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Being you Own Stoic Self

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Being your Own Stoic Self

The Significance of Panaetius' Theory of Personae

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Introduction to the subject

Throughout history, questions regarding morality, individuality and the correctness of behaviour have always been popular. Already in antiquity, people wrote works on what appropriate conduct was. Around 44 BCE, the famous Roman orator Cicero wrote a letter to his son, Cicero Minor, on exactly this question. In this rather lengthy letter, he instructed his son on behaviour that was appropriate and that would, moreover, suit his nature. The inspiration for this letter was a work on the same subject by Panaetius – a prominent Stoic philosopher in his own day. Despite Cicero's effort and Panaetius' erudition, the letter seems to have proven fruitless. Cicero Minor was mostly remembered for his alcoholism by Pliny and Seneca. Seneca further states that Cicero Minor "had none of his father's ability except his wit".[1]

Today, people continue to grapple with the same questions that were posed – and to some extent answered – in antiquity. Interestingly, (a part of) Stoicism has experienced a resurgence in recent years. Many books have been written that are inspired by this antique philosophy. One of these books, called *Stoic Wisdom: Ancient Lessons and Modern Resilience*, addresses the phenomenon:

> *Stoicism has made a comeback – and a huge one at that. There are Stoic self-help books, digests of Stoic quotes, websites with Stoic wisdom to kickstart your day, podcasts, broadcasts, and online crash courses – some to learn how to become manly, others to become calm, some to learn to meditate Roman style, others to practice abstention, some to learn to take more control, others to take less. […] The fervor has spread to the alt-right, too, with Stoic enthusiasts championing the great works of Western civilization as a bastion of whiteness and masculinity*.[2]

This renewed attention for Stoicism has been the starting point of my research; I think there is some relevance to revisiting the ancient sources. Instead of focusing on the most popular Stoics – Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus and Seneca – I want to focus on Panaetius, whom I have already mentioned briefly. Although this Stoic philosopher has become an obscure figure in the course of history, he was a widely acclaimed thinker in his own day. According to Cicero, Panaetius was milder and less severe than previous Stoics.[3] This characterization makes him into a potentially interesting figure, who could provide a compelling account of Stoicism. In my thesis, I will examine one aspect of Panaeatius' philosophy, namely his 'theory of *personae*', which is connected to notions of individuality and personality by many scholars. Although contemporary Stoicism will not be revisited until the conclusion, it can be kept in mind when reading this thesis.

[1] Seneca, *Suasoriae*, 7.13. Here and elsewhere, all translations will be by myself.
[2] Sherman, 2021: 1-2
[3] Cicero, *De Finibus*, 4.79

Research Question

The research question of this thesis is: "What is the significance of Panaetius' theory of *personae* in Stoic philosophy?" This question, in fact, contains two subquestions that will both need to be answered. First, we must look at how the theory of *personae* was significant in relation to Stoicism before the time of Panaetius. In this way, we can judge Panaetius' innovativeness. Only then can we judge what the significance of Panaetius' theory is for later Stoicism – our second subquestion. The first subquestion deals with Panaetius' innovativeness, and the second one assesses his impact on later Stoic philosophy. Besides answering these two questions, it will, of course, be necessary to have a good understanding of what the theory of *personae* is. By providing an answer to these subquestions, I hope to be able to answer my research question.

Methodology and structure

To answer the research question, I will closely examine passages from the first book of Cicero's *De Officiis*. The passage on the four *personae* in *De Officiis* is widely assumed to reflect Panaetius' thoughts.[4] I will look at each *persona* in detail and see whether parallells can be found in pre-Panaetian Stoicism. In this way, I will try to identify possible Panaetian innovations.

To judge Panaetius' influence on later Stoic philosophy, I will closely examine the writings of Epictetus (ca. 50-130 CE). Epictetus has written passages that similarly deal with *personae* and related concepts, which makes him a suitable representative of the later Stoa. However, there is a period of roughly two centuries between the writings of Panaetius and Epictetus, in which Stoics like Musonius Rufus and Seneca lived. Because of the body of his writings, Seneca is of special interest. By using secondary literature, I will look at his relation to Panaetius and Epictetus.

This thesis will be divided into three chapters. The first chapter focuses on Panaetius and his *Peri tou Kathēkontos*, a work that discussed what *appropriate action* is. Chapter one also covers relevant aspects of Stoicism, as well as a brief prehistory of the notion of *personae.* In this way, we are able to understand the theory of *personae.* Chapter two focuses on the *personae*-theory as it is found in Cicero's *De Officiis*, that reflects Panaetius' *Peri tou Kathēkontos*. In this chapter, all four *personae* will be covered systematically, and we will see whether the content of the *personae* can be linked to pre-Panaetian Stoicism. This will hopefully allow us to distinguish between common Stoic notions and particular 'Panaetian' innovations. The chapter will conclude with a reflection of the four *personae* as a whole, and with a preliminary list of significant possible innovations that could be ascribed to Panaetius. Chapter three covers the thoughts of Epictetus, an important post-Panaetian Stoic philosopher. Our primary focus will be on his *Discourses*, as this work provides us with reflections on *personae* (and a similar concept). I will then judge to what extent the possible innovations that have been postulated in chapter two are present in Epictetus' philosophy.

[4] Striker, 2022: 223

Knowing this, we are able to judge Panaetius' significance for later Stoicism. In my conclusion, I will briefly reformulate my main findings, commenting on Panaetius' innovativeness and his influence on later Stoic philosophy.

Status quaestionis

The theory of the four *personae* has received considerable scholarly attention, especially from Christopher Gill, Richard Sorabji, and Anthony Long. Panaetius' *personae*-theory has been part of a debate surrounding the ancient concepts of self and personality. A central question in this debate is whether something like these concepts existed in antiquity, and if so, how much these concepts differed from ours. Verheij (2014) gives an overview of this debate and distinguishes two sides. Some scholars, most notably Richard Sorabji, emphasize the continuity between ancient and modern conceptions of selfhood and personality. Other scholars, the most prominent being Christopher Gill, argue that there is a fundamental difference between these ancient and modern conceptions. In his work "The Structured Self in Hellenistic and Roman Thought" Gill employs a distinction between a 'subjective-individualist' conception of the self, and an 'objective-participant' conception of the self, the former focusing on unique individuality and the latter on social and communal life. The subjective-individualist conception of selfhood and personality, which is prevalent in the modern Western world, finds its origins – according to Gill – in the philosophy of René Descartes (1596-1650). Gill believes that this modern-day conception of selfhood and personality leads us to misinterpret ancient texts. Verheij describes the phenomenon as follows:

> *As modern Western individuals, we have the tendency to incorporate post-Cartesian ideas of what it means to be a subject into our interpretation of ancient thinking, thereby distorting the objective-participant conception that these writings actually represent.*

Gill argues that the instances of selfhood and personality that we recognize in ancient texts are not actual inherent features of these texts, but projections of our modern conceptual framework.

In this debate, I share Verheij's position; he believes that the subjective-individualist aspect and the objective-participant aspect do not rule each other out.[5] In other words, while there may be a strong focus on social relations, this does not imply that there is no individuality or self. Many scholars (such as Dave Machek, Steve Inwood and Charles Kahn) propose theories in which certain concepts, such as the self and the will, develop throughout antiquity, oftentimes becoming more like ours.

In my thesis, I will often refer to the writings of Long, Gill and Sorabji. Furthermore, Dave Machek's article "Using Our Selves: An Interpretation of the Stoic Four-*Personae* Theory in Cicero's *De Officiis* I*"* is also important to this study, because it makes some connections that I haven't found elsewhere. The question of this thesis has been answered in multiple way.

[5] Verheij, 2014: 195-196

Machek, for example, argues that the psychological model that emerges from his interpretation of Panaetius' theory of *personae* "was adopted by several Stoic thinkers after Panaetius, and that it can be therefore understood as an idea which is characteristic of younger Stoicism, but which nevertheless has a reasonable foothold in Stoicism generally considered".[6] In this article, Panaetius therefore seems to be an important figure in the development of the notion of selfhood and personality. Sorabji similarly believes that Epictetus repeats much of Panaetius' doctrine.

Whereas some scholars believe that Panaetius' theory of *personae* has influenced later Stoic philosophers such as Epictetus, other scholars have argued to the contrary. In his article "The Four Stoic 'Personae'", Phillip De Lacy points to the possibility that Epictetus' doctrine reflects a pre-Panaetian stage of Stoic philosophy, and that Panaetius' theory of *personae* could be a reaction to this earlier doctrine.[7] In his article "Personhood and Personality: The Four-Personae theory in Cicero, *De Officiis* I", Gill argues that Epictetus has not simply copied Panaetius, and that there are some fundamental differences.[8]

It is evident that the question of my thesis has been answered in various ways. One important factor in answering this question is how readily scholars consider an idea to be 'Panaetian'. If a lot of ideas are seen as Panaetian, it is easier to find Panaetian influences in later Stoic philosophy. I think that it is important to critically analyze which ideas can actually be attributed to Panaetius. Much attention will be paid to this question in my thesis.

[6] Machek, 2016: 179
[7] De Lacy, 1977: 167
[8] Gill, 1988: 188-189

Chapter 1: Panaetius, the *Peri tou Kathēkontos*, and the Stoa

1.1 Panaetius' biography

Despite Panaetius' prominence during his lifetime, relatively little of him is known to us. He lived from approximately 185 to 109 BCE and belonged to a noble family of Rhodes. He achieved fame as head of the Stoa, one of the leading philosophical schools in the Hellenistic period. Panaetius became head in 129 BCE, after Antipater of Tarsus, the former head, passed away.[9]

The Stoa that Panaetius became head of had been under attack by the Academy – a rival school of philosophy. One of the fiercest attackers of the Stoa had been the Academic Carneades (ca. 214-129 BCE). Carneades' critique forced the Stoics to adapt, and to integrate philosophers who had not been part of the Stoa into their own philosophy. Already under Antipater of Tarsus, the Stoa had begun to change. Panaetius further contributed to this development of Stoic philosophy.

The face of Stoicism was changed by Panaetius in multiple ways. For one, he did not only teach in the original Stoa in Athens, but also in Rhodes, where he opened up a second school.[10] Another instance in which Panaetius seems to differ from, or expand upon the original Stoa, is in some of his doctrines and in his style. Cicero makes mention of this in his work *De Finibus*:

> *Quam illorum tristitiam atque asperitatem fugiens Panaetius nec acerbitatem sententiarum nec disserendi spinas probavit fuitque in altero genere mitior, in altero inlustrior, semperque habuit in ore Platonem, Aristotelem, Xenocratem, Theophrastum, Dicaearchum, ut ipsius scripta declarant*.[11]
>
> Avoiding their [sc. the earlier Stoics'] harshness and severity, Panaetius approved neither the sourness of their sentiments nor the difficulties of their arguments. He was milder in the one [sc. his content] and more respectable in the other [sc. his mode of expression], and he always quoted Plato, Aristotle, Xenocrates, Theophrastus and Dicaearchus, as his own writings make evident.

Here, we read that Panaetius frequently quoted other thinkers. The names mentioned are noteworthy because these belong to prominent figures from 'rival' schools. Plato and Xenocrates were heads of the Academy, and Aristotle, Theophrastus and Dicaearchus belonged to the Lyceum. Instead of attacking these schools, Panaetius seems to have incorporated some of their ideas into his own thinking. Moreover, he rejected certain Stoic notions. For one, Panaetius dismissed the Stoic notion of a 'conflagration of the cosmos'. According to Stoic cosmology, the universe was to end in a great cosmic fire.

[9] Inwood, 2006: Brill's New Pauly
[10] Inwood, 2022: 6-10
[11] Cicero, *De Finibus*, 4.79

Panaetius rejected this idea and believed the cosmos to be indestructible.[12] Because of such diverging opinions, Panaetius has been regarded as a significant innovator of Stoicism.

Although Panaetius certainly contributed to the development of the Stoa, his role as an innovator has been relativized in recent scholarship. Striker (2022) argues that Panaetius would not have become head of the Stoa if he had been regarded as a heretic, and that he still abided by the central Stoic tenets.[13] Inwood (2022) similarly states that, although Panaetius presented his teachings in a less polemical and more accessible way, the core of his philosophy remained close to that of the older Stoa.[14]

Panaetius taught with success. Among his many pupils, some rose to prominence, the most important one being Posidonius of Rhodes. Posidonius (ca. 135-51 BCE), in turn, became the philosophical tutor of Cicero, who rendered Panaetius' *Peri tou Kathēkontos* into Latin. Panaetius himself also attracted a large Roman audience. However, despite this influence, none of Panaetius' works have come down to us.[15]

1.2 Panaetius' *Peri tou Kathēkontos* and its prehistory

Panaetius' best-known work to us is his *Peri tou Kathēkontos* (Περὶ τοῦ καθήκοντος), a title that is often translated as *On Duties* or *On Appropriate Action*. This work explained what 'appropriate action' is according to Stoic philosophy. The work has come down to us (indirectly) via Cicero (107 – 44 BCE) – one of the most renowned Roman writers – who used it as inspiration for his work *De Officiis*. Panaetius' own *Peri tou Kathēkontos* itself has been lost, but efforts have been made to get an insight into the content and the structure of this work. It is certain that the *Peri tou Kathēkontos* was divided into three books, but scholars debate what topics were covered in what books. The most important source for reconstruction is by far Cicero's *De Officiis*.[16] It is generally accepted that Cicero presents genuine Panaetian philosophy, and the *personae*-theory covered in this thesis is therefore thought to be Panaetian.[17] It is evident, however, that Cicero did not slavishly translate *Peri tou Kathēkontos*, since *De Officiis* is written as a letter to Cicero's own son. Cicero's work also mentions politicians like Julius Caesar and Mark Antony, who were not alive during Panaetius' lifetime.[18] Furthermore, Cicero at times even revises and criticizes Panaetius.[19] As for structure, both Panaetius and Cicero divided their work into three books, but it is certain that the content of the books differed. The whole of Panaetius' three books is covered in the first two books of the *De Officiis*.[20]

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[12] Inwood, 2022: 19
[13] Striker, 2022: 222-223
[14] Inwood, 2006: Brill's New Pauly
[15] Inwood, 2006: Brill's New Pauly
[16] Another account can be found in Book 13.28 of Aulus Gellius' *Noctes Atticae.*
[17] Striker, 2022: 223
[18] Long, 1997: 19
[19] In *De Officiis* 1.7, Cicero criticizes Panaetius for not clearly expressing what an *appropriate action* exactly is.
[20] Dyck, 1979: 408

The main topic of the *Peri tou Kathēkontos* was 'appropriate action', which is a translation of the Greek word *kathēkon* (καθῆκον).[21] *Appropriate action* is an important concept in Stoicism. An ancient account of this concept can be found in the writings of Diogenes Laertius – a biographer of philosophers. He writes: "*appropriate actions* are […] those that *reason* persuades us to do, like honouring one's parents, brothers, fatherland, (and) going about with friends".[22] It becomes clear that *appropriate action* is connected to *reason*, a crucial Stoic concept that will be explained later. Cicero refers to some more characteristics of Panaetius' original work, writing that the Stoic philosopher drew an important distinction between behaviour that pertains to 'the honorable' (Gr. *to kalon*, το καλόν; Lat. *honestum*) on the one hand, and to 'the useful' (Gr. *to sumferon*, το συμφέρον; Lat. *utile*) on the other. According to Panaetius, people ask themselves three questions when determining their actions. The first question relates to the honorable; people ask themselves whether their action will be honorable or disgraceful. The second question deals with the expedient; people will evaluate whether their action will or will not be expedient to their happiness, health, influence, and the like. The third question arises when the honorable seems to be in conflict with the expedient, when an action seems beneficial but dishonorable.[23] Cicero structured his three books according to these three questions, but this division does not go back to Panaetius. Moreover, it is certain that *Peri tou Kathēkontos* included the 'cardinal virtues', the four classical virtues, that were inextricably linked to honorable behaviour.[24]

Apart from its content, modern-day scholars have also commented on the style of the *Peri tou Kathēkontos* (and the *De Officiis*), trying to connect it to Panaetius' alleged philosophical tendencies. Striker has noted that the *De Officiis* differs from other philosophical works by Cicero, such as *De Finibus* or the *Tusculans.* The work appears less theoretical. Furthermore, there is little focus on the 'Stoic sage' – the idealized flawless Stoic practitioner. Striker supposes that this absence of theoretical foundations in *De Officiis* goes back to the *Peri tou Kathēkontos*:

> […] *In the Περὶ τοῦ καθήκοντος he* [sc. Panaetius] *was* […] *writing about* appropriate action – *correct but not necessarily virtuous, and such action is, according to the Stoics themselves, common to both sages and fools, virtuous and vicious persons.*

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[21] Cicero himself translated the word *kathēkon* as *officium*, whence the title *De Officiis.*

[22] Diogenes Laertius, Vitae Philosophorum 7.1.108: "Καθήκοντα μὲν οὖν εἶναι ὅσα λόγος αἱρεῖ ποιεῖν, ὡς ἔχει γονεῖς τιμᾶν, ἀδελφούς, πατρίδα, συμπεριφέρεσθαι φίλοις·"

[23] Cicero, De Officiis, 1.9

[24] Dyck, 1979: 416-417. The four virtues are: *prudence* (φρόνησις), *justice* (δικαιοσύνη), *greatness of soul* (μεγαλοψυχία) and *temperance* (σωφροσύνη). Cicero renders these as *prudentia, iustitia, magnitudo animi* and *temperantia*. The use of μεγαλοψυχία for the third virtue is interesting, because, more commonly, the third virtue is ἀνδρεία (*fortitudo* in Latin) 'bravery, resolution'. Before Panaetius, Stoics regarded μεγαλοψυχία as a subordinate virtue to ἀνδρεία. Dyck (1981: 154) explains Panaetius' preference for μεγαλοψυχία as a "shift of emphasis from physical to mental aspects" that fits his ideas of "virtues being based on drives peculiar to man".

> *In a work that offers advice for everyday life, the theoretical foundations could be left largely in the background, as Cicero himself suggests* (Off. I.7).[25]

Another scenario, in which Cicero would have gotten rid of the technical foundations of the *Peri tou Kathēkontos,* has been considered in earlier scholarship. It has been supposed by Gärtner that Panaetius' work contained material that was more speculative, but that Cicero excluded this from *De Officiis* and instead included it in *De Finibus.* Gärtner believes this to be the case because of similarities between statements in both works.[26] While we can identify some key concepts of *Peri tou Kathēkontos*, its style and the way the content was structured remain up for debate.

The *Peri tou kathēkontos* was not without its precedents. Panaetius was one among the many authors who produced works with (largely) the same title. Before Panaetius, the Stoics Zeno of Citium, Cleanthes, Sphaerus, and Chrysippus had all written works on *appropriate action*. After Panaetius, Hecato and Posidonius also produced works on the same subject. Sadly, none of these have survived.[27] It is clear that Panaetius' subject was in no way innovative, and that it had been part of Stoicism from the time of Zeno of Citium, the founder of the Stoa. According to Diogenes Laertius, Zeno of Citium was, in fact, the first person to introduce the concept *kathēkon*.[28] The notion of *appropriate action* thus had a long prehistory in Stoicism. Just like Cicero looked back on an earlier philosopher to create his work, we can reasonably assume that Panaetius did so too.

1.3.1 *Nature* and *reason*

Striker has observed that *De Officiis* is a work that relies more on anecdotes and examples than on philosophical argumentation. Nevertheless, it is necessary to have some grasp of Stoicism and its basic concepts to be able to answer the research question.

The Stoa, or Stoicism, was one of the major schools of Hellenistic philosophy. It existed alongside the Academy and the Lyceum, founded by Plato and Aristotle respectively. The founder of Stoicism was Zeno of Citium (ca. 334-262 BCE), who established his school during the late fourth century BCE. He constructed Stoicism around two central concepts, namely *nature* (Gr. *phusis*, φύσις; Lat. *natura*) and *reason* (Gr. *logos*, λόγος; Lat. *ratio*).[29]

In its Stoic context, *nature* can be understood as an originating power or the principle of growth in the universe.[30] Marcus Aurelius, the Stoic Roman emperor, offers a clear illustration of the workings of *nature*.

[25] Striker, 2022: 222-224
[26] Dyck, 1979: 416
[27] Visnjic, 2021: 32-33
[28] Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum*, 7.1.108
[29] Long, 1974: 120
[30] Long, 1974: 147-150

He writes: "Out of the substance of the universe the *nature* of the universe forms, as out of wax, at one time a little horse, then, after melting it down, it uses the material to form a little tree, afterwards a little human and thereafter something else".[31] The little horse, the little tree, and the little human are thus all products of *nature*.

Nature does not shape the universe in a random way, but according to *reason*. This means that the universe and everything in it is understood to be a product of *nature's* conscious rational plan.[32] All events and all creations of *nature* can be seen as neatly fitting into a thought-out cosmic scheme. Once again, Marcus Aurelius illustrates this notion nicely. He asks: "Can you not see plants, birds, ants, spiders, bees all doing their own work, each helping in their own way to order the world?".[33] The central task for us humans, then, is also to live 'in accordance with *nature*', which could prove challenging; immediately after the foregoing sentence, Marcus Aurelius reproachfully writes to himself: "And then you do not want to do the work of a human being – you do not hurry to the demands of your own *nature*".[34] Living in accordance with *nature* was the main goal for Stoics throughout the history of the school.

We read that the plants, birds, and other creatures all do their own work, just as *nature* intended them to do. What, then, does it mean for a human being to live in accordance with *nature*? To answer this question, the Stoics looked at what comes 'most naturally' to human beings and what sets them apart from other creatures. In this way, we, as human beings, might know what our own work would be. The answer given by the Stoics is that *nature* endowed us with particular cognitive abilities that animals lack.[35] In the introduction to *De Officiis*, we read that human beings perceive the causes of things (*causas rerum videt*), that they have a feeling for order (*sentit quod sit ordo*) and, most importantly, a desire to search after truth (*In primisque hominis est propria veri inquisitio atque investigatio*). We owe such distinguishing cognitive abilities to the fact that *nature* endowed us humans with an especially strong grasp of *reason*, making us rational beings par excellence.[36] This thought is omnipresent in Stoicism. When we successfully incorporate *reason* into all aspects of our lives, we live in accordance with *nature*. Seneca – a Stoic philosopher – states it as follows:

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[31] Marcus Aureslius, *Ad Se Ipusm*, 7.23: Ἡ τῶν ὅλων φύσις ἐκ τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας, ὡς κηροῦ, νῦν μὲν ἱππάριον ἔπλασε, συγχέασα δὲ τοῦτο εἰς δενδρύφιον συνεχρήσατο τῇ ὕλῃ αὐτοῦ, εἶτα εἰς ἄνθρωπάριον, εἶτα εἰς ἄλλο τι·

[32] Long, 1974: 147-150

[33] Marcus Aureslius, *Ad Se Ipusm*, 5.1: οὐ βλέπεις τὰ φυτάρια, τὰ στρουθάρια, τοὺς μύρμηκας, τοὺς ἀράχνας, τὰς μελίσσας τὸ ἴδιον ποιούσας, τὸ καθ᾽ αὑτὰς συγκροτούσας κόσμον.

[34] Marcus Aureslius, *Ad Se Ipusm*, 5.1: ἔπειτα σὺ οὐ θέλεις τὰ ἀνθρωπικὰ ποιεῖν; οὐ τρέχεις ἐπὶ τὸ κατὰ τὴν σὴν φύσιν;

[35] Long: 1974: 170-175

[36] Cicero, *De Officiis*, 1.11

> *Quid in homine proprium? Ratio: Haec recta et consummata felicitatem hominis implevit. Ergo si omnis res, cum bonum suum perfecit, laudabilis est et ad finem naturae suae pervenit, homini autem suum bonum ratio est, si hanc perfecit laudabilis est et finem naturae suae tetigit. Haec ratio perfecta virtus vocatur eademque honestum est.*[37]
>
> What is peculiar to man? *Reason*. *Reason*, when it is right and has been perfected, fulfills man's felicity. And so, if everything that has perfected its good is praiseworthy and has attained its purpose given by *nature*, but now man's good is *reason*, then, if man has perfected this, he is praiseworthy and has attained his purpose given by *nature*. This *reason*, when it is perfected, is called virtue (*virtus*), and likewise it is the honorable (*honestum*).

In this passage, the concept of 'the honorable' – an important topic in Panaetius' *Peri tou Kathēkontos* – reappears in close connection with *reason*. Furthermore, *reason* is linked to virtue. We already saw that virtue – in the form of the four cardinal virtues – also played a role in Panaetius' work. We can thus begin to see how the content of *Peri tou Kathēkontos* is related to broader Stoic philosophy.

Before turning to the notion of *persona*, it is necessary to briefly introduce three more Stoic philosophers. After the founder of the Stoa, Zeno of Citium, passed away around 262 BCE, he was succeeded as head first by Cleanthes (ca. 330-230 BCE) and then by Chrysippus (ca. 285-205 BCE). These three heads remained highly influential throughout the entire history of the Stoa, up until its disappearance sometime in the third century CE, when it gave way to Neoplatonic and Christian philosophy.[38] It is reasonable to suppose that Panaetius knew their works well, and as we have already seen, all three men wrote a work on *appropriate action*.

1.3.2 The *persona* and its early history

Another concept that is crucial to this thesis is the 'persona'. *Persona* is the Latin rendition of the Greek word *prosōpon* (πρόσωπον).[39] The most common translation of *prosōpon* is "face", and a secondary meaning is that of a "mask" used in theatre. The Latin word *persona* similarly could be used to denote a theatrical mask. By extension, both words could be used to refer to the 'role' that a 'character' has, not just in theatre but also in real life. The notion of *persona* could be used in reference to a mythical hero such as Odysseus, and in the same way, one could talk about the *persona* of regular people.

The Stoics incorporated this theatrical term into their philosophical vocabulary.[40] The notion of *persona* played a role in the *Peri tou Kathēkontos*.[41] Panaetius was not the first Stoic philosopher to make use of this concept.

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[37] Seneca, *Epistulae Morales*, 76.10
[38] Gould, 1970: 13
[39] For the sake of consistency, I will mostly use the word *persona*. Of course, Panaetius will have used the Greek word *prosōpon*.
[40] Marrin, 2020: 184
[41] De Lacy, 1977: 166

To be able to see in what ways Panaetius might have been innovative, we must first know what the concept meant to pre-Panaetian philosophers. Two studies, by De Lacy and Marrin, cover the early history of the notion of *persona*. References to the notion of persona can be found in pre-Panaetian Stoicism. De Lacy refers to a passage from Seneca that reports a dispute in the early Stoa between Cleanthes – the aforementioned second head of the Stoa – and Ariston of Chios.[42] The latter was a remarkable Stoic philosopher who disagreed with some of the basic points of Stoicism.[43] The dispute between the two men mentions *personae*, but focuses more on the closely related concept of Stoic 'precepts' (*praecepta*) and the way in which the content of Stoicism should be taught. Cleanthes believed that different groups of people should be provided with different precepts, which were tailored to each particular group. He was, according to Seneca, an example of someone who practiced that part of philosophy "that gives precepts particular to each *persona*".[44] In this way, husbands could be provided with specific precepts on how to properly behave toward their wives, fathers on how to treat their children, and slave-owners on how to treat their slaves. Ariston, however, regarded these tailor-made rules as useless. Instead, he argued to provide everyone with one and the same teaching – that of the fundamentals of philosophy, which he believed were virtue and vice. If someone were to understand virtue and vice, one would consequently behave wisely in his role as a husband, in his role as a father, slave-owner, or whatever *persona* he might take up.

Another reference to the notion of *persona* can be found in the writings of Diogenes Laertius, an ancient biographer of philosophers. In this reference, the concept of *persona* is once again associated with Ariston of Chios. According to Diogenes, Ariston argued that the goal in life was to live in indifference to that which was neither virtue nor vice. This meant that people should make no distinction between health and sickness, pleasure and pain, or prosperity and failure. Virtue and vice – the only things of importance to Ariston – could be seen as knowledge of good and bad.[45] Ariston compared the wise person to a good actor, and it is in this context that we encounter the *persona.* The comparison runs as follows:

> [...] εἶναι γὰρ ὅμοιον τὸν σοφὸν τῷ ἀγαθῷ ὑποκριτῇ, ὃς ἄν τε Θερσίτου ἄν τε Ἀγαμέμνονος πρόσωπον ἀναλάβῃ, ἑκάτερον ὑποκρινεῖται προσηκόντως.[46]
>
> The wise person is similar to a good actor. Whether he has taken up the role (*prosōpon*) of Thersites or that of Agamemnon, he will play both fittingly.[47]

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[42] De Lacy, 1977: 167
[43] Ariston argued that the only thing of importance was virtue, and that people should be indifferent to status, wealth, health and the like. (Marrin, 2020: 179-180).
[44] Seneca, *Epistulae Morales*, 94.1: *Eam partem philosophiae, quae dat propria cuique personae praecepta* [...]
[45] Marrin, 2020: 1
[46] Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum* 7.2.160
[47] In my translation of this comparison, I have chosen to render the word *prosōpon* as 'mask' instead of '*persona*', as its meaning is still closely tied to theatre. However, the word is clearly linked to philosophy and to some 'characteristics' of regular people.

With this comparison Ariston seems to say that the Stoic sage is in no way troubled by his status, wealth, health, and the lack thereof.[48] Instead, his focus is on virtue, and he is indifferent to all the rest. A similar reference to the notion of *persona* is found in the writings of the philosopher Bion of Borysthenes:

> Δεῖ ὥσπερ τὸν ἀγαθὸν ὑποκριτὴν ὅ τι ἂν ὁ ποιητὴς περιθῇ πρόσωπον τοῦτο ἀγωνίζεσθαι καλῶς, οὕτω καὶ τὸν ἀγαθὸν ἄνδρα ὅ τι ἂν περιθῇ ἡ τύχη.[49]
>
> Just as a good actor must perform that role (*prosōpon*) well that the poet has bestowed upon him, so too must a good man [sc. play well] what fortune has bestowed upon him.

Bion of Borysthenes (ca. 335 - 245 BCE) was not a Stoic himself, but rather an eclectic philosopher who had studied under many teachers from different schools.[50] In Bion's conception, our *persona* is given to us by *tukhê* (τύχη) or 'fortune'.

These examples give us some idea of what the concept of *personae* meant to pre-Panaetian philosophers.[51] The discussion between Cleanthes and Ariston makes clear that *personae* were used to refer to diverse roles, such as that of a husband, a father or a slave-owner. The reference to Agamemnon and Thersites might indicate that *personae* were not only used to refer to roles, but to a broader array of (individual) dispositions, such as wealth, status, health, and perhaps, conduct. Moreover, it seems possible that, even in the early stages, a person could be viewed as having multiple *personae* at once, as one person could be a husband, father, and slave-owner at the same time.

The concept of *personae* evidently can be traced back to the time of Bion of Borysthenes, Ariston of Chios and Cleanthes – sometime around the early to mid third century BCE. Both Cleanthes and Zeno of Citium – the founder of Stoicism – wrote a work called *On Appropriate Action*. We can therefore wonder if Cleanthes, or even Zeno, had already developed a theory of *personae*, which could have served as a foundation for Panaetius' theory.

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[48] Agamemnon and Thersites are two figures from Homer's *Iliad*. In the comparison by Ariston, they exemplify the successful and the unsuccessful person. Agamemnon was healthy, rich and a mighty king. Thersites, on the other hand, was disabled, rude, impopular and of normal descent. In a passage from the Iliad (2.212-276), Thersites taunts Agamemnon, for which he is physically punished by Odysseus. When Thersites cries because of this beating, everyone laughs at him. Ariston's comparison seems to include status, wealth, and health. Perhaps, personality should also be included in this list, but it is debated whether or to what extent the notion of personality existed in antiquity.

[49] Kindstrand, 1976: 116

[50] Kindstrand, 1976: 8-12

[51] There is yet an even earlier reference to *personae.* Demades, a fourth century BCE orator, is supposed to have asked king Philip of Macedon: "O King, when fortune (*tukhê*) has clothed you in the role of Agamemnon, aren't you ashamed to perform the act of Thersites?" (De Lacy, 1977: 165). The usage of Agamemnon and Thersites is thus not restricted to Stoicism.

Chapter two: the four *personae* and pre-Panaetian Stoicism

In this chapter we will examine the theory of *personae* as it is found in Cicero's *De Officiis*. This theory is widely believed to reflect Panaetius' philosophy.[52] To explain Panaetius' theory of *personae*, I will cover the four personae one by one, and, when possible, provide parallels in earlier Stoic philosophy.

2.1 The first *persona*: human rationality

The first *persona* is described rather briefly in *De Officiis*. Nevertheless, it is fundamental for finding out *appropriate action*. The following passage from *De Officiis* captures its fundamentals:

> […] *duabus quasi nos a natura indutos esse personis; quarum una communis est ex eo, quod omnes participes sumus rationis praestantiaeque eius qua antecellimus bestiis* […].[53]
>
> […] We are invested by *nature* with two *personae*, as it were, one of which is common, because we all share *reason* and that superiority that makes us surpass animals […]

Our first *persona* is shaped by our shared capacity for *reason*, which distinguishes us from animals. Our *reason* is thus closely tied to our 'humanness'. The idea of *reason* as a guiding principle for conduct is fundamental to Stoicism. Moreover, already in the time of Zeno of Citium, there was a notion of a specific human *nature*. The founder of Stoicism wrote a work titled "On Human *Nature*", and Diogenes Laertius relates the following thoughts to Chrysippus, the third Stoic head:

> μέρη γάρ εἰσιν αἱ ἡμέτεραι φύσεις τῆς τοῦ ὅλου. διόπερ τέλος γίνεται τὸ ἀκολούθως τῇ φύσει ζῆν, ὅπερ ἐστὶ κατά τε τὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ κατὰ τὴν τῶν ὅλων […][54]
>
> For our *naturae* are parts of the Whole. Therefore, the goal becomes to live in accordance with *natura*, which means according to one's own *natura* and according to that of the universe […].

In Chrysippus' thought, 'one's own *nature*' refers to one's human and thus rational *nature*.[55] The idea that humans possess a *nature* that is rational and that separates them from animals evidently predates Panaetius. I therefore see no reason to include this in the list of possible innovations at the end of the chapter.

[52] Striker, 2022: 223
[53] Cicero, *De Officiis*; 1.107
[54] Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum*; 7.1.88
[55] Long, 1971: 93

2.2.1 The second *persona*: individual natural dispositions

Like the first *persona*, the second *persona* is determined by *nature*. The first *persona* is described as being common to all people, and is connected to human rationality. The second *persona* consists of our physical capabilities, bodily appearance and character traits. Many scholars have therefore connected the second *persona* to notions of personality and individuality. Johnson, for example, simply calls it the '*persona* of personality'.[56] Machek calls the traits that this *persona* consists of 'individual natural dispositions'.[57] Similarly, Sorabji speaks of 'the insistence on the unique individual'.[58] Christopher Gill, believing that the notion of a 'self' is post-Cartesian, interpretates the second *persona* in a more social 'objective-participant' way, believing that this *persona* deals with traits that make people distinguished in competitive Roman society.[59]

I believe that the notion of individuality *is* present in Panaetius' philosophy, and I find Machek's notion of 'individual natural dispositions', describing physical capabilities, bodily appearance, and character traits, both valid and useful. In *De Officiis*, much attention is paid to character traits. A broad array of traits is presented: wit (*lepos*), seriousness (*severitas*), cheerfulness (*hilaritas*) and striving for one's favour (*ambitio*), among others (1.108). Cicero writes that:

> *Innumerabiles aliae dissimilitudines sunt naturae morumque, minime tamen vituperandorum. Admodum autem tenenda sunt sua* cuique non *vitiosa, sed tamen propria,* […]. *Sic enim est faciendum, ut contra universam naturam nihil contendamus, ea tamen conservata propriam nostram sequamur,* […].[60]
>
> Innumerable other differences exist in *naturae* and in habits, none of which, however, deserve any blame. Surely, everyone must nonetheless hold fast to their characteristics that are not vicious, but that are, in fact, particular […]. We should behave in such a way that we do not contend against the common *nature*. And yet, while taking this (common *nature*) into account, we should still conform to our own particular (*nature*) […].

All types of character traits are allowed insofar as they are not in conflict with the common *nature*. Moreover, it is stressed multiple times that imitating the ways of someone else is bad.[61] In *De Officiis* 1.112-113, we moreover read that *appropriate action* will look different depending on the individual, not just because of profession or age, but because of the particular character that is given by *nature*.

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[56] Johnson, 2013: 141
[57] Machek, 2016: 169
[58] Sorabji, 2007: 142
[59] Gill, 1988: 181
[60] Cicero, *De Officiis*, 1.109-110
[61] If Panaetius' second *persona* truly only focuses on qualities that make people distinct in the competitive Roman society, it would be strange to argue that one must stay true to his own traits. In this case, we would expect Panaetius to argue for the opposite; to adopt alien qualities as a means of achieving distinction. I think that Panaetius' actual argument makes it more likely that some notion of the individual and personality existed in present in Panaetius' philosophy.

A comparison is drawn between two Homeric heroes; If Ajax were to suffer Odysseus' fate, he would have preferred to die. We read that this would have been the *appropriate action* in his case, but for Odysseus, enduring the hardships was the *appropriate action.* In the same situation, both heroes would have rightfully behaved differently. As Machek remarks, this passage presupposes self-reflectiveness.[62] In his article "Peace of Mind and Being Yourself: Panaetius to Plutarch", Gill similarly notes that the focus on one's own character gives the personae-theory a reflexive quality.[63]

2.2.2 Questionable conduct

Many different ways of conduct are allowed, some of which are contradictory. Openness, for example, is opposed to secrecy, but both are viewed positively in particular persons. This in itself does not necessarily raise questions, but some of the discussed examples do. In *De Officiis* 1.108, for example, the Athenian lawmaker Solon is given as an outstanding example of secrecy – specifically shrewdness.[64] We read that Solon feigned his own insanity, which seems quite opposite to virtuous conduct. Even more problematically, examples of moderation are opposed to people who "would put up with whatever, would be devoted to whomever, as long as they would obtain what they want", like Lysander of Sparta.[65]

The presence of such 'unscrupulous characters', as Machek calls them, has been explained in different ways.[66] Christopher Gill believes that the second *persona* does not focus on individual personality but rather on characteristics that made people accomplished, successful, and distinct in competitive Roman society. Gill uses the presence of these unscrupulous characters as an argument for this idea, but he admits that the questionable conduct is in conflict with the moral values that are laid down by the first *persona*. He writes: "But this is not a conflict, or inconsistency, of which Cicero seems at all conscious in this passage", thereby providing no actual solution to this problem.[67]

In his article "Using our Selves: An Interpretation of the Stoic Four-*Personae* Theory in *De Officiis* I", Machek disagrees with Gill's idea and proposes another theory, in which the conduct of the questionable examples is not in conflict with the rationality of the first *persona*. Machek seeks to present the four *personae* as a coherent theory.[68] He convincingly argues that the second (and third) *persona* must be connected to the Stoic notion of *indifferents*. According to Stoic theory, *indifferents* are those things which are neither virtue nor vice, but which lie between the two, and of which both good and bad use can be made, such as "life, health, pleasure, beauty, strength, wealth, fame, and noble birth". The individual natural dispositions seem to fit into the category of *indifferents* quite well.

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[62] Machek, 2016: 187-188
[63] Gill, 1994: 4606
[64] The Latin word that is used to describe Solon is *callidus*.
[65] Cicero, *De Officiis*, 1.109
[66] Machek, 2016: 166
[67] Gill, 1988: 176-183
[68] He does so in response to Gill (1988), who doubts the cogency of the theory of *personae.*

In *De Officiis*, we find justifications for the alleged questionable conduct. Solon's shrewdness, for example, seems to be justified in *De Officiis* 1.108 by the fact that "his life would be more secure" and that "he would be considerably more beneficial to the state".[69] The case of Lysander of Sparta – an example that is not further explained in this passage – seems to point in a similar direction. As a Spartan commander in the Peloponnesian war, Lysander sought victory over Athens. To secure this victory, he relied heavily on subsidies from Persia, a notorious former enemy of Sparta (and Athens alike). After defeating Athens, Lysander further supported the coup d'état of the merciless pro-Spartan 'thirty tyrants'. Although one could argue that Lysander had been opportunistic and relentless, and that Solon had been dishonest, both men seem to have done so to benefit their community.

The examples of Lysander and Solon moreover appear elsewhere in *De Officiis*, providing some further context. In book 1.74-76, Cicero writes read that the military victory of the Athenian general Themistocles should be deemed less significant than Solon's legislative reforms. Themistocles' victory would, in fact, not even have been possible without Solon's reforms. We similarly read that Lysander's victory was deemed less significant than the laws and discipline that were created by Lycurgus, a legendary Spartan lawgiver.[70] Once again, Lysander's victories were only possible because of Lycurgus' legislative successes. Cicero states that "achievements of war" (*res bellicas*) are less important than "cultivated achievements" (*res urbanas*).[71] Elsewhere, in book 1.35, he writes that: "[…] war must only be waged because of this reason, that people may live in peace without violence". I think that these passages provide some important context to Panaetius' examples.

The 'unscrupulous characters' thus seem to serve as examples of people who were capable of making good use of (essentially 'indifferent') particular character traits, thereby bringing profit to their society. Nevertheless, they are not on the same level as their more 'cultivated' counterparts. While a reader can get the impression that Panaetius freely tolerates dishonesty and opportunism, such traits are actually only permitted insofar as the circumstances justify them.

2.2.3 The embeddedness of character traits within *nature*

As has been shown, pre-Panaetian Stoics such as Zeno, Cleanthes, Sphaerus, and Chrysippus all wrote a work on *appropriate action*, in which the notion of *indifferents* is very likely to have been connected to conduct. Chrysippus wrote that virtue could be achieved by developing a good *hexis* (ἕξις) or 'habit-pattern', meaning choosing for those *indifferents* that were in accordance with *natura.*[72] The connection between *indifferents* and conduct is thus not Panaetius' innovation.

[69] Cicero, *De Officiis*; 1.108
[70] Cicero, *De Offciis*; 1.76
[71] Cicero, *De Officiis*; 1.74
[72] Reesor, 1951: 104-105

What seems to set Panaetius apart from his Stoic predecessors, however, is that he presents *natura* as endowing individuals with individuating character traits.[73] In this way, people are by *nature* fundamentally different, which leads to the fact that "different people may validly pursue virtue in significantly different ways", as Gill has strikingly written.[74]

2.3.1 The third *persona*: status and success

The third *persona* is shaped by our "authority, dominion, renown, honor, wealth and the things opposite to this" (1.115). Gill identifies all these factors with the notion of social position.[75] In a similar way, I connect them to the notions of status and success. Cicero writes that the third *persona* is not determined by *nature*, but by "chance or circumstance" (*casus* […] *aut tempus*), which is then associated with *fortuna*, 'chance' or 'fortune'.[76]

A sharp and remarkable distinction is drawn between *nature* and *fortuna*, and the two are even depicted as battling each other. While *fortuna* seems to be associated with changeability and volatility, *nature* is viewed as something unchangeable and consistent:

> […] *multo enim et firmior est et constantior, ut fortuna nonnumquam tamquam ipsa mortalis cum immortali natura pugnare videatur*.[77]
>
> For *nature* is much more steadfast and unchangeable, so that *fortuna* would always seem like a mortal fighting against the immortal *nature*.

It appears that "authority, dominion, renown, honor, wealth and the things opposite to this" are more volatile than that which is given to us by *nature*, like rationality and individuating character traits. The broader context of this passage deals with choosing a career, and Panaetius' advice seems to be that it is wiser to rely on something that is invariable than on something that is rather unpredictable and potentially fleeting.[78] Yet, the "authority, dominion, renown, honor, wealth and the things opposite to this" are not viewed as something that is necessarily valueless. Although *fortuna* is seen as inferior to *nature*, we read that one should still take *fortuna* into consideration. Cicero makes this explicit:

> *Ad hanc autem rationem quoniam maximam vim natura habet, fortuna proximam, utriusque omnino habenda ratio est in deligendo genere vitae* […].[79]

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[73] In his article "Peace of Mind and Being Yourself: Panaetius to Plutarch", Gill argues that Panaetius' particular emphasis on one's own *nature* was shaped by the philosophy of Democritus and Epicurus (1994, p.4608).
[74] Gill, 1994: 339
[75] Gill, 1988: 174
[76] Cicero, *De Officiis*, 1.120
[77] Cicero, *De Officiis*, 1.120
[78] Cicero, *De Officiis,* 1.120
[79] Cicero*, De Officiis*, 1.120

> But because *nature* has the biggest influence on this affair [sc. choosing one's career] and *fortuna* comes next, both must, of course, be taken into account when deciding one's way of life.

The products of *fortuna* are convincingly connected by Machek to the Stoic notion of *indifferents* – things of which both good and bad use can be made.[80] Authority, dominion and the like can be used in a good way when they are used according to *reason.*

In *De Officiis* 1.121, an insightful account is provided of someone who chose not to live according to his *fortuna* because his *nature* prevented it – an example of a situation where the two are like a mortal and an immortal fighting. The successful Roman general Scipio Aemilianus (185-129 BCE) had an adoptive son. The adoptive son's third *persona* was thus characterized by military renown. However, *nature* had endowed the son with poor health.[81] Wisely paying more regard to his *nature* than to his *fortuna*, Scipio's son chose not to follow in the footsteps of his father, realizing that this military renown would not last because of his unfit physique. Here, we see how *fortuna* is subordinate to *nature*.

The example of Scipio Aemilianus' son makes clear that the third *persona* is something that is partially inherited and generational. According to *De Officiis* 1.117, the choice for a career must be made when one is still quite young (*ineunte enim adulescentia*), and we can suppose that at this early point in life, it would be hard for someone to have already gained much authority, renown or wealth for himself. Cicero praisingly gives multiple accounts of people who chose careers in fields in which their parents were revered (1.116).[82] These accounts seem to serve as examples of people who had a due regard for their *fortuna.* However, the third *persona* is not always completely inherited, as Cicero also gives examples of people who were the first in their family to achieve renown in a certain field.[83]

2.3.2 The prehistory of *fortuna*

The sharp opposition between *fortuna* and *nature* has been commented upon by multiple scholars. Johnson sees it as a reflection of the 'traditional opposition' between *tukhê* and *phusis*, coming from Greek philosophy.[84] He writes that similar ideas can be found in Aristotle's *Physics* (2.4), and furthermore in the works of Polybius and Tacitus.[85] Machek similarly connects the opposition to Aristotle, and notes that in his works, the same contrast between volatility and steadfastness appears.

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[80] Machek, 2016: 172.
[81] Apparantly, bad health is seen as part of *nature* and not of *fortuna*.
[82] The fact that the third *persona* seems to be generational seems to support Gill's idea that the *personae*-theory must be interpreted in a social 'objective-participant' way. However, I do not think that this social aspect implies that there is no individual 'subjective-individualist' aspect.
[83] One example of such a figure is Timotheus, son of Conon. It seems more likely to assume that this example comes from Panaetius than from Cicero.
[84] Johnson, 2013: 151.
[85] Johnson, 2013: 169. Johnson mentions Aristotle's *Physics* 2.4. Polybius was a contemporary of Panaetius, but Tacitus lived later.

In *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.10, Aristotle argues that the stability of the virtuous person allows him to face the volatility of *tukhê*.[86] The notion of *tukhê* also plays a role in pre-Panaetian Stoic philosophy. According to the Stoics, the universe functions according to *reason*. Therefore, someone who could fully grasp this *reason* – the Stoic sage – could understand the unfolding of the universe.[87] To those incapable of becoming perfectly rational, some events would remain inexplicable. This inexplicable aspect of events was called *tukhê*.[88] In Stoic theory, *tukhê* therefore only exists where understanding is limited, and the Stoic Persaeus (307-243 BCE) is reported to have said that *tukhê* is something that the Stoic sage is not affected by.[89] Non-sages, on the other hand, *are* affected by *tukhê.*

Even though *fortuna* was of no importance to the Stoic sage, the topic still received much attention from pre-Panaetian Stoic philosophers. Sphaerus (ca. 285-210 BCE), for example, wrote a work on *fortuna.*[90] Moreover, he authored a work on *appropriate action.* Furthermore, because Panaetius wrote a work on *appropriate action* – action that is by definition performed by non-sages – he *had* to incorporate *fortuna* in some form in his work. It is therefore no wonder that both *nature* and *fortuna* play a part in his theory of *personae*. Although Panaetius might have used the notions of *nature* and *fortuna* in a somewhat more Aristotelian way, it seems that Panaetius was still following Stoic doctrine.[91] I will therefore not include the opposition between *nature* and *fortuna* in the list of possible innovations at the end of this chapter.

2.4 The fourth *persona*: judgement and *voluntas*

The fourth and last *persona* is called 'the *persona* of choice' by Johnson.[92] Gill similarly connects the fourth *persona* to choice.[93] Cicero writes that the last *persona* is determined by "our own *iudicium*" (*ipsi iudicio nostro*) and by "our *voluntas*" (*nostra voluntate*).[94] The word *iudicium* is often translated as 'judgement', and the word *voluntas* can be translated as 'will', but translating this word is a complex issue. Nevertheless, we read that these two factors determine what profession we choose and what virtue we would like to excel in.

The use of the word *voluntas* – often translated as 'will' – is interesting, as it seems to carry a sense of agency and selfhood. We could be tempted to associate this term with the modern notion of a will, but are we right in doing so? The historical development of the notion of the will is complex and has been studied by multiple scholars, such as Inwood, Kahn and Sorabji.

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[86] Machek, 2016: 172. Machek mentions Aristotle's *Magna Moralia* 2.8, *Eudemian Ethics* 8.2, and *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.10.
[87] Hahmann, 2019: 186-187
[88] Hahmann, 2019: 175-176
[89] Hahmann, 2019: 186
[90] Hahmann, 2019: 175
[91] Even if we suppose that Panaetius had a more Aristotelian view on the opposition between *nature* and *fortuna*, it seems difficult to prove that he was the first Stoic to adopt such a view. The works of Sphaerus, for example, have been lost.
[92] Johnson, 2014: 156
[93] Gill, 1988: 174
[94] Cicero, *De Officiis*, 1.115

In his article titled "The Will in Seneca the Younger", Inwood states that, arguably, there is a lexical correspondence between the will and *voluntas*. He continues by writing: "but as almost everyone agrees, you cannot push this lexical correspondence back into Greek, where neither βούλησις [sc. *boulêsis*] nor προαίρεσις [sc. *prohairesis*], neither διάνοια [sc. *dianoia*] nor any other term quite does the job".[95] *De Officiis* is a translation of a Greek work, which leads to some questions. What was the idea that Cicero rendered into Latin as *voluntas*, and in what way does this idea differ from the later notions of *voluntas* and *prohairesis* that we find Seneca and Epictetus?

Although it is difficult to understand just exactly what *voluntas* means in this passage, we can still identify antecedents to *voluntas* and *iudicium*. Kahn, Sorabji, and Long have all presented the notion of the will as developing throughout antiquity. In his article "Discovering Will: From Aristotle to Augustine", Kahn identifies three important steps in this development after the philosophy of Aristotle:

1) Chrysippus' doctrine of *assent (synkatathesis).*
2) The translation of Greek philosophy into Latin.
3) The notions of *prohairesis* and *voluntas* in Epictetus and Seneca.[96]

Panaetius and his *Peri tou Kathēkontos* fall between the first and second step, as Cicero was the one who translated the work into Latin. Therefore, the Stoic notion of *assent* (*synkatathesis*), which was worked out by Chrysippus, is likely to be the antecedent of the idea(s) that Cicero rendered as *voluntas* and *iudicium* in *De Officiis*. What *assent* is, I shall briefly explain. According to Stoic theory, our awareness is filled with 'representations' (*phantasiai*). Long explains that representations are all sorts of thought-contents, and he gives a clear example of what a particular representation looks like: 'I have the impression that it would be good to go to the beach'. A representation can be translated into action, but only after we have given assent to this representation, by which we commit ourselves to it. Whether we commit to this *representation* or reject it is up to us, and the ability to do so is called *assent.*[97] The word *iudicium* 'judgement' can easily be connected to this concept, as does *voluntas*. In his book "Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic agitation to Christian Temptation", Sorabji, in fact, observes that *assent* is referred to as *voluntas* by Seneca.[98]

Making a right career choice could be seen as giving assent to reasonable representations and rejecting the unreasonable ones. The fourth *persona* is thus not without an antecedent in pre-Panaetian Stoicism. Furthermore, there seems to be a strong connection between the fourth and the first *persona*, as both deal with *reason*. Whereas the first *persona* implies the presence of *reason*, the fourth *persona* implies the capability to make use of this *reason*.

[95] Inwood, 2000: 44.
[96] Kahn, 1988: 245-255
[97] Long, 1991: 110-111.
[98] Sorabji, 2000: 328-329

2.5 The four *personae* as a whole

It appears that the content of the four *personae* can largely be explained from concepts that were already present in pre-Panaetian Stoicism. The second and third *persona* can be connected to the Stoic notion of *indifferents*, as Machek has argued. The opposition between *nature* and *fortuna* seems to bear some similarity to Aristotle's philosophy, but the notions were also used in pre-Panaetian Stoicism. Interestingly, the second and third *persona* have common ground with Ariston of Chios' early Stoic conceptions of *persona.* Let us recall what Ariston wrote:

> *The wise person is similar to a good actor. Whether he has taken up the role* (*prosōpon*) *of Thersites or that of Agamemnon, he will play both fittingly.*

The two men are distinguished both by their physique – Thersites being crippled, while Agamemnon is in good health – and by their wealth and status – Agamemnon being a successful military leader of noble descent, while Thersites is a regular soldier. The similarity to the second and third *persona* is evident. The first and fourth *persona* are more remarkable. In Ariston's conception, we should 'act out' our *persona* according to *reason*. However, in Panaetius' conception, both the *indifferents* and our capacity to use these according to *reason are* a *persona*. Instead of guiding our *persona*, *reason* is part of our *persona.* The addition of the first and fourth *persona* turns the concept of *personae* into a fully-fledged vehicle for conducting Stoic ethics – a theory of *personae*. I have been unable to find an evident account of this in earlier Stoicism so far. We thus arrive at the following list of possible Panaetian innovations:

1. The fourfold distinction of *personae.*
2. The fact that both 1) the *indifferents* and 2) our *reason* and the capacity to use this *reason* make up our *personae*.
3. The embeddedness of a broad array of individual characteristics within *natura*, which leads to a plurality of commendable behaviour.

Although, so far, these three points do not seem to be present in earlier Stoicism, we cannot directly attribute these innovations to Panaetius as without further arguments. Before doing so, we must consider whether there are earlier Stoic philosophers who might have come up with these innovations.

Chapter 3: Panaetius' significance for Epictetus

3.1 Epictetus and his theory of *personae*

Epictetus was a Stoic philosopher who lived from ca. 50 to 130 CE. Like Panaetius, Epictetus wrote on *personae* and *appropriate actions*. An extensive examination of his *personae*-theory is provided in "The Role Ethics of Epictetus: Stoicism in Ordinary Life" by Brian Johnson. Epictetus has been described by scholars such as Kahn and Long as an important figure in the alleged "turn toward the self".[99] Machek argues that the psychological model of the self by Panaetius became characteristic for later Stoics such as Epictetus.[100] Sorabji similarly states that Epictetus repeats much of Panaetius' theory.[101] By closely examining relevant passages from Epictetus' philosophy, I arrive at a somewhat different conclusion, that is closer to that of Gill. To come to this conclusion, I will examine whether, or to what extent, the three possible innovations mentioned in chapter two are present in Epictetus' philosophy.

Besides the notion of *persona* that we have become familiar with, Epictetus' works contain several closely related concepts. One of these is the concept of *onoma* (ὄνομα), a word that can be translated as 'name', 'designation' or 'identification'. This notion is very similar to that of the *persona.*[102]

3.2.1 Panaetius' three possible innovations

De Lacy has observed that the scheme of the four *personae* that Cicero presents us with is not attested in the work of any other ancient philosopher.[103] Although Epictetus has a *personae*-theory, it is safe to say that the exact fourfold distinction that has been examined in the previous chapter – Panaetius' first possible innovation – is absent. We therefore quickly turn to Panaetius' second possible innovation – the fact that both 1) the *indifferents* and 2) our capacity to use these according to *reason* make up our *personae.* As I will show, this possible innovation is present in Epictetus' philosophy.

Echoing Chios and Bion of Borysthenes, Epictetus writes that we are like actors in a play, and that we should neatly play out the *persona* that the playwright has given to us, whether that would be the *persona* of a beggar, a disabled person, a general or a layperson.[104] Here, Epictetus connects the *persona* to instances of the Stoic notion of *indifferents*, such as health and fame. The capacity to use these *indifferents* according to *reason* is also present in his theory of *personae*. Epictetus' *Discourses* 2.10 is titled "How to find out one's *appropriate actions* on the basis of one's *designations*". In this chapter, being human – and thus having a capacity for *reason* – is presented as our most important role. The importance of our 'humanness' is stated in the following passage:

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[99] Kahn does so in his article "Discovering the Will: From Aristotle to Augustine". Epictetus' notion of *prohairesis* is presented as "the true self, the inner man, the "I" of personal identity" (1988: 253). Long does so throughout his article "Representation and the Self in Stoicism" (1991).
[100] Machek, 2016: 161
[101] Sorabji, 2007: 142
[102] Mann, 2015: 222
[103] De Lacy, 1977: 164
[104] Furthermore, in Epictetus' *Discourses* the example of Agamemnon and Thersites is used.

> Σκέψαι τίς εἶ. τὸ πρῶτον ἄνθρωπος, τοῦτο δ᾽ ἔστιν οὐδὲν ἔχων κυριώτερον προαιρέσεως, ἀλλὰ ταύτῃ τὰ ἄλλα ὑποτεταγμένα, αὐτὴν δ᾽ ἀδούλευτον καὶ ἀνυπότακτον. σκόπει οὖν, τίνων κεχώρισαι κατὰ λόγον. κεχώρισαι θηρίων, κεχώρισαι προβάτων.[105]
>
> Consider who you are. A human being in the first place, and that means: having nothing more supreme than your *choice* (*prohairesis*). The rest is subordinate to this [sc. *choice*], and this [sc. *choice*] is unenslaved and independent. Consider therefore from what you are distinguished because of *reason* (*logos*). You are distinguished from wild animals, you are distinguished from cattle.

Just as in *De Officiis*, our human rationality is crucial for discovering *appropriate action*. Both Epictetus and Panaetius stress the importance of our role as a rational human being. To refer to this role, Epictetus uses the word *onoma* 'designation'. However, De Lacy has observed that Epictetus uses *persona* and *designation* interchangeably in this passage, and we may assume that being a rational human being is also a *persona.*[106]

Two closely connected concepts feature prominently in Epictetus' passage, namely *reason* and *prohairesis* – an important notion in Epictetus' philosophy, which could be translated as 'choosing' or 'purpose' but which I will leave untranslated. *Reason* can be connected to Panaetius' first *persona*, and *prohairesis* to the fourth. *Reason* and *prohairesis* are not split into two distinct *personae*, but the similarity is still noteworthy. Both Panaetius and Epictetus therefore seem to agree that 1) the *indifferents* and 2) our capacity to use these according to *reason* make up our *personae*. However, in chapter 3.3, I will argue that this innovation could well be pre-Panaetian.

3.2.2 Individual dispositions embedded within *nature*

I will now show that Epictetus' philosophy has some notion of individual character traits being embedded within *nature*. However, I will argue that character traits play a less prominent role, and that Epictetus actually only sees one type of conduct as truly commendable, while many types of conduct are presented as being commendable in *De Officiis.*

Apart from our role as a rational human being, *Discourses* 2.10.3-14 offers more examples of *designations* or *personae.* Everyone shares the role of 'citizen of the world' (πολίτης τοῦ κόσμου). Then, however, individuating *designations* or *personae* are listed. One can, for example, be a son, a brother, a councilor, young, old, a father, or a smith. The character traits that make up the second *persona* in *De Officiis* are remarkably absent from this list. However, as Sorabji has noted, similar character traits can be found in other parts of Epictetus' *Discourses*.[107]

[105] Epictetus, *Epicteti Dissertatio*, 2.10.1-2
[106] De Lacy, 1977: 166
[107] Sorabji, 2007: 143

In *Discourses* 3.15.11, Epictetus notes that being a wrestler requires a (naturally) strong physique, and that being a philosopher similarly requires a (natural) lack of anger and annoyance. *Discourses* 3.22 seems to offer some more evidence that individuating character traits must be seen as being embedded within *nature.* In this chapter, Epictetus responds to a young man who thoughtlessly thinks of becoming a Cynic philosopher. Epictetus, believing that the young man is unfit for such a life, tells him that there is a god – who is identical to *nature* in Stoicism – who "arranges all things" (ἕκαστα ὁ διατάσσων). Epictetus then makes God explain his own process. While appointing tasks or character traits to people, God speaks as follows:

> "σὺ δύνασαι ἡγεῖσθαι τοῦ στρατεύματος ἐπὶ Ἴλιον· ἴσθι Ἀγαμέμνων. σὺ δύνασαι τῷ Ἕκτορι μονομαχῆσαι· ἴσθι Ἀχιλλεύς."[108]
>
> "You are capable of leading the army against Troy; be Agamemnon. You are capable of battling Hector; be Achilles."

The words of God are then commented upon by Epictetus:

> εἰ δὲ Θερσίτης παρελθὼν ἀντεποιεῖτο τῆς ἀρχῆς, ἢ οὐκ ἂν ἔτυχεν ἢ τυχὼν ἂν ἠσχημόνησεν ἐν πλείοσι μάρτυσι.[109]
>
> But if Thersites would have passed by and would have claimed the command, it either would not have happened, or it would have happened, and then he would have disgraced himself in the company of many witnesses.

Once again, Agamemnon and Thersites are used as contrastive examples. Epictetus seems to argue that God, or *nature*, makes Agamemnon capable of leading an army. Thersites has not been endowed with the same capabilities. A second passage can be found near the end of *Discourses* 3.22. There, Epictetus rephrases a passage from the Iliad in which Hector addresses his wife Andromache before going into war:

> ἰδοὺ γάρ, τί καὶ ὁ Ἕκτωρ λέγει τῇ Ἀνδρομάχῃ· "ὕπαγε," φησίν, "μᾶλλον εἰς οἶκον καὶ ὕφαινε· πόλεμος δ᾽ ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει πᾶσι, μάλιστα δ᾽ ἐμοί." οὕτως καὶ τῆς ἰδίας παρασκευῆς συνήσθετο καὶ τῆς ἐκείνης ἀδυναμίας.[110]
>
> For you must know what Hector says to Andromache: "Go" he says, "rather into the house and weave; but war will be the thing for all men, and mostly for me." In this way he recognized his own predisposition, and her incapability.

[108] Epictetus, *Epicteti Dissertationes*, 3.22.7
[109] Epictetus, *Epicteti Dissertationes*, 3.22.8
[110] Epictetus, *Epicteti Dissertationes*, 3.22.108-109

Both passages seem to present individual dispositions as something deriving from *nature*. Epictetus' reasoning seems to be that the young man wanting to play the part of a Cynic, is similar to Thersites wanting to play the part of Agamemnon, but who by his very *nature* is incapable of leading an army.

3.2.3 Epictetus' uniformity of good behaviour

In Panaetius' philosophy, different people in the same situation are expected to behave differently, which is because of the individual natural dispositions that make up their second *persona*. Instances of people behaving differently in the same situation can also be found in *Discourses* 1.2. Sorabji has used the similarities to argue that Epictetus repeats much of Panaetius' theory.[111] Nevertheless, I want to emphasize some important differences.

In *Discourses* 1.2.5-11, Epictetus writes that some slaves deem it bearable to hold a chamber pot for their master, whereas other slaves deem it unbearable and would rather suffer a beating and be starved. Johnson gives an account of the situation that very much seems to be in line with Panaetius' philosophy:

> *The logic here is quite compressed* […]: *for one individual, it is so unbearable to hold the chamber pot that beatings, starvation and so forth, become irrelevant; but for other individuals, such a task is bearable enough, whereas a beating and starvation are unbearable* […].[112]

But whereas the two opposing types of conduct are treated even-handedly in *De Officiis*, Sorabji admittingly remarks that, while neither conduct is criticized, Epictetus does seem to admire the slave who is unwilling to hold out the chamber pot.[113] Long similarly believes that both types of conduct are seen as valid, but that Epictetus prefers the defiant slave, who is not simply "assessing material gains or losses" but who also takes his individual character into consideration.[114] Gill, on the other hand, sees Epictetus' preference not as something trivial, but rather as something more fundamental to his philosophy. He writes:

> *For one thing, in* De Officiis *the presentation of the two types of person* […] *is relatively neutral* […]. *But, in Epictetus' discussion, there is a marked, and increasingly overt, favouring of the rigorous position* [sc. the defiant slave]*, which is more powerfully articulated throughout, and with which Epictetus eventually seems to identify himself.*[115]

[111] Sorabji, 2007: 142
[112] Johnson, 2013: 28
[113] Sorabji, 2007: 143
[114] Long, 2002: 239
[115] Gill, 1988: 187-188

I think that Gill is right in believing that Epictetus strongly favours the rigorous position. Moreover, I believe that Epictetus provides some important argumentation for *why* this position would be the only type of commendable conduct. In the beginning of *Discourses* 1.2, Epictetus states for a fact that "beatings are not by *nature* unbearable" (πληγαὶ οὐκ εἰσὶν ἀφόρητοι τῇ φύσει). To prove this point, Epictetus says that the "Lacedaemonians are (ritually) flogged after they have learned that this is reasonable" (Λακεδαιμόνιοι μαστιγοῦνται μαθόντες ὅτι εὔλογόν ἐστιν).[116] It is noteworthy that this capability to endure a beating is seen as the product of understanding or realization (μαθόντες).[117] It appears that the people of the rigorous position – the Lacedaemonians, the defiant slave, and Epictetus himself – all realize that a beating is bearable by *nature*. The other slave has not realized this, for which he is condemned throughout the text.

After the example of the slaves, Epictetus presents us with three interesting examples that similarly focus on *personae* and contrastive conduct. The first example deals with two prominent Romans, Florus and Agrippinus, who discuss participating in a festival of the cruel emperor Nero.[118] A refusal to partake in this festival would result in death, and Florus deliberates whether he should be part of Nero's show. He asks Agrippinus for his opinion, who responds by saying that Florus *should* participate. When asked why Agrippinus will not take part himself, Agrippinus replies that he wants to be unlike the majority of people who "consider such issues", and who therefore are "close to those who have forgotten their own *persona*". Instead, Agrippinus wants to stand out, like a purple thread in white fabric, even if this would cost him his life.[119] The second example deals with senator Helvidius Priscus and emperor Vespasian, who threatens to kill the senator if Priscus expresses his opinion. Staying true to his *persona*, Priscus replies that, as a senator, he must express his opinion.[120] Priscus states that he is not bothered by the fact that him doing what he must would result in his death, and he advises Vespasian to do as he pleases.[121] The last example features a Greek Olympic athlete who runs the risk of dying if his private parts are not amputated. Instead of removing them, he stays true to his *persona* of being a man, and dies.

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[116] Epictetus, *Epicteti Dissertationes*, 1.2.2-4. Epictetus' reasoning is remarkable: if the Lacedaemonians can suffer a beating, a beating *is* by *nature* bearable. A capacity that is particular to the Lacedaemonians is apparently used to argue that *all* (wise) people can realize this capacity. In this way, the notion of individuating dispositions being embedded within *nature* is implicitly rejected.

[117] This implies that there was a time when the Lacedaemonians had not yet realised this capacity.

[118] This example cannot have been part of *Peri to kathēkontos*, nor of *De Officiis*.

[119] Epictetus, *Epicteti Dissertationes*, 1.2.18

[120] Wolfgang-Rainer Mann shows that this particular example is part of a tradition going back to Herodotus in which a wise figure encounters an often violent ruler (p.217-218). Moreover, Mann remarks that Epictetus bases this example on Plato's *Phaedo*, in which Socrates commits suicide. I think that the exemplary force of Socrates' suicide is crucial to all of Epictetus' examples.

[121] Epictetus, *Epicteti Dissertationes*, 1.2.19-22

All three men are presented as exemplary figures, who provide a "good model for other people" (τοῖς ἄλλοις δὲ καλὸν παράδειγμα).[122] As Gill notes, the less rigorous counterparts, on the other hand,are described in humiliating and negative ways, such as sitting in the senate 'like a jug' or as entering the gymnasium without genitalia.[123]

Interestingly, all three exemplary figures share a willingness to die to preserve their *persona*, which seems to be an important quality for Epictetus.[124] He addresses people who lack this willingness to welcome death through the mouth of his example Agrippinus. Agrippinus, preferring death over considering ways to preserve himself, says that: "He who once has stooped to the consideration of such things and to the value of externals, and who calculates these, is close to those who have forgotten their own *persona*". The phrasing is very reminiscent of *Discourses* 2.10, in which someone criticizing his brother is said to have "forgotten his *designation*". There, this forgetfulness is once again presented very negatively.

The apparent disapproval of people unwilling to welcome death is absent from *De Officiis*. While Odysseus was willing to endure many adversities, Ajax would have preferred death. Both types of conduct are nevertheless presented as *appropriate action.* Panaetius and Epictetus evidently disagree on the subject of suicide. More broadly speaking, while Panaetius seems to believe that "different people may validly pursue virtue in significantly different ways" – as Gill has said –, Epictetus seems to view one type of conduct as superior to all others. This leads to a problem: one the one hand, Epictetus recognizes that people are born with different *natures*, on the other hand, he sees only one type of conduct as commendable. How can he blame those who don't have the right *nature* to perform that one type of right conduct? How could people incapable of doing the right thing even happen within the Stoic framework? Gill answers this question in the following way:

> […] *the notion of living according to one's* persona*, seems to be reserved for those who make the rigorous response; and it is suggested that anyone who consistently tries to live according to one's* persona *will come to feel that he must make this response.* […] *His advice presupposes the classic Stoic view that, as human beings, we are all, at some level, naturally capable of living in accordance with the virtuous rationality that constitutes our human nature. In effect, then, the advice to maintain their own specific* persona *is converted into the advice to maintain our universal* persona *as human beings.*[125]

[122] Epictetus, *Epicteti Dissertationes*, 1.2.22
[123] Gill, 1988: 188
[124] In *Discourses* 1.2.29, Epictetus says that he himself would have his neck cut off than his beard cut off – a beard being part of the philosopher's *persona*.
[125] Gill, 1988: 188-189

Like Panaetius, Epictetus' advice is to take into consideration one's particular *persona.* However, this particular *persona,* once fully realized, seems to almost completely coincide with the universal *persona*, resulting in the fact that acting in accordance with one's particular *persona* will result in people overall acting in one and the same way. Those who behave differently have simply not (yet) understood what their actual *persona* is – like the slave who hasn't understood that a beating is by *nature* endurable. What makes us most distinct from each other in regard to our actions is therefore not the individuating workings of *nature* – as Panaetius seems to believe –*,* but the degree of understanding and literal *realization* of our *nature.* Epictetus' philosophy therefore seems to focus more one discovering one's *nature* and *persona*, while Panaetius seems to view these as something fixed.

3.3 Panaetius' significance for Stoicism

We have looked for three possible Panaetian innovations in the philosophy of Epictetus. While the first innovation – the fourfold distinction of *personae* – is absent from Epictetus' writings, the second innovation – the fact that both 1) the *indifferents* and 2) our capacity to use these according to *reason* make up our *personae* – is present. The situation of the third possible innovation is more complex. Epictetus' works do display the notion of the embeddedness of individual dispositions within *nature*, but to a lesser degree than Panaetius' work, and this notion does not lead to a plurality of commendable behaviour. Moreover, Panaetius and Epictetus seem to disagree on the topic of suicide.

The fact that Panaetius' first possible innovation is absent from Epictetus' works, demonstrates that Epictetus has not slavishly copied Panaetius. We can therefore only suppose that Panaetius has influenced Epictetus in more subtle ways. Before doing so, we must consider to what extent both philosophers could be drawing from a common source. While I see little reason to connect the first and third possible innovation to pre-Panaetian Stoic philosophers, the second innovation – the fact that both 1) the *indifferents* and 2) our capacity to use these according to *reason* make up our *personae* – could be connected to Chrysippus on the basis of the following arguments:

1) Chrysippus wrote a *Peri tou Kathēkontos*.
2) Chrysippus posits that the goal in life is both living in accordance with the universal *nature* and living in accordance with one's human *nature.* Given Chrysippus' emphasis on this rational human *nature*, it would be unexpected if this notion were absent from his *Peri tou Kathēkontos.*
3) The references to *personae* by Ariston of Chios and Bion of Borysthenes, who predate Chrysippus, only include the *indifferents*. In these accounts, *reason* is not yet a *persona*, rather, one should 'act out' one's *persona* according to *reason*.

It could thus well be possible that Chrysippus preceded Panaetius in presenting our human rationality as a (crucial) *persona.*

Chrysippus was a highly influential philosopher throughout the history of the Stoa.[126] From the first century CE onward, his works were even studied more than those of other Stoic philosophers.[127] This gives us reason to believe that both Panaetius and Epictetus looked at Chrysippus' *Peri tou Kathēkontos* when they themselves were writing on *appropriate action*. The fact that human rationality plays an important role in Epictetus' philosophy does therefore not necessarily point to Panaetian influence. But there is no clear precedent, prior to Panaetius, to the third possible innovation – the embeddedness of a broad array of individual characteristics within *nature*, which leads to a plurality of commendable behaviour.[128] This idea is present in the philosophy of Epictetus, which gives us some reason to believe that Epictetus has been influenced by Panaetius. However, Epictetus does not preserve the idea unaltered. His works retain the idea that *nature* endows people with certain individuating (mental) dispositions, but without leading to Panaetius' plurality of commendable conduct. One type of conduct seems commendable; all other types – while perhaps not completely rejected – are evidently looked down upon. While seemingly using Panaetian doctrine, Epictetus seems to be moving away from the Panaetian idea that "different people may validly pursue virtue in significantly different ways". I therefore disagree with the view that that Epictetus repeats much of Panaetius' theory. While Epictetus' works quite likely retain this alleged Panaetian innovation, it seems to have been heavily modified, either by Epictetus himself, by previous Stoic philosophers, or by both.

If Epictetus' work indeed retains (modified) Panaetian doctrine, we can wonder just how Epictetus came to be influenced. Panaetius is never mentioned by name by Epictetus.[129] Perhaps, there was an intermediate Stoic philosopher, himself influenced by Panaetian doctrine, who in turn influenced Epictetus. However, Panaetius is hardly mentioned in Stoic sources.[130] Musonius Rufus (ca. 30-100 CE) does not mention him.[131] Three references to Panaetius can be found in the philosophy of Seneca (4 BCE – 65 CE). Sellar therefore concludes that:

> *One thing is clear,* […]*, namely that Seneca rarely mentions Panaetius in his works compared with his frequent references to the early Stoic triumvirate of Zeno, Cleanthes, and Chrysippus.* […] *There is, then, little explicit evidence for a strong direct Panaetian influence on Seneca.*[132]

[126] Gould, 1970: 12
[127] Gould, 1970: 13
[128] Gill has argued that Panaetius was influenced by Democritus and Epicurus (1994).
[129] Van Straaten, 1952: 56-59
[130] This does not necessarily mean that Panaetius was uninfluential, as it could have to do with the Stoic sources. Only fragments of Musonius Rufus have survived. Furthermore, it could be possible that Panaetius influenced the way in which later Stoics interpreted the writings of Zeno, Cleanthes and Chrysippus. In this way, he could have left his mark on Stoic philosophy without explicitly being referred to.
[131] Van Straaten, 1952: 56-59
[132] Sellars, 2013: 11

Like Seneca, Epictetus regularly mentions Chrysippus, Zeno and Cleanthes; respectively fourteen, twelve and ten times.[133] More frequent references to Panaetius can be found outside of the Stoa. Plutarch, an influential Stoic philosopher and contemporary of Epictetus, refers to Panaetius nine times.[134] Aulus Gellius, born around 125 CE, gives a specific account of Panaetius' *Peri tou Kathēkontos*, proving that the work still existed when Epictetus was writing.[135] Given the frequent reference to Chrysippus and Cleanthes, it seems likely that their works were the major source for Epictetus' *personae*-theory. Epictetus has not taken over Panaetius' fourfold distinction of *personae*, and he disagrees with Panaetius on the topic of suicide. Only the idea that certain character traits are embedded within *nature* seems to be taken over from Panaetius, but in an altered way. I am therefore tempted to believe that Panaetius influenced Epictetus only as an additional source.

I believe it is fair to assume that the specific fourfold distinction of the *personae* is a genuine Panaetian innovation, because there is nothing like it in the writings of other Stoic philosophers. I also assume that the idea of a broad array of character traits being embedded within *nature* is genuinely Panaetian. While I think it is fair to assume that the early Stoa held a limited notion of *nature* as an individuating force, Panaetius appears to have developed this idea further, incorporating a wide range of character traits into it. Here, Panaetius' significance lies in the fact that he elaborated on already existing ideas. The notion of the plurality of commendable conduct can, on the basis of absence of similar ideas elsewhere, also be assumed to be Panaetian. The same goes for the idea that two different people are expected to behave differently in the same situatio. Whereas all of Epictetus' commendable examples readily welcome death, Panaetius deems suicide right for some and wrong for others.

When judging Panaetius' significance, we can say that his influence on later Stoicism must have been small. His significance must therefore be sought in his innovativeness, as he seems to have introduced some innovations into Stoicism. These innovations can, however, all be connected to concepts that already existed in pre-Panaetian Stoicism. Panaetius does not seem to have been a highly original thinker in his own right, but rather one who developed or expanded upon the thoughts of men like Zeno, Cleanthes, and Chrysippus. His own thoughts are composed of common Stoic elements, which he, at times, arranged in his own particular way. This particular arrangement of Stoic elements has not been taken over by later Stoic philosophers. For post-Panaetian Stoics, the status of the first three headmasters must have outweighed Panaetius' additions to their thoughts, so that the works of the former maintained their canonical status, whereas Panaetius' works disappeared into the background.

[133] Gould, 1970: 12
[134] Van Straaten, 1952: 58
[135] Van Straaten, 1952: 44

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have examined the theory of *personae* as it is found in *De Officiis*. I have done so in the scholarly held belief that Cicero's works offer a reflection of a similar theory in Panaetius' *Peri tou Kathēkontos.* The research question – what is the significance of Panaetius' theory of *personae* in Stoic philosophy? – can be answered. Panaetius has been seen a great innovator, even a heretic in earlier times, but I believe that his significance has been rather small. On the basis of my research, I propose the following list of plausible Panaetian innovations:

1. The fourfold distinction of *personae.*
2. The embeddedness of a broad array of individual characteristics within *nature*, which leads to a plurality of commendable conduct.

I have argued that other parts of the theory of *personae* that we find in *De Officiis* have clear parallels in pre-Panaetian Stoicism. In general, Panaetius seems to have developed and further expanded upon previously existing Stoic ideas. The embeddedness of character traits within *nature* can, for example, be connected to the category of *indifferents* and the example of Agamemnon and Thersites.

Panaetius' contributions to Stoicism seem to have been less important than those of the first three Stoic heads. In this way, Panaetius likely became a minor figure in Stoicism. Seneca still refers to him, but he refers more often to Zeno, Cleanthes and Chrysippus. We can still find some traces of Panaetius' influence in Epictetus' philosophy, but I agree with Gill that Panaetius' philosophy is quite different from that of Epictetus.

The *personae*-theory has often been part of a discussion surrounding notions of self, personality and will. As has become clear from my thesis, I think that it is fair to believe that such notions were not completely absent from antiquity. Panaetius' notion of the embeddedness of character traits within *nature*, leading to a plurality of commendable conduct, seems to be a strong indication that a notion of personality is especially present in his philosophy. Epictetus seems to view the human rational *persona* as more important than Panaetius, leading me to believe that the notion of personality is more prominent in Panaetius' philosophy than in that of Epictetus. Seneca and Epictetus, on the other hand, seem to have been more important for the development of the notion of the will. Some modern notions are more present in the philosophy of Panaetius, others in the philosophy of Seneca and Epictetus. Therefore, I think that it is inaccurate to see the development of these concepts as a straightforward, linear progression. However, I realize that this thesis is too short to fully cover the interesting debate surrounding these notions in relation to Panaetius. If i may add just one point to this debate, it would be that it is important to know which ideas can be attributed to Panaetius before discussing his significance.

Panaetius most important innovation for the personae-theory – the embeddedness of a broad array of character trait within *nature*, leading to a plurality of commendable conduct – can perhaps be seen as a response to questions that had been raised after the death of the first three heads of the Stoa.

As we have seen, the Stoa had been under fierce attack by philosophers from rivaling schools, like the Academic Carneades. We have seen that Panaetius incorporated works from these schools into his own thinking. Perhaps, the origin of Panaetius' focus on many different characters must partially be sought in the philosophy of schools like the Academy and the Lyceum. This is, however, beyond the scope of my thesis. That Panaetius attracted a large audience during his lifetime suggests that his philosophy was held in high regard. In the long run, however, his legacy gave way to that of the first three heads, who had provided the general outline for Stoic philosophy. Panaetius' additions to their work were not enough to maintain the status that he had during his lifetime.

With the renewed attention for Stoicism, we can ask ourselves if Panaetius can be relevant in our times. Contemporary Stoicism, with its focus on topics like 'typically' masculine behaviour, could perhaps benefit from a Stoic philosopher who validates qualities like cheerfulness, and who argues that appropriate behaviour can be realised in multiple ways. On the other hand, we should not be blind to the fact that Panaetius' philosophy – like that of all Stoic philosophers – contains problematic aspects, like his justification of the relentless Lysander. Ancient philosophers come from a society that operates verya different from ours. We can wonder if, perhaps, we are right in granting ancient philosophers, whether it would be Panaetius or any other, any significance at all. I do not have the answer to this question, but I hope to have provided a good answer to my research question, and to have given an insightful account of Panaetius' theory of *personae.*

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