

The slave from birth undergoes his first rebirth in the face of death, his fear of the Lord. The Lord has sway over life and death, and in experiencing this the whole world of the slave is shaken. As with anything, this shaking has stirred up what was previously sedimented, and by applying himself to these new realizations, the slave awakens to his own existence – through his servitude and through his work (194).

The master from birth has never had to wound his pride by kneeling down to a superior, has never felt the pang of lust for a desire left unsatisfied – in short, he has never wanted, he has always had. Each desire immediately satisfied has left no room for the development of discipline, which in truth is only instituted by those in want of something they lack. The slave has only ever worked for the master and has only ever existed as an extension of the master's will. It is through his first death and rebirth that the slave begins to see himself as being in possession of a life of his own – and therefore a being warranting the personal satisfaction of desire. But the awakened slave is still enslaved for he remains fettered to the iron chains of the master. The existence of the slave is still destined to work, and to work for the satisfaction of the master and master alone, and so each action the slave takes is a staving off of his own desire, and through this discipline does the slave come to regard himself more and more so as a self (195-196).

In seeing that the world is not for him the awakened slave seeks solace by attempting to escape from this tantalizing reality. His chains prevent physical freedom, and so he seeks solitude in a world of his own devising: the world of his thoughts. In this turn the second death is experienced and the awakened slave is reborn as a stoic. The freedom it gains in this move is the freedom of thought, and the stoic cuts all ties with the world to find seclusion in private communion with himself (197).

But the freedom the stoic has afforded himself in this move is an artificial one, for by deeming itself the locus of truth has turned its back on the world. The stoic ignores the independence of things as they are in the world, and therefore his thoughts lack the content which would grant them meaning. Instead, the stoic only identifies the content of his thought with itself – the source of its ideas of the good and true is the same thought which names them, and thus these narcissistic ideas are divorced from the living reality of things and cannot surpass themselves (200).

The stoic can take one standpoint or another; in either scenario, the source of his ideas lack recourse – they are as ephemeral as his reflection in unsteady waters. In turning to face reality to seek the necessary content, the stoic dies and is reborn as the skeptic (202). The skeptic aims to affirm his freedom by calling into question the world it now faces – it sees the world as something open for it to perceive, yet seeks to confuse the moment of difference between itself and world. What the skeptic takes to be real he says can be false, the products of his reasoning he claims to be illusions, and in his search for the truth adopts a form of sophistry (204).

But the stance of the skeptic is self-defeating. He calls into question his thoughts, yet by the same token proves to himself that he is a thinking being. After peering out at the world he glances down at the food of his senses as though they were poisoned, yet continues to find his subsistence off these same victuals. In seeking his freedom he has created for himself a constant state of unrest and unease, and has condemned himself to an eternal fruitless struggle (205). I beseech you, where can he seek his salvation?