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The Point of View of the Cosmos: Deleuze, Romanticism, Stoicism

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Throughout his works, but in particular in those with Félix Guattari, Gilles Deleuze can be seen to propose a practical or ethical philosophical project that it is tempting to describe as 'a return to nature' or as 'living according to nature'.[1] Unfortunately phrases such as these are often difficult to define. In order to understand exactly what they might mean to Deleuze and Guattari a helpful way to proceed might be to consider the sources of inspiration that lie behind their project. Of the various influences that can be discerned, central is that of German Romanticism. The philosophical fragments of Friedrich Schlegel are a prime example of the Romantic project of 'following nature' and thus may serve as an illustrative case. Yet both Deleuze and Schlegel locate the inspiration for their projects in Stoicism. For reasons that will become clear the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius offer themselves as an ideal example of the Stoic philosophical project, not merely for exploring the prehistory of Deleuze and Guattari's own project but also for proposing how it might proceed.

Deleuze

Although Deleuze says very little about German Romanticism, passing references abound, especially in his works with Guattari. Deleuze regularly refers to Hölderlin and Kleist, contrasting their new aesthetic of speeds, breaks, and becomings with the altogether more sober and well-

[1] The following is a list of works by Deleuze referred to in this paper (in chronological order): *Difference and Repetition*, trans. P. Patton (London: Athlone, 1994); *The Logic of Sense*, trans. M. Lester (London: Athlone, 1990); (with F. Guattari) *Anti-Oedipus*, trans. R. Hurley, M. Seem & H. R. Lane (London: Athlone, 1984); (with C. Parnet) *Dialogues*, trans. H. Tomlinson & B. Habberjam (London: Athlone, 1987); (with F. Guattari) *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. B. Massumi (London: Athlone, 1988); *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. R. Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights, 1988); *Foucault*, trans. S. Hand (London: Athlone, 1988); *Negotiations*, trans. M. Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); (with F. Guattari) *What is Philosophy?*, trans. G. Burchell & H. Tomlinson (London: Verso, 1994). All references are to these English editions but I also include the French pagination in square brackets.

ordered forms of Goethe, Schiller, and Hegel.[2] Elsewhere he positions these two Romantics between Spinoza and Nietzsche, that is to say, in the middle of what he calls his great Spinoza-Nietzsche equation.[3] Deleuze also mentions Büchner and Lenz alongside Kleist, calling them the three anti-Goethes,[4] and it is Büchner's portrayal of Lenz that opens Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*, setting the scene for the practical philosophical project outlined in that book and continued in *A Thousand Plateaus*. This project is perhaps most clearly expressed in the section of *A Thousand Plateaus* entitled 'How Do You Make Yourself a Body without Organs?'[5] In this section Deleuze and Guattari offer a number of examples and strategies for their philosophical project. In its initial outline in *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari define this project - with reference to both German Romanticism and to Marx - as an overcoming of the division between man and nature.[6] It is within this context that they turn to the figure of the schizophrenic, and in particular to Büchner's portrayal of Lenz, whom they characterize as someone who has "projected himself back to a time before the man-nature dichotomy" and who no longer believes in the self or ego.[7] In the words of Büchner, the experience achieved by Lenz was one of "dissolving into a single harmonious wave".[8] The task of making oneself a Body without Organs is the task of repeating this experience. Thus it involves a return to nature.

Yet this is a very specific conception of nature. Deleuze and Guattari's plane of nature encompasses both the animate and the inanimate, the artificial and the natural.[9] It is a plane of immanence, identified with the

[2] See *Dialogues*, p. 95 [114].

[3] See *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 507 [633], and *Negotiations*, p. 135 [185].

[4] See *Dialogues*, p. 42 [54].

[5] *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 149-66 [185-204], first published separately in *Minuit*, 10 (1974), 56-84.

[6] See *Anti-Oedipus*, pp. 4-5 [10-11], where they cite Granel's commentaries on Marx. In his Paris Notebooks of 1844 Marx discusses man's estrangement and alienation from his object of labour, his productive life-activity, other men, external nature, and his human nature. See K. Marx, *Early Political Writings*, trans. J. O'Malley & R. A. Davis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 71-78. Following Marx, Deleuze and Guattari take up the task of overcoming this estrangement of man from his productive nature, affirming "universal primary production as 'the essential reality of man and nature'".

[7] *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 2 [8].

[8] G. Büchner, *Complete Plays, Lenz, and Other Writings*, trans. J. Reddick (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993), p. 146.

[9] *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 254 [311].

Substance of Spinoza.[10] It is like the "nonstratified, unformed intense matter" of an egg before its organization into an organism.[11] Upon this plane of nature occurs a process, something inevitable that is "beneficial in many respects and unfortunate in many others": this is the process of stratification.[12] Deleuze and Guattari use the term stratification to refer to processes of organization that produce apparent stability, not just geological process of stratification, but also biological and cultural processes that perform the same operation.[13] Yet this stability is always only apparent. It is always only a relative solidification of the flows of matter-energy. The distinction between the seemingly opposed strata on the one hand and the unformed and fluid plane of nature or Body without Organs on the other is simply a question of varying speeds and slownesses within a single physical system.[14] This single material reality contains within itself immanent processes "in which raw matter-energy, through a variety of self-organising processes and an intense, immanent power of morphogenesis, generates all the structures that surround us".[15] Thus there

[10] *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 154 [191]. See also *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 327 [390], *What is Philosophy?*, p. 48 [49-50], and *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, p. 124 [167].

[11] *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 153 [189-90], 164 [202]. See also *Difference and Repetition*, pp. 214-17 [276-80], 249-52 [320-24], and also the theme of the 'cosmic egg' in *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 158 [186].

[12] *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 40 [53-54].

[13] Deleuze and Guattari do not take the geological concept of stratification and apply it metaphorically to other non-geological processes. Rather they notice a single process at work in a number of different domains - geological, biological, cultural - and in the light of this construct a single concept of an abstract machine of stratification referring to a single organising process at work everywhere. Insofar as this process has been examined in most detail in the domain of geology Deleuze and Guattari borrow a geological term to refer to this single process but strictly speaking their abstract machine is neutral in relation to its various instances. It is within this context that Deleuze also uses the term in relation to Foucault's account of historical knowledge. See *Foucault*, pp. 47-123 [55-130]. In certain respects one might say that Deleuze's use of the term stratification owes as much to the work of Foucault and Braudel as it does to geology. For a detailed account of the abstract machine of stratification and the process of double articulation common to all its instances see M. De Landa, *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History* (New York: Zone, 1997), pp. 57-70.

[14] See M. De Landa, 'Nonorganic Life', in *Incorporations: Zone 6*, ed. J. Crary & S. Kwinter (New York: Zone, 1992), pp. 129-67, esp. p. 143. Deleuze takes this distinction between speeds and slownesses from Spinoza (*Ethics*, trans. G. H. R. Parkinson (London: Dent, 1989), Part 2, Prop. 13, Lem. 1) and develops it in *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, p. 123 [165], and *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 254 [310], 261 [318], where all individuation is based upon movement and rest.

[15] M. De Landa, 'Immanence and Transcendence in the Genesis of Form', *South*

is no absolute distinction between form and matter. Here Deleuze and Guattari draw upon the work of Simondon who questions the ontological privilege usually assigned to fully-formed individuals and who attempts to understand the individual not from the perspective of the already constituted individual but rather from the perspective of the processes that produce individuals, a process he calls ontogenesis.[16] Simondon suggests that concepts such as unity and identity, developed from the perspective of the individual, are unhelpful when trying to characterize the pre-individual domain of wave-corpuscle and matter-energy. Following Simondon, Deleuze and Guattari reject Aristotelian hylomorphism and instead they cite the *spermatikos logos* or generative principle of Stoicism, a principle of organization immanent to matter.[17]

It would be a mistake to characterize these form generating processes as a linear historical progression in which order and solidity are constructed out of chaos. For Deleuze and Guattari the organized organism and the fluid Body without Organs always exist side by side.[18] To make oneself a Body without Organs does not involve destroying the organism but rather experiencing the organism from a different perspective. The schizophrenic does not undergo a physical process of de-organization but rather undergoes a process in which he no longer experiences himself as an organism. This is possible because any level of organization or stratification is always relative to a particular perspective. So, although from the perspective of a human lifetime a mountain seems permanent and unchanging, from the perspective of geological time it continues to flow, if only slowly. Similarly, a flow of genetic material seems unformed relative to an organism but it will still contain its own internal organization. Taking this further, as does Manuel De Landa, from a cosmic perspective "our entire planet would itself be a mere provisional hardening in the vast flows

Atlantic Quarterly 96 (1997), 499-514, at 509.

[16] See *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 408 [508] and G. Simondon, 'The Genesis of the Individual', trans. M. Cohen & S. Kwinter, in *Incorporations: Zone 6*, ed. J. Crary & S. Kwinter (New York: Zone, 1992), pp. 297-319. This is a translation of the introduction to his *L'Individu et sa genèse physico-biologique* (Paris: PUF, 1964).

[17] *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 165 [203]. Not surprisingly this reference to Stoic physics is usually overlooked. For example M. De Landa, 'Immanence and Transcendence in the Genesis of Form', p. 499, suggests Spinoza as the original source of Deleuze's idea that the genesis of form might be immanent to matter.

[18] See M. De Landa, 'Nonorganic Life', p. 151, and *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History*, pp. 257-74.

of plasma which permeate the universe".[19] In each of these cases there is a shift in perspective, a move from the perspective of the limited organism to a perspective orientated around much larger spatial and temporal dimensions. This new perspective shares much with (and is indebted to) Braudel's conceptions of *la longue durée* and *le temps du monde*.[20] For Braudel these perspectives - the long-term and world-time - enable one to experience time on a planetary scale, to emphasize the contingency of historical processes, to highlight the impermanence of the apparently stable, to notice gradual changes imperceptible to a single human generation, and to uncover underlying processes of change and organization that span centuries. In order to develop these perspectives Braudel suggests supplementing history with the study of geography and landscape insofar as this will enable one to shift to a geological measure of time. Thus Braudel proposes a geological perspective for history, a geohistory. When Deleuze and Guattari propose a geophilosophy that they say is in exactly the same sense as Braudel's geohistory, presumably they propose a philosophy from the perspective of *la longue durée* or geological time.[21] This is closely related to what they call a perspective approaching infinite speed.[22] By this they mean a move towards a limit-perspective from which everything would be experienced as unformed flux. This limit-perspective does not involve any physical dismantling of the organism but rather a re-orientation of thought that "renders matter-energy flows, rather than the structures thereby generated, the primary reality".[23] This is a re-orientation of thought from the perspective of the organism and organic life to the perspective of the cosmos and nonorganic life.[24] From this new perspective one will understand life "not as a form, or

[19] M. De Landa, *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History*, p. 261. See also his 'Immanence and Transcendence in the Genesis of Form', pp. 510-11.
[20] For Braudel's approach to history see his *A History of Civilizations*, trans. R. Mayne (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993), p. 28, *The Perspective of the World: Civilization and Capitalism 15th-18th Century Volume 3*, trans. S. Reynolds (London: Fontana, 1984), pp. 17-18, and *The Mediterranean*, trans. S. Reynolds (London: Harper Collins, 1992), p. 1. See also *On History*, trans. S. Matthews (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), esp. pp. 25-54.
[21] See *What is Philosophy?*, pp. 85-113 [82-108], esp. p. 95 [91].
[22] See *What is Philosophy?*, p. 118 [111].
[23] M. De Landa, 'Immanence and Transcendence in the Genesis of Form', p. 509.
[24] For Deleuze's concept of nonorganic (*non-organique*, *inorganique*, *anorganique*) life see *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 30 [43], 503 [628], *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 326 [389], *What is Philosophy?*, p. 213 [200], *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, p. 123 [165], *Foucault*, p. 92 [98], *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 131 [164]. For further discussion

a development of form, but as a complex relation between differential velocities".[25] Thus Deleuze writes, "Stop thinking of yourself as an ego (*moi*) in order to live as a flow (*flux*), a set of flows in relation with other flows, outside of oneself and within oneself".[26] This is the sense in which Deleuze and Guattari propose a return to nature.

Approaching this limit perspective can often be dangerous. Deleuze and Guattari offer examples of the schizophrenic and the drug addict who have destroyed themselves when leaving the perspective of the organism. These are examples of casualties or failures in this re-orientation of thought. Yet Deleuze and Guattari suggest that this task is actually something very easy, something that we all do everyday. However, to do it successfully requires skill and caution: "You don't do it with a sledgehammer, you use a very fine file. You invent self-destructions (*autodestructions*) that have nothing to do with the death drive. Dismantling the organism has never meant killing yourself".[27] Rather it is essential, they suggest, to hold on to small rations of subjectivity. Destroying the organism means death, a too violent rupture means the asylum. Compared to these risks they say "Staying stratified – organized, signified, subjected – is not the worst that can happen".[28] Their modest experiment with regard to the organism and the self is "to diminish it, shrink it, clean it, and that only at certain moments".[29]

In the light of the dangers that have accompanied the experiences of the schizophrenic or the drug user, Deleuze and Guattari wonder if their experience could be obtained in some other way. They ask if it would be possible "to use drugs without using drugs, to get drunk on pure water, as in Henry Miller's experimentations".[30] Deleuze raises this same question

see M. De Landa, 'Nonorganic Life', esp. p. 153, and T. G. May, 'The Politics of Life in the Thought of Gilles Deleuze', *Substance* 66 (1991), 24-35.

[25] *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, p. 123 [165].

[26] *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 51 [68]. In this essay, p. 52 [69], Deleuze goes on to contrast the ego or self (*moi*) and the soul (*l'âme*), identifying the soul with the life of flux and nonorganic life.

[27] *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 160 [198].

[28] *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 161 [199]. Compare this seemingly cautious approach with *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 321 [384]: "It should therefore be said that one can never go far enough in the direction of deterritorialization". However it should be noted that the caution in *A Thousand Plateaus* does not replace but rather supplements the claim that "we haven't sufficiently dismantled our self" (p. 151 [187]).

[29] *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 162 [201].

[30] *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 166 [204]. See also *Negotiations*, p. 23 [37-38]: "We're considering a very simple problem, like Burroughs with drugs: can you harness the

in *The Logic of Sense*, where he wonders whether it might be possible to recover the effects of drugs and alcohol independently of the use of those substances.[31] With this in mind he suggests becoming a little crazy or a little alcoholic, "just enough to extend the crack, but not enough to deepen it irremediably".[32] Deleuze wonders just how this might be attained. He responds to this question of his with the words "How much we have yet to learn from Stoicism …".[33] Here, in *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze rather enigmatically implies that his project of recovering the experiences of the drug user without drugs, of extending the crack in the self without cracking up, has already been accomplished in Stoicism.

From this brief account it seems clear that a central theme of Deleuze's work with Guattari is to propose a return to nature, a dissolution of the man-nature dichotomy, a dissolution to a certain extent inspired by German Romanticism. It also seems clear that this project focuses upon a shift in perspective to what might be called a Braudelian conception of geological time, to a point of view that is able to capture the underlying processes that organize matter and to see through the only ever localized stability that forms the basis for the arbitrary division between man and nature. This seems to be what is behind their concept of a geophilosophy and was perhaps behind their proposed project of writing a philosophy of nature. [34]

Romanticism

In the various collections of philosophical fragments by Friedrich Schlegel, a similar project can be discerned. Central to this is the typically romantic image of the individual as an artist, as someone who creates not merely works of art but also himself and his own way of life. Schlegel writes, "The artist should have as little desire to rule as to serve. He can only create, do nothing but create".[35] Closely related to this aesthetic practice is

power of drugs without them taking over, without turning into a dazed zombie? It's the same with schizophrenia. […] The schizophrenics in hospitals are people who've tried to do something and failed, cracked up".

[31] See *The Logic of Sense*, p. 161 [188-89].

[32] *The Logic of Sense*, pp. 157-58 [184].

[33] *The Logic of Sense*, p. 158 [184]: "*que de leçons encore à recevoir du stoïcisme*".

[34] *Negotiations*, p. 155 [212]: "Guattari and I want to get back to our joint work and produce a sort of philosophy of Nature, now that any distinction between nature and artifice is becoming blurred".

[35] *Ideas*, in F. Schlegel, *Philosophical Fragments*, trans. P. Firchow (Minneapolis:

a rejection of Kantian morality. Thus Schlegel says “The Kantian’s conception of duty relates to the commandment of honour, the voice of God and of one’s calling in us, as the dried plant to the fresh flower on the living stem”.[36] This combination of a rejection of Kantian morality and an aesthetics of existence personified by the artist seems close to Foucault’s account of mainly Stoic practices of the self in his later works and the distinction that he makes in volume two of *The History of Sexuality* between prescriptive morality on the one hand and purely optional ethico-aesthetic practices on the other,[37] a distinction also at work in Deleuze’s reading of Spinoza where it is presented in terms of an ethics versus morality.[38]

In Schlegel’s rejection of Kantian morality he contrasts Kantian duty with what he calls “the voice of God and of one’s calling in us”. Throughout the *Ideas* there are many other passages with equally religious overtones. Yet in the light of Schlegel’s claim that every philosophy “that excludes Spinoza must be spurious”[39] it soon becomes clear that Schlegel’s God is immanent. Indeed, he defines his own conception of religion as an “all-animating world-soul”,[40] echoing Spinoza’s conception of an infinite being called God or Nature,[41] itself a reworking of the Stoic position, and also repeated by Deleuze when he says “without a doubt, there is a world soul”.[42] Attributing this position to Schlegel would also make sense of his claim that the empirical sciences that study nature offer direct access to the world of the divine.[43] So when Schlegel proposes in *Ideas* section 7 the liberation of religion, he seems to be suggesting the liberation of the relationship between the individual and an immanent god or divine nature. In other words he proposes a dissolution of the boundaries between man and nature: a return to nature.

In the *Ideas* Schlegel also characterizes his notion of religion as an

University of Minnesota Press, 1991), pp. 94-109, § 54.
[36] *Ideas* 39.
[37] See M. Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality Volume 2*, trans. R. Hurley (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986), pp. 25-32.
[38] See *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, pp. 17-29 [27-43].
[39] *Athenaeum Fragments*, in F. Schlegel, *Philosophical Fragments*, trans. P. Firchow (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), pp. 18-93, § 274.
[40] *Ideas* 4.
[41] Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part 4, Pref.
[42] G. Deleuze, foreword to É. Alliez, *Capital Times*, trans. G. Van Den Abbeele (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), p. xii.
[43] *Ideas* 106.

"original way of looking at infinity",[44] that is as a new mode of relation with infinite nature. Elsewhere, in the *Philosophical Lectures*, he identifies the infinite with what he calls the limited whole,[45] implying a conception of nature both infinite and finite at once. Here Schlegel repeats the Stoic conception of nature as limited in extent but at the same time an infinite set, containing an infinity of subsets. According to Plutarch's summary of the Stoic Chrysippus, the division of bodies can go on infinitely, with the entire cosmos containing no more parts than a single man or for that matter a single man's little finger.[46] For both Schlegel and the Stoics, the notion of infinity remains entirely compatible with an immanent nature, just as it does for Deleuze and Guattari who themselves propose an immanent conception of a smooth space that has the infinite divisibility of a fractal.[47] It is within the context of this conception of an infinitely divisible divine nature that Schlegel proposes his ethico-aesthetic project of self-transformation. A key passage from the *Ideas* that summarises this project is section 44:

> No one can be the direct mediator for even his own spirit because the mediator must be purely objective, and necessarily centred on a point outside himself. [...] A mediator is one who perceives the divinity within himself and who self-destructively sacrifices himself in order to reveal, communicate, and represent to all mankind this divinity in his conduct and actions.

This fragment contains a number of key themes for Schlegel's philosophy. Firstly, a mediator is one who perceives the divinity within himself, that is to say, he is one who acknowledges and is aware of the immanent divinity that permeates all of nature including himself. This theme also finds expression in a number of other fragments. For example he writes "Man is Nature creatively looking back at itself" and "Every thinking part of an organization should not feel its limits without at the same time feeling its

[44] *Ideas* 3; see also 30.

[45] *Philosophical Lectures*, in F. C. Beiser, ed., *The Early Political Writings of the German Romantics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp.141-58, at 150.

[46] Plutarch *De communibus notitiis* 1078e-1079a: *SVF* 2.484-85: LS 50C (see n. 60 below on Stoic references). See also S. Sambursky, *Physics of the Stoics* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959), pp. 96-97.

[47] See *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 486-88 [607-09].

unity in relation to the whole".[48] Secondly, in order to reveal this connection with divine nature, a mediator will self-destructively sacrifice himself; that is to say, he will engage in some form of destructive or deterritorializing process in which he will destroy himself as he exists as a self or organism in order to open up connections with nature and the flows of nonorganic life. Yet it should be remembered that this will only appear destructive from the perspective of the limited organism and, as Deleuze notes, has nothing to do with the death-drive. Thirdly, this will be communicated via his conduct and actions, that is, in a particular way of life constituted by a set of particular practices of the self aimed at dismantling the self. Fourthly, this mediation will never be direct, for a direct mediator must be purely objective and outside oneself. In other words, the point of view of a pure or direct mediator is a limit that can never be reached, just as Deleuze and Guattari's perspective of infinite speed or the full Body without Organs can never be reached.

Various other passages scattered throughout Schlegel's philosophical fragments confirm this rejection of the limited self or organism. For example he writes, "Aren't all systems individuals just as all individuals are systems at least in embryo and tendency? [...] Aren't there individuals who contain within themselves whole systems of individuals?".[49] Similarly, he offers a conception of the mind that he says "contains within itself simultaneously a plurality of minds and a whole system of persons".[50] Schlegel also imagines a process that he describes as "the fusion of a number of persons into one person".[51] In these passages there is simultaneously a division of the subject into multiple selves and a unification of subjects as parts of a single divine nature. In these passages Schlegel seems to conform to Deleuze and Guattari's magic formula of "pluralism = monism".[52] However he also pre-empts it with his own magic formula of "unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity".[53]

This practical philosophical project of destroying the boundaries between the individual and nature leads Schlegel to propose what he calls the unification of religion and ethics. In the *Ideas* section 110 he suggests that the division between these two domains is based upon "the old classification of all things into divine and human, if only it were

[48] *Ideas* 28 and 48.
[49] *Athenaeum Fragments* 242.
[50] *Athenaeum Fragments* 121.
[51] *Athenaeum Fragments* 34.
[52] *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 20 [31].
[53] *Philosophical Lectures*, p. 145.

understood properly". In the light of what has already been said it should be clear that ethics (insofar as it deals with the human) and religion (insofar as it deals with the divine) do not relate to objects that are radically different in kind. Rather the distinction seems to be one based upon the difference between particular and whole. Thus the division between ethics and religion is for Schlegel primarily one of focus. One might say that ethics focuses inwards (insofar as it is concerned with practices of the self), while religion focus outwards (insofar as it is concerned with divine nature). In actual fact Schlegel reverses this, suggesting that ethics refers to that part of the philosophy of life directed outwards, while religion refers to that part which is directed inwards.[54] Either way, what is important is that this is another expression of Schlegel's project of overcoming the man-nature dichotomy.[55] Once this project is undertaken the boundary between ethics and religion will itself collapse. As the distinction between individual and nature becomes blurred so will the division between the study of the individual (ethics) and the study of divine nature (religion), resulting in a single unified philosophy of the future.

Despite the use of religious language throughout Schlegel's fragments it should be clear that his conception of god and the divine are wholly immanent. Similarly, despite his imagery of the heroic artist creating himself it should be clear that the practices he proposes involve the dissolution of the boundaries between the limited self and this divine conception of nature. Thus he writes, "Only a man who is at one with the world can be at one with himself".[56] Schlegel characterizes this project in terms close to those of Stoicism when he says that the "only precept of moral education" is to "*follow nature*". He expands this by saying "*just as nature is organized, so organize yourself*".[57] Here Schlegel comes close to repeating the classic Stoic maxim 'to live according to nature'. Indeed, he explicitly acknowledges his affinity for the Stoa, proclaiming that among all existing doctrines it is Stoicism that "corresponds best with our

[54] See *Philosophical Lectures*, pp. 147-48.

[55] In the *Philosophical Lectures*, p. 151, Schlegel writes, "*Religion* is completely separated from *morals*; they are opposed to one another. But this opposition must be united in a higher synthesis".

[56] *Ideas* 130.

[57] *Philosophical Lectures*, p.152. See also p. 155: "The unity of our philosophy is harmony, or the unity in the relation of the individual to the whole. This philosophy rests on the concept of the organism of nature. This concept also extends into practical philosophy".

principles".[58] This is combined with a repeated affirmation of the Stoic conception of an art of living created in the spirit of classical antiquity and, in particular, in the spirit of the Roman Stoics such as Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius.[59] Thus it seems that to a certain extent Schlegel's project is itself merely a variation upon a Stoic project.

Stoicism

The Stoic injunction to live according to nature exists in a number of differing formulations.[60] According to Stobaeus the first formulation by Zeno was simply 'to live *homologia*' (τὸ ὁμολογουμένως ζῆν), a term that might be rendered as in agreement, in harmony, or consistently.[61] His successor Cleanthes is said to have extended this into 'to live in agreement with nature' (τὸ ὁμολογουμένως τῇ φύσει ζῆν) and his successor Chrysippus is said to have expanded it again into 'to live in agreement with the experience of what happens by nature'.[62] Diogenes Laertius expands the phrase further into 'life in accordance with both one's own nature and nature as a whole' (κατά τε τὴν αὑτοῦ καὶ κατὰ τὴν τῶν ὅλων).[63] Whether these reformulations constitute a conceptual development or merely clarifications in the presentation of a single doctrine it is hard to say - partly due to the fragmentary nature of the evidence - and the matter is made more complicated by the fact that the

[58] *Philosophical Lectures*, p. 152.

[59] For example see the *Critical Fragments*, in F. Schlegel, *Philosophical Fragments*, trans. P. Firchow (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), pp. 1-16, §§ 46 and 111. See also P. Lacoue-Labarthe & J.-L. Nancy, *The Literary Absolute* (Albany: SUNY, 1988), p. 65, for a similar judgement.

[60] Note on Stoic references: All references to ancient texts are given by their standard Latin titles and have been consulted in the Loeb Classical Library editions where they exist (where not a full reference is given). These are cross-referenced to two collections using the following abbreviations: *SVF = Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, ed. H. von Arnim (Leipzig: Teubner, 1903-24); LS = A. A. Long & D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). For the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius I have consulted the editions of A. S. L. Farquharson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1944), W. Theiler (Zürich: Artemis, 1951), J. Dalfen (Leipzig: Teubner, 1987), and the more readily available Loeb edition by C. R. Haines (1916). Haines and Farquharson both include English translations and I have also consulted that of M. Staniforth (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964).

[61] See Cicero's note on the translation of ὁμολογία in *De Finibus* 3.12.

[62] For all three formulations see Stobaeus, *Anthologium*, ed. C. Wachsmuth & O. Hense (Berlin: Weidmann, 1884-1912), 2.75-76: *SVF* 1.179, 1.552, 3.12: LS 63B.

[63] Diogenes Laertius 7.88: LS 63C.

various sources are not consistent in their attribution of these formulations to specific individuals.[64] What is clear is that this ideal persisted throughout the history of the Stoa up to and including the last ancient Stoic of note, Marcus Aurelius.[65] In the *Meditations* Marcus uses the phrase 'in agreement with nature' (τῶν ὁμολογουμένως τῇ φύσει) just once, preferring the shorthand 'according to nature' (κατὰ φύσιν).[66] In the passages where Marcus uses these phrases it is clear that he opposes the way things appear according to human opinion (δόξᾶ) to the way they are according to nature (κατὰ φύσιν). He writes that one should "cling not to the opinion of all men, but only of men who live in accord with nature".[67] This is the central theme of the *Meditations*, namely the relationship between the subjective opinions that are the product of the perspective of the typical human and the objective point of view of the cosmos experienced by the Stoic sage who lives in total agreement with nature. Throughout the *Meditations* there are numerous examples of what Marcus takes this perspective of the cosmos to reveal. Here are five such examples:[68]

> 2.17: Of the life of man, his time is a point, his substance flowing, his perception faint, the constitution of his whole body decaying, his soul a spinning wheel, his fortune hard to predict, and his fame doubtful; that is to say, all the things of the body are a river, the things of the soul dream and delusion, life is a war and a journey in a foreign land, and afterwards oblivion. […].
>
> 5.23: Often consider the speed of the movement and carrying away and coming to be of existing things. For substance is like a river in perpetual flow, its activities are in continuous change, its causes are in countless turns, it is never near a standstill, and close at hand is the infinite void of past and future in which all things disappear.

[64] For example Diogenes Laertius 7.87: *SVF* 1.179: LS 63C differs from Stobaeus on Zeno's formulation.
[65] As R. B. Rutherford comments in his *The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 262, it is a shame that the description 'the last of the Stoics' is often taken to imply 'the least interesting of the Stoics'.
[66] Marcus uses the fuller phrase at 3.4.4. Examples of the shorthand include 1.9, 3.9, 3.12, 4.1, 5.1, 5.3, 5.4, 7.11, 7.56, 7.74, 8.29, 10.33, 12.1.
[67] *Meditations* 3.4.4.
[68] The Greek texts upon which these translations are based are supplied in the Appendix.

> [...].
>
> 7.47: Observe the courses of the stars as if revolving with them and reflect upon the continuous changes of the elements into one another; for impressions such as these are for cleansing the filth of earth-bound life.
>
> 9.32: You have the power to strip away many superfluous troubles located wholly in your judgment, and to possess a large room for yourself embracing in thought the whole cosmos, to consider everlasting time, to think of the rapid change in the parts of each thing, of how short it is from birth until dissolution, and how the void before birth and that after dissolution are equally infinite.
>
> 12.32: How little a fraction of infinite and empty time has been distributed to each individual, for quickly it is lost in the eternal; and how little of the whole substance, how little of the whole soul, and on how little a clump of the whole earth do you creep. Considering all these things, imagine nothing greater than this: to act as your nature guides, and to undergo what common nature brings.

In these passages and many others like them Marcus proposes what might be called a point of view of the cosmos, a Braudelian perspective of geological time from which the apparently rigid organism and self are merely momentary pauses in the flows of matter that constitute the infinite and eternal cosmos. He writes:

> You came into the world as a part. You will vanish in that which gave you birth, or rather you will be taken up into its generative principle by the process of change.[69]

As with Braudel - and as with Deleuze and Guattari - this point of view of the cosmos enables one to perceive the large scale processes at work throughout nature. For Marcus and his Stoic predecessors the cosmos is organized by the immanent *spermatikos logos* (σπερματικὸς λόγος) or generative principle alluded to by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*. This organising principle is also known variously as god, world-

[69] *Meditations* 4.14. See also 4.21, 6.24.

soul, fire, and *pneuma* (πνεῦμα).[70] Some accounts of Stoic physics present this as an active principle in some form of mixture with the passive principle of matter.[71] However the active *spermatikos logos* is itself material and this distinction between two material principles is merely formal.[72] The *spermatikos logos* or *pneuma* is not in mixture with matter but is rather a certain quality of matter itself. Thus Stoic physics is monistic, conceiving material nature as a force moving itself.[73] Within this monistic materialism the organising principle of the *spermatikos logos* produces all stability and form, with processes of condensation, rarefaction, solidification, and stratification generating states of pneumatic tension (τόνος τοῦ πνεύματος).[74] In this the Stoics follow Heraclitus and

[70] See Aetius in *Doxographi Graeci*, ed. H. Diels (Berlin: Reimer, 1879), 1.7.33: *SVF* 2.1027: LS 46A and Diogenes Laertius 7.135: *SVF* 1.102: LS 46B. It has been suggested that the concept of *pneuma* as active principle of the cosmos was introduced by Chrysippus, while Cleanthes posited heat, and Zeno fire. See M. Lapidge, 'ἀρχαί and στοιχεῖα: A Problem in Stoic Cosmology', *Phronesis* 18 (1973), 240-78, at 274-75, and F. Solmsen, 'Cleanthes or Posidonius? The Basis of Stoic Physics', in his *Kleine Schriften 1* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1968), pp. 436-60, at 456-57.

[71] Diogenes Laertius 7.134: *SVF* 1.85, 2.300: LS 44B.

[72] The status of the Stoic ἀρχαί or principles is a problem that has attracted much scholarly debate and much of it has hinged upon a textual emendation of a passage in Diogenes Laertius 7.134. According to the manuscript tradition, the two principles (active God and passive matter) are corporeal (σώματα). However the *Suda* offers as an alternative reading of incorporeal (ἀσωμάτους). R. D. Hicks (Loeb), H. S. Long (OCT), and H. von Arnim (*SVF* 2.299) all adopt the *Suda* emendation, while Long and Sedley (44B) follow the manuscript. They argue (vol. 1, p. 274) that the principles must be corporeal if they are to fulfil their functions of acting and being acted upon. However E. Lewis, 'Diogenes Laertius and the Stoic Theory of Mixture', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 35 (1988), 84-90, has called into question the validity of the notion of two corporeal principles in total mixture with one another. In the light of this, the account of the principles made by R. B. Todd, 'Monism and Immanence', in J. M. Rist, ed., *The Stoics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 137-60, esp. 139, that characterizes them as a logical or conceptual distinction within a physically unified system seems attractive. The claim would not be that active god and passive matter are incorporeal but rather that the distinction between these two inseparable aspects of a single substance is an incorporeal λεκτά or proposition. In other words the principles constitute merely a formal distinction, not an ontological distinction. Ontologically matter is one. God and matter, as aspects of this single material unity, remain corporeal; only the linguistic distinction between them is incorporeal. For further discussion of this problem with reference to the passage from Diogenes Laertius (= Posidonius fr. 5 Edelstein & Kidd) see I. G. Kidd, *Posidonius 2: The Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 105-06.

[73] Diogenes Laertius 7.148: *SVF* 2.1132: LS 43A.

[74] See Diogenes Laertius 7.142: *SVF* 1.102: LS 46C, Plutarch *De Stoicorum*

his physics of becoming organized by a single *logos* generating stability through processes of dynamic equilibrium.[75] What Stoic physics adds to this is a distinctively biological orientation. Their *spermatikos logos* functions as a principle of nonorganic life and, as Marcus writes, we should never cease "to think of the cosmos as one living being".[76] For the Stoics this living material nature is god,[77] defined as the intelligence in matter (νοῦν ἐν ὕλῃ),[78] and as both Cicero and Plotinus note this is usually a cover for disposing of the concept of god altogether.[79] Thus the Stoic conception of the cosmos is more biological than theological and Stoic cosmology is always cosmobiology.[80]

From the point of view of the cosmos, nature is experienced as this cosmic process of becoming punctuated with occasional points of dynamic equilibrium. It is already clear that Marcus uses this perspective in order to devalue human anxieties and concerns. This theme is expanded upon in *Meditations* 12.8:

> Look at the inmost causes of things, stripped of their husks; note the intentions that underlie actions; [...] observe how man's disquiet is

repugnantiis 1053f: *SVF* 2.449: LS 47M, *De communibus notitiis* 1085d: *SVF* 2.444: LS 47G, Nemesius *De natura hominis*, ed. M. Morani (Leipzig: Teubner, 1987), 70.6: LS 47J, and, for pneumatic tension, Alexander of Aphrodisias *De mixtione*, ed. R. B. Todd (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 223.34: *SVF* 2.441: LS 47L.

[75] Much of Stoic physics can already be found within the fragments of Heraclitus, in particular a model of dynamic equilibrium based upon a theory of pneumatic tension. See for example fragments B8, B31, B51, B67a, B76 (Diels & Kranz). See A. A. Long 'Heraclitus and Stoicism', *Philosophia* 5 (1975), 133-56, for further discussion. Marcus Aurelius seems to have had a particularly strong affinity with Heraclitus, naming him often and preserving five of the fragments (4.46 and 6.42 are the source for B71-75). It is also interesting to note that Deleuze and Guattari's 'pluralism = monism' and Schlegel's 'unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity' are both pre-empted by Heraclitus fr. B10: "from all things one and from one thing all [ἐκ πάντων ἓν καὶ ἐξ ἑνὸς πάντα]".

[76] *Meditations* 4.40.

[77] See Cicero *De Natura Deorum* 1.39: *SVF* 2.1077: LS 54B.

[78] Plutarch *De communibus notitiis* 1085b: *SVF* 2.313.

[79] See Cicero *De Natura Deorum* 1.32 and also Plotinus 6.1.27: *SVF* 2.314 who says that the Stoics bring in God only for the sake of appearances, defining him as matter in a certain state. This accords with the interpretation of the ἀρχαί given above.

[80] See D. Hahm, *The Origins of Stoic Cosmology* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1977), ch.5, J. Annas, *Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p. 43, and M. Lapidge, 'Stoic Cosmology', in J. M. Rist, ed., *The Stoics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 161-85, esp. p. 163.

> all of his own making, and how troubles come never from another's hand, but like all else are creatures of our own judgement (ὑπόληψις).

Here Marcus emphasizes his distinction between things as they appear according to opinion and as they appear according to nature. In this he follows his Stoic mentor Epictetus in suggesting that all judgements of good and evil are always a product of the perspective of a limited individual. As Epictetus often repeats, what upsets people are not things themselves, which are neither good nor evil, but rather their judgements (δόγματα) about things.[81]

The theory of judgement held by Epictetus runs roughly as follows:[82] When someone encounters an object they not only see the object as it is, but they also undergo an almost involuntary emotional response to it that generates a judgement (δόγμα).[83] Thus they experience not only the object itself but also a judgement that is the product of a passion. As Augustine glosses it, it is as if these passions are too quick for the intellect.[84] For Epictetus all judgements of good and evil are of this type. With the majority of individuals these judgements remain unquestioned and are taken as facts about objects themselves. However the philosopher – the one who is making progress towards wisdom - is someone who can disentangle an object as it is according to its own nature from the emotional response or judgement it provokes and then reject the judgement. The wise man or sage is someone who manages to go further and train himself to overcome these seemingly automatic judgements altogether. In other words he is someone who can stop at what is given

[81] *Encheiridion* 5. Epictetus also uses the term ὑπόληψις in *Encheiridion* 1, a term that is also used by Marcus in 12.8 above and elsewhere (e.g. 2.15, 3.9, 4.3, 5.26, 8.40, 9.13, 10.3, 11.16, 12.26). This term might be translated as opinion, assumption, or notion. P. Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, trans. M. Chase (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 52 and 83, offers value-judgement. Marcus also uses κρίμα (judgement) at 8.47 where in his own words he follows closely the content of *Encheiridion* 5: "If you suffer because of something external, it is not due to the thing itself but your judgement of it".

[82] See Epictetus *Dissertationes* 2.16.22-26 and fr. 9 (Schenkl) *apud* Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 19.1.15-20.

[83] See Sextus Empiricus *Adversus Mathematicos* 8.397: *SVF* 2.91 for an account of the Stoic distinction between presentation or impression (φαντσασία) and assent (συγκατάθεσις).

[84] Augustine *De Civitate Dei* 9.4.

without adding a judgement to it.[85] As Simplicius says in his commentary on the *Handbook* of Epictetus, "those things which we apprehend to be evil [...] are really neither evil themselves, nor the true causes of any evil to us [...] all our troubles and perplexities are entirely owing to the opinions which we ourselves have entertained and cherished concerning them".[86] For Epictetus good and evil only exist in human judgements. They do not exist in the nature of things. Thus living in accordance with nature involves living beyond good and evil.

In the light of this, the *Meditations* can be seen as a study in attempting to observe the cosmos free from such human judgements. Marcus writes, "Salvation in life depends on seeing everything in its entirety and its reality, as matter and as cause".[87] It is *in order* to achieve this judgement-free perspective of material nature that Marcus proposes his point of view of the cosmos. From this cosmic perspective of geological time, local encounters between bodies become insignificant compared to the vast flows of matter-energy that form the system of nature taken as a whole. From this cosmic perspective Marcus proposes a re-evaluation of everything that is usually attributed value from the perspective of limited human judgement.

Thus Marcus says that from the point of view of Nature nothing is bad in itself (οὐδὲν δὲ κακὸν κατὰ φύσιν).[88] Comments such as this have led some scholars to suggest that the cosmic perspective proposed by Marcus might enable one to understand Stoic ideas about providence. The suggestion often made is that Marcus is implying that while from a limited perspective certain things may seem bad, from a cosmic perspective everything is in fact good.[89] Thus an extreme optimism is attributed to Marcus of a form close to that rightly ridiculed by Voltaire in *Candide*. But Marcus does not say that everything that happens is always good.[90]

[85] See *Meditations* 8.49: "Do not say more to yourself than the first impressions report. [...] abide always by the first impressions and add nothing of your own from within". See also 5.26. This is the Stoic definition of a φαντασία καταληπτικὴ, an adequate or objective impression. See P. Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, pp. 84, 104.

[86] Simplicius, *Commentarius in Epicteti Enchiridion*, ed. I. Hadot (Leiden: Brill, 1996) and trans. by G. Stanhope in *Epictetus his Morals, with Simplicius his Comment* (London, 1694, 5th edn 1741), comment on *Encheiridion* 10 (Hadot, p. 242, Stanhope, p. 61).

[87] *Meditations* 12.29. See also 12.10, 12.18.

[88] *Meditations* 2.17.

[89] For example, A. A. Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy*, 2nd edn (London: Duckworth, 1986), p. 170.

[90] Of course there are a number of passages in the *Meditations* where Marcus does

What he says is that from the cosmic perspective nothing is bad. This is because the notions of good and bad can only apply to the limited perspective of the individual for whom what is good is what promotes life and what is bad is what limits it. But from the cosmic perspective there can be no judgements of good or bad. An edible substance might be either good or bad from the point of view of an individual depending upon whether it is nourishing or poisonous, but from the perspective of nature taken as a whole everything is part of the system. Nothing is external or opposed to the system of nature, so nothing can be bad, but equally nothing can be good. Similarly terms such as natural and unnatural only make sense relative to a particular individual. For example, saltwater is unnatural for humans but natural for sea fish. However from the point of view of the cosmos terms such as natural and unnatural become as meaningless as do the terms good and bad.[91] All of these terms are, as Epictetus would say, merely the product of human judgements that only make sense from the point of view of a limited perspective. Thus Marcus proposes to re-describe everything usually held of value from his cosmic perspective, a perspective free from human judgements. This leads him to characterize a human being as merely a mass of water, dust, bones, and stench; Europe as but a mound of earth in one corner of a vast ocean; death as merely a re-organization of a collection of material elements; and sexual intercourse as nothing more than a convulsive expulsion of mucus.[92]

Passages such as these along with the others already quoted have led a number of scholars to attribute certain psychological states to their author. Thus E. V. Arnold has suggested that Marcus must have suffered from deep melancholia, a saddened outlook, and general resignation in the face of his own mortality, for him to have been able to write such depressing prose.[93] Another author, named Thomas Africa, has gone considerably further, writing an article entitled 'The Opium Addiction of Marcus Aurelius' in which he suggests that Marcus's "bizarre visions" and his "extraordinary insulation from domestic reality" were the product of a

affirm providence (such as 4.3.2). However there seem to be many more where he expresses an agnosticism with regard to the question 'providence or atoms?' (6.24, 7.32, 9.28, 9.39, 10.6, 12.14, 12.24). In these instances Marcus seems to suggest that this issue is fairly unimportant to him (see esp. 12.14).

[91] See A. A. Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy*, p. 181.

[92] *Meditations* 9.36, 6.36, 2.17, 6.13; also 4.48.2 where life is described as a brief journey from mucus to ashes.

[93] E. V. Arnold, *Roman Stoicism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958), pp. 125-26.

substantial intake of *theriac*, an opium based antidote to poison often taken in modest doses by Roman Emperors afraid of attempts on their lives.[94] Africa claims that Marcus enjoyed this substance a little too much and developed a considerable habit, this being the cause of his delusional writing in the *Meditations*. Africa goes on to draw parallels with the accounts of taking opium reported by Coleridge and De Quincey, and he concludes by characterising the *Meditations* as "an attempt to express the extended perspectives of time and space which opium had opened up to him".[95]

An alternative explanation has been offered by Pierre Hadot, who characterizes Africa's opium hypothesis as one of the summits of bad historical psychology.[96] Hadot shows that these supposedly drug induced passages in the *Meditations* simply take up a theme common throughout Stoicism. Take for example the following passages from Seneca:

> Infinitely swift is the flight of time […] Everything slips into the same abyss […] The time which we spend in living is but a point, even less than a point.[97]

> Place before your mind's eye the vast spread of time's abyss, and consider the universe; and then contrast our so-called human life with infinity.[98]

> As the mind wanders among the very stars it delights in laughing at the mosaic floors of the rich and at the whole earth with all its gold.[99]

[94] T. W. Africa, 'The Opium Addiction of Marcus Aurelius', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 22 (1961), 97-102, at 102. See also E. C. Witke, 'Marcus Aurelius and Mandragora', *Classical Philology* 60 (1965), 23-24. P. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, trans. M. Chase (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), pp. 180-81, offers a survey of such 'explanations' including one (R. Dailly & H. van Effenterre, *Revue des Études Anciennes* 56 (1954), 347-65) that suggests a gastric ulcer as the cause of the 'strange visions' in the *Meditations*.

[95] T. W. Africa, 'The Opium Addiction of Marcus Aurelius', p. 101.

[96] P. Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, pp. 250-57. J. M. Rist, 'Are You a Stoic? The Case of Marcus Aurelius' in B. F. Meyers & E. P. Sanders, eds., *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition 3* (London: SCM, 1982), pp. 23-45, at 34, also dismisses Africa's hypothesis as comical.

[97] Seneca *Epistulae* 49.2-3.

[98] Seneca *Epistulae* 99.10.

[99] Seneca *Naturales Quaestiones* 1. Praef. 7.

These passages from Seneca suggest that the *Meditations* were not the product of any personal narcotic experiences but rather just one literary example of a Stoic theme of relocating that which is normally attributed value from a human perspective into a much broader context.[100] Moreover, this Stoic theme of developing a cosmic perspective is in many ways the complete opposite of De Quincey's experiences cited by Africa. For De Quincey the present is said to expand and last for a hundred years,[101] whereas for Marcus and Seneca the present almost vanishes within the immensity of the infinite dimensions of the cosmos.[102] It should also be noted that while De Quincey seems content simply to recount the experiences he has had, Marcus and Seneca repeatedly use the image of a cosmic perspective for a very specific philosophical purpose, namely the relocation of the self and organism within the infinite flows of matter and the devaluation of human concerns and anxieties that accompany the point of view of the limited individual. For example, in the *Natural Questions* Seneca deploys the image of the mind wandering among the stars in order to show that from such a Braudelian world perspective local conflicts between groups over property become meaningless, even ludicrous.[103] Similarly, Marcus writes that if one were "suddenly carried up to mid-heaven one would look down upon human affairs and despise them".[104] Thus Seneca and Marcus are not reporting something that they have experienced as De Quincey is. Rather they are developing a properly philosophical cosmic perspective in order to reassess the ways in which humans normally attribute value to particular objects.

Yet despite these important differences between the Stoic cosmic perspective and the narcotic adventures of De Quincey - and accepting the

[100] The image of man as but part of a much larger whole also appears in Epictetus (*Dissertationes* 1.12.26, 2.5.25) and according to A. A. Long ('Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius', in T. J. Luce, ed., *Ancient Writers: Greece and Rome* (New York: Scribner's, 1982), pp. 985-1002, at 998) is "entirely Stoic". However the use of a 'view from above' is not confined to the Stoa and other notable examples include Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* (in *De Re Publica* Book 6) and Lucian's *Charon*. For further discussion see R. B. Rutherford, pp. 155-61, and P. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, pp. 238-50.

[101] De Quincey cited in Africa, p. 101: "Sometimes I seemed to have lived for seventy or a hundred years in one night".

[102] *Meditations* 12.32: "What a fraction of infinite and gaping time has been assigned to every man; for very swiftly it vanishes in the eternal".

[103] Seneca *Naturales Quaestiones* 1. Praef. 7-11.

[104] *Meditations* 12.24.

numerous criticisms that have been made of the opium hypothesis - Africa's initial intuition is not completely foolish. Marcus's descriptions are at first glance indeed strange. Hadot's criticisms of the opium hypothesis are based upon two arguments, one concerning the historical details of the life of Marcus Aurelius and the other suggesting that Marcus should be read in the context of other Stoic authors. For example Galen, the medical writer who also happened to be Marcus's personal physician, reports that his daily dose of *theriac* was one *kyamos*, about 0.033 of a gram of opium, hardly enough for addiction.[105] In other words Hadot argues that as a matter of fact Marcus was not an opium addict, and that other Stoic texts describe similar experiences, making the so-called symptoms by no means unique to him. From this one is left to conclude that this theme within the *Meditations* of developing a point of view of the cosmos - a theme present throughout Stoicism - is what one might call an experience at first glance similar to that induced by opium but without the use of that substance. In other words, the Stoics seem to have taught and practised the development of a philosophical perspective that might be characterized as an experience of drugs without the use of drugs. Thus it seems that Stoics such as Marcus and Seneca have already accomplished the philosophical project outlined by Deleuze and Guattari. Moreover it is now possible to understand Deleuze's remark that, with regard to this project, there is indeed much yet to learn from Stoicism.

Concluding Remarks

It seems relatively clear that Deleuze and Guattari propose a project of overcoming the man-nature dichotomy, a project inspired by German Romanticism. Although they do not mention Schlegel by name, the project outlined in his philosophical fragments serves as a good example of the German Romantic project of a return to nature. Both Deleuze and Schlegel cite Stoicism as a precursor to their shared project. Yet Deleuze goes further, suggesting the Stoics already knew how to recreate the experiences of the drug user or the alcoholic without the use of those substances. This is where one might say that Deleuze has learned from the often catastrophic experiments of his German Romantic predecessors. In order to have been a Romantic it seems almost obligatory to have suffered a mental breakdown, preferably followed by an early death. Lenz, Kleist,

[105] Galen (Kühn 14.42) in P. Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, pp. 251-52. See also T. Africa, p. 102 n. 78, who acknowledges this fact himself.

and Hölderlin all tragically conformed to this model. Rather ironically one of the few Romantics not to die young was in fact Schlegel. Yet he found his own black hole in what one biographer has called thoroughly reactionary Roman Catholicism.[106]

In the light of the disastrous ends that befell a number of the Romantics it would seem more than a little strange if Deleuze and Guattari (or anyone else for that matter) simply proposed a straightforward resurrection of their philosophical project. German Romanticism hardly presents itself as viable model for an art of living. But by proposing a return to Stoicism, Deleuze seems to have hit upon a more promising way to continue the Romantic project. The Stoic notion of developing a point of view of the cosmos offers a philosophical means of overcoming the man-nature dichotomy based upon a naturalism not far from Deleuze's own. In the case of Marcus Aurelius it seems that Deleuze and Guattari's project of recreating the experiences of the drug user without recourse to such substances and without falling into the usual dangers has already been achieved. Deleuze was himself aware of this, as his comment in *The Logic of Sense* testifies. Thus it seems that if one wanted to engage in the creative self-transformations proposed by German Romanticism or if one wanted to make oneself a Body without Organs, perhaps the best advice would be 'Read Marcus Aurelius'.

[106] See the entry in W. N. Hargreaves-Mawdsley, *Everyman's Dictionary of European Writers* (London: Dent, 1968), pp. 485-86.

Appendix:
Selected Passages from Marcus Aurelius

2.17 Τοῦ ἀνθρωπίνου βίου ὁ μὲν χρόνος στιγμή, ἡ δὲ οὐσία ῥέουσα, ἡ δὲ αἴσθησις ἀμυδρά, ἡ δὲ ὅλου τοῦ σώματος σύγκρισις εὔσηπτος, ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ ῥόμβος, ἡ δὲ τύχη δυστέκμαρτον, ἡ δὲ φήμη ἄκριτον· συνελόντι δὲ εἰπεῖν, πάντα τὰ μὲν τοῦ σώματος ποταμός, τὰ δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς ὄνειρος καὶ τῦφος, ὁ δὲ βίος πόλεμος καὶ ξένου ἐπιδημία, ἡ δὲ ὑστεροφημία λήθη. [...].

5.23 Πολλάκις ἐνθυμοῦ τὸ τάχος τῆς παραφορᾶς καὶ ὑπεξαγωγῆς τῶν ὄντων καὶ γινομένων. ἥ τε γὰρ οὐσία οἷον ποταμὸς ἐν διηνεκεῖ ῥύσει καὶ αἱ ἐνέργειαι ἐν συνεχέσι μεταβολαῖς καὶ τὰ αἴτια ἐν μυρίαις τροπαῖς καὶ σχεδὸν οὐδὲν ἑστώς καὶ τὸ πάρεγγυς τόδε ἄπειρον τοῦ παρῳχηκότος καὶ μέλλοντος ἀχανές, ᾧ πάντα ἐναφανίζεται. [...].

7.47 Περισκοπεῖν ἄστρων δρόμους ὥσπερ συμπεριθέοντα καὶ τὰς τῶν στοιχείων εἰς ἄλληλα μεταβολὰς συνεχῶς ἐννοεῖν· ἀποκαθαίρουσι γὰρ αἱ τούτων φαντασίαι τὸν ῥύπον τοῦ χαμαὶ βίου.

9.32 Πολλὰ περισσὰ περιελεῖν τῶν ἐνοχλούντων σοι δύνασαι ὅλα ἐπὶ τῇ ὑπολήψει σου κείμενα, καὶ πολλὴν εὐρυχωρίαν περιποιήσεις ἤδη σεαυτῷ, <τῷ> τὸν ὅλον κόσμον περιειληφέναι τῇ γνώμῃ καὶ τὸν ἀίδιον αἰῶνα περινοεῖν καὶ τὴν τῶν κατὰ μέρος ἑκάστου πράγματος ταχεῖαν μεταβολὴν ἐπινοεῖν, ὡς βραχὺ μὲν τὸ ἀπὸ γενέσεως μέχρι διαλύσεως, ἀχανὲς δὲ τὸ πρὸ τῆς γενέσεως, ὡς καὶ τὸ μετὰ τὴν διάλυσιν ὁμοίως ἄπειρον.

12.32 Πόστον μέρος τοῦ ἀπείρου καὶ ἀχανοῦς αἰῶνος ἀπομεμέρισται ἑκάστῳ· τάχιστα γὰρ ἐναφανίζεται τῷ ἀιδίῳ· πόστον δὲ τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας· πόστον δὲ τῆς ὅλης ψυχῆς· ἐν πόστῳ δὲ βωλαρίῳ τῆς ὅλης γῆς ἕρπεις. πάντα ταῦτα ἐνθυμούμενος μηδὲν μέγα φαντάζου ἢ τό, ὡς μὲν ἡ σὴ φύσις ἄγει ποιεῖν, πάσχειν δέ ὡς ἡ κοινὴ φύσις φέρει.

Notes: **3** ῥόμβος **F H L** ῥεμβός **D T** || **8** ὄντων **H L** ὄντων τε **D F T** || **10** after ἑστώς **D** adds <οὐδὲ τὸ ἐνεστὼς τοῦ χρόνου> | τόδε **H T** τὸ δὲ **D F L** || **11** τοῦ **H L** τοῦ τε **D F T** || **18** <τῷ> **F H L T** omitted in **D** || **19** ἀίδιον **D H L T** <ἀ>ίδιον **F** | [ἑκάστου πράγματος] **D**.

Sigla: **D** = J. Dalfen (Leipzig, 1987) **F** = A. S. L. Farquharson (Oxford, 1944) **H** = C. R. Haines (Loeb, 1916) **L** = J. H. Leopold (OCT, 1908) **T** = W. Theiler (Zürich, 1951)