

**How Philosophy Makes the Stoic Sage Tranquil  
A Lesson of Our Times**

**Richard Sorabji**

Foreword

We present here the 1996 and 1997 Radhakrishnan Memorial lectures of the Institute. The Radhakrishnan Memorial Lecture is, perhaps, the most important annual academic event of the Institute. The lecture was instituted both to honour the memory of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and as a mark of our gratitude to him for his gift of Rashtrapati Nivas to the Institute. Every year, an eminent scholar—from India or abroad—is invited to deliver the lecture on a topic of his choice on any day during the birth week of Dr. Radhakrishnan. The 1996 lecture was delivered by Professor Richard Sorabji of King's College, London, on the subject of 'How Philosophy Makes the Stoic Sage Tranquil'. Professor Sorabji spent a memorable one week at the Institute discussing with our scholars both issues raised in his lecture and other more general academic and scholarly issues. Professor Sorabji did not speak from a prepared text. What we present here is a lightly edited version of the recorded lecture.

The 1997 lecture was delivered by Professor Andre Beteille of Delhi University. His lecture was on the subject of 'The Place of Tradition in Sociological Enquiry'. Professor Beteille stayed on to discuss his lecture with our Fellows, Associates and invited scholars. The lecture as well as the discussion was among the most exciting academic events of the year at the Institute.

Shimla  
MRINAL MIRI

How Philosophy Makes  
the Stoic Sage Tranquil  
*Radhakrishnan Memorial Lecture 1996*  
RICHARD SORABJI

How Philosophy Makes the  
Stoic Sage Tranquil

It is a very great honour for me to be asked to give 'The Radhakrishnan Memorial Lecture'. I would like to thank Professor Mrinal Miri and the Institute of Advanced Study for this honour and I would like to thank him also for the welcome he has given to myself and my wife in this extremely stimulating and impressive Institute. The whole arrangement here speaks of the place that philosophy holds in Indian life, as does the fact that one of India's Presidents was a philosopher. The discussions we have here, involving all the disciplines, but with specialists in the subject brought in from other parts of the country, are a rare and valuable thing. The fact that there is an Institute like the Indian Institute of Advanced Study for intellectual life is something that fills me with admiration. I think it is a very great thing for a nation that philosophy in particular and intellectual life in general should be given such a prominent place in the nation.

As you know, I am a scholar of Greek Philosophy, so I am counting on learning from you about Indian Philosophy. My mother used to visit Radhakrishnan in his rooms in Oxford but I never had the privilege of meeting him. I did have the privilege of knowing as a friend Bimal Matilal, who was his indirect successor in that Chair in Oxford, and indeed it was through the generosity of Bimal Matilal and his widow Karabi Matilal that a

lectureship in Indian Philosophy was created in King's College, London.

Radhakrishnan and Matilal tried to explain Indian philosophy to the West by different means. Radhakrishnan espoused the absolute idealism which had been very central to English philosophy at the turn of the century. Bimal Matilal, however, was an exponent of analytic philosophy and he was trying to show how much Indian Philosophy has in common with modern Western analytic philosophy. There are many people in this room who are carrying on that tradition. But I think it is important to ask ourselves, 'How wide is Western analytic philosophy?', because it has sometimes been given a very narrow definition. I will take just one example from a very excellent philosopher, Professor Bernard Williams. He has recently said that rigorous philosophy is not something which could ever help people with their emotions. Philosophy is not meant to do that; it is meant to be rigorous. He has applied this point in particular to the Greek philosophers I am going to talk about, the Stoics. He says it is extraordinary that there should have been an age in which people believed that rigorous analytic philosophy could help you to cope with your emotions.<sup>1</sup> I disagree with that and the Stoics disagree with that. What I am going to argue to-day is that the Ancient Greek Stoics were extremely rigorous in analytic philosophy. They offered an analysis of what the emotions are. I believe that analysis was more rigorous than any modern analysis of emotion in Western philosophy, and yet their motive for giving an analysis of emotion was that you should learn how to cope with your own emotions. Seneca, one of the ancient Stoics says that it would be quite pointless to analyse exactly what anger is, unless the analysis helps you to cope with anger.<sup>2</sup> I believe that rigorous analysis of what the emotions are should indeed help you to cope with your own emotions. If I am right this expands the area for comparison between Indian philosophy and Western analytic philosophy, because on the conception that Williams has expressed, Western analytic philosophy will be a comparatively narrow thing, so only some portion of Indian philosophy will be comparable. But I do not believe that over the centuries Western analytic philosophy has been so narrow, and if not, the possibilities of comparison are much wider.

Now the Stoics have a very striking view about what you would have to change if you are to cope with your emotions. They think that it is enough to change your intellectual opinions. Just change your intellectual beliefs and you will change your emotions. They disagree with another ancient Greek school, the school of Epicurus. The Epicureans recommend you to change your emotions by changing your attention: shift your attention to past pleasures, the pleasures of past philosophical conversations. Epicurus claims to be doing that on his death bed. But other schools say that this doesn't work. Of course, there is some deficiency in Epicurus' advice merely to shift your attention, because he suggested no mechanisms to help you make the shift. He did not, for example, suggest anything like the mantras which you might be taught in Yoga which actually help you shift your attention. Not surprisingly, the Stoics disagree and say that all you need to do is change your beliefs and that they will help you to do that and then your emotions will be changed. It is a very intellectualist view.

I should point out something noteworthy about the Stoics. Would they ever allow that change of behaviour would help? Yes and No. The Greeks did not on the whole go in for behavioural therapy. I will give you one example of behavioural therapy in ancient Greek philosophy. It is said that Socrates, if he felt he was beginning to be angry, would put a smile on his face and slow down his gait, so as to induce calmness. That would be an example of behavioural therapy. I understand there are comparable techniques in Sankya Yoga, but the technique is not Stoic. On the other hand, the Stoics would agree that behaviour could be relevant if it works directly on your beliefs. I will give you an example. When you are angry, the Stoics said that a good idea would be to look at your face in a mirror and see how ugly it makes you, because that will change your beliefs

about whether it is appropriate to react in this way. So here is a piece of behaviour which helps you to control anger but only because it directly works on your beliefs about how it is appropriate to act. By contrast, smiling does not in a direct way act on your beliefs. Stoic therapy is to some extent comparable with a branch of modern psychology called cognitive therapy because cognitive therapists are like the Stoics in many ways. Here is an example. There was a patient, who believed that he was going to have a heart attack. The hospital told him that his heart was perfectly alright, but he still had this fear. So the cognitive therapist said to him, 'do you feel now that you are going to have a heart attack?' 'Yes', he said, 'I am sure I am going to have one'. So the therapist said, 'now please will you do some star jumping? Jump in the air and raise your hand above your head'. The jumping was a piece of behaviour, but the treatment was still cognitive therapy and not behavioural therapy, because the whole point of the behaviour was to change his beliefs about his being likely to have an heart-attack. This is exactly parallel to looking in a mirror. Behaviour may be relevant to Stoic therapy, but only if it works directly on your beliefs, according to the Stoics.

You will notice how different this is from the view of Radhakrishnan, because the Stoics although they were religious people, very much so, are not using their religious view as part of the therapy. Indeed, one of the great Stoics, one of the founders of this therapy, the Stoic Chrysippus, says that he could cure people's emotions even if they did not share his theories about what was important in the universe. So the Stoics have to separate their therapy for the emotions from their religious beliefs. Radhakrishnan, by contrast, was offering his absolute idealism, his belief in the Absolute, as part of his method for transforming people's lives. The parallel for this approach is Greek neoplatonism. The Stoics, by contrast, can speak to you, whatever your religious beliefs.

It was from Socrates that the Stoics got their view that a merely intellectual change could change your emotions. Socrates was intellectualist in a rather similar way, despite the later story about changing his countenance with a smile. This is not what he is famous for. He is famous for his intellectualism, and Stoic intellectualism derives from that of Socrates. What I don't know is whether there are parallels in India. I am asking you whether in Indian philosophy there is such an intellectualist tradition which believed that that you could through purely intellectual changes achieve detachment and tranquility.

I will later come to a dissenting Stoic position, which prefers to revive the view of Plato that human souls are not just intellectual, but contain irrational forces, which require non-intellectual therapies of music and gymnastics. The last may recall the posture exercises of Yoga.

I will say one last introductory thing. I have been disagreeing with Bernard Williams' view, because I do believe that rigorous analysis in philosophy can have a direct bearing on life and on emotions. But on the other hand I do agree with Bernard Williams about something else. I am not in favour of what is called applied ethics and there I totally agree with Williams. Let me give a caricature of applied ethics. I stress it is a caricature, because the view in question has done more good than almost any contemporary piece of Western philosophy by making people think about their treatment of animals, and even changing the meat industry. But an incautious follower of this view might think as follows. You have run into a peacock with your car. You do not know how much you have injured it. Should you stop and see if the peacock is alright? According to our exponent of applied ethics, what matters is satisfying preference. You think of your theory and your theory says, 'How many preferences does a peacock have? You are hurrying home for supper with your wife. How many preferences does your wife have?' Obviously your wife has more and stronger preferences than a peacock. So the conclusion is that you are not to stop to see whether the peacock is alright. That is applied

ethics. Now I am not recommending applied ethics when I say that philosophy is relevant to life. The Stoics are not working out some ethical theory in the abstract and then cranking out an application. I think we will see, when we have examined the Stoics a little bit, that there is something seamless about what they are doing. The analysis of what emotions are has immediate implications for how you might cope with them.

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My story involves three great Stoic philosophers from the period 300 BC to AD 100<sup>3</sup> Chrysippus invented the theory, another Stoic Poisonous attacked it, even though he was a fellow Stoic, because the Greeks were very argumentative people. Then I believe the Stoic Seneca repaired the theory. This is not generally accepted, but this is how I see Seneca's relation to the others. Chrysippus' theory of what emotions are is amazingly precise. He says that there are four basic emotions and all the other emotions are species of those four: distress and pleasure, appetite and fear. Now each emotion consists of intellectual judgments and indeed of two judgments. When you have an emotion, you judge that there is something good or bad at hand some harm or benefit. Secondly you judge that it is appropriate to react. Chrysippus goes further. There are two types of reactions which you judge to be appropriate. For distress and pleasure, I believe it has not in the past been clear what the approved reactions are meant to be. But there is a text which settles the matter. The reactions which you judge appropriate in distress and pleasure are inner reaction. When you are distressed, you have sinking feelings in your chest. It is actually your soul which is sinking according to the Stoics because they were materialists and they thought the soul was something material or physical. What you are actually feeling, in their view, is your soul sinking. We would not believe that part, but I do believe that you often have sinking feelings in your chest, or expansive feelings. So the second judgment in the case of distress and pleasure is that it is appropriate to have these sinkings or expansions. But in the other two emotions, fear and appetite, what you judge appropriate is behaviour. It is appropriate to reach for something, if you have an appetite for it; it is appropriate to avoid it, if you fear it. So to rehearse it once again, every emotion simply is two judgments: the judgment that there is good or bad for you and the judgment that it is appropriate to react—to react either with inner sinking and expansion or with avoidance and reaching for. There is one extra complication which I need not dwell on, but I will just mention it. Seneca who elaborates the whole theory suggests that there is an extra judgment, which comes after a little while. You start by judging that it is appropriate to react. If you are angry, you might judge that it is appropriate to take revenge. But after a while, says Seneca, you move on to another stage. You begin to judge, 'I must take revenge, right or wrong'. Those involved in academic committee work will find this an extremely helpful piece of advice. You can even time with your watch when people pass from Seneca's stage two to stage three and begin to think, 'I must get even, right or not'.

There was a brilliant Stoic who came later, Poisonous, who said, 'This is wrong. We Stoics have forgotten what Plato told us. The very intellectual Stoic account of what the emotions are, namely, two intellectual judgments, forgets the irrational forces about which Plato spoke. Plato told us that there are three parts of our souls: not just reason or intellect, but also two irrational forces which he compared with horses that are drawing the charioteer of reason. We Stoics are forgetting the irrational horses.' Of course, there is a direct comparison with Freud, who read Plato and who distinguished the ego, the super-ego and the id as parts of our personality. Freud actually draws the comparison with a rider and a horse. 'So' Poisonous says, 'you do not understand emotions nor can you cope with them, if you forget the horses'. He gives five counter examples to show that judgments are not sufficient, nor necessary for emotions. Judgments are very important to emotions and have a major role to play, but they are not in every case sufficient nor in

every case necessary. I do not think these five objections have been sufficiently attended to. There has been a lot of discussion of similar modern intellectualist theories of the emotions. But I think the modern discussion has been much vaguer because nobody in the modern discussion has been able to say precisely which judgments they were indentifying with emotions. So correspondingly modern counter examples cannot be precise. Poisonous is precise. His first two objections are meant to show that intellectual judgments are not sufficient for emotions.

First he says that we often find that emotions fade because they are exhausted. On his diagnosis, the horses are exhausted. We can judge that something bad has happened to us. We can judge it would be perfectly appropriate to react, but we are just exhausted, so emotion fails. The two judgments are there, but they are evidently not sufficient to produce the emotions. I think he is right. I think there are other examples of this too. Think of cases of emergency. A fire breaks out in the room. Immediately the Director is intent on rescuing everybody. He judges that something very bad is liable to happen. He judges that it would be right to react. But he is so intent on making sure that everybody escapes through the right door that he does not feel any fear at that time. It is only afterwards that he begins to feel the horror. This is another example, not given by Poisonous, in which judgments are there, but they are not sufficient to produce the emotion of fear. I think in both examples (I am going beyond Poisonous), it is because attention is not directed in the right way to produce fear. What the Director is attending to is the right safety measures for getting everybody out of the room, he is so intent on that, that his attention is not fully focussed on the danger. Of course, he is aware of the danger; otherwise he would not be sending people through the right exit. But his focus is on what to do exactly. So attention is what is missing. That is why he does not feel any horror until later.

The second objection is that sometimes we have the right judgments but do not have the emotion due to lack of imagination. This can happen with pity or fear. You judge that there is a danger to your country You judge that it would be right to react by re-arming perhaps. (Think of Britain at the time of Hitler in the 1930s). And yet you cannot imagine Hitler invading your country. You cannot actually manage to feel fear even if you judge that something bad is liable to happen, and it would be right to react, so long as the idea remains intellectual and you do not imagine it. Similarly with pity: you hear that in a distant country hundreds of thousands of people have been killed in a flood. You judge this is very bad; you judge it would be right to react, but you cannot imagine it; it is too far away. I think this is what Prime Minister Chamberlain said about Czechoslovakia when it was invaded by Hitler: It is a long way away and is a country we know little about. He could not imagine it.

So there are two kinds of example already where through lack of attention or imagination you have the judgments, but they are not sufficient for the emotions. Now there are three objections which show that you might have emotions without having the judgments at all. So the judgments are not necessary for the emotions. The first is an example in which you disown the judgment. Poisonous is actually talking about cases in which you are crying, although you do not believe that there is anything bad, and do not believe that it would be right to cry, but you find yourself crying all the same. I am not certain that he is talking about the distress rather than the tears, but the point certainly would apply to the distress as well as the tears. The situation is one in which you do not actually judge 'this is bad' because the badness is a mere appearance and you disown it. And yet you are distressed all the same. Here is another example of disowned emotion. Take the fear of flying. Quite a lot of people who are afraid of flying realize that this is stupid. They realize that flying is very safe, so there is nothing bad on the horizon. They realize that it would be wrong to react by avoiding flying. They realize all that, but they are still afraid.

For this fear it turns out that the judgments are not necessary. At most they *feel as if* something bad was going to happen. They *feel as if* it would be better not to fly, but they realize that they are wrong. Now *feeling as if* is important for the Stoics, because when they say that emotion involves judgments, by judgment they mean something more than *just feeling as if*. In fact, they distinguish *feeling-as-if* or appearance, as I would like to translate the Greek word, from judgment. We cannot help it, if it appears to us that something bad has happened to us. But when it does so appear, Stoicism instructs us to step back and say, 'yes', but that is a mere appearance. 'Is it right or wrong? Should we assent to this appearance?' Assent is a very central concept. Should we agree, in other words, to this appearance? You do not have the judgment until you actually agree to the appearance. So judgment is assent to an appearance and it is your reason that gives the assent. If we are not trained in Stoicism, we are not trained to realize that we have the opportunity of stepping back and questioning appearances. We do not ask, 'yes, but is it actually bad?' 'Yes, but is it really appropriate to react?' Stoicism gives you exercises to practice, thinking about whether the appearance of good or bad, the appearance that it is appropriate to react is to be assented to or not. Most people, as soon as there is an appearance that things are good or bad, just automatically assent. They do not even notice that assent is a separate mental operation. They may not even feel that there is a difference between appearance and assent. Indeed this difference does not come out until the Stoics actually help you by drawing attention to the fact that you always have the opportunity of withholding assent from appearance. Only after that do you realize that in the past you have been automatically assenting and running the appearance and assent into a single act. But conceptually they are distinct acts.

Poisonous has two more examples to show that there are irrational forces at work and that judgments are not necessary for emotions. Animals surely have emotions. Actually, the other Stoics deny that, but surely it is very plausible, as any of you who have pets will know. Thus animals have emotions and yet, according to the Stoics, animals do not have reason, so they cannot make judgments. Actually, I do not quite agree with Poisonous' last kind of example because I believe that animals do make judgments. But in a way Poisonous is right, because I do not think animals normally make judgments in the Stoic sense of having an appearance and also assenting to it. For I do not think we can make a logical distinction in the case of most animals between appearance and assent. Also I would concede that animals would very seldom judge that it is appropriate to react. I think they often judge that things are good or bad for them, but examples of judging that it is appropriate to react will be rare. Take the case of a guide dog for a blind person. The guide dog is taking the blind person across the road. The blind person says, 'go on, it is safe now', but the dog sees the traffic coming. I think the dog might have to judge whether it is appropriate to respond to his master's call. But this would be an exceptional case. So basically I do agree with Poisonous that animals have emotions without having full-scale Stoic judgments and without having judgments that it is appropriate to react.

Poisonous has another example to show that judgments are not necessary for emotions. Take the case of wordless music, rhythms and scales. People get emotions from rhythms and scales. Surely they do not change in their judgments, but that will not stop the emotions, says Poisonous. If we wanted to support him, we might say that in wordless music, no story is being told, so there is nothing for your judgment to be about. We are not being told that something bad has happened, if the music is wordless. So surely emotions aroused by music do not involve judgment.

These are Poisonous' five objections. I believe that Seneca is offering a reply. Seneca drew a sharp distinction between the real emotion and the preliminaries which people tend to confuse with emotion. But the preliminaries are not emotion nor any part of it, because mere appearance that things are good or bad can set up in us these involuntary

reactions—these physical and mental involuntary first movements. They can be aroused without waiting for the full emotion, or the judgment, but already by the mere appearance of good or bad. This appearance can give rise to involuntary tears. Or take the involuntary sinking feeling in your chest. That can be aroused before you have any judgment or emotion by the mere appearance that something is bad. Seneca's view is that since no assent has occurred nor any judgment, they cannot yet be emotion. Moreover, he interprets in this light all three of the cases I have just gone through in which emotion appears to be unaccompanied by judgment: the case of animals, the case of wordless music and the case of tears. His picking precisely these three Posidonian examples is part of my reason for thinking that the examples were designed as a reply to Posidonius, even if Seneca does not say so.

Posidonius offered animals, wordless music and perhaps disowned tears as examples of judgment-free emotion. What Seneca's analysis suggests is that they do not provide examples of emotion at all but only of first movements. Tears are often first movements. Animals are capable of no more than first movements. Similarly with wordless music. A retired soldier in peace-time hears a trumpet and he suffers a first movement; he involuntarily reaches for his sword, but he has not suffered any emotion, only first movements.

Is this true of wordless music? It may be true of some cases but not, I think, of all. Wordless music in many cases does arouse real emotions and if I were defending Chrysippus I would say it also arouses real judgments. Often in music, and you can tell me if this is true of Indian Music, you want the music to resolve itself. This point has been well made by others. And are judgments there? What I would add on Chrysippus' behalf is that at least often there are judgments, because you judge it would be good and would be appropriate to react with expansive feelings, if the music resolved itself. So I think there are often real emotions when you listen to wordless music and real judgments. Moreover, this primary emotion and set of judgments may give rise to further emotions which could be different for different listeners. For the judgment that it would be good if the music resolved itself may remind you of similar emotions which you have had in the past, or may give rise to similar emotions which you have had in the past, or may give rise to similar emotions that you have never had before: emotional longings, for example. I think you might defend Chrysippus to some extent along these lines. I do not think that you can defend him wholly, because sometimes with these further emotional longings that you are reminded of or which you have stirred up in you for the first time, you cannot identify what the object of your emotion is. You may not even be aware that you are being reminded of some emotions that you have had before. If you cannot identify the object of your emotion, then it is most unlikely that you could assent and think, 'yes indeed, there is something very good or something very bad'. You could at most *feel as if* there were something good, but you would not quite know what it was. So I think Posidonius is right that there are many examples of wordless music in which we do not have an actual judgment of something good to which we can assent but at most *a feeling as if* an appearance as the Stoics call it. That would support Posidonius' objections to Chrysippus: There is not always the intellectual judgment or assent when music arouses your emotions.

So much for the five objections of Posidonius, I will now add one objection of my own and that will be the last objection. The objection is that Chrysippus makes it too easy to get rid of unwanted emotions, if all you have to do is to get rid of the judgment that it is appropriate to react. Surely when we have emotions we are often perfectly well aware that it is not appropriate to react. On Chrysippus' view, we only have to shed the judgment of appropriateness in order to be rid of emotion. Isn't that an objection to this analysis of what emotions are? Yes and No. It is not a successful objection right away for

all cases, I think. Take the case of anger. When you sit on academic committees, I think the Director will confirm, you often hear that something very bad has taken place. Nonetheless you may judge that it would be very counter-productive to react and I think you often find that you do not feel any anger at all. The second judgment is actually very important. You have an objective. You want people to reach a sensible decision. You realize that if you reacted to whatever bad thing has happened you would impede their doing so. And then you find you do not have any anger at all. Of course, this is a special case, because if you judge that it would be counter-productive to retaliate, this would also affect the other judgment: because you will not think that retaliation would be such a good thing. You know that retaliation would just produce a great deal of chaos. So both judgments are going to be changed by your realizing that retaliation is counter-productive. It is sometimes very relevant, then to get rid of the second judgment that it would be appropriate to react.

What about distress and pleasure? Here the reactions which you judge appropriate are the secret inner sinking and expansion. It is very difficult to get rid of the judgment that those sinkings are appropriate, unless you also get rid of the other judgment, that you suffered harm. If you feel you have been harmed, it is often no good saying to yourself 'yes but I should not have these sinking feelings', because you feel 'how appropriate these sinking feelings are, given the way I have been treated'. In order to get rid of the judgment that these sinking feelings are appropriate, you usually have to get rid of the judgment that you have suffered any harm. When you look at it more carefully, you realize, 'well they did not do the right things to me, but actually I am perfectly alright', and only then can you appreciate that the sinking feelings are after all not appropriate. So even in this case we are not easily going to get the situation that you might get rid of the judgment that the sinking feelings are appropriate and yet still have the emotion. For by the time you had got rid of the judgment that the sinking feelings were appropriate, you would have already got rid of the judgment that you had suffered real harm and thereby you would have got rid of the emotion. So I do not think we often get any difficulty here. But there are other cases in which there is real difficulty.

Just to take one example, with fear we are often aware that it would be quite inappropriate to run away and yet we still have the fear. So I think this is a real difficulty. In fact, with fear it may be that we do not so much judge that it would be appropriate to run away, as desire to run away. Some people have suggested that emotion should be analysed in terms of desire instead of in terms of judging that it is appropriate to react. But I think the 'desire' analysis is mistaken. Certainly, in distress we do not want a sinking feeling. At most, we may wish that things were otherwise, but that is a qualified sort of want. And in pleasure, we need not necessarily want the pleasure prolonged. We may welcome it while it is there, but welcoming is not the same as wanting, which implied a lack.

So much for the objections to Chrysippus' very intellectual analysis of emotions: five objections of Posidonius and one from me. Nearly all of the objections are partially correct. So where does this leave the intellectual analysis of emotions? Not in total ruins; there is still lot to be learnt from it. Admittedly we have seen many cases of emotion without judgment, but even in most of these cases there is at least a feeling as if there was good or bad, or a feeling as if it would be appropriate to react. So even if there is no judgment, there is usually *feeling as if*—not always, but usually. Similarly, if you take the other objections where you get the two judgments without the emotions, it is very easy to see what is missing. In many of the cases what is missing is either attention or imagination and we can see how to repair the analysis by adding reference to these. The account of emotion is not right as it stands. Posidonius' objections have real force. But nonetheless, the revised analysis taking these things into account will cover at least many of the cases.



Now let me come to my original question. Can the analysis, at least when it is revised, help us to cope with emotions? It obviously can. For one thing, it immediately shows you which two propositions you need to attack if you want to get rid of emotions: the proposition that some good or bad has happened to you (have I really suffered harm?) and the proposition that it is appropriate to react (would it really be right to retaliate?). Also it is very realistic of the Stoics to draw attention to sinking and expansive feelings. We all of us have them. And it is a great help to be told that you can discount them. The important thing is to evaluate whether you have really suffered harm. While you are evaluating that, it helps you enormously to think 'don't worry if your teeth are chattering. Don't worry if you have not a sinking feeling. That is not the emotion'. What often happens is that people think, 'I am in a terrible situation', as soon as they realize that their teeth are chattering, or that they have a sinking feeling. So the Stoic really wants you to realize that this is just your teeth chattering, just a first movement and is neither here nor there. We still have the question: am I really in a bad position or not? That is actually very calming.

The Stoics do not just leave you there. They will give you a whole bag of tricks to help you assess these appearances and change your mind about your situation. Here is an example. Recently people who thought they had won the national lottery in England and found that they had made a mistake and had not got the winning number, committed suicide. Why? What is bad about not winning the lottery? A week earlier, they thought there was nothing bad about it. What happened? The difference is that now failure to win the lottery is unexpected. They have confused the unexpected with the bad. It is very often helpful to ask ourselves, 'is what is happening to me really bad, or is it merely unexpected?' There are also useful little hints which help you to re-evaluate the 'appropriate to react' proposition. I have given a few examples already: look at your face in a mirror, if you are tempted to anger, and that may lead you to think that it is not appropriate to react, because it makes you ugly.

There are other philosophical questions that the Stoics raise which also give direct help. They discuss: 'what is the value of anger?' and they argue that it is not actually helpful. You can achieve everything you want to achieve by sheer determination to produce the right result, without anger having to be involved. These ideas meant nothing to me until I, like you, Mr. Director, enjoyed the experience of **academic** administration, when I realized how true it is that anger does not help people. The Stoics also offer philosophical views about the nature of time and the self. For example, they give the Indian view that you should not be afraid of death, because after all there is no continuous self, but only a sequence of momentary selves. You have died many times already. As a matter of fact, that view is given by Seneca. It is also given by a non-Stoic, the Platonist Plutarch, who very inconsistently discusses the idea of a momentary self also in an absolutely opposite way: If you want to achieve tranquility you must avoid being split into momentary selves, by weaving your past life into one whole. Otherwise you will not be tranquil. You should use your memory to create a biography of yourself. Include the bad parts of your life with the good; they are all parts of the picture. People who do not use their memory to create a biography for themselves are like a person who is plaiting a rope behind his shoulder and who does not notice that a donkey is eating up the rope as he plaits it. Tranquillity involves creating a self, instead of allowing disintegration into many selves.

There are many other philosophical ideas in the Stoics which are relevant to actual life and to the achievement of tranquility. But now I must make a concession. In so far as the Stoic analysis offered by Chrysippus is mistaken, to that extent we cannot expect that it will help us with our emotions. Take for example fear. We have realized that you do not remove your fear in battle, by deciding that it is not appropriate to run away. We have to

admit that. So to the extent that Chrysippus was wrong about fear in battle, to that extent, he is not going to help you to get rid of it. Yet even with fear we can see Chrysippus is of some help. Think of the fear of flying. British Airways offers a one-day course which had 80% success in curing people in a single day of the fear of flying. But they have to use imagination as well as judgment. What they do by the end of the day is to stop you having the appearance or feeling as if something bad is going to happen if you fly. And that does cure the emotion. We are talking now not of the 'appropriate to react' proposition, but of the 'something bad is going to happen' proposition. If you remove the appearance that something bad will happen, that actually does cure fear. So even with fear, though Chrysippus' analysis is wrong, nonetheless the revised analysis can help you to cope with fear.

I would acknowledge that there are cases in which you do not need to change your judgment because a shift of attention will do the trick instead. Perhaps the saying of mantras will take your mind off what you are thinking about, so that you do not need to change your opinions. But the ancients complained, and I agree, that it is often difficult to shift your attention. So I think that much more often it would be more effective to change your judgment. What must be admitted is that to the extent that Chrysippus' analysis of emotion is wrong, to that extent it will not help you to cope with your emotions. But that proves my point, because it shows that rigorous analysis is relevant to real life. It is the failure of Chrysippus' rigorous analysis of what emotion is that has impaired his attempt to help you in real life to cope with your emotions. So the idea that rigorous philosophy can help you in real life, so far from being refuted by the hole in Chrysippus' analysis, is actually confirmed by the fact that those very holes impair the therapy, so they must be relevant to the therapy. I must have to consider an objection put to me by Arindam Chakrabarty. First, a bad analysis of the emotions could go hand in hand with good therapy, and secondly a good<sup>4</sup> analysis could be untherapeutic. Both points are true, and of the second Seneca is only too keenly aware. If emotion had been an involuntary shock, he says, then the correct analysis of emotion would have impeded therapy by making it seem hopeless. If Seneca's own analysis, by contrast, is helpful, if true, this is because of its particular content. If he is right that emotions depend on voluntary assent, there is a positive encouragement to attempt therapy, and if they are distinct from first movements, there is encouragement not to be deterred by these. Moreover, if an appearance of good or bad really is a necessary component of emotion, it simply follows that avoiding the appearance will avoid the emotion. Chrysippus is doubtless too optimistic in supposing that one can always in emotion question the appearance of good or bad, but one can surely do so more often than is supposed.

My main message then is that rigorous analytic philosophy is closely related to philosophy as a way of life. These have often been married in the Western tradition, and certainly were in Stoicism. It is just a feature of some contemporary Western analytic philosophy that they are not married. If we remember that they were married in much of the Western tradition then comparison between Western philosophy and Indian philosophy becomes more fruitful, because the comparisons, as I said, can take place over a much wider area.

I will finish by coming back to Radhakrishnan. Radhakrishnan, as I said at the beginning, hoped to produce changes in the world by putting forward a religious and metaphysical view: a view that was quite complicated, a view which some people have experienced as true, a view which has wonderfully strong echoes in the tradition of Greek Neoplatonism and in Christianity, but not for everybody and certainly not for everybody in the West nowadays. So Radhakrishnan's message would not nowadays appeal to so many people in the West. They no longer have any feeling for Absolute Idealism nor even in many cases for religion. The Stoic analysis has, therefore, certain advantages, because it leaves

out certain things which are difficult for some people to agree to. It talks to you whoever you are, and whatever our point of view on religion. Its occasional appeal to metaphysical ideas is an optional extra. I think this point was made in antiquity by the Great Latin speaking philosopher Boethius, who was executed around 524 AD in a rather horrible way on a charge of treason, leaving incomplete his life's work of translating Greek philosophy into Latin. That is why Latin went through the dark ages in philosophy, because it was another 600 years before they could have access to the Greek philosophical texts. Boethius wrote in prison, awaiting execution, a wonderful work, the *Consolation of Philosophy*, paraphrased by King Alfred and translated by Queen Elizabeth I. In the first two books of this work, Boethius gives you what are basically Stoic and other Greek consolations, advice on calming your emotions. But then he says, 'now I am going to move to a much harder view' and he starts to tell you about the nature of God. He realized, and he was right, that consolations which depend on a certain view of God are much harder for people to take in. They are much more complicated. May be they are truer; I am not expressing any view about that. But they are harder, whereas the Stoics speak to you directly, without the apparatus of metaphysical or of theological beliefs. What I want to learn from you is whether there are traditions in Indian philosophy other than the one Radhakrishnan was talking about, which, like the Stoics, talk to you in a direct way about how to achieve tranquillity, whoever you are, whatever your religious belief. It may be that Westerners extract yogic exercises from their context and so free them of presuppositions of this kind. But are the original systems free in this? That is a question which I am not competent to judge, and I ask you to tell me about it.<sup>5</sup>

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Bernard, Williams, 'The need to be sceptical' (review of Martha Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire*, *London Review of Books*, 20 Oct. 1994, 25-6; id. 'On hating and despising philosophy', *London Review of Books*, 18 April 1996, 17-18.
2. Seneca *On Anger* Book 2, Chapters 1 to 4, makes this point and gives the analysis of anger which I am reporting. Book I, chapter 3, sections 7 to 9 draws conclusion about animal emotion. There is a loose translation in the Loeb classical Library, *Seneca Moral Essays* vol. I, and an accurate one by John Cooper and John Procope, *Seneca On Anger*, published by Aris and Phillips, in paperback, Warminster England, 1995.
3. The attack of Posidonius on Chrysippus is reported, with quotations, by Galen, in Books 4 and 5 of the *Placita of Plato and Hippocrates*. There is an excellent translation by Philip de Lacy, in *Corpus Medicorum Graecorum*, Volume V. 4, 1, 2. The **information** on sinking and expansion is in Books 2 and 3 in the same volume (Book 2.8.4; 3.1.25; 3.5.43-4; 3.7.4). The two texts, one by Seneca, one by Galen, between them cover most of what I am saying. The picture can be filled out by reading Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, Books 3 and 4, translated in the Loeb Classical Library.
4. As regards the first point, the therapeutic efficacy of shedding a certain judgment would only show that that judgment was in *some* way necessary to the emotion. It would not **confirm** Seneca's view that the judgment was a component of the emotion, nor that the only components were judgments, nor that judgment was needed rather than appearance.
5. I am very grateful to Professor Mrinal Miri for bringing in philosophers and scholars from other parts of India. I learnt particularly from the comments of Professor Arindam Chakraborty and Professor Sundara Rajan. In addition, Arindam Chakraborty explained to me the Sankya system of Yoga, and from this I see that the Yogic exercises have such a different function in the system, as to make comparisons with Greek somewhat superficial.