with Buddhism emerging. The end or goal for both schools of thought lies in the fact that we need understanding of the human and psychological potential to realise cessation and human flourishing (in Epictetus terms *eudaimonia*). The pathway to this end goal is, in Epictetus' terms, choosing a path towards virtue, and in Buddhism the pathway is basically the same, a matter of personal moral choices and decision-making, based on strikingly similar reasoning, albeit from alternative perspectives. The revelation that suffering can be ceased develops from being able to understand there is a pathway to cessation and to be able with right reasoning, view and intentions to realise this insight.

Our discussion on the fundamentals of the *third truth* led us to a detailed discussion on Epictetus' teaching of the faculty of choice (*prohairesis*) and through the application of this faculty we can practice the cessation of our unwholesome acts and states of mind. The discussion made reference to parallel thinking in Buddhism related to volition (*cetanā*), actions (*kamma*), mental formations (*sankhara*) and the wholesome (*kusala*) or unwholesome (*akusala*) states of mind. Our faculty of choice needs to be used for the purpose of achieving some goal or objective, in this case cessation, and our moral disposition and character needs to be active to ensure we make the right moral choices. This includes making the right moral choices regarding our use of impressions and understanding their use: deciding on our desires and aversions, accepting and refusing impressions and set against our moral goal of what is in our control.

The theme of language has been discussed in the context of the inner voice that is continuously producing and processing thoughts, views and feelings, which can lead to wholesome (*kusala*) or unwholesome (*akusala*) states of mind. When our internal language, thoughts and feelings revolve around personalised objectives that we wish this or that will (or will not) happen and when it does not happen (or does happen) we feel dissatisfied, discontented, unhappy with the outcome and we suffer. In general, we define or identify ourselves in terms of what we do, say and think, based on our wishes and wants. Buddhists talk about 'kammic volition' wishing and wanting us to do, say and think something based on attachments, aversions and ignorance, which can result in moral (*kusala*) or immoral (*akusala*) mental states, dissatisfaction and suffering. This chapter has looked at this inner language in terms of Epictetus' teaching and practice of the faculty of moral choice (*prohairesis*).

Chapter 5 Epictetus and the Fourth Noble Truth

5.1 Prologue

This chapter looks at the *Fourth Noble Truth*, which is concerned with the Buddhist 'Way' (or path) leading to the cessation of suffering. This Buddhist 'Way' consists of eight divisions or categories (the *Noble Eightfold Path*) to be followed and practised which are aimed at promoting and perfecting the Buddhist principles of (a) Ethical Conduct (*Sīla*), (b) Mental Discipline (*Samādhi*) and (c) Wisdom (*Paññā*).

The main ideas behind the *fourth truth* are presented in the context of the teachings of Epictetus to reflect his 'art of living' (1.3.1 and 5.2.2) approach, which we claim is not unlike the Buddhist path ('Way') to the cessation of suffering. As we have seen in previous chapters, the views and approach prescribed in Buddhism are not dissimilar to those of Epictetus: there is harmony and synergy between the two teachings (of course taking account of the remarks made in 1.2 regarding metaphysical differences).

This chapter closes our reference to the medical analogy pursued in other chapters with a short discussion on aspects of treatment and therapy.

Finally this chapter concludes with a section on how the *Noble Truths* are mastered through three levels of theory, practice and realisation to gain vision, understanding, insight and knowing regarding suffering. This includes consideration of a not dissimilar approach embraced by Epictetus' philosophy as an art of living connected with each person's way of life. In both Buddhism and Epictetus, the notion of philosophical exercises exists: in Buddhism we have the *Noble Eightfold Path* and in Epictetus the three disciplines of the soul. The relationship between the two is explored in the final part of this chapter.

5.2 Path to Liberation

5.2.1 Fourth Truth

The *Fourth Noble Truth* (*magga saccā*) of the Buddha Dharma describes the path or the way that can lead to the cessation of suffering. This path (normally referred to as the *Noble Eightfold Path*¹⁰¹¹ or *arya ashtangika magga*, 'a noble path of eight limbs') prescribes eight disciplines of how we should liberate ourselves from a life of suffering. These are typically grouped as follows:

Insight/Wisdom (paññā) – insight, self-reflection, self-contemplation, discriminating knowledge:

- Right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) - having the right perspective, outlook or understanding; this explicitly includes our actions (*kamma*) and their consequences (*vipaka*).
- Right intention (*sammā sankappa*) - having the right thoughts, resolve, aspiration and exertion of our own will to change;- this explicitly includes volition (*cetanā*) and the active *sankhara*.

¹⁰¹¹ SN 45.8, 45.41-48, 22.56, 12.65, 38.1, MN 9; Bodhi (2013) p.282; Kalupahana (1992) pp.102-103

Ethical conduct/moral virtue (sīla) - impulse, obligations, virtuous actions:

- Right speech (*sammā-vācā*) - abstaining from lying, from divisive speech, harsh words, from abusive speech, and from idle chatter/gossip.
- Right action/right conduct (*sammā-kammanta*) - being morally upright in one's activities, not misconducting oneself in a way that would bring harm to oneself or to others; this explicitly includes our actions (*kamma*) and their consequences (*vipaka*).
- Right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*) - not engaging in activities that would harm others, not being dishonest and being ethical in business affairs, not cheating, lying or stealing.

Mental Discipline (Effort, Mindfulness and Meditation):

- Right effort (*sammā-vāyāma*) - having right endeavour or diligence, refraining from negative actions.
- Right mindfulness – (*sammā-sati*) - having the right awareness or attention in order to constantly keep our minds alert to phenomena that may affect our body and mind.
- Right concentration/right meditation (*sammā-samādhi*).

These eight principles all use the Pali word *samma*, which variously translates to 'right', 'proper', 'skilful', 'wise' or 'as it ought to be'.

These eight disciplines form part of the Buddhist path to the cessation of suffering; each contains all the other seven. They are defining principles for living a meaningful and virtuous way to achieve a morally fulfilling life, a '*pathway to awakening*'. They are strikingly similar in spirit and purpose to those of Epictetus and play a similar role to his three disciplines of the soul: desires, impulses and assents.

5.2.2 The Path According to Epictetus

I have argued that the basic tenor of Epictetus' teaching parallels that outlined in the *Four Noble Truths*. His approach, although less systematic, formal and rigorous, compared to that of Buddhism, is similar and complementary in understanding, aim and purpose. Regarding the *Eightfold Path* we claim Epictetus' 'pathway to freedom' advocates a similar practice of reflective exercise, practice and training for dealing with suffering. For example Epictetus also stresses observing and maintaining due measure,¹⁰¹² self-examination,¹⁰¹³ self-contemplation, self-circumspection of matters in life,¹⁰¹⁴ and paying attention to everyday aspects of our life as it unfolds, *prosochē*. This section is a continuation of this comparison to support our claim by considering how elements of Epictetus' teaching and aspects of it are found in the *Eightfold Path*. We shall consider in 5.2.3-4 and 5.3.3 the correspondence between the three disciplines (exercises) of the soul of Epictetus and the elements of the *Eightfold Path* (see also 1.3.2).

5.2.2.1 Wisdom

¹⁰¹² *Diss.* 4.4-5

¹⁰¹³ *Diss.* 4.6.34-35, 3.12.15

¹⁰¹⁴ *Diss.* 3.15

Right View¹⁰¹⁵ (or Right Understanding) has been interpreted in several different, although complementary, ways in Buddhism. At the heart of this principle is having the right understanding as regards the idea that 'All that is subject to arising is subject to ceasing' and the illusion of a self that is connected to mortal conditions. This includes the insight that thoughts, feelings, and the like are just that, nothing more, nothing less. But our ignorance blinds us to this truth, and through Dependent Origination we get caught up in our thoughts and feelings, believing them to be more than they are, permanent and self-defining (see 1.2.3). Using Right View we apply our reasoning and intelligence to reflect and contemplate the reality of life to achieve an understanding that this involves change and suffering. Right View is an understanding of what is wholesome and unwholesome, which in Buddhist terms relates to our moral well-being, whereas Wrong View arises from ignorance. In Buddhism the wholesome (*kusala*) refers to the good, skilful and meritorious, and the unwholesome (*akusala*) to what is bad/evil, unskilful. An action based on wholesome moral quality (*kusala-kamma*) is an action based on Right View and one based on unwholesome moral quality (*akusala-kamma*) is an action based on Wrong View, an action that is morally reprehensible.¹⁰¹⁶ In some of Buddha's discourses he refers to the negative effects of attachment to speculative or fixed views and dogmatic opinions.¹⁰¹⁷ In 1.2.3 we discussed views based on the idea of the 'self' and the five aggregates.

Exercise, practice and training of Right View are clearly evident throughout Epictetus' work, in particular regarding the *prohairesis* and that this becomes right *prohairesis* (cf. *kamma-kusala*).¹⁰¹⁸ Right View and right *prohairesis* relate to his major teaching themes: opinions, beliefs and judgements;¹⁰¹⁹ good and evil (cf. *kusala and akusala*);¹⁰²⁰ desire and aversions, indifference and externals;¹⁰²¹ what is in our control and our preconceptions relating to individual circumstances.¹⁰²²

The other aspect regarding wisdom is Right Intention¹⁰²³ (or Right Thoughts, Aspiration, Thinking), which again we see in Epictetus when he discusses having the aim and purpose of renouncing or abandoning ourselves to those things we get attached to that cause us to suffer: it concerns having the right desire and aspiration to realise freedom from suffering and ill-will; wholehearted commitment and willingness to exercise, practice and training of the *Noble Truths* (the three disciplines of the soul in Epictetus' case – 1.3, 5.3.3); the attitude, intention and will, not from an intellectual perspective, but as deep-rooted aspiration within our soul, to perfect and make wholesome our *prohairesis* towards the ethical imperative of freedom. Right Intention concerns having the right desire and in Epictetus this is learning to desire things as they happen and keeping

¹⁰¹⁵ MN 9, SN 12.15, 12.33; Nhat Hanh (1998) pp.48-54; Tashi Tsering (2005) pp. 135-139; Kalupahana (1992) pp.103-104

¹⁰¹⁶ AN 3:65, I 188-93; AN 1:xvii, 1, 3, 7, 9, I 30-32; MN 20; *Vitakkasanthana Sutta*, I 118-122; MN 9; *Sammaditthi Sutta*, I 46-55; Bodhi (2005) pp.146-149, 165

¹⁰¹⁷ Harvey (2000) pp.239-240

¹⁰¹⁸ *Diss.* 1.4.18-19, 1.29.3-4, 2.10.29, 2.23.27, 3.1.40-44, 3.3.7, 3.4.9, 3.16.15-16, 4.1.84, 4.1.164-166, 4.5.32, *Ench.* 4, 13, 30

¹⁰¹⁹ *Diss.* 1.11.12-15, 2.16.27, 2.23.12-15, 4.6.24-25, 4.6.28-30

¹⁰²⁰ *Diss.* 2.16

¹⁰²¹ *Diss.* 2.6, 2.18,

¹⁰²² *Diss.* 1.22, 2.17, 3.6.8

¹⁰²³ SN 45.8; Nhat Hanh (1998) pp.55-58; Tashi Tsering (2005) pp. 135-139; Kalupahana (1992) pp.104-105

our will in harmony with what happens,¹⁰²⁴ it is having the desire and will to keep our *prohairesis* in harmony with nature.¹⁰²⁵

Right Intention is the determination and resolve to do something in a wholesome and skilful way (*kusala-kamma*). For example, it involves partaking of goodwill (*metta* in Pali) towards others, as opposed to acting with ill feeling towards someone (*akusala-kamma*). In fact, *metta* means loving-kindness, friendliness, goodwill, benevolence, fellowship and this becomes the basis of our relationships with others and our role and responsibility in society. 'If the good is something different from the noble and the just' remarks Epictetus,¹⁰²⁶ then 'all relationships simply disappear'. So, advocates Epictetus,¹⁰²⁷ our good should be placed in our right moral purpose, so preserving our relationships and taking care of our duties, with the Right View and Right Intention. Right Intention includes not hating, blaming, find fault with, criticising or hurting others,¹⁰²⁸ and not getting angry with others:¹⁰²⁹ this is a key aspect of our training.¹⁰³⁰ Another way of expressing this is, as Epictetus puts it, 'Whoever, then, has knowledge of good things, would know how to love them too; but when a man is unable to distinguish things good from things evil, and what is neither good nor evil from both the others, how could he take the next step and have the power to love?'¹⁰³¹ The power of love is with those that are wise enough to have the Right View and Right Intention of good and evil.¹⁰³² We may reflect on the question: Is our friendship and love based on the sway of our emotions between the good and the bad? Right View and Right Intention correspond in purpose to that given in Epictetus' first discipline of the soul (5.3.3.2), which deals with having the right view and intention about desires and aversions. His coverage of Right View and Right Intention is shown in Table 5a (5.2.4).

5.2.2.2 Ethical Conduct (Moral Discipline)

This group of Buddhist principles (Right Action,¹⁰³³ Right Speech¹⁰³⁴ and Right Livelihood¹⁰³⁵) corresponds in purpose to that given in Epictetus' second discipline of the soul and is related to ethical conduct, dealing with the problematic of impulse and repulsion to act appropriately (see 1.7.2). Epictetus' coverage of Right Action, Right Speech and Right Livelihood is shown in Table 5b (5.2.4).

¹⁰²⁴ *Diss.* 1.12.15-17, *Ench.* 6, 8

¹⁰²⁵ *Ench.* 4, 30

¹⁰²⁶ *Diss.* 3.3.6

¹⁰²⁷ *Ench.* 30

¹⁰²⁸ *Diss.* 3.10.12-13, 3.24.58-59, 3.26.19, 4.4.46, 4.7.9-10, 4.8.1, *Ench.* 1, 31

¹⁰²⁹ *Diss.* 1.13.3, 1.18, 2.10.19, 4.12.20

¹⁰³⁰ *Ench.* 5

¹⁰³¹ *Diss.* 2.22.1-3

¹⁰³² *Diss.* 2.22.7-8

¹⁰³³ SN 45.8; Nhat Hahn (1998) pp.86-90; Tashi Tsering (2005) pp. 130-133; Kalupahana (1992) pp.105-106

¹⁰³⁴ SN 45.8; Nhat Hahn (1998) pp.77-85; Tashi Tsering (2005) pp. 130-133; Kalupahana (1992) p.105

¹⁰³⁵ AN 5.177, 4.61, 4.62; Nhat Hahn (1998) pp.104-109; Tashi Tsering (2005) pp. 130-133; Kalupahana (1992) pp.106-107

The Buddha refers to three types of action: bodily, verbal and mental, which can be performed skilfully (*kusala-kamma*) or unskilfully (*akusala-kamma*).¹⁰³⁶ The first two of these are related to Right Action, Right Speech and Right Livelihood, whilst mental action is considered in 5.2.2.3.

Right Action includes abstaining from killing, abstaining from stealing, abstaining from sexual misconduct. With a strong social conscience and feeling Epictetus' discourses advocate leading a moral life where every action (bodily, verbal and mental) is directed at the good: our conduct, activities and behaviour are in keeping with the right *prohairesis* so that our impulse to act would not corrupt or bring harm to ourselves or to others, our father, mother, brothers or sisters and we do not act in a way contrary to the principles of duty towards all our relations in society.¹⁰³⁷ Our ethical conduct, argues Epictetus, should be based on our innate social instinct, as a social creature as nature intended.¹⁰³⁸ The idea of 'impulse' is being able to act appropriately, making the right moral choices, choices that affect us, and our actions, duties and relations towards others,¹⁰³⁹ which aligns with the Buddhist perspective. Epictetus, in his attack on Epicurus,¹⁰⁴⁰ argues against taking pleasure in things of the body. He accuses Epicurus of declaring that getting caught for theft was evil but not the act itself: hence as a precaution Epicurus says 'Do not steal' in case someone is caught. Epictetus' advice is to judge uprightly, to keep your hands off the property of other people;¹⁰⁴¹ not to covet the neighbour's wife,¹⁰⁴² to use wine with discretion (no heavy drinking) aiming to lead to abstinence, to keep your hands off a wench or a sweet cake,¹⁰⁴³ and to preserve the purity of your sex-life.¹⁰⁴⁴ He draws our attention to doing noble deeds rather than actions that are base and without moral purpose. We should be adopting principles of conduct that are not bad, subversive, and destructive to us or to others: it is our duty as citizens of the universe.

Verbal misconduct is an unwholesome action (*akusala-kamma*) that causes harm and suffering.¹⁰⁴⁵ Right Speech is also classed as abstinence and includes abstaining from lying, from divisive speech, from abusive speech, and from idle chatter: this principle holds that we should speak the truth, we should speak with the aim of creating concord and not disagreement, we should speak in an affectionate, endearing and polite way and we should not engage in idle chatter, gossip or nonbeneficial ways.

So Right Speech is about resolving questions such as: When is it best to talk or keep silent? Which is the best way to speak, this way or that? Is this language appropriate or that in the circumstances? When is the proper occasion? What is the utility of the discourse? Epictetus provides strongly

¹⁰³⁶ AN 10.176

¹⁰³⁷ *Diss.*, 3.3.5-10, 3.11.5-6, 3.24.79, 4.4.17-18

¹⁰³⁸ *Fr.* 1, 4.8.20-21

¹⁰³⁹ *Diss.*, 3.11.5-6, 3.24.79, 4.4.16-17, 4.6.26-27, 4.8.20-21, 4.10.15-16

¹⁰⁴⁰ *Diss.* 3.7.9-13

¹⁰⁴¹ *Diss.* 3.7.21-22

¹⁰⁴² *Diss.* 3.7.18

¹⁰⁴³ *Diss.* 3.12.11

¹⁰⁴⁴ *Ench.* 33

¹⁰⁴⁵ AN 2.18

worded advice about maintaining our character in public and about social intercourse,¹⁰⁴⁶ including some examples of how to talk in public. The main direction that he points to is maintaining the *prohairesis* in a fit state so that it attends to Right Speech or Wrong Speech. We should, as Epictetus reminds us, think about what we might be losing and gaining as regards Right Speech or Wrong Speech, gaining inner peace in exchange for futile, angry or derisive discourse, or self-respect for smutty talk.¹⁰⁴⁷

Right Livelihood from the Buddhist perspective relates to things such as not engaging in trades or business affairs which, directly or indirectly, could result in harm to other living beings but engaging in work that is ethical, beneficial and helpful to others. This encompasses no dishonest livelihood, no cheating in business affairs, only obtaining wealth through rightful means, and conducting business in an ethical and socially responsible way. In the tasks we undertake, the duties we perform and jobs we must do we must be properly attentive to what is to be done. From Epictetus' perspective, all that has been said above regarding the prescriptions and his teachings applies to Right Livelihood. He says 'we must remember who we are, and what is our designation, and must endeavour to direct our actions, in the performance of our duties'¹⁰⁴⁸ and this should apply to all forms of relationships: social, business and family. We need to consider to what end we should engage in business affairs, and with whom we do business and how to maintain our proper character during the business affair. Epictetus is resolute in directing attention to the moral aspect of our livelihood, pointing out again that it is our concern and we should look with courage sufficient to face the needs of our life in a proper and noble way, and not be led astray beyond what is absolutely necessary.

Epictetus talks about acting in a cowardly and ignoble way for fear that the 'necessities of life' will fail you – lying awake at night trembling with such fear.¹⁰⁴⁹ This can lead men into possibly contriving one scheme after another to satisfy every necessity and want. Man's greed for wealth and power is his own doing and deserves to be censured and reformed by him. Often our wants go beyond the basic needs to survive and to live a well-flowing and comfortable life. It's in our power to choose a livelihood that is morally sound and provides for our own well-being. Yet again we should recall Epictetus' words, 'No man is master of another's moral purpose,' and so therefore, 'No one has power either to procure me good, or to involve me in evil, but I myself alone have authority over myself in these matters'.¹⁰⁵⁰

5.2.2.3 Mental Discipline

The last group relates to Right Concentration (*samādhi*),¹⁰⁵¹ Right Mindfulness (*sammā-sati*)¹⁰⁵²

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Diss.* 4.12.17-18, *Ench.* 30

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Diss.* 4.3.2-3

¹⁰⁴⁸ *Diss.* 4.12.16-17

¹⁰⁴⁹ *Diss.* 3.26.1-10

¹⁰⁵⁰ *Diss.* 4.12.7-9

¹⁰⁵¹ AN 3.1, MN 29, SN 45.8; Nhat Hahn (1998) pp.96-103; Tashi Tsering (2005) pp. 133-135; Kalupahana (1992) p.109

¹⁰⁵² SN 45.8, 46.12, 54.13, MN 10; Nhat Hahn (1998) pp.59-76; Tashi Tsering (2005) pp. 133-135; Kalupahana (1992) pp.108-109

and Right Effort (*sammā-vāyāma*).¹⁰⁵³ This group relates to the class of mental actions that focus on the repeated reflection, attention and mindfulness of our actions, bodily, verbal and mental, whether they are wholesome or unwholesome, observing what we crave for and what we cling to, past and present actions (*kamma*), and the results of these actions (*kammaphala*).

Right Mindfulness focuses on the here and now, not the past or the future, it is focusing on the freshness and newness of the present moment, emptying the mind of what is known (the past) and paying complete attention and being watchful to the experience of the present. Epictetus' coverage of this last group is shown in Table 5c (5.2.4).

Right Concentration and Right Mindfulness are two qualities of the mind that are both related to meditation but are functionally different. On the one hand concentration is what the Buddhists refers to as a 'one-pointedness' of the mind, that is, the mind remains focused on one object of attention with discipline and relentless willpower. Whereas mindfulness has no fixed object of focus or attention, it selects objects of attention and observes changes in these objects or cases when our attention to these objects has gone astray. The object of our mindfulness might be the body, and in that case mindfulness is contemplation of the body. The objects might be our feelings or sensations, the contemplation of these feelings or sensations, or our mental states. In a state of mindfulness the individuals can observe themselves exactly as they are: they observe their selfish behaviour, anger, anxieties and suffering, and they observe how they create that suffering. Mindfulness enables the individual to see right through the layers of lies, delusions and ignorance and to see what is really there below the surface and this leads to a state of knowing, understanding and wisdom. Mindfulness is not an action as it is not trying to achieve or do anything, but merely just looking, observing and watching the state of mind and the movements and changes to this state.

Concentration is exclusive in the sense that it settles upon one item, focuses on it and ignores everything else, whereas Buddhist mindfulness is inclusive in the sense that it stands back from the focus of attention and watches any change that occurs. These two qualities, concentration and mindfulness, work together as part of the job of meditation to penetrate into the deepest level of the mind and this cooperation achieves insight and understanding of our suffering. Epictetus talks of various ways that are essential to disciplining of the mind such as examining and observing our thoughts and actions through self-contemplation, circumspection and paying attention. These all add to the meditative aspect of acquiring a mental discipline to help us in achieving the freedom from suffering we search for.

Epictetus would advise *prosochē*: to focus our attention on the things that should be important to us, making sure there is concentrated attention and energy and no rash assent, reckless choice, futile desire or unsuccessful aversion.¹⁰⁵⁴ It is important to note here that his use of the notion of concentrated attention (*prosochē*) seems like that of the Buddhist concept of mindfulness but whilst it does capture some of the meaning it does not have the same breadth and depth of meaning as the

¹⁰⁵³ SN 45.8; Nhat Hahn (1998) pp.91-95; Tashi Tsering (2005) pp. 133-135; Kalupahana (1992) pp.107-108

¹⁰⁵⁴ *Diss.* 3.22.105

Buddhist concept. Many contemporary writers associate mindfulness with merely paying attention and focusing one's awareness on the present moment. Whilst this popularised modern view of mindfulness has many applications such as in cognitive therapy and popular meditation practices, there is much criticism from authoritative scholars that this modern movement grossly fails to capture the Buddhist understanding of this concept.¹⁰⁵⁵ Kalupahana describes Buddhist mindfulness as more than merely an awareness of what is immediately given in experience, but understanding the present in relation to the past, and using this as the basis of dependent arising, a means to awaken insight and the search for truth and reality.¹⁰⁵⁶ The modern mindfulness movement, in comparison to the Buddhist concept, does nothing more than merely 'scratch the surface' in relation to this important Eastern philosophical notion: contemporary analysis of the concept lacks any formal rigour, depth of technical understanding and appreciation to do the Buddhist concept full justice.

This concept of paying attention (*prosochē*) is so important that Epictetus devotes a complete chapter to it. For the purposes of helping cease our suffering this is a useful meditative device along with the others Epictetus advocates. Epictetus' advice on *prosochē* is close to the everyday sense of the word 'mindfulness', that is, the quality or state of being conscious or aware of something, being attentive:

'When you relax your attention for a little while, do not imagine that whenever you choose you will recover it'.¹⁰⁵⁷

What is worse is that we make a habit of not paying attention, and after that a habit of deferring our attention, growing accustomed to putting off from one time to another the things that are important to a life in accordance with nature. We should make a habit of paying attention. As Epictetus chides: 'Will you do it

worse by attention, and better by inattention?'¹⁰⁵⁸ Will the inattentive helmsman steer more safely?

'Do you not realise that when once you let your mind go wandering, it is no longer within your power to recall it, to bring it to bear upon either seemliness, or self-respect, or moderation? But you do anything that comes into your head, you follow your inclinations'.¹⁰⁵⁹

He goes on to argue that we can avoid the faults, which might be the faults in our thinking to cause us suffering, by not relaxing our attention.¹⁰⁶⁰

Right Concentration (*samyak-samādhi*), also known as right meditation, is a common principle in many Asian philosophies. Its aim is to centre or focus the mind to attain a heightened awareness and it is linked with the notion of Right Mindfulness. It is characterised by a state of mind that is at

¹⁰⁵⁵ Valerio (2016) pp.157–83; Wallace (2006); VanGordon, Shonin, Griffiths and Nirbhay (2015) pp. 9-28

¹⁰⁵⁶ Kalupahana (1992) pp.41, 108-109

¹⁰⁵⁷ *Diss.* 4.12.1

¹⁰⁵⁸ *Diss.* 4.12.4

¹⁰⁵⁹ *Diss.* 4.12.6

¹⁰⁶⁰ *Diss.* 4.12.19

peace and unperturbed. Epictetus does not specifically address the notion of meditation as such but he does refer to reflecting upon our situation, examining our habits, and being attentive to those thoughts that disturb us, and our peace of mind. What is important here regarding meditation or focusing the mind in Epictetus is the inner discourse or dialogue we have with ourselves. Of course a fundamental example of inner discourse is focusing on 'things seen by the mind' and saying to oneself 'You are an external impression and not at all what you appear to be'.¹⁰⁶¹ Epictetus' advice is that we ought to 'exercise ourselves daily to meet the impressions of our senses, because these too put interrogations to us'.¹⁰⁶² He refers to Diogenes the Cynic who concentrated his earnest attention and energy; his eyes were everywhere checking his moral purpose was intact and he was making proper use of his impressions, to ensure there was no rash assent, no reckless choice, no futile desire on his part.¹⁰⁶³ Also as part of our inner dialogue (4.5) we should focus on a daily basis, are the things we say to ourselves¹⁰⁶⁴ to avoid being unhappy or disturbed by the thoughts suggested by these things we say: 'Everybody hates me'.¹⁰⁶⁵ We should on reflection modify the things we say to ourselves to suggest thoughts that have a less disturbing influence on us: Epictetus' advice is to transform what we are saying: do not say 'Alas I have a head-ache' but 'I have a head-ache'.¹⁰⁶⁶

The *Dhammapada* says:

'All experience is preceded by mind, led by mind, made by mind. Speak or act with a corrupted mind and suffering will follow. As the wagon wheel follows the hoof of the ox.

All experience is preceded by mind, led by mind, made by mind. Speak or act with a peaceful mind and happiness follows. Like a never-departing shadow'.¹⁰⁶⁷

In other words we are the result of what we have thought: we are founded on our thoughts and we are made up of our thoughts. Epictetus argues a similar point when he says:

'Nothing but judgement is responsible for the disturbance of our peace of mind'.¹⁰⁶⁸

from which we can reason that:

'If you have sound judgements, you will fare well; if unsound judgements, ill; since in every case the way a man fares is determined by his judgement'.¹⁰⁶⁹

Epictetus encourages us to turn our thoughts to the question 'What sort of a thing do you imagine the good to be?'¹⁰⁷⁰ And the answer he wants to lead us to is that of living a life where serenity, happiness and freedom from suffering is more important than anything else. Expressed another way, our aim is that our end goal in life is to secure *eudaimonia* (happiness, well-being or flourishing life) and for those that achieve this end there are many things to enjoy: *ataraxia*

¹⁰⁶¹ *Ench.* 1

¹⁰⁶² *Diss.* 3.8.1-2 (cf. Long (2008) pp.129-131)

¹⁰⁶³ *Diss.* 3.22.104-105

¹⁰⁶⁴ *Ench.* 11, 12 and 24

¹⁰⁶⁵ *Diss.* 1.18.20

¹⁰⁶⁶ *Diss.* 1.18.18-19

¹⁰⁶⁷ Fronsdal (2005) verses 1-2

¹⁰⁶⁸ *Diss.* 3.19.3

¹⁰⁶⁹ *Diss.* 3.9.2 (cf. Long (2008) pp.27, 119, 244-254)

¹⁰⁷⁰ *Diss.* 3.22.39

(imperturbability), *apatheia* (freedom from passion), and *eupatheiai* (good feelings). Of course man's suffering mind is a result of his discontent and dissatisfaction with life, his mistaken beliefs regarding the true nature of the good and the failure to understand that his pleasures and desires for the external world will lead to unhappiness, which means having no control over his desires for the external. If we give up or reduce our endless craving and attachment to desiring things we cannot control and endure the problems that our life experiences present to us without suffering from fear, anxiety, anger and other normal sufferings, as Epictetus suggests, then we start to become happy, content and liberated.

We all seek happiness but our ignorance leads us to a place where true and ultimate happiness does not exist, to a place where we cannot hope to be free from suffering:

'I am tranquil and serene; be not ignorant, O men, that while you are tossed about and are in turmoil over worthless things, I alone am free from every perturbation'¹⁰⁷¹

Sammā-vāyāma (Right Effort), can also be translated as 'right endeavour' or 'right diligence'. This principle says we should be persistent in our effort to:

- Prevent unwholesome states of mind arising;
- Eliminate unwholesome states of mind that have arisen;
- Generate and maintain wholesome states of mind.

We can interpret wholesome and unwholesome states of mind as our needing to look after our moral wellbeing, which, in the case of Epictetus, means maintaining our *prohairesis*. Right Effort is conducive to being moral, virtuous, noble, honourable, righteous, decent, just and upstanding in our own lives and in our relations with others. In this respect, Epictetus talks of our needing to concentrate our efforts on eradicating unwholesome mental states, as he argues against making vicious judgements about other people and things: fault-finding, accusing, impiety are all judgements, as is misfortune, strife and disagreement.¹⁰⁷² As he often says we should transfer our judgements to things under our control and then whatever the situation and circumstances we find ourselves in we shall remain steadfast¹⁰⁷³ and be indifferent.¹⁰⁷⁴ We should not look for good or evil in anything which is not our own, that is, outside our sphere of moral control; we should therefore not express thoughts, make judgements or say things about things owned by others, using words such as 'good' or 'evil', 'benefit' or 'injury'. Long remarks that showing no emotional response to other people's problems might seem repellent, inhumane and lacking sympathy.¹⁰⁷⁵ But this is not Epictetus' point; Long argues our response should be based on Stoic values: rather than sympathise and say 'poor you', act with kindness and generosity, translate the situation, indifferent in itself, into one of being morally responsible. This links with another aspect of Right Action regarding generosity

¹⁰⁷¹ *Diss.* 4.8.26-27

¹⁰⁷² *Diss.* 3.3.18

¹⁰⁷³ *Diss.* 3.3.19

¹⁰⁷⁴ *Diss.* 2.5.5

¹⁰⁷⁵ Long (2002) pp.246-247

(dana)¹⁰⁷⁶ and working towards the well-being of others.

We should be careful not to take a course of action based on Wrong View, wrong and irrational judgements, extreme subjective views, and generation of excessive attachments to conceptions, all of which lead to negative moral quality and imperfection.¹⁰⁷⁷ Epictetus' advice is to be careful not to cling to our judgements; they may lead to unwholesome mental states and non-virtuous actions, so we need to eliminate them and not obstinately persist in defending and clinging to them.¹⁰⁷⁸ Right Action should be based on having Right View and Right Intention/Thinking.

Each man's true possessions, his moral choices and his judgements, make his actions either base or noble. Applying Right View, Right Intention and Right Effort to our situation is the foundation upon which we build our moral life. A life founded on human emotion, temporary pleasure and enjoyment and misplaced dispositions is one lacking objective moral basis. Epictetus adds that we should have put away or reduced a malignant disposition, and reviling, or impertinence, of foul language, recklessness, or negligence'.¹⁰⁷⁹

The Buddhist message of Right View, Right Intention and Right Effort is equally universal in Epictetus' teaching and is an endeavour towards the morally good, being righteous and excellent,¹⁰⁸⁰ showing good faith, self-respect and forbearance,¹⁰⁸¹ being high-minded, faithful and honourable¹⁰⁸² and the like. This is to have a certain moral fearlessness and acceptance of situations and, whatever happens, being able to generate, maintain and preserve wholesome states of mind and to diminish and destroy unwholesome ones.

5.2.3 Kammic Nature of Exercises and Practice

Reforming Figure 1 we have the following kammic (cause/effect) arrangement of the four truths:

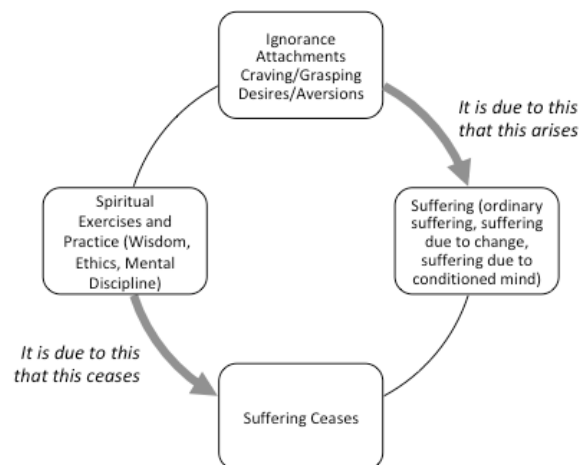


Figure 2 *Kamma* (arising and ceasing of suffering)

¹⁰⁷⁶ AN 6.10, AN 8.49, AN 8.54

¹⁰⁷⁷ Kalupahana (1992) pp.104-105

¹⁰⁷⁸ *Diss.* 2.15.1-9

¹⁰⁷⁹ *Diss.* 4.4.44-46

¹⁰⁸⁰ *Diss.* 4.1.133

¹⁰⁸¹ *Diss.* 2.22.18-21

¹⁰⁸² *Diss.* 3.20.5

In this figure we see that the *third* and *fourth truths* are related by 'it is due to this that this ceases': it is by exercise and practice of the *Eightfold Path* that suffering ceases.

As should be clear from what has been discussed so far, Epictetus' three disciplines of the soul (see 1.3.2) provide a foundation for the Stoic interpretation for the *Four Noble Truths* (see 5.2.4 Table 3). Furthermore, in this chapter we have discussed how by practice and exercise of the *Eightfold Path* we can realise the cessation of our suffering. The *Eightfold Path* is not in a true one-to-one correspondence with the three disciplines of the soul, in the sense that they display an exact equivalence of presentation and ordering of ideas. They do, however, share a kindred spirit and correspond with a coherence of ideas and display a consistent understanding of the problems of suffering and its treatment (5.2.4 - Tables 4, 5a-5c). The three disciplines of the soul, like the *Eightfold Path*, do provide a spiritual path for the cessation of suffering.

The group of trainings under the heading ethical conduct (*sīla*) do correlate closely to the exercise theme 2 (choice and refusal) in Epictetus. However, the correspondence between the other two groups - wisdom (*prajñā*) and mental discipline (*samadhi*) - and exercise theme 3 (judgement and assent) and theme 1 (desire and aversion) is not so clearly defined. Certainly theme 3 does relate to wisdom (*prajñā*) but there are aspects of theme 1 also present within this wisdom group. The training group consisting of mental discipline (*samadhi*) is about Buddhist meditative and mindfulness practice and so there are differences to the Stoic therapeutic exercises that cut across all three exercise themes of Epictetus. This latter observation nevertheless does not detract from the fact that Epictetus covers the mental discipline aspect, which is significant for our claim regarding the close relation between Epictetus and the *Four Noble Truths*. If we look at the bigger picture of the *Four Noble Truths*, taking account of what we have discussed in Chapters 2-4 regarding the parallel thinking between Epictetus and Buddhism, the three disciplines of the soul play a similar role and function to those of the Buddhist truths.

Both philosophies argue that our freedom is a moral choice between things 'in our control' and things 'not in our control'. Recognising, understanding, practising and living a life with this knowledge results in the soul's freedom, 'a state of mind undisturbed by passion, pain, fear, or confusion'.¹⁰⁸³ By having the Right View and Right Intention man can focus his desires and aversions in accord with nature and his moral purpose and can accept what happens as it happens, neither being upset or dissatisfied when desires fail to materialise nor being emotionally attached to something when a desire is satisfied.

¹⁰⁸³ *Diss.* 4.3.7-8

5.2.4 The Noble Truths and the EightFold Path: Relationships with Epictetus

Noble Truths	Source Ref (Selection)	Thesis, Practice and Realisation ¹⁰⁸⁴	Epictetus: concepts and references
<p>DUKKHA (Chapter 2)</p>	<p>DN 33 MN 28; MN 38; MN 43; MN 44; MN 109; MN 141 SN 22.48; SN 22.56; SN 22.79; SN 38.14</p>	<p>Thesis (<i>pariyatti</i>): Birth is suffering; ageing is suffering; illness is suffering; death is suffering; sorrow, lamentation, pain, dejection, and despair are suffering; not getting what one wants is suffering; in brief, the five aggregates subject to clinging are suffering. Practice (<i>patipatti</i>): Through practice the practitioner needs to fully understand the truth of suffering: not just the types of suffering, but how they function, how we experience them and so on.</p>	<p>Death, ageing, illness Desires and aversions Living in accordance with nature Change and Stoic acceptance of what happens is in accord with nature Discipline of desires and discipline of assent</p>
<p>ORIGIN OF DUKKHA (Chapter 3)</p>	<p>AN 10.92 DN 11; DN 22 MN 28 SN 12.2; SN 12.23; SN 12.64; SN 12.70; SN 22.53</p>	<p>Thesis (<i>pariyatti</i>): The noble truth of the origination of <i>dukkha</i> is the craving that makes for further becoming, accompanied by passion & delight, relishing now here & now there, i.e., craving for sensual pleasure, craving for becoming, craving for non-becoming. Practice (<i>patipatti</i>): Through practice and exercise the practitioner needs to gain insight, knowledge and understanding of how to abandon suffering.</p>	<p>Desires and aversions Impulse and repulsion Judgements, opinions, beliefs Attachments and cravings Ignorance Discipline of desires and discipline of assent</p>
<p>CESSATION OF DUKKHA (Chapter 4)</p>	<p>AN 10.92 DN 11; DN 22 MN 28 SN 12.2; SN 12.23; SN 12.64; SN 12.70; SN 22.53</p>	<p>Thesis (<i>pariyatti</i>): The noble truth of the cessation of <i>dukkha</i> is the remainderless fading & cessation, renunciation, relinquishment, release, & letting go of that very craving. Practice (<i>patipatti</i>): Through practice the practitioner needs to cultivate and develop insight, knowledge and understanding to achieve the state of cessation.</p>	<p>Reflective mind Contemplative insight and understanding Stoic mindfulness Discipline of assent</p>
<p>PATH OF LIBERATION (Chapter 5)</p>	<p>AN 4.41; AN 5.28; AN 9.36; AN 10.99; AN 10.176 DN 2, MN 10; MN 44; MN 117; MN 118; MN 125; MN 126 SN 45.1; SN 45.2; SN 45.8; SN 56.11</p>	<p>Thesis (<i>pariyatti</i>): The noble truth of the way of practice leading to the cessation of <i>dukkha</i>: precisely this Noble Eightfold Path: right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. Practice (<i>patipatti</i>): The practitioner needs to cultivate and develop insight, knowledge and understanding through practice of the path to realise liberation.</p>	<p>Exercises (desires and aversions, impulses and actions, judgements and assents) Awareness, attention, meditation, contemplation, examinations and testing Discipline of desires, discipline of action and discipline of assent</p>

Table 3: Noble Truths and Epictetus

¹⁰⁸⁴ SN 56.11 - See also 1.3

Exercises of Epictetus ¹⁰⁸⁵			Correlation with the <i>Eightfold Path</i>
DISCIPLINE OF DESIRE	The discipline has to do with desires and aversions, that we may never fail to get what we desire, nor fall into what we avoid. (Stoic Acceptance)	<p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 'philosophical attitude' toward life and acceptance of our fate as necessary and inevitable; • The confusions, tumults, misfortunes and calamities, sorrows and lamentations that make us envious and jealous, passions which make it impossible for us even to listen to reason. 	<p>The problematic of desires and aversions is having the right understanding about desires and aversions.</p> <p>It is coming to realisation, insight and knowing, as Buddhists say, reflecting on Right View, leading to Right Intention in regard to exercising proper control over our desires and aversions.</p>
DISCIPLINE OF ACTION	The discipline concerns Stoic ethics and cases of choice and refusal, and, in general, duty, that we may act in an orderly fashion, upon good reasons, and not carelessly. (Stoic Philanthropy)	<p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of good, bad, and indifferent; • Goal of life (<i>eudaimonia</i>); • Stoic virtues and likewise, the vices opposing these virtues, and the irrational and unhealthy 'passions', classified as: fear, craving, emotional pain and unhealthy pleasures. 	<p>The problematic of impulse and repulsion is being able to perform appropriate actions (<i>kathēkonta</i>) and control mental activity that drives or motivates us with a desire or urge to take action, to do or not to do something; being aware of what our conduct, speech, efforts and livelihood might result in: they can lead to our suffering and a failure in undertaking duties and responsibilities to others and society as a whole.</p> <p>It is coming to the realisation, the insight and knowing, as Buddhists say reflecting on <i>Right Action, Right Speech, Right Livelihood</i> and <i>Right Effort</i>.</p>
DISCIPLINE OF ASSENT	The discipline concerns the avoidance of error and rashness in judgement, and, in general, cases of assent. This embodies the virtue of living in harmony with our own essential nature, that is, in accord with reason and truthfulness (Stoic Mindfulness)	<p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continual awareness of the true self; • Monitoring and evaluating our value judgements (as the basis of our actions, cravings and feelings; irrational passions); • Attention and mindfulness to our impressions, judgements and assents. 	<p>The problematic of judgements and assents is about making the proper use of impressions:- interpreting and judging and then deciding to assent or not, that such and such is the case; we suffer because of errors in our judgements. Thus we must subject our impressions to critical examination so that our inner dialogue and judgement about the impression does not add anything subjective to the impression and result in us making a false judgement that might be out of accord with reality: we must have the Right View of things and the Right Intention, supported by right awareness and attention (Right Mindfulness) and right focus (Right Concentration) in relation to our impressions and what we assent to.</p>

Table 4: Correlation Between Exercises of Epictetus and the EightFold Path

¹⁰⁸⁵, *Diss.* 1.1, *Diss.* 1.27.1, *Diss.* 2.10.7-13, *Diss.* 3.2.4, *Diss.* 3.4, *Ench.* 2-45, Simplicius (2002, 2013), Hadot (1998), Seddon (2005), Sellars (2003)

Prajñā (Insight) (WHY)

PATH ELEMENT	SIMPLE DESCRIPTION	EPICTETUS: DISCIPLINES, CONCEPTS AND REFERENCES (<i>DISCOURSES</i>)
<p>RIGHT VIEW¹⁰⁸⁶ (<i>sammā-dīṭṭhi</i>)</p>	<p>The purpose of right view is to clear one's path from confusion, misunderstanding and deluded thinking. It is a means to gain right understanding of reality, having knowledge and understanding of mental stress and tension (its origin and cessation).</p>	<p>Primary Exercise - DISCIPLINE OF DESIRES Secondary Exercise - DISCIPLINE OF ASSENT</p> <p>Judgements (1.8, 1.11, 1.17, 1.19, 1.20, 1.24, 1.25, 1.28, 1.29, 2.1, 2.16, 2.17, 2.18, 2.19, 2.20, 2.21, 2.22, 2.23, 2.26, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.7, 3.9, 3.16, 3.17, 3.19, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.10, 4.11)</p>
<p>RIGHT INTENTION/ RESOLVE¹⁰⁸⁷ (<i>sammā-sankappa</i>)</p>	<p>Can also be known as 'right thought' or 'right aspiration.' The intention and resolve to give up the causes of suffering, renounce belief, opinion or action, freedom from ill-will. It contrasts with wrong intention, which involves craving for worldly things and the wish to harm.</p>	<p>Impressions (1.1, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.12, 1.19, 1.20, 1.22, 1.23, 1.24, 1.26, 1.27, 1.28, 1.30, 2.1, 2.7, 2.8, 2.12, 2.14, 2.16, 2.18, 2.19, 2.20, 2.21, 2.22, 2.23, 2.26, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.7, 3.8, 3.12, 3.20, 3.21, 3.22, 3.23, 3.24, 3.26, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.10, 4.13)</p> <p>Choice and refusal, impulse (1.4, 1.8, 1.17, 1.19, 2.8, 3.7, 3.12, 4.1, 4.4, 4.8)</p> <p>Desire, craving and yearning (1.1, 1.4, 1.17, 1.19, 2.1, 2.7, 2.13, 2.14, 2.17, 2.23, 2.24, 3.2, 3.6, 3.7, 3.9, 3.12, 3.13, 3.14, 3.22, 3.23, 3.24, 3.26, 4.4, 4.5, 4.8, 4.10, 4.11)</p> <p>Aversion and avoidance (1.4, 2.13, 2.14, 2.23, 3.12, 3.14, 3.23, 4.4, 4.8)</p> <p>Indifference (2.5, 2.6)</p> <p>Ignorance and knowledge (1.26, 2.1, 2.11, 2.24)</p>

Table 5a: EightFold Path (Insight/Wisdom) and Epictetus

¹⁰⁸⁶ Discourse = MN 6; other texts = DN 22; AN 10.103; AN 10.104; AN 3.65; MN 117; MN 2; SN 12.15

¹⁰⁸⁷; AN 4.41; AN 9.36; MN 117; SN 2.10; SN 35.145; SN 45.8

Śīla (Morals) (HOW)

PATH ELEMENT	SIMPLE DESCRIPTION	EPICTETUS DISCIPLINES, CONCEPTS AND REFERENCES (<i>DISCOURSES</i>)
RIGHT SPEECH ¹⁰⁸⁸ (<i>sammā-vācā</i>)	Abstaining from lying, from divisive speech, from abusive speech, and from idle chatter; never speaking something that is not beneficial and only speaking what is true and beneficial, 'when the circumstances are right, whether they are welcome or not'.	Primary Exercise - DISCIPLINE OF ACTION Speaking and talking, words and speech (1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.7, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, 1.12, 1.14, 1.15, 1.16, 1.17, 1.18, 1.19, 1.21, 1.22, 1.23, 1.24, 1.25, 1.26, 1.28, 1.29, 1.30, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 2.15, 2.17, 2.18, 2.19, 2.20, 2.21, 2.23, 2.24, 2.26, 3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.10, 3.18, 3.21, 3.22, 3.23, 3.24, 3.25, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 4.11, 4.13, 4.17, <i>Ench.20, Ench.33</i>)
RIGHT ACTION ¹⁰⁸⁹ (<i>sammā-kammanta</i>)	Abstaining from killing, abstaining from stealing, abstaining from sexual misconduct; refraining from morally impure acts; abandoning the taking of what is not given, abstaining from taking what is not given.	Primary Exercise - DISCIPLINE OF ACTION Deeds and actions (1.6, 1.16, 1.22, 1.28, 1.29, 2.1, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 2.23, 2.24, 3.5, 3.7, 3.24, 3.25, 3.26, 4.4, 4.6, 4.8, 4.9, 4.11, 4.13) Duties (1.7, 1.18, 1.22, 1.27, 1.28, 2.5, 2.7, 2.10, 2.14, 2.17, 3.2, 3.7, 3.22, 4.1, 4.12, <i>Ench.30</i>) Societal relations and behaviour (2.20, 2.22, 3.3, 3.7, 3.11, 3.22, 3.24, 4.1, 4.4, 4.6, 4.8, 4.10, 4.12, <i>Ench.24, Ench.30, Ench.33</i>)
RIGHT LIVELIHOOD ¹⁰⁹⁰ (<i>sammā-ājīva</i>)	Abstaining from adopting wrong mode of livelihood; refraining from trickery, cajolery, insinuating, dissembling, rapacity for gain upon gain.	Primary Exercise - DISCIPLINE OF ACTION Duties (1.7, 1.18, 1.22, 1.27, 1.28, 2.5, 2.7, 2.10, 2.14, 2.17, 3.2, 3.7, 3.22, 4.1, 4.12, <i>Ench.30</i>) Societal relations and behaviour (2.20, 2.22, 3.3, 3.7, 3.11, 3.22, 3.24, 4.1, 4.4, 4.6, 4.8, 4.10, 4.12, <i>Ench.24, Ench.30, Ench.33</i>) Crime, corruption, justice and injustice (1.18, 1.20, 1.29, 2.4, 2.10, 2.11, 2.18, 2.26, 3.3, 3.14, 3.26, 4.1, 4.2, 4.5, 4.7, 4.9, <i>Ench.33</i>)

Table 5b: EightFold Path (Moral Conduct) and Epictetus

¹⁰⁸⁸ SN 3.3; SN 45.8; SN 56.9; AN 5.198; AN 10.69; AN 10.176, MN 58;; MN 61; MN 117; DN 2;;

¹⁰⁸⁹ SN 45.8; AN 10.99; MN 117; AN 10.176

¹⁰⁹⁰ ; SN 24.3; SN 45.8; AN 5.177; AN 8.54; AN 42.2; MN117; DN 2

Samādhi (Meditation) (WHAT)

PATH ELEMENT	SIMPLE DESCRIPTION	EPICTETUS: DISCIPLINES, CONCEPTS AND REFERENCES (<i>DISCOURSES</i>)
RIGHT EFFORT ¹⁰⁹¹ (<i>sammā-vāyāma</i>)	Arouses the will, puts forth effort, generates energy, exerts his mind, and strives (i) to prevent the arising of evil and unwholesome mental states that have not yet arisen, (ii) to eliminate evil and unwholesome mental states that have already arisen and (iii) to maintain wholesome mental states that have already arisen, to keep them free of delusion, to develop, increase, cultivate, and perfect them.	Primary Exercise - DISCIPLINE OF ASSENT Secondary Exercise - DISCIPLINE OF ACTION Judgements (1.8, 1.11, 1.17, 1.19, 1.20, 1.24, 1.25, 1.28, 1.29, 2.1, 2.16, 2.17, 2.18, 2.19, 2.20, 2.21, 2.22, 2.23, 2.26, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.7, 3.9, 3.16, 3.17, 3.19, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.10, 4.11) Use of faculty (1.1, 1.6, 1.20, 2.1, 2.3, 2.10, 2.18, 2.23, 3.13, 3.16, 3.21, 3.22, 3.24, 4.4, 4.10) Attempt/endeavour (2.14, 3.24, 4.1, 4.12)
RIGHT MINDFULNESS ¹⁰⁹² (<i>sammā-sati</i>)	Contemplating the body as body, resolute, aware and mindful, having put aside worldly desire and sadness; contemplating feelings as feelings; contemplating mental states as mental states; contemplating mental objects as mental objects, resolute, aware and mindful, having put aside worldly desire and sadness.	Primary Exercise - DISCIPLINE OF ASSENT Attention (1.17, 1.20, 3.8, 3.16, 3.22, 3.23, 3.26, 4.2, 4.7, 4.12, <i>Ench.1, Ench.7, Ench. 33</i>) Contemplation (1.20, 1.29, 3.4)
RIGHT CONCENTRATION ¹⁰⁹³ (<i>sammā-samādhi</i>)	Limiting of the attention of the mind on one object; also the clearness and heightened alertness of mind, which appears through prolonged practice of <i>dhyana</i> (often translated as meditation and equated with concentration – associated attention, thought and reflection).	Impressions (1.1, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.12, 1.19, 1.20, 1.22, 1.23, 1.24, 1.26, 1.27, 1.28, 1.30, 2.1, 2.7, 2.8, 2.12, 2.14, 2.16, 2.18, 2.19, 2.20, 2.21, 2.22, 2.23, 2.26, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.7, 3.8, 3.12, 3.20, 3.21, 3.22, 3.23, 3.24, 3.26, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.10, 4.13)

Table 5c: Eightfold Path (Meditation) and Epictetus

¹⁰⁹¹ SN 45.8; AN 2.19; AN 6.55; MN 117

¹⁰⁹² DN 22; MN 117; MN 118; SN 47.20; AN 6.19;

¹⁰⁹³; AN 4.41; AN 9.36; MN 117; SN 2.10; SN 35.145; SN 45.8

MAJOR COMPONENTS OF THE <i>DHARMA</i>		DISCIPLINES OF EPICTETUS
FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS	<i>Dukkha</i> - suffering (Chapter 2 first truth) Cause of suffering (Chapter 3 second truth) Cessation (Chapter 4 third truth) Eightfold path (Chapter 5 fourth truth)	Discipline of Desire Discipline of Action Discipline of Assent
THREE MARKS OF EXISTENCE (Embodies Right View, Effort, Mindfulness and Meditation)	Suffering (<i>dukkha</i>) Impermanence Illusion of the self	Discipline of Desire Discipline of Assent
EIGHT VICISSITUDES (Embodies Right View)	Pleasure and pain Gain and loss Praise and blame Fame and disrepute	Discipline of Desire Discipline of Action
SIX ROOTS OF THE VOLITIONAL MIND – Three wholesome (<i>kusala- mula</i>) and three unwholesome (<i>akusala- mula</i>)	Generosity, love and wisdom Greed, hatred and delusion	Discipline of Desire Discipline of Assent
FIVE HINDRANCES (Embodies Right Effort, Mindfulness and Meditation – Eightfold Path)	Sensory desire, ill will, sloth,torpor, restlessness,worry, doubt	Discipline of Desire Discipline of Assent
FIVE AGGREGATES (Embodies Right View, Intention, Effort, Mindfulness and Meditation)	Body, feeling, perception, mental formations, consciousness	Discipline of Desire Discipline of Assent
FIVE PRECEPTS Basic Code of Ethics (Part of Right Action)	Killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, false, harsh and idle speech, intoxicants that cloud the mind	Discipline of Action

ELEMENTS OF THE <i>DHARMA</i>		ELEMENTS OF EPICTETUS
<i>cetanā</i>	volition, intention	<i>prohairesis</i>
<i>kamma</i>	action	action
<i>sankhara</i>	conditioned things, dispositions active/passive	dispositions, habits, <i>hexis</i> active/passive

Table 6: Major Components of the *Dharma* and Epictetus

5.3 Treatment and Therapy

5.3.1 Cures and Remedies

We return to the medical model (1.4) to consider the aspect of treatment or therapy. It is through therapy that we can hope for cessation of suffering. The therapy in this case is to apply the *Eightfold path* or the three exercises of the soul. Again we continue our comparison of Epictetus with the Buddhist thinking.

The Greek *therapeia* variously means 'service', 'attendance', 'medical treatment', 'remedy' or 'cure', and in the latter context plays a significant part in the medical analogy already discussed (1.4). Many Greek and Roman writers and philosophical schools discussed the practice of therapy. Nussbaum (1994) provides an excellent and useful comprehensive account of the main schools of thought regarding *therapeia*. From a Buddhist perspective, the notion of therapy is a key aspect of the cessation of our suffering as discussed in 5.2 and comparatively with the practices and exercises of Epictetus as discussed in 1.3. Several scholars have discussed the philosophical foundations behind therapeutic practices in Stoicism and Buddhism including Murguia and Diaz (2015), Goerger (2017) and Ferraiolo (2010).

The famous remark of Epicurus, 'Empty is that philosopher's argument, which by no human suffering is therapeutically treated. For just as there is no use in a medical art that does not cast out the sickness of bodies, so too there is no use in philosophy, if it does not throw out suffering from the soul',¹ is a challenge to the utility of philosophy (See. 1.3). It also relates to the idea that philosophy should have practical goals, a means to care for the soul to address the suffering and stresses of life through argument and reason and clearly relates to the medical analogy which the Stoics, Buddhists and others used and exploited. It is clear that Epictetus' thinking aligns with these views, as is evident in his deployment of various remedies. The following from the lesson on 'How must we struggle against our external impressions?' illustrates one of the medical usages of the term *therapeia* as a remedy to cure the ills of the soul:

'For when once you conceive a desire for money, if reason be applied to bring you to a realization of the evil, both the passion is stilled and our governing principle is restored to its original authority; but if you do not apply a remedy (*therapeian*), your governing principle does not revert to its previous condition, but, on being aroused again by the corresponding external impression, it bursts into the flame of desire more quickly than it did before. And if this happens over and over again, the next stage is that a callousness results and the infirmity strengthens the avarice. For the man who has had a fever, and then recovered, is not the same as he was before the fever, unless he has experienced a complete cure (*therapeuthēi*).²

Here, as elsewhere, Epictetus' therapy for the mind is the application of reason to appearances and impressions, even more so to exercise reason on the unhealthy habit, to help 'kick this habit' and the

¹ Epicurus *Us.* 221 = Porph *Ad Marc.* 31, p.209 23 N

² *Diss.* 2.18.8-11

desire that follows as a result of this habit. He invites us to draw sustenance from within us and to help and listen to ourselves, realising that we are in a bad way.¹⁰⁹⁶ And even more so this *therapeia* is self-contemplative (5.3.4) in the sense that we apply our reasoning to the habit and to whether it is good or bad or neither good nor bad. Self-therapy is prime amongst the exercises he advocates,¹⁰⁹⁷ communing with oneself, conversing with one self, spending time devoted to oneself considering how we have acted towards things that happen and how we act now, what continues to distress us and what needs to be remedied (*therapeuthēi*) through exercising reason. As Gill remarks, self-examination (between the person and his impression) is an interpersonal dialogue, as such private thought or meditation was conceived as a kind of internalisation of practical teaching and exercise.¹⁰⁹⁸ Long also discusses these issues on internal dialogue as a way of exposing a person's mental conflicts and reorienting his volitions.¹⁰⁹⁹ (Cf. *prohairesis* – 4.4).

5.3.2 Exercises and Practice

The importance of exercises and practice for the treatment and therapy to realise our liberation from suffering was introduced in 1.3. The *Eightfold Path* exercises, and Epictetus' three disciplines, constitute our practice to attend to and provide treatment for our suffering mind.

Each of the Eightfold Path exercises are prefaced by the word 'right (*samma*)' which should not be understood to mean the opposite of 'wrong' or to confer a meaning in relation to 'good' or 'bad' (2.4). The meaning is closer to the sense of 'as it ought to be', 'to go together' or 'to be united' and this sense is close to the Stoics' philosophical attitude towards a life of living in harmony with nature, in accord with reason and truthfulness as is our own essential nature as rational human beings. Consequently the *Eightfold Path* exercises and Epictetus' three disciplines share a similar sense and interconnectedness of the notion of 'right (*samma*)' and the 'how to' path to liberation following the 'right (*samma*)' way.

As discussed (5.2) the *Eightfold Path* encompasses three bases: wisdom, ethics and mental discipline or concentration, and likewise Epictetus' three disciplines encompass desires, (ethical) actions and assents. The two philosophical approaches share a common ground of understanding and view, both working to solve the same problem: suffering (*dukkha*). Our practice leading to cessation (based on the *Eightfold Path* or the three disciplines) is a continuous activity, and as our life takes on more of a philosophical attitude, our practice and perspective towards suffering become easier to manage. Through continuous practice our experience of suffering changes, as we become more aware of its nature and deepen our understanding of its consequences in relation to the particulars of our daily life. Our motivation and drive to practise these disciplines is 'up to us' as they depend on our views, intention, desires, efforts, judgements and attention, and of course our volition (*prohairesis*) has overall control as to whether our practice is successfully followed.

¹⁰⁹⁶ *Diss.* 3.23.27-28

¹⁰⁹⁷ *Diss.* 3.13.7-8

¹⁰⁹⁸ Gill (2006) p.390

¹⁰⁹⁹ Long (2002) pp.74-86

5.3.3 Living in the Present Moment

5.3.3.1 Here and Now

Buddhists talk about living in the present moment, being attentive to something in the present, being attentive to what is happening in the here and now. It means that our awareness is centred on the present and not worrying about the future or thinking about the past. It is living where life is happening, with the mind being active, open and conscious to the present, and not clinging to the past (3.5.3). The past is the cause of our ignorance, cravings and clings (1.7.3, 3.2.5, 3.3.5).

The present time we live in is the only real moment in time that we have to work with, the past we have lived through and we never know whether the future may ever be. Our present thoughts, feelings, impressions, desires, actions and judgements are in our control. It is in the present moment we need to be in focus and concentrate our attention on these things if we are to make progress towards a path to cessation. Part of our practice is to find ways to maintain and prolong our attention to the present moment during our daily activities and the things we are in control of.

5.3.3.2 Attention to Inner Thoughts, Feelings and Reactions

The flow of thoughts that streams through our conscious mind embodies our experiences, perceptions, impressions and ideas. The phrase 'stream of consciousness' appears in modern psychology, and was originally coined by James where he used it in a broader study of the mind referred to as 'stream of thought'.¹¹⁰⁰ Generally this idea refers to a person's thoughts and conscious reactions to events, perceived as a continuous flow. The phrase also appears in early Buddhist scriptures,¹¹⁰¹ and is often associated with the therapeutic practice of mindfulness: being aware moment by moment of one's subjective conscious experience from a first-person perspective relates to the Buddhist teaching on the five aggregates.¹¹⁰² The power of our thoughts can save or destroy us and so being aware and attentive to this stream of thoughts and what is arising in the mind can help us understand the background of what is triggering mental events that are causing our suffering. We should also acknowledge that, as discussed (5.2.1, 5.2.2.3), the Buddhist concept of mindfulness goes beyond just this aspect and covers both internal and external experiences in the present, leading to a deeper attention to the three marks of existence: impermanence, unsatisfactoriness (suffering) and the 'non-self'.

Although Epictetus does not employ the phrase 'stream of consciousness' as such, he does prescribe therapy akin to that of Buddhist mindfulness and contemplation (5.2.1, 5.2.2.3). Epictetus recommends that we contemplate and be attentive to the present moment and to our thoughts, feelings, beliefs, actions and reactions to events. On several occasions Epictetus warns about the lack of care and attention such as not to get carried away by our impressions (by lack of attention). He speaks of examining our impressions, warning us to be conscious of this to avoid errors of judgement. Simplicius remarks, 'Let the attentive part of the soul be fully awake and let it be on

¹¹⁰⁰ James (1890) Chapter IX pp.224-290

¹¹⁰¹ Collins (1982) p.257

¹¹⁰² Karunamuni (2015) pp.2-4

guard to remain in itself'.¹¹⁰³ Simplicius goes on to say, 'The soul is distracted towards the outside by the senses when it acts in concert with them, as is shown by people closing their eyes when they want to collect themselves and turn inwards and rouse the attentive part of the soul.'¹¹⁰⁴ Our inner voice is forever talking to us as movements of thought reflecting a continuum of impressions received through our senses and mental experiences; the inner voice is a window into our conditioned mind (3.2.2, 1.7, 2.3.2). We can argue that Epictetus would advise us to be attentive to this inner voice, to understand it and what it expresses and represents.

Epictetus acknowledges that life is like a continuous stream of subjective experiences and that within this continuum there is nothing that does not need our attention.¹¹⁰⁵ Like the Buddhists, he recognises that life is a ceaseless flow of states of existence and impermanence: 'changes of a preliminary state into something else ... a ... change of that which now is, not into what is not, but into what is not *now*'.¹¹⁰⁶ Birth and death and all things that happen between these states, and so too all our experiences as we traverse through life, all our thoughts, feelings, emotions and actions, are a part of this process of change. It only makes sense to talk intelligently about human existence if we acknowledge, understand and comprehend that change, impermanence and the notion of non-persisting objects is a primary part of our lives. As we have already noted ignorance is the most common single contributor to our suffering and what comes with this is our attachment to objects in life (we want things to stay as they are, persistent and unchanging). Ignorance, attachment and our unwillingness to accept change are fundamental factors in causing our suffering. As Epictetus says, we cling obstinately to our judgements;¹¹⁰⁷ his message here is that if we do not accept change and are immovable in our opinions and views, we have the vigour of a madman towards attachment to whatever we have made up our mind about. Epictetus also makes clear the importance of paying attention (*prosochē*) to our thoughts and activities and not letting our thoughts go wandering by deferring our attention: 'There is no part of the activities of your life excepted, to which attention does not extend, is there? What, will you do it worse by attention, and better by inattention?'¹¹⁰⁸ Epictetus remarks, 'Each man's master is the person who has the authority over what the man wishes or does not wish, so as to secure it, or take it away.'¹¹⁰⁹ As is frequently seen in his discussions and debate, the stream of thoughts, feelings and inner voices reflects what we sense from the impressions of the external world; we can have these under control or they can place our minds in a flux of emotional turmoil and disturbance. Life itself is in a constant state of flux, unpredictability, uncertainty and insecurity; our existence and experiences, in particular, embody this flux and our mind can become a whirligig of thoughts.

¹¹⁰³ Simplicius *in Epict* 114.51-52

¹¹⁰⁴ Simplicius *in Epict* 112.21-24

¹¹⁰⁵ *Diss.* 4.12.4

¹¹⁰⁶ *Diss.* 3.24.92-94

¹¹⁰⁷ *Diss.* 2.15

¹¹⁰⁸ *Diss.* 4.12.4-5

¹¹⁰⁹ *Ench.* 14

We are the natural masters of our own moral purpose: our prohairetic choice is unconditionally free and so we can initiate mental change within us, transforming our suffering through our *prohairesis*, whilst at the same time accepting the constant flux of the external world and our need to accept things as they happen. With 'here and now' awareness and attention to our 'stream of consciousness', we can overturn our judgements, putting a halt to a bad judgement overcoming good judgement.¹¹¹⁰ We can make internal mental changes to stop a perverted *prohairesis* placing our attention on externals and projecting the self and our identity in externals, risking the freedom of our *prohairesis* being slave to the externals. Epictetus' definition of internal mental change, *prohairesis* and freedom come together in the following passage: 'He is free who lives as he wills, who is subject neither to compulsion, nor hindrance, nor force, whose choices are unhampered, whose desires attain their end, whose aversions do not fall into what they would avoid.'¹¹¹¹

5.3.3.3 *Accepting the Present Moment*

Through our practice of Epictetus' discipline of desires we should be valuing the things we have in the present moment, increasing attention on desires and aversions that depend on us in the present time, not on what has been in the past, whether we failed to get things we wanted or failed to avoid things, and not on what might be in the future. Practice of the discipline of desires is concerned with the present thoughts, feelings and views we have about whatever is occurring to us and whatever circumstances we need to deal with in the present moment. Attention to these present moment thoughts, feelings and views focuses on what is important to us and distinguishes it from what might be important to others. Practising this discipline should help in dealing with the suffering caused by lack of acceptance of change and impermanence (2.2.3.3) and the suffering related to the natural cycle of life (2.2.3.2). As already discussed and acknowledged (5.2.2, 5.2.4 Table 5a) this mirrors the practice of Right View and Right Intention. The practice of Right View is an activity that enables us to be fully present, engaging in viewing our own living reality. Right View is attention to what is going on in our personal lives in the present moment, and like the discipline of desires is concerned with present thoughts, feelings and views we have about whatever is happening to us. Right View should draw our attention to the powerful grasp of the ego and the inner voice reflecting on the 'me' and 'mine', and the associated craving and clinging to desires and aversions outside our control. The practice of Right Intention, also known as 'right thought', 'right aspiration', focuses on the intention and resolve to renounce craving, belief, opinion or action that causes suffering.

5.3.3.4 *Paying Attention to Ethical Conduct*

Practice of the discipline of action involves paying attention to the things we do, the actions we take in the present moment, unlike the discipline of desires, which pays attention to our accepting what happens to us in accord with nature. With the discipline of action our attention is turned towards our own ethical conduct and exercising a moral life. As already discussed and acknowledged

¹¹¹⁰ *Diss.* 1.29.12

¹¹¹¹ *Diss.* 4.1.1

(5.2.2, 5.2.4 Table 5b) this mirrors the practice of Right Action, Speech and Livelihood. Our attention is accompanied by a deeper understanding of our place in the world, our responsibilities and duties in society, and accordingly of how we should act with regard to people, beings and things who are objects of our actions.

5.3.3.5 Attention to Those Impressions

Our focus on the practice of the discipline of assent involves attention to what we assent to, in particular to those impressions that seem plausible and attractive. As already discussed and acknowledged (5.2.2, 5.2.4 Table 5c) this mirrors the practice of Right Effort, Mindfulness and Concentration. This includes attention to applying a contemplating and reflective mind to our feelings, perceptions, impressions and mental formation (5.3.4).

5.3.4 Contemplation and Reflective Mind

Contemplation of our mental formations is a powerful technique because of its self-reflective aspects. It is deployed in many Buddhist practices,¹¹¹² is one of the parts of the *Eightfold Path* (5.2), and is often used as part of mindfulness and meditative practices. As an example, it might include contemplation to gain insight and understand the interdependent nature of the subjects and objects of the mind, the contemplation of impermanence and looking deeply into the nature of things. The Buddhist notion of contemplation is a mental discipline associated with, but not equivalent to, the notion that includes Right Concentration/Meditation and Right Mindfulness. Our particular concern is contemplating the thoughts, feelings and judgements that bring about suffering. In Buddhism contemplation is the practice of simply holding something in the mind, focusing and concentrating on this something within one's full attention and awareness for a period of time, to allow us to realise it and for it to reveal itself of its own accord. Contemplation is a practice that one can use anytime and anywhere, used continuously throughout our daily lives as part of our awareness and mindfulness of 'dwelling in the present moment' experiences. An interesting development in this area is the emergence of contemplative science where Buddhism and neuroscience converge;¹¹¹³ this is rooted in Buddhist principles and embraces modern cognitive science.

'Every art and faculty makes certain things the special object of its contemplation... What, then, is reason itself? ... self-contemplative':¹¹¹⁴ as Epictetus remarks, reason is the only faculty capable of contemplating itself. Long, in his analysis of *Discourses* 1.20, discusses Epictetus' subdivision of types of contemplation into those that are self-study and those that are non self-study, and also the fact that rationality is of the self-study type.¹¹¹⁵ He draws upon several observations, including Epictetus' advice on the correct use of mental impressions, which means self-study of our thoughts and states of consciousness. This draws support for Socrates' insistence on self-scrutiny and living an examined

¹¹¹² Nhat Hanh (1998) pp.73-74

¹¹¹³ Wallace (2007)

¹¹¹⁴ *Diss.* 1.20.4-5

¹¹¹⁵ Long (2002) pp.130-131

life and for the reflexive aspect of rationality and humans' capacity to reason reflexively and hence to be able to exercise correctly.

Epictetus argues that the art of reasoning is indispensable since it analyses and perfects all else, but it can also contemplate itself.¹¹¹⁶ Dobbin, in his discussion of this, makes the observation that this faculty is thus self-correcting and self-regulating and so is capable of enlightenment independent of outside interpretation or counsel.¹¹¹⁷ Consequently through self-contemplation we can reflect upon and remedy the bad decisions of our *prohairesis*. 'What more masterful faculty do you yourself possess? What is that thing within you which takes counsel, which examines into all things severally?'¹¹¹⁸ We might interpret Epictetus as meaning that our faculty of reasoning makes us into our own therapist -: 'No one is closer to myself than I am',¹¹¹⁹ – and so we are doctoring ourselves towards recovery from our suffering. Further, in *Discourses* 1.20, Epictetus brings in the ethical aspect: 'Once more, what are the things that wisdom has been given us to contemplate? Things good, bad, and neither good nor bad. What, then, is wisdom itself? A good. And what is folly? An evil. Do you see, then, that wisdom inevitably comes to contemplate both itself and its opposite? Therefore, the first and greatest task of the philosopher is to test the impressions and discriminate between them, and to apply none that has not been tested'.¹¹²⁰ Dobbin points to the fact that Epictetus wants us to use this faculty and this entails an obligation on us to exercise in precisely this way.¹¹²¹

5.3.5 Attention to What We Say to Ourselves

5.3.5.1 Communicating Our Feelings

We have in the course of this thesis considered language, and its association with our thoughts and feelings, as a significant influencing factor regarding suffering. We have explored, in 1.5, 3.3.2, 3.3.3 and 4.5.1, the effect of 'what we say to ourselves' and its links to our personality, identity and ego, to the tyrant within and to our suffering. We need to be attentive and be mindful of our language, and recognise that our inner voice and language can influence our sense and sensibility of what is happening in the present moment.

Epictetus remarks, 'It is not the word that I fear, but the emotion, which produces the word'.¹¹²² This remark is made in the context of freedom: he calls no one master, but the cognitive impression of the master conjures up certain feelings and emotions. Our sensitivity and sensibility to words and language are underpinned by emotions and thus can have an overriding affect on our experiences of suffering. Language, words and emotions co-exist; the language conveys emotion. Stoic vocabulary is heavily populated by words that are used to label emotions and passions,

¹¹¹⁶ 1.17

¹¹¹⁷ Dobbin (2007) pp.162-166

¹¹¹⁸ *Diss.* 1.20.18-19

¹¹¹⁹ *Diss.* 4.6.11

¹¹²⁰ *Diss.* 1.20.6-7

¹¹²¹ Dobbin (2007) p.184

¹¹²² *Diss.* 4.1.115

jealousy, rage and so on, and our mind reacts on the basis the associated emotion and mental image attaches to this label.

We have in this thesis indicated that language can affect and afflict our thoughts in many different ways such as experiencing great excitement, laughter and shouting about something or being aroused by some spectacle,¹¹²³ presenting feelings, sufferings and subsequent passions. As discussed our language and what we say to ourself (cf. 1.5, 4.5.1, 4.6.3) can move our soul; our language can set our mood or tone of thought with the alluring, attractive and charming words of desire, pleasure or lust, or the repelling, repulsive, disgusting words that create thoughts of fear, distress and anxiety. We observe in Epictetus words of applause,¹¹²⁴ words of praise, admiration and flattery¹¹²⁵ and on other occasions we observe a combination of words expressing fears and anxieties with a voice which is trembling, nervous and unsteady and sometimes we utter an explosive combination of harsh, terrifying or angry words¹¹²⁶ and inhuman sentiments and threats¹¹²⁷ ('I am ready to tear out the eyes of the man who stands in my way').

Again in Epictetus we see language portraying thoughts, which can be critical, unjust and vicious,¹¹²⁸ censorious and accusing,¹¹²⁹ and sometimes kind-hearted, gentle¹¹³⁰ and forgiving. Our language and thoughts reflect the state of our inner soul: we harbour an abject or broken spirit,¹¹³¹ ignoble thoughts¹¹³² and disgraceful and shameless words and thoughts,¹¹³³ the spirit of the soul is disturbed¹¹³⁴ or at peace¹¹³⁵ with our thoughts. Our thoughts can reflect strong desires, lustful designs and unseemly deeds.¹¹³⁶ We can act and be acted upon (3.3), and this feature of our existence can create a state of mind and soul that is in a good condition or a bad condition, and as discussed our inner voice (4.5, 4.6) can be strongly persuasive to incline us towards a certain way of feeling good or bad, even though as we discussed (3.5.3, 2.4.2) our passions are dominated by particular beliefs and judgements, and conditioned by ignorance (cf.2.2.3, 3.2.5).

It is clear that our thoughts can be influenced by our inner voice (4.5) and can continuously project notions of good and bad, sometimes directly and indirectly, sometimes consciously and subconsciously. The extent of this, influences our decision-making, our judgements and our qualitative assessment of people, things, and events related to us. We often in our language, words and thoughts make reference to things or people that are 'good/evil/bad'¹¹³⁷ but not necessarily in

¹¹²³ *Ench.* 33

¹¹²⁴ *Diss.* 3.23.10-12

¹¹²⁵ *Diss.*, 3.9.18, 3.11.2, 3.17.2-3, 3.23.13-14, 3.24.44-45, 3.24.49, 4.1.55, 4.6.33, 4.7.24, 4.7.32

¹¹²⁶ *Diss.* 1.13.3, 1.18,, 1.27

¹¹²⁷ *Diss.* 1.18.6-7, 1.27.11-12

¹¹²⁸ *Diss.* 3.2.14-15, 3.3.18-19

¹¹²⁹ *Diss.* 3.22.93-94, 3.25.6-7, 3.26.9, 4.6.33, 4.12.13; *Ench.* 48

¹¹³⁰ *Diss.* 3.24.64

¹¹³¹ *Diss.* 2.1.11-12, 3.24.58, 4.1.55

¹¹³² *Diss.*, 1.3.1-2, 1.4.4-5

¹¹³³ *Diss.* 4.9.5

¹¹³⁴ *Diss.*, 3.19.3, 4.12.13

¹¹³⁵ *Diss.* 3.13.12-13

¹¹³⁶ *Diss.* 4.9.5

¹¹³⁷ *Diss.* 3.6.5-6, 3.26.27-28, 4.1.134, 4.9.8

Epictetus' moral sense. Sometimes our language and thoughts carry us away, producing emotional content about the externals rather than following 'the clear evidence of your senses'.¹¹³⁸ The power of our language and expression through words provides a breeding ground with regards to our sensibility towards the good and bad. Language can make us become sensitized towards the lure of false goods and deter us from false evils driving us to go against the dictates of reason.

The power of persuasive language can influence our suffering or enjoyment of life, and can make us fearful or anxious, or make us calm and peaceful. Expressions such as 'I am the mightiest in the world'¹¹³⁹ might be terrifying to some but not to others. Do we have the feeling, are persuaded, that such-and-such a thing is so or not so or perhaps so?¹¹⁴⁰ In general, Epictetus would advise dealing with the uncertainties and risks of life with both confidence and caution; he devotes a complete discourse to these two key aspects.¹¹⁴¹ The language of thought we use, especially how we express ourself through our inner voice, anticipates our fear and thoughts of uncertainty. Epictetus argues that we should examine our thoughts with caution regarding the things we can control and with confidence regarding what we cannot control. Interestingly, one of Epictetus' central points is that we should be able to cope psychologically in every situation we face by changing our thoughts about things and what our inner voice says, expressing our thoughts with confidence in regard to externals and with caution in regard to everything in our control. Where do we show fear? About the things which lie outside our *prohairesis*? We seem to focus our thoughts of fear on external objects but in regard to things in our control we are deceived or act impetuously or in a shameful manner. Rather than facing outward with confidence and inwardly with caution we do the opposite, as Epictetus illustrates:

'They have confused the objects of fear with the objects of confidence'.¹¹⁴²

The less confident individuals will tread with caution in the presence of externals, in order that they can avoid what they think is dreadful and frightening. We run away, having deceived ourselves by placing our confidence in the wrong thing, thus getting trapped in a net, that is, caught in our own opinions about the objects of our fear; we are all confident that death is a certainty but we should be cautious not to let our mind be carried away with the fear of death. Our words, language and thoughts provide us with our own therapeutic treatment.

Erler offers the argument that caution turns out to be the basis for confidence in facing death.¹¹⁴³ In fact we can apply the same argument to everything we do and every challenge of life we face. If we are both cautious and confident, we can achieve resilience against the fears of life.

'Confidence in what? In the only thing in which one can have confidence - in what is faithful, free from hindrance, cannot be taken away, that is, in your own moral purpose'.¹¹⁴⁴

¹¹³⁸ *Diss.* 4.1.136

¹¹³⁹ *Diss.* 1.19.2

¹¹⁴⁰ *Diss.* 1.18.1

¹¹⁴¹ *Diss.* 2.1

¹¹⁴² *Diss.* 2.1.8-9

¹¹⁴³ Erler (2007) p.108-109

¹¹⁴⁴ *Diss.* 3.26.25

Our language and thoughts about suffering and passions need to have the Right View of looking at life (as discussed in 1.5.2.1), that is, having the right perspective, outlook or understanding. Right View is knowing about our fears, being able to communicate with ourself their causes, being cautious in our use of impressions, the thoughts we construct and the judgements we make, the words and language that generate our fears. With Right Effort and practice we should aim to abandon all wrong, evil and harmful thoughts that cause us our fears and replace these with thoughts of confidence and indifference about things outside our control that cause our suffering.

As regards social intercourse, Simplicius' view is that 'The soul is distracted towards the outside by the senses when it acts in concert with them ... uttered speech diffuses the soul towards the outside even more, since in that case it is not acting in concert with the senses, but acting as itself'.¹¹⁴⁵ For instance, social intercourse constitutes an example when our thoughts and emotions may be swayed in concert with others and their irrational thoughts and feelings. Epictetus' advice is to turn the soul back to itself so that it can live its own life, without the undue influence of the external world.¹¹⁴⁶

5.3.5.2 *Emotive Attachment*

Emotive thoughts are an inseparable part of the judgements (*kriseis*) we make, and when we assent to something, be it an opinion or a view, emotion is also part of the process (cf. 3.5.3). If we assent to the opinion 'He insulted me'¹¹⁴⁷, then we are colouring the mental formation and the use of this type of language, as discussed in 1.3 and 4.5, has a pathological effect on our personality.

Feelings result in emotional attachment or aversion (3.2), whether it is lust (*epithumia*) or fear (*phobos*), or pleasure (*hēdonē*) or distress (*lupē*). As discussed, such attachment is a wanting to identify and take possession of, for example, the subject of our fear. With a *pathos* such as fear (*phobos*) irrational thoughts about future evils are at play, as in the case of death;¹¹⁴⁸ such a feeling does not add precision about how and when death might occur.

Epictetus says we should act with caution regarding our thoughts and feelings about some impression of pleasure; as with impressions in general, we should guard ourself against being carried away by it, do not allow 'its enticement, and sweetness, and attractiveness' to overcome you.¹¹⁴⁹

The security of the mind is dependent upon properly responding to impressions, as Epictetus frequently attests; we should guard ourselves against the 'very slippery nature of sense impressions'¹¹⁵⁰ that might allure us with some pleasurable experience into a false sense of the good, ignoring any long lasting period of 'joy and self-satisfaction';¹¹⁵¹ unfortunately we run after it as a perceived good and lurking within the pleasure there lies suffering.

According to Epictetus, we should say to impressions, 'You are an external impression and not at

¹¹⁴⁵ Simplicius in *Epict* 112.21-26

¹¹⁴⁶ *Ench.* 33

¹¹⁴⁷ *Diss.* 2.14.22

¹¹⁴⁸ *Diss.* 3.26.39

¹¹⁴⁹ *Ench.* 34

¹¹⁵⁰ *Diss.* 3.12.7

¹¹⁵¹ *Ench.* 34

all what you appear to be';¹¹⁵² our thoughts and feelings about objects and things in the material world might appear to us to be agreeable or disagreeable, pleasant or unpleasant, good or bad, beautiful or ugly, and many other combinations of opposites. Hence enjoyment, pleasure, delight in the material world might appear under the guise of these impressions but are neither solid nor secure since they represent conditioned phenomena whether they be enjoyment or its opposite and so are only traces of the real thing, the good within us not without. As the Buddhists remark, feelings such as pleasures are fleeting and analogous to a dream, an illusion, a water bubble, a shadow.¹¹⁵³

Finally, Simplicius' view is that, if the soul neglects its *prohairesis* and inclines towards the body and an irrational life it does so because it prefers the intensity of pleasure from irrational desires rather than the pure and gentle pleasures from rational desires.¹¹⁵⁴ Emotional attachment pulls us towards some irresistible desire that Buddhism refers to as an unwholesome state of mind, and, as was discussed in 4.3.5, leads to a weakening of our moral integrity. Long refers to emotional attachment as being incompatible with our rational autonomy and integrity.¹¹⁵⁵

A particular Buddhist perspective on this comes from Kalupahana who reports that in some cases we can accommodate excessive and overextended emotional attachment by using an impersonal form of language which can bring about change in the emotive content and hence the pathological effect.¹¹⁵⁶ He remarks that our feeling adds character to our perception, not precision or clarity.¹¹⁵⁷ Emotional attachment is comparable to the grasping or clinging to the emotive content of human experience of the five aggregates.¹¹⁵⁸

5.3.5.3 Moral Sense and Sensibility

Epictetus argues that to be insensible is to act against one's own nature.¹¹⁵⁹ From this we can conclude that thinking and doing things without sense or reason is to be in an insensate or insensible (*anaisthētos*) state of mind regarding our own nature. Marcus Aurelius, taking the same line of thinking as Epictetus, says that being 'void both of sentience and reason' or in a state of dull senselessness is acting against our rational nature.¹¹⁶⁰ So too when man becomes overly emotional due to sense impressions, he lacks the sensibility of good judgement, lacks the sense of reason. The insensible soul is pathologically disturbed, and is in a state of disease; our sense falls short of being at ease in keeping with our rational nature. Rist considers *pathē* a pathological disturbance of the personality.¹¹⁶¹

Marcus Aurelius says that independence from, and insensibility to, our reasoning is a callous

¹¹⁵² *Ench.* 1

¹¹⁵³ Soeng (2015)

¹¹⁵⁴ Simplicius in *Epict* 78.38-43 (cf. Gill (2006) pp.269-271, 261-266)

¹¹⁵⁵ Long (2002) p. 256

¹¹⁵⁶ Kalupahana (1992) p.34

¹¹⁵⁷ Kalupahana (1992) p.33

¹¹⁵⁸ Kalupahana (1992) p.71

¹¹⁵⁹ *Diss.* 2.8.14

¹¹⁶⁰ *Med.* VII.7, X.1

¹¹⁶¹ Rist (2010) p.27

neglect of our duties as a human being.¹¹⁶² He further remarks that 'A man's true work is ... to disdain the motions of the senses, to diagnose specious impressions.'¹¹⁶³ Is it our mental obtuseness, stupor or deliberate lack of sense that we are unaware of what I myself possess in matters of freedom of choice and of what is up to us?¹¹⁶⁴ Epictetus spends considerable time on the proper use of our impressions, and our cognitive response and reaction to impressions.¹¹⁶⁵ He continuously argues that our sensitivity and sensibility to the impressions of our senses should firmly be within the sphere of a *prohairesis*. This of course does not mean we should be unfeeling towards others but in the case of our sense and sensibility to good and evil we are making a judgement call for ourselves in regard to the moral quality of our *prohairesis*.

From our dispositions (2.3) and volitional actions (4.4) (cf. *sankhara* - 1.2.3, 1.7.2, 2.3.2) arises a conditioned mind creating the good and the evil (cf. *kusala* and *akusala* 2.4), within us. As with good and bad *prohairesis*, in Buddhism *kusala-kamma* (good *kamma*) and *akusala-kamma* (bad *kamma*) represent states of moral sense and sensibility that can lead to well-being or harm and suffering: *akusala-kamma* produces disturbing thoughts, feelings and sensations, is detrimental to our spiritual development and morally negligent and irresponsible.

Our sensitivity and sensibility to passions that move the soul can, for example, make us liable to be offended by others' comments, to be jealous of others, or to be angered by others. Distracting and emotive thoughts connected to desires, greed, hatred and delusion are unwholesome moral states of mind, *akusala-kamma*. Simplicius remarks, 'It is impossible for those who have their senses in good order to misperceive, so too in the case of things grasped by reasoning.'¹¹⁶⁶ Whilst our sensibility to objects of desire and aversion should be in accordance with Right View, we often have a Wrong View. Simplicius remarks that our conceptions are often erroneous, 'whether their source is a deceived perception, irrational desire, unwarranted reasoning or invalid assumptions'.¹¹⁶⁷ Epictetus rightly argues, in line with Right View, 'A perception of the state of one's own governing principle [reason]; for when once a man realizes that it is weak he will no longer wish to employ it upon great matters.'¹¹⁶⁸ Can we respond to complex emotional issues if our soul is in a weak condition or unduly sensitive? Are we going to be easily sensitive or deceived by our impressions and perceptions that have an excessive emotive content? Whatever kind of perception, and sensitivity to this perception, there is, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, it is one of the conditioned aggregates of the mind (like feelings)¹¹⁶⁹ that cause craving and clinging and hence emotions and suffering.

According to Epictetus, 'Every action is the impression of <man's> senses' (be they rightly or

¹¹⁶² *Med.* 1.8

¹¹⁶³ *Med.* VIII.26

¹¹⁶⁴ *Diss.* 1.9.31-32

¹¹⁶⁵ *Diss.* 1.27, 2.15, 2.16, 2.18, 3.8, 4.1

¹¹⁶⁶ Simplicius *in Epict* 9.21-23

¹¹⁶⁷ Simplicius *in Epict* 68.30-33

¹¹⁶⁸ *Diss.* 1.26.15-16

¹¹⁶⁹ SN 22:82

wrongly formed), so our sense and sensibility of things great or terrible originate in the impressions of our senses.¹¹⁷⁰ Frequently Epictetus reminds us, in relation to our actions and perceptions, that some are profitable and some unprofitable, some are appropriate and some not appropriate.¹¹⁷¹ Moral sense and sensibility consist in applying reason to understand and realise what is evil.¹¹⁷² It is clear from this that men need to be sensible to observe and distinguish that by virtue of which men become philosophers.¹¹⁷³

We err in our impressions and judgements and this makes us believe that we are discontented and dissatisfied with life. The *pathē* are universal emotions; however, the way they relate to us is entirely unique to us: they are personalised and individualised by us through conditioned phenomena and mental formations (cf. aggregates, *sankhara* and *kamma*) and these personalised experiences become us, we identify with them. If we have a feeling that a thing is so then we feel (are aware of) this feeling, and we have a thought that a thing is so.¹¹⁷⁴ If we feel the presence of this feeling and this is an unpleasant fearful awareness (fearful thought) then we are turned into a fearful mess.¹¹⁷⁵ Our thoughts and feelings provide powerful insight and a window into our inner world, of sense and sensibilities; contemplating our thoughts and feelings enables us to bear witness and testimony to our moral sense and sensibilities against externals.¹¹⁷⁶

The practice of Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration provides the means of having an awareness of our feelings and emotions, observing and witnessing them. Are we to be martyrs to the emotive content of our thoughts about externals and so be witness to the suffering through these thoughts? We have presented evidence from Epictetus that his answer to this question is yes: a witness about the things, which lie outside the sphere of the *prohairesis*.¹¹⁷⁷

5.3.6 Practising and Exercising Letting Go

Buddhists have the notion of 'letting go', which is an ongoing practice to help us gain freedom from our attachments and suffering. It is ongoing as it requires our continuous attention and practice regarding the conditioned phenomena that cause our suffering; its aim is to gain freedom and this involves exercise and training to realise that:

- All conditioned things are impermanent;
- They are phenomena, subject to birth and death;
- When birth and death no longer are, the complete silencing is joy.¹¹⁷⁸

This notion concerns opening the mind and being fully conscious of our *dukkha*, embracing it, being conscious what our craving and clinging actually is, observing it as it arises. However, without

¹¹⁷⁰ *Diss.* 1.28.10

¹¹⁷¹ *Diss.* 1.28.5-6

¹¹⁷² *Diss.* 2.18.8

¹¹⁷³ *Diss.* 1.8.14, 1.27.19, 2.20.20, 4.1.104

¹¹⁷⁴ *Diss.* 1.18.1-2

¹¹⁷⁵ *Diss.* 4.7.3

¹¹⁷⁶ *Diss.* 1.29.44-62, 4.8.32

¹¹⁷⁷ *Diss.* 3.24.112

¹¹⁷⁸ Nhat Hanh (1998) p.115 (cf. Tashi Tsering (2005) p.118)

proper mental discipline and attention we tend to grasp, attach and identify ourselves to the five aggregates, including our mental formations (*sankharas*). This can become habitual and we repeat this attachment to these conditioned phenomena; we find separation and letting go difficult and we are left in a cycle of suffering.

As Buddha reminds us it is the 'I-making' and 'mine-making' links to attachments that exacerbate the problem of grasping: we grasp and attach ourselves to thoughts of 'I' and 'mine' (see 1.2.3).¹¹⁷⁹ Buddhists stress that what they call cessation is not destruction or annihilation of the conditions that cause *dukkha*: cessation is the natural ending, the death of those conditions that have been born in the conditioned mind; for the individual obsessed with the 'I' attachment, cessation raises the Buddhist question of the self and non-self (see 1.2.3).¹¹⁸⁰ However, the 'letting go' is abandoning conditions such as our craving and clinging that subsequently give rise to our suffering and what is important here for this thesis and for our comparison with Epictetus is not the notion of the self but elimination of the conditions that cause our suffering.

Therefore, despite the differences between Stoic and Buddhist understandings of the self (1.2.3), we can safely argue that Epictetus shares with Buddhism this need to gain insight, understanding and knowing in dealing with the conditioned phenomena: listening and conversing with ourselves;¹¹⁸¹ unexercised thoughts;¹¹⁸² testing¹¹⁸³ and examining¹¹⁸⁴ our impressions; interrogation of impressions;¹¹⁸⁵ observing,¹¹⁸⁶ visualising¹¹⁸⁷ and contemplating feelings, cravings, attachments and actions. The notion of practising for letting go manifests in different ways in Epictetus based on the insight gained into conditioned phenomena: the abandoning and giving up of things outside our control;¹¹⁸⁸ indifference;¹¹⁸⁹ circumspection;¹¹⁹⁰ proper use of impressions.¹¹⁹¹ Both the Buddhist approach and that of Epictetus involve letting go of conditioned mental states that dispose us towards suffering.

5.3.7 Modern Versus Ancient Therapy

Both Buddhism¹¹⁹² and Epictetus¹¹⁹³ have found their way into some of the modern day practices of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy (REBT). It is worth noting that some CBT and REBT practices, such as mindfulness-based and meditation-based

¹¹⁷⁹ SN 28.1-9

¹¹⁸⁰ SN 22.45, 22.59

¹¹⁸¹ *Diss.* 4.4.30

¹¹⁸² *Diss.* 4.6.14

¹¹⁸³ *Diss.* 3.12.11-12

¹¹⁸⁴ *Diss.* 3.12.15

¹¹⁸⁵ *Diss.* 3.8.1-2

¹¹⁸⁶ *Diss.* 4.4.6-7, 4.4.10-11

¹¹⁸⁷ *Diss.* 3.12.10-11

¹¹⁸⁸ *Diss.* 4.6.7-10

¹¹⁸⁹ *Diss.* 2.6, 4.1.135-138 (cf. Rist (2010) pp.46, 49, 102-105; Long (2002) pp.239, 245; Reesor (1951))

¹¹⁹⁰ *Diss.* 3.15

¹¹⁹¹ *Ench.* 10, 1.24, 1.28.7-9, *Diss.* 3.8, *Ench.* 11, (cf. Long (2008); Gill (2006) pp.379, 381, 389-390; Graver (2007) pp.154-155, 24-26)

¹¹⁹² Tirsch, Silberstein, and Kolts (2017)

¹¹⁹³ Robertson (2010)

methods, are distinct from the philosophical content, meaning and moral imperatives behind the method and technique. Hence, Buddhist psychology, and that of Epictetus, go way beyond, for example, mindfulness-based methods and because of their philosophical and ethical objectives, are more broadly applicable (see 5.2.2.3). Several studies have compared Buddhism with CBT and REBT.¹¹⁹⁴ As Brazier says,¹¹⁹⁵ Buddhist psychology provides a framework for understanding mental processes, providing for everyone practices to develop spiritual maturity generally applicable 'for the good of the many' and not confined to the therapy room but giving practical help for the wider social community, relevant to a life-style based approach to psychological help.

Epilogue to Chapter 5

The path to liberation from suffering has been the theme of this chapter reflecting the Buddhist teaching of the *fourth truth*. This *fourth truth* represents the 'how to' of the Buddhist path to liberation, it is the practice that leads to the *third truth*, the cessation. This chapter has looked at the Buddhist *Eightfold Path* and its relation with the three-fold exercises of Epictetus. The Buddhist pathway to cessation is through the practice and training of 'how to' activities covering the three areas of wisdom, ethics and concentration or mental discipline. This chapter discussed the relation and harmony between these three areas and the three areas of discipline found in Epictetus.

Finally this chapter has discussed the regime of theory (*pariyatti*), practice (*patipatti*) and realisation (*pativedha*), which appears in the teaching of Buddhism and is reflected in the educational philosophy of Epictetus.

¹¹⁹⁴ Kwee and Ellis (1998); David, Lynn, Steven and Das (2013)

¹¹⁹⁵ Brazier (2003) p.xiv

Epilogue

In this thesis I have researched Epictetus' approach with regard to human suffering, in particular in the context of the Buddhist *Four Noble Truths* (see 1.2), which is used as a comparative model for consideration of Epictetus' thinking: Chapter 2 (Epictetus and the truth of suffering), Chapter 3 (Epictetus and the causes of suffering), Chapter 4 (Epictetus and the cessation of suffering) and Chapter 5 (Epictetus and the path to liberation). This research has revealed significant areas of parallel thinking between Epictetus and Buddhism in many subjects that are fundamental to the problem of suffering including ignorance, cravings and attachments, volition and action, mental formations, dispositions and the moral self. Using this model has proved invaluable in advancing our understanding and comparison of the similarities and differences between Epictetus and Buddhism. This model has provided a systematic method of analysing the various stages of the suffering presented in the *four truths* in the light of Epictetus' ideas. We have also gone beyond the comparison of parallel thinking by suggesting a way of recasting our understanding of Epictetus' thinking in Buddhist terms as presented in the tables given in 5.4.2.

What is clearly pronounced in the *Four Noble Truths*, as well as in Epictetus, is the need to reflect on the mind's activities through a daily regime of exercise, practice and training which involves self-therapy, contemplation, meditation, mindfulness and other methods.

One of the major themes throughout this thesis is the role of language in regard to the psychology of suffering and the relationship between language and our conditioned mind, reflecting our perceptions, thoughts, feelings and cognitions. Language can have a persuasive influence on us and shape our thoughts. Our use of language can reveal a great deal about our personality and feelings. One category of words that is particularly powerful, persuasive and revealing of many aspects of our personality and character is the pronouns. The psychological relationship with the use of pronouns such as 'I' and 'me', 'we' and 'you', and so on, has been discussed in various contexts in the thesis. Another aspect that has been considered is Epictetus' use of the Greek language of the active (*poieō*) and the passive (*paschō*), and the examination and analysis of this language using a diverse range of examples and citations from Epictetus' teachings. This aspect of language brings recognition of the causes and effects of our conditioned mind and resulting suffering and moves forward our comparison with Buddhist thinking in the use of the active/passive *sankhara* (disposition) and related *cetanā* (volition) and *kamma* (action/doing). In this research I have also addressed the pathology of the soul and those pathological elements that underpin how we are disposed and inclined towards suffering; again this has identified many areas of common thinking with Buddhism, in particular regarding *sankhara* (disposition) and human personality.

Another theme of the thesis is the moral imperative to deal with our suffering through its cessation and in this context Epictetus' unique language of moral choice and volition, as defined by the *prohairesis*, has been discussed. I have shown that Epictetus and Buddhism take similar views of

the importance of moral choice and volition to the development of a life that is flowing well and is virtuous and has inner peace and contentment.

Finally throughout the thesis the medical paradigm of diagnosis, aetiology, prognosis and therapy in regard to human suffering has been used as a tool of instruction and comparative explanation in Epictetus and Buddhism.

So what has been learnt through this journey of research? Firstly, there have been many recurrent themes and areas of shared understanding and agreement between Buddhism and Epictetus regarding man's problem of suffering. This relationship not only brings these two schools together into a common framework of thinking but also supports my claim that it is feasible to arrive at a fresh interpretation of Epictetus' thinking in the broader context of human suffering. This claim included offering a more systematic methodology and procedure to study Epictetus' orientation towards suffering through the *Four Noble Truths* and the medical paradigm.¹¹⁹⁶ Secondly, re-interpreting Epictetus' approach in a more systematic way helps to clarify, verify and validate certain pathological aspects. Lastly, we start to understand, the importance of language for Epictetus and the active/passive pathology associated with what we do, say and think in relation to our suffering. Language in terms of what we say to ourselves is an integral part of his teaching approach and indeed the active language we use and the thoughts have an effect on our passive state in terms of an irrational neurotic state or a calm and well-balanced rational state. This investigation into the language of Epictetus' thinking has proved invaluable in regard to many questions regarding suffering and has brought out a broad perspective of suffering far beyond just the Stoic passions.

Buddha taught the truth about suffering and its cessation; Epictetus taught the truth about freedom from suffering.¹¹⁹⁷ A shared objective is concerned with an experience that affects all of us as we progress through life's journey from birth to death, and including everything that happens in between these stages.

Both Buddha and Epictetus would in unison conclude that our thoughts, views and opinions, shrouded in ignorance that exists in the conditioned mind, lead us to grasping and attachment to this mind and this gives birth to our suffering: 'It is not the things themselves that disturb men, but their judgements about these things (Ταράσσει τοὺς ἀνθρώπους οὐ τὰ πράγματα, ἀλλὰ τὰ περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων δόγματα).'¹¹⁹⁸

¹¹⁹⁶ Epictetus' teachings, as found in the writings of Arrian, are less than systematic and unconcerned with style of presentation: topics and principles are scattered throughout the writings in an *ad hoc* fashion without any focus on order or particular logic or procedure for their placement. Topics of significant and prime importance are liberally distributed through the written text without, seemingly, any due care attention to any method or procedure.

¹¹⁹⁷ *Diss.* 4.1

¹¹⁹⁸ *Ench.* 5

Bibliography

PRIMARY SOURCES (TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS OF EPICETETUS)

Epictetus, *Discourses, Book 1*. Translated with an introduction and commentary by R.F. Dobbin (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1998)

Epictetus, *The Discourses*. Translated by R. Hard, with an introduction and notes by C.Gill (London: Everyman 1995)

Epictetus, *The Discourse, Fragments, Handbook*. Translated by R. Hard, with an introduction and notes by C.Gill (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2014)

Epictetus *The Discourses as Reported by Arrian Books I- IV, the Manual and Fragments, (2 vols)*., Translated by W.A. Oldfather (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1928)

Epictetus, *The Encheiridion of Epictetus and its Three Christian Adaptations*. Translated by G. Boter (Leiden: Brill 1999)

PRIMARY SOURCES (OTHER ANCIENT GREEK AND ROMAN TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS)

Aeschylus, *Persians, Seven against Thebes, Suppliants, Prometheus Bound*.. Translated by A.H. Sommerstein (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2009)

Aeschylus, *The Oresteia. Agamemnon. Libation-Bearers. Eumenides*.. Translated by A.H. Sommerstein (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2009)

Aristotle, *On the Soul, Parva Naturalia, On Breath*. Translated by W.S. Hett (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1957)

Aristotle, *Categories, On Interpretation, Prior Analytics*. Translated by H. P. Cooke and H. Tredennick (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1989)

Aristotle. *Athenian Constitution, Eudemian Ethics, Virtues and Vices*. Translated by H. Rackham. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935)

Aristotle. *Metaphysics, Volume II: Books 10-14, Oeconomica, Magna Moralia*. Translated by H. Tredennick, G.C. Armstrong (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935)

Aristotle, *Metaphysics, Volume I: Books 1-9*. Translated by H. Tredennick (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1933)

Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by H. Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1962)

Aristotle, *Physics Books 1-4*. Translated by P.H. Wicksteed and F.M. Cornford (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1957)

Aristotle. *Posterior Analytics. Topica*. Translated by H.Tredennick, E. S. Forster. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960)

Aristotle. *Art of Rhetoric*. Translated by J. H. Freese. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926)

Cicero. *On Duties*. Translated by W. Miller. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1913)

Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*. Translated by J.E. King (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1945)

Cicero, *On the Orator: Book 3. On Fate, Stoic Paradoxes, On the Divisions of Oratory: A. Rhetorical Treatises*. Translated by C. MacDonald (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1942)

- Cicero, *De Inventione, etc.* Translated by H.M. Hubbell (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1949)
- Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*. Translated by H. Rackham (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1951)
- Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers (Volume 2)*. Translated by R.D. Hicks (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1970)
- Euripides, *Children of Heracles: Hippolytus, Andromache, Hecuba*. Translated by D. Kovacs (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1996)
- Euripides, *Trojan Women: Iphigenia among the Taurians, Ion*. Translated by D. Kovacs (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1999)
- Galen, *On the Structure of the Art of Medicine, the Art of Medicine, On the Practice of Medicine to Glaucon*. Translated by I. Johnston (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2016)
- Galen, *Method of Medicine: v. II, Bks. 5-9*. Translated by I. Johnston and G.H.R Horsley (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2011)
- Galen, *On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato*, 3 vols. Edited and translated by P. de Lacy (Berlin: Akademie, 1978-84)
- Hippocrates of Cos, *Works Volume IX Coan Prenotions, Anatomical and Minor Clinical Writings*. Translated by I. Johnston and P. Potter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2010)
- Hippocrates, *Epidemics 2, 4-7*. Edited and translated by W.D. Smith. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994)
- Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations, Speeches and Sayings*. Translated by C.R. Haines (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2003)
- Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*. Translated by G. Hays (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson 2003)
- Musonius Rufus, *Lectures and Sayings*. Translated by C. King, with preface by W.B. Irvine (Raleigh, NC: CreateSpace 2011)
- Philo, *On the Special Laws, On the Virtues, On Rewards and Punishments*. Translated by F.H. Colson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1939)
- Philo, *On the Unchangeableness of God, On Husbandry, Concerning Noah's Work as a Planter, On Drunkenness, On Sobriety*. Translated by F. H. Colson, G. H. Whitaker. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1930)
- Plato, *Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*. Translated by C Emlyn-Jones and W. Preddy (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2017)
- Plato, *Lysis, Symposium, Gorgias*. Translated by W.H. Lamb (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1925)
- Plato, *Theaetetus, Sophist*. Translated by H. North Fowler (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1921)
- Plato, *Timaeus, Critias, Cleitophon, Menexenus, Epistles*. Translated by R.G. Bury (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1929)
- Plato, *Statesman, Philebus, Ion*. Translated by H. North Fowler and W.H. Lamb (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1929)
- Plotinus, *Ennead, Volume VI: 1-5*. Translated by A.H. Armstrong (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1988)

Plutarch, *Moralia, Volume VI*. Translated by W.C. Helmbold (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1989)

Seneca, *Moral Essays, Volume I: De Providentia. De Constantia. De Ira. De Clementia*. Translated by J. W. Basore. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1928)

Seneca, *Epistulae Morales: Volume II*. Translated by J.W. Basore. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1989)

Seneca, *Dialogues and Essays*. Translated by John Davie, ed. Tobias Reinhardt, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008)

Sextus Empiricus. *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*. Translated by R. G. Bury. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1933)

Simplicius, *On Epictetus, Handbook 1-26*. Translated by C. Brittain and T. Brennan (London: Bloomsbury 2013)

Simplicius, *On Epictetus Handbook 27-53*. Translated by C. Brittain and T. Brennan (London: Bloomsbury 2002)

Sophocles, *Antigone, Women of Trachis, Philoctetes, Oedipus at Colonus Vol 2*. Translated by H. Lloyd-Jones (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1994)

von. Arnim H, *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta (4 vols)* (Leipzig: Teuber, 1903-24)

PRIMARY SOURCES (BUDDHIST AND OTHER ANCIENT TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS)

Gautama Buddha, *Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: Majjhima-Nikaya*, translated by Bhikku Bodhi (Somerville, Mass: Wisdom Publications 1995)

Gautama Buddha, *Long Discourses of the Buddha: Translation of the Digha-Nikaya*, translated by M. O'Connell Walshe (Somerville, Mass: Wisdom Publications 1995)

Gautama Buddha, *Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya*, translated by Bhikku Bodhi (Somerville, Mass: Wisdom Publications 1999)

Gautama Buddha, *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya*, translated by Bhikku Bodhi (Somerville, Mass: Wisdom Publications 2012)

Gautama Buddha, *The Dhammapada*, translated by G Fronsdal (Boston, Mass: Shambhala Publications 2005)

Anon, *The Upaniṣads, Part II*, translated by M. Müller (New York: Dover Publications (Reprinted in 1962))

Anon, *The Bhagavad Gita*, translated by J. Mascaro with introduction by S. Brodbeck (London: Penguin Classics 1962)

SECONDARY SOURCES

Ahonen, M (2014). 'The Stoics on the Kinds of Madness', in *Mental Disorders in Ancient Philosophy, , Studies in the History of Philosophy of Mind 13* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer) pp.103-137

Ajahn Sumedho (1992). *The Four Noble Truths* (Hertfordshire: Amaravati Publications)

Anderson, C. (1999). *Pain and Its Ending: The Four Noble Truths in the Theravada Buddhist Canon*, (London: Routledge)

Annas, J. (1990). 'Stoic Epistemology', in Stephen Everson (ed.) *Epistemology*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) pp.180-202

- Annas, J. (1986). 'Doing without Objective Values: Ancient and Modern Strategies', in M. Schofield and G. Striker, eds., *The Norms of Nature: Studies in Hellenistic Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 3-29
- Annas, J. (2007). 'Epictetus on Moral Perspectives', in T. Scaltsas and A.S. Mason, eds., *The Philosophy of Epictetus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) pp.140-152
- Bailey, J.I. (2011) *Logos and Psyche in Plato's Phaedo*, Dissertation. Pennsylvania State University, 2011. (<https://etda.libraries.psu.edu/paper/12631/> - accessed 01/12/2017)
- Barney, R. (1992), 'Appearances and Impressions', *Phronesis* Vol. 37, No.3 pp.283-313
- Barnouw, J. (2002). *Propositional Perception: Phantasia, Predication and Sign in Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America)
- Baudouin, C and Lestchinsky, A. (1924). *The Inner Discipline* (London: George Allen and Unwin)
- Beck, A.T. (1991). *Cognitive Therapy and the Emotional Disorders*, (New York: Penguin Books)
- Beck, J.S. (2011). *Cognitive Therapy: Basics and Beyond*, with foreword by A.T. Beck, 2nd edition (New York: The Guiléford Press)
- Bodhi, Bhikkhu (2011), *Anicca Vata Sankhara, Access to Insight* (BCBS Edition) (http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/bodhi/bps-essay_43.html - accessed 05/11/2017)
- Bodhi, Bhikkhu (2003). *A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma: Pali Text, Translation and Explanatory Guide (Vipassana Meditation and the Buddha's Teachings)* (Onalaska, WA: Pariyatti Press)
- Bodhi, Bhikkhu (2009). *In the Buddha's Words: An Anthology of Discourses from the Pali Canon*, (Somerville, Mass: Wisdom Publications)
- Bodhi, Bhikkhu (2008). *The Noble Eightfold Path* (Onalaska, WA: Pariyatti Press)
- Bodhi, Bhikkhu (2017), *The Suttanipata: An Ancient Collection of Buddha's Discourses* (Somerville, Mass: Wisdom Publications)
- Bobzien, S. (2001). *Determinism and Freedom in Stoic Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Bonhöffer, A. (1996). *The Ethics of the Stoic Epictetus*, trans. W.O. Stephens, (New York: Peter Lang)
- Braicovich, R.S. (2010). 'Freedom and Determinism in Epictetus' Discourses', *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, Vol. 60, No. 1, pp.202-220
- Braicovich, R.S. (2013), 'On Some Rhetorical-Pedagogical Strategies in Epictetus' Discourses Concerning the Prohairesis', *EIDOS*, No. 19, pp. 39-56
- Brandt, R. (2002). 'Self-Consciousness and Self-Care, On the Tradition of Oikeiosis in the Modern Age'. *Grotiana* (New Series) 22/23, pp.73-92
- Brann, E. (2008). *Feeling Our Feelings* (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books)
- Braund, S. and Most, G.W (2007). *Ancient Anger: Perspectives from Homer to Galen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
- Brazier, C. (2003). *Buddhist Psychology*, (London: Constable and Robinson Ltd)
- Bréhier, É. (1910). *Chrysippe et l'ancien stoicisme* (Paris: Félix Alcan)
- Brennan, T. (2005). *The Stoic Life: Emotions, Duties and Fate* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Brennan, T. (2003). 'Stoic Moral Psychology', in B.Inwood (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

- Bronkhorst, J. (2009). *Buddhist Teaching in India* (Boston: Wisdom Publications)
- Brown, R. (1968). *The Psychology of Language and Communication* (New York: The Guilford Press)
- Butler, D.C. (2003). *Western Mysticism: Augustine, Gregory and Bernard on Contemplation and the Contemplative Life* (Mineola, NY: Dover)
- Carroll, J. (ed.) (1956). *Language, Thought and Reality: Selected writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*. (Massachusetts: MIT Press)
- Chu, J. (2006). On Dignāga's theory of the object of cognition as presented in PS (V) 1, *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* Vol. 29 (2), pp.211–254
- Colish, M.L. (1990). *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden: E.J.Brill)
- Collins S. (1982). *Selfless Persons: Imagery and Thought in Theravāda Buddhism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
- Cooper, J.M. (2007). 'The Relevance of Moral Theory to Moral Improvement in Epictetus', in T. Scaltsas and A.S. Mason (eds.) *The Philosophy of Epictetus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) pp.9-19
- Cowie, F. (1999). *What's Within? Nativism Reconsidered* (New York: Oxford University Press)
- Crivelli, P. (1994). 'Indefinite Propositions and Anaphora in Stoic Logic', *Phronesis* Vol. 39, No.2, pp.187-206
- Dalai Lama (1998). *The Four Noble Truths: Written by His Holiness the Dalai Lama*, (London: Thorsons Publishing)
- Dalai Lama (1999) *The Art of Happiness* (London: Hodder Paperbacks)
- David, Daniel, Lynn, Steven Jay and Das, Lama Surya (2013), 'Self-Acceptance in Buddhism and Psychotherapy' in M.E. Bernard (ed.), *The Strength of Self-Acceptance: Theory, Practice and Research*, (New York: Springer Science+Business Media, LLC) pp.19-38
- Davis, J. (2012). *The Importance of Suffering: The Value and Meaning of Emotional Discontent* (London: Routledge)
- Davis, L. and Sharpe, M (2013), *Preliminary Notes Towards a Comparison of Stoicism and Buddhism as Lived Philosophies*, Deakin University
(https://www.academia.edu/13037452/Notes_towards_a_comparison_of_Buddhism_and_Stoicism_as_Lived_Philosophies - accessed 03/11/2017)
- De Lacy, P. (1943), 'The Logical Structure of the Ethics of Epictetus', *Classical Philology* 38, pp.112-125
- De Lacy, P. (1945), 'The Stoic Categories as Methodological Principles', *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* Vol. 76 pp.246-263
- De Lacy, P. (1977), 'The Four Stoic Personae', *Illinois Classical Studies* Vol. 2 pp.163-172
- Denyer, N. (1991) *Language, Thought and Falsehood in Ancient Greek Philosophy* (London: Routledge)
- Dewey, J. (1958). *Experience and Nature* (New York: Dover Publications)
- Dihle, A. (1982). *The Theory of the Will in Classical Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press)
- Dobbin, R. (1991). 'Prohairesis in Epictetus', in *Ancient Philosophy* XI, pp.111-135
- Dragona-Monachou, M. (2007). 'Epictetus on Freedom: Parallels between Epictetus and Wittgenstein', in T. Scaltsas and A.S. Mason (eds.) *The Philosophy of Epictetus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) pp.112-139

- Dubois, P. (1909). *Self-Control and How to Secure it: L'éducation De Soi-Même*, trans. H.H. Boyd (New York: Funk and Wagnalls)
- Dyson, H. (2009). 'The God Within: The Normative Self in Epictetus', *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 235-253
- Ellis, A. (2001a). *Overcoming Destructive Beliefs: New Directions for Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy*, (New York: Prometheus Books)
- Ellis, A. (2001b). *Reason and Emotion in Psychotherapy* (New York: Citadel Press)
- Ellis, A. (2005). *The Myth of Self-esteem: How Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy Can Change Your Life Forever* (New York: Prometheus Books)
- Ellis, A. and Ellis D.J. (2011). *Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy* (Washington: American Psychological Association)
- Ellis, A. and Harper, R.A (1997). *A Guide to Rational Living* (Los Angeles: Wilshire Book Company)
- Engberg-Pedersen, T. (2011). *Cosmology and Self in the Apostle Paul: The Material Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Erler, M. (2007). 'Death is a bugbear: Socratic 'Epode' and Epictetus' philosophy of the self', in T. Scaltsas and A.S. Mason (eds.) *The Philosophy of Epictetus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) pp.99-111
- Ferraiolo, W (2010) 'Roman Buddha', in *Western Buddhist Review* vol.5
(<http://www.westernbuddhistreview.com/vol5/roman-buddha.html> - accessed 07/02/2017)
- Finley, J. (2003). *Merton's Palace of Nowhere*, rev. ed. (Notre Dame, Indiana: Ave Maria Press)
- Fox, E. (2008). *Emotion Science: An Integration of Cognitive and Neuroscientific Approaches* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan)
- Frede, D. (2003). 'Stoic Determinism', in B. Inwood, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 179-205.
- Frede, M. (1980). 'The Original Notion of Cause', in M. Schofield, M. Burnyeat and J. Barnes, eds., *Doubt and Dogmatism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), pp. 217-49
- Frede, M. (1986). 'The Stoic Doctrines of the Affections of the Soul', in Schofield, M. and Striker, G (eds.), *Norms of Nature: Studies in Hellenistic Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) pp.93-110
- Frede, M. (1994). 'The Stoic Notion of a Lekton', in Stephen Everson (ed.), *Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) pp.109-128
- Frede, M. (1999). 'Stoic Epistemology', in K. Algra, J. Barnes, J Mansfield and M. Schofield (eds), *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). pp.295-322
- Frede, M. (2007). 'A Notion of a Person in Epictetus', in T. Scaltsas and A.S. Mason (eds.) *The Philosophy of Epictetus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) pp.153-168
- Fritz, M. (1985). *Take Nothing for the Journey: Solitude as the Foundation for the Non-possessive Life* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press)
- Gadamer, H.G. (2013). *Truth and Method* (London: Bloomsbury Academic: Reprint edition)
- Gethin, R.M.L. (1998). *The Foundations of Buddhism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Gethin, R.M.L. (2004). 'He Who Sees Dhamma Sees Dhammas: Dhamma In Early Buddhism', *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 32, pp.513-42.

- Gethin, R.M.L. (2008). *Sayings of the Buddha: A Selection of Suttas from the Pali Nikāyas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Gethin, R.M.L. (2011). 'On Some Definitions of Mindfulness', *Contemporary Buddhism* 12, pp.263-279.
- Gethin, R.M.L. (2015). 'Buddhist conceptualizations of mindfulness' in K.W. Brown et al. (eds), *Handbook of Mindfulness: Theory, Research, and Practice*. (New York: The Guilford Press), pp.9-41
- Gill, C. (1985). 'Ancient Psychotherapy', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 46, pp.307-25
- Gill, C. (2006). *The Structured Self in Hellenistic and Roman Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Gill, C. (2015). *The Stoics on Integrity*, Integrity Project (<https://integrityproject.org/2015/01/14/the-stoics-on-integrity/> - accessed 01/08/2017)
- Girdwood, A.B. (1998). *Innovation and Development in the Psychology and Epistemology of Epictetus* DPhil. University of Oxford.
- Goerger, M. (2017). 'Moral Practice in Late Stoicism and Buddhist Meditation', *Comparative Philosophy* Vol. 8, No. 1 pp.47-62
- Gombrich, R. (2006). *Theravada Buddhism* (London: Routledge)
- Gould, J.B. (1970). *The Philosophy of Chrysippus* (New York: State University of New York Press)
- Gowans, C.W. (2010). 'Medical Analogies in Buddhist and Hellenistic Thought: Tranquillity and Anger', *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement* 66 pp.11-33
- Graeser, A. (1978). 'Stoic Theory of Meaning', in J. Rist (ed.) *The Stoics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press)
- Graeser, A. (2006). 'Stoic Categories', in J. Brunschwig (ed.), *Les Stoiciens et leur logique* (Paris: Vrin) pp. 347-367
- Graeser, A. (1977). 'Language, Thought and Reality in Ancient Greek Philosophy', *Dialectica* Vol. 31 No. 3-4
- Graver, M. (2007). *Stoicism and Emotion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press)
- Graver, M. (2002). *Cicero on Emotions; Tusculan Disputations 3-4* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press)
- Groenendijk, L.F. and de Ruyter, D.J. (2009) 'Learning from Seneca: a Stoic perspective on the art of living and education', *Ethics and Education*, 4: 1, pp.81 — 92
- Hadot, P. (1995). *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, (London: Wiley-Blackwell)
- Hadot, P. (2001). *The Inner Citadel: The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press)
- Hall, E. (2012). 'Ancient Greek Responses to Suffering – Thinking with Philoctetes', in Malpas J. and Lickiss N. (eds) *Perspectives on Human Suffering* (Dordrecht: Springer) pp.155-169
- Harvey, P. (2000). *Buddhist Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
- Hattori M. (1968), *Dignāga, On Perception, being the Pratyakṣapariccheda of Dignāga's Pramāṇasamuccaya from the Sanskrit fragments and the Tibetan Versions* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press)
- Hayes, R. (1982), *Dignāga on the Interpretation of Signs* (Dordrecht: Reidel Publishing Company)
- Hershbell, J.P. (1993). 'Epictetus and Chrysippus', *Illinois Classical Studies*, Vol. 18, pp. 139-146

- Hijmans, B. L. (1959). *Askesis: Notes on Epictetus' Educational System*. (Assen: Van Gorcum)
- Hoijer, H. ed. (1954). *Language in Culture: Conference on the Interrelations of Language and Other Aspects of Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press)
- Horney, K. (1945). *Our Inner Conflicts* (New York: W. W. Norton)
- Horney, K. (1950). *Neurosis and Human Growth* (New York: W. W. Norton)
- Humphreys, C. (2012). *Exploring Buddhism* (London: Routledge)
- Huxter, Malcolm. (2015). 'Mindfulness and the Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path, in *Buddhist Foundations of Mindfulness (Series Mindfulness in Behavioral Health)* (Basel: Springer International Publishing Switzerland) pp.29–54
- Iqbal Shah, Muhammad (2010), "'ta lekta" The Stoic Theory of Sayables', *Al-Hikmat* Vol. 30 p.p. 17-27
- Irvine, W.B. (2009). *A Guide to the Good Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Inwood, Brad. (1985). *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press)
- Inwood, B (ed.) (2003). *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
- Jackson-McCabe, M. (2004). 'The Stoic Theory of Implanted Preconceptions', *Phronesis* Vol. 49, No.4, pp.323-347
- Jackson, S.W. (1969). 'Galen — On Mental Disorders', *Journal of the History of Behavioural Sciences (Wiley Online Library - [https://doi.org/10.1002/1520-6696\(196910\)5:4<365::AID-JHBS2300050408>3.0.CO;2-9](https://doi.org/10.1002/1520-6696(196910)5:4<365::AID-JHBS2300050408>3.0.CO;2-9) accessed 01/12 2017)* pp.365-384
- James, W. (1890). *The Principles of Psychology*, (New York: Henry Holt and Co.)
- Kahn, C.H. (1988). 'Discovery of the Will: From Homer to Augustine', in J.M.Dillon and A.A. Long (eds.), *The Question of Eclecticism: Studies in Later Greek Philosophy* (Berkeley: University of California Press) pp. 234-259
- Kahn, C.H. (1985). 'Democritus and the Orgins of Moral Psychology', *American Journal of Philology*, 106, pp. 1-31
- Kalupahana, D.J. (1975). *Causality: The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press)
- Kalupahana, D.J. (1987). *The Principles of Buddhist Psychology*, (New York: State University of New York)
- Kalupahana, D.J. (1992). *A History of Buddhist Philosophy: Continuities and Discontinuities* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass)
- Kamtekar, R. (1998). 'ΑΙΔΩΣ in Epictetus', *Classical Philology*, 93, pp.136-160
- Karunamuni, N.D. (2015). *The Five-Aggregate Model of the Mind*. (SAGE Open) <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015583860> (accessed 01/12/2017)
- Kelsang Gyatso, Geshe (2014). *How to Understand the Mind: The Nature and Power of the Mind* (Ulverston, Cumbria: Tharpa Publications)
- Kerferd, G.B. (1978). 'The Origin of Evil in Stoic Thought', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, University of Manchester*, 60(2) pp. 482-494.
- Kerns, L. (2013). *Platonic and Stoic Passions in Philo of Alexandria*, PhD Thesis, University of London, Kings College London

- Kidd, I. (1983). 'Euemptosia – proneness to disease', in W.W. Fortenbaugh (ed.) *On Stoic and Peripatetic Ethics: The Works of Arius Didymus*, (Rutgers University Studies in Classical Humanities, Vol 1, New Brunswick, N.J.) pp. 103-117
- Konstan, D. (2007). *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks: Studies in Aristotle and Classical Literature*, (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press)
- Korzybski, A. (1951). 'The Role of Language in Perceptual Processes', in R.R. Blake, and G.V. Ramsey (eds.) *Perception: An Approach to Personality*, (New York: Ronald) pp.170-205
- Krishnamurti, J. (1999). *This Light in Oneself: True Meditation* (Colorado: Shambhala Publications)
- Krishnamurti, J. (2013). *The First and Last Freedom* (London: Rider)
- Kwee, M. and Ellis, A. (1998). 'The Interface between Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT) and Zen', *Journal of Rational Emotive & Cognitive Behavior Therapy*, 16, pp. 5-43:
- Lachs, J. (2005b). 'Stoic Pragmatism', *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, New Series, Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 95-106
- Laing, R.D. (2010). *The Divided Self*, (London: Penguin Books)
- Laurentiu, A. (2009). *On the Medical Paradigm: Stoics and Buddhists – a comparative approach*, The Third Consortium on Global Perspectives in Japanese Studies, Ochanomizu University (<http://hdl.handle.net/10083/35084> - accessed - 11-06-2015)
- Lesses, G. (1998). 'Content, Cause and Stoic Impressions', *Phronesis*, Vol. 43, No.1, pp.1-25
- Levinas, E. *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* trans. Alphonso Lingis, (Dordrecht and Boston, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1978)
- Lombardo, N.E. (2011). *The Logic of Desire: Aquinas on Emotion*, (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press)
- Long, A.A. (1970-71). 'The Logical Basis of Stoic Ethics', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 71, pp. 85-104, reprinted in *Stoic Studies* (1996), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) pp.134-55
- Long, A.A. (1971). 'Freedom and Determinism in the Stoic Theory of Human Action', in *Problems in Stoicism* (London: Athlone Press), pp. 173-99
- Long, A.A. (1982). 'Soul and Body in Stoicism', *Phronesis*, Vol. 27, No. 1 pp. 34-57
- Long, A.A. (1996). *Stoic Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
- Long, A.A. (2002). *Epictetus: A Stoic and Socratic Guide to Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press)
- Long, A.A. (2008). 'Stoic Psychology' in I. Algra, J. Barnes, J. Mansfeld, & M. Schofield (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) pp.560-584
- Long, A.A. and Sedley, D.N. (1987). *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
- Lord, A.R. (1914). 'On the Meaning of Λόγος in certain passages in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics', *The Classical Review* 28, pp. 1-5
- Losang Gyatso (1994). *The Four Noble Truths* (Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications)
- Mackenzie, R. (2007). *New Buddhist Movements in Thailand: Towards an Understanding of Wat Phra Dhammakaya and Santi Asoke* (London: Routledge)
- Makail, J. (2003). 'Moral Character: Hexis, Habitus and Habit', *Minerva – An Internet Journal of Philosophy* Vol. 7 (<http://www.minerva.mic.ul.ie/vol7/moral.html> - accessed 7/11/2017)

- Mason, A. and Scaltsas, T. (eds.) (2007). *The Philosophy of Epictetus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- McDowell, J. (1998) 'Some Issues in Aristotle's Moral Psychology', in *Mind, Value and Reality* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard), pp.23-49.
- McIvelley, T. (2008). *The Shape of Ancient Thought: Comparative Studies in Greek and Indian Philosophies* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass)
- Mendell, C.W. (1941). *Our Seneca* (New Haven: Yale University Press)
- Menn, S. (1999). 'The Stoic Theory of Categories', in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, Volume XVII (Oxford, Oxford University Press) pp.215-247
- Mesthene, E.G. (1959). 'The Role of Language in the Philosophy of John Dewey', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. 19, No. 4, pp. 511-517
- Merton, T. (1961). *New Seeds of Contemplation*, (New York: New Directions)
- Moss, J. (2014). 'Right Reason in Plato and Aristotle: On the Meaning of Logos', *Phronesis* Vol. 59, Issue 3, pp.180-230
- Müller, F.M. (1881). *The Dhammapada (Sacred Books Of The East, Vol. X)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Murguia, E and Diaz, K (2015). 'Philosophical foundations of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy: Stoicism, Buddhism, Taoism and Existentialism' *Journal of Evidence Based Psychotherapies* Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 37-50
- Nhat Hanh, Thich (1991). *Old Path, White Clouds: Walking in the Footsteps of the Buddha* (Berkeley, California: Parallax Press)
- Nhat Hanh, Thich (1993). *The Diamond That Cuts Through Illusion: Commentaries on the Prajnaparamita Diamond Sutra* (Berkeley, California: Parallax Press)
- Nhat Hanh, Thich (1999). *The Heart of Buddha's Teaching* (London: Rider)
- Nhat Hanh, Thich (2006). *Understanding Our Mind* (Berkeley, California: Parallax Press)
- Nhat Hanh, Thich (2010). *Heart of Understanding: Commentaries on the Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra*. (Berkeley, California: Parallax Press)
- Nordenfelt, L (1997). 'The Stoic Conception of Mental Disorder: The Case of Cicero', *Philosophy, Psychiatry and Psychology* 4.4 pp.285-291.
- Nussbaum, M. (1994). *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
- Nussbaum, M. (2001). *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press)
- Nussbaum, M. (2004). 'Emotions as Judgements of Value and Importance', in Solomon. R.C. (ed.) *Thinking about Feeling: Contemporary Philosophers on Emotions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) pp. 189-199
- Paris, B.J. (1994). *Karen Horney: A Psychoanalyst's Search for Self-Understanding* (New Haven: Yale University Press)
- Parker, Victor (1998). 'Τύραννος: The Semantics of a Political Concept from Archilochus to Aristotle', *Hermes*, 126.2, pp. 145-172.
- Perkins, J (1992). 'The "Self" as Sufferer', *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 85, No. 3, (Cambridge, Mass: Cambridge University Press) pp.245-272

- Pohlenz, Max and Lofmark Carl. (1966). *Freedom in Greek Life and Thought: The History of an Idea*, (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Reidel)
- Potprecha Cholvijarn (2011) *Nibbāna as True Reality beyond the Debate*, (Damnoen Suduak, Rajburi, Thailand: Wat Luang Phor Sodh Dhammakayaram)
- Rabel, R.J (1981), 'Diseases of Soul in Stoic Psychology', *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 22 pp.385-93
- Ranocchia, G. (2012). 'The Stoic concept of proneness to emotion and vice', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* Vol. 94, Issue 1
- Reesor, M.E. (1951). 'The Indifferents in the Old and Middle Stoa', *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*. Vol. 82, pp.102-110
- Reydams-Schils, G. (2005). *The Roman Stoics: Self, Responsibility and Affection* (Chicago: Chicago University Press)
- Rhys Davids, T.W. and Stede, W (1921). *The Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary* (New York: Wentworth Press)
- Rhys Davids, C.A.F (2010). *A Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing)
- Ricciardone, C.T (2013). "'We are disease": Truth, Health and Politics from Plato's Gorgias to Foucault', *Epoche*, Volume 18, Issue 2, pp.287-310
- Rist, J.M. (1969). *Stoic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
- Rist, J.M. (1975). 'Prohairesis, Proclus, Plotinus et alii', in *De Jamblique à Proclus*, (Foundation Hardt: Geneva) pp.103-122
- Rist, J.M. (1978) (ed.). *The Stoics* (Berkeley: California University Press)
- Rist, J.M. (1989). 'Seneca and Stoic orthodoxy', in Wolfgang Haase (ed.) *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt, Vol. 36.3, Philosophie Wissenschaften, Technik. Philosophie*. (Berlin/New York: Walter De Gruyter) pp.1993-2012
- Rodrigo, Pierre (2011). 'The Dynamic of Hexis in Aristotle's Philosophy', *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* Vol. 42, pp.6-17
- Robertson, D. (2010). *The Philosophy of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy – Stoic Philosophy as Rational and Cognitive Psychotherapy* (London: Karnac Books)
- Rutherford, R.B (1989). *The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius: A Study* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Sandbach, F.H. (2001). *The Stoics* (London: Duckworth)
- Seddon, K. (2005). *Epictetus' Handbook and the Tablet of Cebes: Guides to Stoic Living*, (London: Routledge)
- Sedley, D. (1993). 'Chrysippus on Psychophysical Causality', in J. Brunschwig and M. Nussbaum (eds.), *Passions and Perceptions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 313-31.
- Sellars, J. (2006). *Stoicism* (London: Routledge)
- Sellars, J. (2003). *The Art of Living: The Stoics on the Nature and Function of Philosophy* (London: Bloomsbury)
- Sellars, J. (2016) (ed.). *The Routledge Handbook of the Stoic Tradition (Routledge Handbooks in Philosophy)* (London: Routledge)
- Sevenster, J.N. (1966). 'Education or Conversation: Epictetus and the Gospels', *Novum Testamentum* Vol. 8, Fasc 2/4, pp.247-262

- Smith, Nicholas D (1998). *Plato: Critical Assessments* (London: Routledge)
- Soeng, Mu (2015). *Diamond Sutra: Transforming the Way We Perceive the World*. (Somerville, Mass: Wisdom Publications)
- Sorabji, R. (1990). 'Perceptual Content in the Stoics', *Phronesis* Vol. 35, No.3, pp.307-314
- Sorabji, R. (2002). *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Sorabji, R. (2006). *Self: Ancient and Modern Insights about Individuality, Life and Death* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)
- Sorabji, R. (2007). 'Epictetus on prohairesis and Self', in T. Scaltsas and A.S. Mason (eds.) *The Philosophy of Epictetus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) pp.87-98
- Stamatellos, G (2015). 'Virtue and Hexis in Plotinus', *The International Journal of the Platonic Tradition*, Vol 9, Issue 2, pp.129 – 145
- Starr Jr, C.G. (1949). 'Epictetus and The Tyrant', *Classical Philology* XLIV pp.20-29
- Stephens, W.O. (2007). *Stoics Ethics – Epictetus and Happiness as Freedom*. (London: Continuum International)
- Stough, C. (1978). 'Stoic Determinism and Moral Responsibility', in J.M. Rist (ed.) *The Stoics* (Berkeley: University of California Press), pp. 203-31
- Suchy, Yana (2011). *Clinical Neuropsychology of Emotion* (New York, NY: The Guilford Press)
- Sucitto, Ajahn (2014). *Unseating the Inner Tyrant* Amaravati Publications
(<https://www.amaravati.org/dhamma-books/unseating-the-inner-tyrant/> - accessed 21/11/2017)
- Thanissaro Bhikkhu (2013). *Selves & Not-self: The Buddhist Teaching on Anatta*, by Access to Insight (Legacy Edition)
(<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/thanissaro/selvesnotself.html> - accessed 17/11/2017)
- Thera, Venerable N.A. (1998). *Abhidhamma Studies: Buddhist Explorations of Consciousness and Time* (Somerville, Mass: Wisdom Publications)
- Tieleman, T (2003). *Chrysippus On Affections: Reconstruction and Interpretation* (Leiden: Brill)
- Tirch, Dennis, Silberstein, Laura R, and Kolts Russell L. (2017). *Buddhist Psychology and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy: A Clinician's Guide* (New York: The Guilford Press)
- Tsering, Gesche Tashi (2005). *The Four Noble Truths, The Foundation of Buddhist Thought*. (Somerville, Mass: Wisdom Publications)
- Tsering, Gesche Tashi (2006). *Buddhist Psychology: Foundation of Buddhist Thought*. (Somerville, Mass: Wisdom Publications)
- Tsering, Gesche Tashi (2008). *Relative Truth Absolute Truth: The Foundation of Buddhist Thought*. (Somerville, Mass: Wisdom Publications)
- Tsering, Gesche Tashi (2009). *Emptiness: The Foundation of Buddhist Thought*. (Somerville, Mass: Wisdom Publications)
- Valerio, Adam (2016). 'Owning Mindfulness: A Bibliometric Analysis of Mindfulness Literature Trends Within and Outside of Buddhist Contexts', *Contemporary Buddhism*, 17: pp.157–83
- VanGordon, William, Shonin, Edo, Griffiths, Mark. D and Nirbhay, N.Singh. (eds.)(2015). 'Mindfulness and The Four Noble Truths', in *Buddhist Foundations of Mindfulness (Series Mindfulness in Behavioral Health)*, (Basel, Springer International Publishing Switzerland) pp.9–28

- Vogt, K. (2012). 'Why Beliefs Are Never True: A Reconstruction of Stoic Epistemology' in K.M. Vogt, *Belief and Truth: A Skeptic Reading of Plato*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press) pp.158-182
- Wallace, B.A. (2006). *The Attention Revolution: Unlocking the Power of the Focused Mind* (Boston: Wisdom Publications)
- Wallace, B.A (2007). *Contemplative Science: Where Buddhism and Neuroscience Converge* (New York: Columbia University Press)
- Watts, A.W. (1957). *The Way of Zen* (London: Penguin Books)
- Wei-Hong, Zheng (2011). *Dignāga and Dharmakīrti: Two Summits of Indian Buddhist Logic*, http://www.undv.org/vesak2012/research/001_zheng_wei_hong.pdf (accessed 22/10/2017)
- Wezler, A (1984). 'On the Quadruple Division of the Yogaśāstra, the Caturvyūhatva of the Cikitasāśāstra and the 'Four Noble Truths' of the Buddha', *Indologica Taurinensia* 12, pp. 291–337.
- Williams, J.M.G. and Kabat-Zinn. J. (2013). *Mindfulness: Diverse Perspectives on its Meaning, Origins and Applications* (London: Routledge)
- Williams, P. (2002). *Buddhist Thought* (London: Taylor & Francis)
- Williams, P. (2008). *Mahayana Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations*, (2nd ed.) (London: Routledge)
- Wierzbicka, A. (1992). *Semantics, Culture, and Cognition: Human Concepts in Culture-Specific Configurations* (New York: Oxford University Press)
- Wittgenstein, L. (1978). *Tractatus Logico-philosophicus*, trans. D.F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness (London: Routledge)
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig (2009). *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. P.M.S Hacker and J. Schulte, (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell)
- Wynne, A. (2010). 'The atman and its negation', *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 33 (1–2), pp. 103–171
- Wynne, A. (2009). 'Early Evidence for the 'no self' doctrine?', *Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*: (<https://ocbs.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/awynne2009atijbs.pdf> - accessed 01/11/2017)
- Xenakis, J. (1969) *Epictetus Philosopher-Therapist*, (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer)
- Yu, J. (2014). 'The Body in Spiritual Exercise: A Comparative Study between Epictetan Askēsis and early Buddhist Meditation', *Asian Philosophy*, Vol 24, No 2, 2014, pp. 158-177
- Zhang, Xue-fu (2009). 'The Therapeutic Philosophy of Stoicism and the Concept of Self', *Modern Philosophy* 2, pp.:85-90.
- Zysk, K.G. (1991). *Asceticism and Healing in Ancient India: Medicine in the Buddhist Monastery* (New York: Oxford University Press)

Appendix A: Glossary of Pali Terms

The following is a glossary of Pali terms used in this thesis derived from various sources.¹¹⁹⁹ These terms are presented in concise form for the purposes of this thesis. Generally the meaning given here and in the main body of the thesis is in the Buddhist sense.

<i>akusula:</i>	kammically unwholesome; demerit; bad action; unskilful
<i>anusaya:</i>	proclivity; the persistence of a dormant or latent disposition; predisposition; tendency
<i>avijjā:</i>	not knowing, ignorance; it also means 'darkness without illumination'; illusory phenomena
<i>bhava:</i>	habitual or emotional tendencies; conditioned arising of beings; it is also sometimes translated as being; experience or becoming
<i>cetanā:</i>	thinking as active thought; intention; purpose; will; volition; one of the seven mental factors
<i>ditthi:</i>	view; belief; dogma; theory; speculation
<i>dukkha:</i>	disease; dissatisfaction; unsatisfactory nature and the general insecurity of all conditioned phenomena; suffering and pain (body and mind); distress; discontent. Antonyms: ease; pleasant; agreeable; satisfactory
<i>kamma:</i>	action; correctly speaking denotes the wholesome and unwholesome volitions (<i>kusala-</i> and <i>akusala-cetanā</i>); kammical volitions (<i>kamma cetanā</i>) become manifest as wholesome or unwholesome actions by: body (<i>kāya-kamma</i>), speech (<i>vacī-kamma</i>), mind (<i>mano-kamma</i>).
<i>khandā:</i>	group; aggregate; heap; term for the five aggregates, which constitute the entirety of what is generally known as 'personality'. They are: form (<i>rupa</i>); sensation (<i>vedanā</i>); perception (<i>sannā</i>); mental formations (<i>sankhāra</i>); and consciousness (<i>vijñāna</i>).
<i>klesa:</i>	mental defilement; impurity; delusion
<i>kusula:</i>	kammically wholesome or profitable; salutary; morally good; (skilful)
<i>patikasamippada:</i>	dependent origination; dependent arising – 'if this exists, that exists; if this ceases to exist, that also ceases to exist'. Twelve links - <i>avijjā</i> (ignorance), <i>sankhāra</i> (formation), <i>vijñāna</i> (consciousness), <i>rupa</i> (form), <i>salāyatana</i> (senses), <i>phassa</i> (contact), <i>vedana</i> (feeling/sensation), <i>tanhā</i> (craving), <i>upādāna</i> (clinging), <i>bhava</i> (becoming), <i>jāti</i> (birth), <i>jarā-maraṇa</i> (death)
<i>rupa:</i>	form; figure; appearance; principle of form
<i>sankhāra:</i>	conditioned things; dispositions; mental imprint [passive sense] kammically active volition or intention [active sense]
<i>sannā:</i>	perception; sense; discernment; recognition; assimilation of sensations; awareness; cognition
<i>tanhā:</i>	thirst; craving; desire
<i>upādāna</i>	clinging; grasping; holding on; grip; attachment
<i>vedana:</i>	feeling; sensation; pleasant (<i>sukkhā</i>), unpleasant (<i>dukkhā</i>), indifferent (<i>adukkham-asukhā</i>)
<i>vijñāna:</i>	consciousness; life force; mind; discernment

¹¹⁹⁹ Wisdom Library (<https://www.wisdomlib.org/buddhism/>); Concise Pali-English Dictionary (<https://www.budsas.org/ebud/dict-pe/>); Rhys Davids, T.W. and Stede, W (1921); Pali Canon E-Dictionary Version 1.94 (PCED) (<http://dictionary.sutta.org>)

Appendix B: Frequency Analysis of Legō

The tables below provide a frequency analysis of the word legō as found in Epictetus' *Discourses*

LEGO		
	Discourses	Freq.
PRESENT		
<i>legō</i>	1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.10, 1.15, 1.17, 1.18, 1.19, 1.25, 1.26, 1.29, 1.30, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.10, 2.12, 2.13, 2.17, 2.18, 2.20, 2.21, 2.23, 2.24, 2.26, 3.1, 3.17, 3.23, 3.24, 3.5, 4.1, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7, 4.11	51
<i>legeis</i>	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.9, 1.12, 1.18, 1.19, 1.22, 1.24, 1.25, 1.28, 1.29, 1.30, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 2.12, 2.15, 2.17, 2.19, 2.20, 2.23, 2.24, 3.1, 3.5, 3.10, 3.21, 3.22, 3.23, 3.24, 3.25, 4.1, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 4.12, 4.13	75
<i>legei</i>	1.1, 1.4, 1.7, 1.14, 1.17, 1.19, 1.22, 1.24, 1.25, 1.26, 1.28, 1.29, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.8, 2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 2.16, 2.17, 2.19, 2.20, 2.23, 2.24, 3.1, 3.2, 3.5, 3.7, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.13, 3.14, 3.15, 3.18, 3.19, 3.20, 3.21, 3.22, 3.23, 3.24, 4.1, 4.4, 4.6, 4.10, 4.11, 4.13	111
<i>legomen</i>	1.9.22, 1.19.18, 1.24.14, 1.29.31, 2.16.13, 2.19.23, 4.1.25, 4.1.26, 3.7.18, 3.8.2, 3.3.17, 3.13.3	13
<i>lete</i>	2.1.24, 2.17.37, 2.21.20	3
<i>legousi</i>	2.22.14, 2.1.23, 2.19.22, 1.5.10, 4.6.38, 3.13.5	6
<i>leges</i>	1.17.5, 1.15.7, 1.18.7, 3.14.14, 3.23.6, 3.7.14, Ench.6	7
<i>lege</i>	1.29.5, 1.29.6, 1.26.14, 1.29.31, 2.20.4, 4.11.24, 4.11.36, 3.22.64, 3.26.22, 4.7.30, Ench.42	12
<i>legein</i>		49
<i>legōn</i>		11
<i>legousa</i>	1.28	1
<i>legon</i>	1.1	1
IMPERFECT		
<i>elegon</i>	1.10.3, 2.16.16, 4.1.73, 4.8.6, 4.8.20	5
<i>eleges</i>	2.9.17, 2.19.19, 1.30.3, 2.19.16, 3.14.12, 3.23.11, 4.5.19, 3.9.9	10
<i>elege</i>	2.2.15, 3.6.10	2

(366)

Table 6 Frequency Analysis of Legō

Appendix C: Frequency Analysis of Paschō-Poieō

The tables below provide a frequency analysis of the verbs paschō and poieō as found in Epictetus' *Discourses*

PASCHŌ		
	Discourses	Freq.
PRESENT		
<i>paschein</i>	2.16.27, 3.22.18	2
<i>paschōn</i>	3.8.7, 2.10.18, 4.286.127	3
<i>paschō</i>	2.22.8, 3.22.56, 4.1.38, 4.258.47, 4.1.57	5
<i>pascheis</i>	4.6.19	1
<i>paschei</i>	4.1.35, 4.1.39, 4.1.26, 1.11.31, 3.24.7, 4.1.59, 4.1.27	6
<i>paschomen</i>	2.16.7, 2.19.12, 2.1.8, 2.1.15, 2.16.11, 1.11.6, 4.13.6	7
FUTURE		
<i>peisesthai</i>	1.14.17	1
<i>peisēi</i>	1.30.6, 1.15.1	2
<i>peisei</i>	4.11.24	1
<i>peisetai</i>	1.2.9	1
AORIST		
<i>pathein</i>	1.18.1, 1.18.2, 1.28.13, 4.1.96, 4.7.3	5
<i>pathōn</i>	2.1.27, 2.20.35, 2.5.23, 2.15.8, 2.18.11	5
<i>epathes</i>	3.25.7	1
PERFECT		
<i>peponthenai</i>	1.20.12	1
<i>pepontha</i>	4.13.8, 1.29.7	2
<i>peponthe</i>	2.13.12	1
		(44)

Table 7a Frequency Analysis of Paschō

POIEIŌ		Freq
Discourses		
PRESENT (Active)		
<i>poiēō</i>	1.29.31, 2.1.31, 2.3.5, 1.17.21, 2.5.12, 4.5.17, 4.1.15, 4.8.25	8
<i>poiēis</i>	3.21.24, 3.23.1, 3.5.2, 4.9.18, 4.11.15, 3.5.16, 3.13.22, 3.14.6, 1.24.11, 2.8.6, 2.8.14, 2.15.7, 2.20.28, 3.21.13, 3.22.13, 4.6.27, 4.11.26, 4.12.6, 4.13.19, 3.9.8	20
<i>poiēi</i>	2.26.1, 2.26.3, 2.26.5, 2.26.6, 3.1.5, 3.1.6, 4.8.2, 4.8.3, 4.8.5, 3.13.19, 3.13.23, 1.19.11, 1.19.12, 2.18.4, 3.6.18, 4.7.26, 3.8.6, 1.25.17, 2.23.14, 3.18.9, 3.21.24, 3.22.30, 3.23.1, 4.1.88, 4.2.9, 4.4.1, 4.5.35, 3.4.8, 4.9.4, 4.9.18, 4.11.24, 3.12.9, 3.14.9, 1.14.10, 1.19.21, 1.28.20, 1.29.3, 1.29.39, 2.5.21, 2.11.12, 2.13.13, 2.18.12, 2.20.10, 2.23.11, 2.24.23, 3.17.5, 3.22.82, 3.24.50, 3.25.10, 4.1.19, 4.1.62, 4.1.92, 4.1.108, 4.7.1, 3.5.6, 4.11.10, 3.7.11, 3.13.5	62
<i>poioumen</i>	3.7.18, 1.28.33, 1.22.16, 2.4.2, 2.5.10, 1.3.3, 2.9.4, 1.12.13, 3.1.21	9
<i>poiēite</i>	2.17.35, 1.4.15, 1.27.20, 3.22.26	4
<i>poiōusi</i>	4.1.19, 1.6.10, 4.7.33, 4.8.7	4
<i>poiēin</i>	2.15.15, 2.15.16, 2.8.14, 2.18.4, 1.11.28, 3.22.5, 3.22.7, 2.1.2, 2.12.17, 2.23.38, 1.8.3, 3.4.35, 3.7.27, 1.16.15, 1.19.15, 1.27.9, 1.2.25, 2.6.16, 2.9.14, 2.14.13, 2.17.21, 2.26.3, 1.7.14, 3.1.24, 3.23.6, 3.23.38, 3.24.40, 3.25.5, 4.1.11, 4.1.46, 4.1.120, 4.1.122, 4.1.147, 4.1.155, 4.4.29, 4.8.13, 4.12.15, 3.5.13, 3.10.13	44
PRESENT (Middle)		
<i>poioumai</i>	4.1.152	1
<i>poiēitai</i>	2.23.29	1
<i>poiōn</i>	4.10.12, 4.10.13, 3.5.6, 1.20.6, 2.1.15, 3.2.3, 2.8.14, 2.15.17, 1.12.30, 3.15.10, 3.20.10, 3.24.53, 3.24.116, 4.5.6, 3.5.14, 3.7.18, 3.1.9	17
<i>poioun</i>	4.1.62-63, 2.22.28, 1.6.11, 3.1.5	4
<i>poiēsai</i>	1.29.33, 1.11.40, 3.12.1, 3.24.103, 4.7.5	5
IMPERFECT		
<i>epoioun</i>	4.8.17, 1.17.20, 4.8.20	4
<i>epoiēis</i>	3.9.8, 2.16.34, 1.11.21	3
<i>epoiēi</i>	3.22.88, 2.12.5, 1.6.33, 3.22.33, 3.26.33	5
<i>epoioumen</i>	3.3.16	1
<i>epoioun</i>	3.4.2, 3.4.7, 4.8.17, 1.17.20, 4.8.20	5
FUTURE		
<i>poiēsein</i>	1.14.17	1
<i>poiēso</i>	3.20.12, 3.20.15, 4.10.1, 3.9.19, 1.24.11, 1.27.8, 1.7.25, 3.21.13, 4.1.95, 4.6.23, 3.1.10	11
<i>poiēseis</i>	3.20.13, 3.22.14, 4.12.2, 3.16.4, 3.5.4, 3.6.6, 4.11.13, 3.1.9, 1.19.28, 2.16.34, 1.10.3, 1.25.29	12
<i>poiēsei</i>	1.28.8, 1.29.30, 4.7.27, 4.7.28, 3.26.37, 3.22.71, 4.1.166, 4.2.5	8
<i>poiēsomen</i>	2.4.5, 3.23.4	2
<i>poiēsete</i>	3.8.7	1
<i>poiēsousi</i>	1.12.19	1
AORIST		
<i>poiēsai</i>	2.11.3, 2.14.19, 2.16.31, 2.16.40, 1.17.25, 1.27.8, 2.1.10, 2.2.6, 2.5.12, 1.4.3, 1.9.21, 3.22.20, 4.1.69, 4.1.100, 4.1.146, 4.6.5, 4.13.8, 3.7.36	20
<i>epoiēsa</i>	2.20.31, 1.1.10, 1.29.47, 2.6.29	4
<i>epoiēsas</i>	2.6.29, 1.7.31, 3.21.10, 3.24.97, 3.26.10	5
<i>epoiēse</i>	3.7.10, 1.2.19	2
<i>epoiēsan</i>	1.13.33, 1.13.35, 1.1.8	3
PERFECT		
<i>pepoiēkenai</i>	1.16.3, 1.11.5	2
<i>pepoiēka</i>	1.25.31, 2.14.21	2
<i>pepoiēkas</i>	2.21.11, 4.4.8	2
<i>pepoiēke</i>	1.24.26, 1.16.4, 4.1.102	3
		(330)

Table 7b Frequency Analysis of Poieō

