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## The Stoics

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### Introduction

**T**he Stoic school of philosophy was founded by Zeno of Citium (modern-day Larnaca in Cyprus), who arrived in Athens some twenty years after Aristotle's death.

Stoicism's origin corresponds roughly, therefore, to the beginning of the Hellenistic period, conventionally dated from the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC. The term 'Stoic' itself derives from Zeno's practice of teaching in the painted portico (*stoa poikilê*) of Athens, one of several colonnades clustered in the marketplace at the foot of the Acropolis. The Stoa continued as one of the main philosophical institutions of Athens until about the beginning of the first century, remaining at the philosophical centre of the ancient world for nearly 200 years. During this period, successive heads of the school elaborated and defended the teachings of its founder, producing an impressive body of writing on a range of philosophical topics, including logic, ethics and physical theory. These treatises would have been available to the philosophical community in Athens during the second and third centuries BC, and some of them probably circulated widely throughout the Mediterranean world.<sup>1</sup>

Despite their wide circulation, we are in a very different position with respect to these early Stoic writings than to the works of Plato

and Aristotle, for numerous and influential as they were, none of the treatises of the original Greek Stoics has come down to us intact. This does not make it impossible to study Stoic philosophy as it was taught and practised in Athens, but it does mean that this study presents special challenges, and a number of preliminary cautions should be borne in mind. It should be remembered, first, that almost everything we know about the Greek Stoics is based on the second-hand reports of later authors. With few exceptions, we are at one or more removes from the earliest Stoic writings, and the discussions of Stoic doctrines that survive frequently reflect the biases and assumptions of later thinkers. Second, it should be remembered that Stoic philosophy is not a homogeneous whole but a body of thought developed and elaborated by various individuals over time. Though the main lines of Stoic thought remain fairly constant, it is clear that some of the leading Stoics disagreed with one another on finer points of doctrine. Since the picture of Stoicism that we are able to recover is not always sensitive to these differences, it is best thought of, perhaps, as a kind of composite image, rather than a snapshot of the system as articulated by any particular Stoic thinker. In speaking of Stoic thought as though it were a unified whole, we are doing our best to extract a coherent doctrine from many later, incomplete accounts.<sup>2</sup>

Fortunately, we are in a better position with respect to Stoic ethics than to most other facets of Stoic philosophy, and for two reasons. First, partly by accident, and partly due to the preoccupations of later writers, a number of continuous expositions of Stoic ethical theory have survived, and from authors who have no particular motives (so far as we know) for distorting the views they report.<sup>3</sup> Second, it is arguably in the field of ethics that Stoicism came to exercise its most enduring influence. Much of the work produced by Stoic writers during the time of imperial Rome – by Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, for instance – is primarily concerned with ethical matters. Though these authors are not always accurate guides to the complexities of Stoic theory as articulated by earlier thinkers, their treatises provide us with an indispensable view of much that has been lost. They also allow us to see, at first hand, the very considerable influence that Stoic ethics came to exercise on the Roman world.

## Foundations and influences

Like other philosophers of the Hellenistic period, the Stoics are indebted to their classical inheritance. In the realm of ethics, their deepest debt is to Socrates and to a body of Socratic thought current when Zeno arrived in Athens. Indeed, as we shall see, Stoic ethics may be usefully viewed as an elaboration and defence of key Socratic claims. It is clear, in particular, that many of the earliest Stoic writings, such as the *Republic* of Zeno, were shaped by a close interaction with Platonic texts. A number of Stoic doctrines appear to build on claims Plato himself associates with Socrates in the early dialogues, while others derive from a largely independent tradition of Socratic teaching.<sup>4</sup> Zeno is said to have spent a considerable time as the pupil of the Cynic Crates, who was himself associated with a line of teachers reaching back, through Antisthenes, to Socrates himself. Some of the central features of early Stoic thought were almost certainly inherited from the Cynic tradition.<sup>5</sup>

The Stoics' relationship to Aristotle is less clear. Though Aristotle's published treatises were probably available in Athens during the lifetime of his successor, Theophrastus, Aristotle is rarely mentioned by name in Stoic texts, and many elements of Stoicism that initially seem to recall Aristotle can also be explained as independent developments of Platonic thought.<sup>6</sup> One central element of Stoic ethics may reasonably be thought of as Aristotelian, however, for it is arguably Aristotle who, in Book One of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, gives it its most explicit formulation. This is the thesis that a rational agent will be guided by a conception of *eudaimonia* or happiness, by an account of the kind of human life that is best overall. Like most Hellenistic philosophers, the Stoics adopt the framework of eudaimonism as a basis for the requirements that an ethical theory enjoins.<sup>7</sup> They assume with Aristotle that each of our actions, insofar as it is rational, will be directed towards the overarching end of happiness, and that the job of an ethical theory is to say what this end consists in and how it may be achieved. As Aristotle puts it, if there is a highest good for human beings – and Aristotle thinks there is – it is of the greatest importance to understand what it is, so that, like archers, we will have a target to aim at.<sup>8</sup>

Such a concern with happiness may seem an objectionable starting point for an ethical theory. Ethics, after all, seems centrally concerned with questions about our obligations to others. How can a theory that regards self-interest as the foundation of rational action purport to be an *ethical* theory? Those sympathetic to the ancient tradition of ethical theorizing sometimes provide an answer along the following lines.<sup>9</sup> They point, first, to differences between the concept expressed by *eudaimonia* and that expressed by the popular notion of happiness. Though 'happiness' is probably the best way to render the Greek term, this translation can be misleading, for it may seem to suggest an episodic or fleeting condition of the agent, one dependent on the satisfaction of transient desires. By contrast, the Greek conception is more closely associated with the idea of a human life conceived as an ordered whole. Though *eudaimonia* may certainly include the satisfaction of desire, the Greeks tend to take it for granted that an agent who is *eudaimôn* must also have the *right kinds* of desires. This point helps us to see why eudaimonism need not amount to a narrowly self-interested theory, for the right kind of desires, the kind that go to make up the best form of human life, will plausibly include concern for others. This does not conclusively show that eudaimonism can supply an adequate basis for ethics, but it does help to show that it is not obviously deficient in this respect.<sup>10</sup>

By itself, however, the framework of eudaimonism imposes a largely formal constraint. It is compatible, for instance, with the Epicurean claim that the highest good consists in pleasure and the absence of pain, or with a view that came to be associated with both Plato and Aristotle during the Hellenistic period: that it consists in the exercise of virtue together with the possession of additional goods such as health or wealth.<sup>11</sup> On the Epicurean view, the traditional virtues are no part of happiness at all; they are means to securing the good life, but the good remains distinct from virtue. According to Hellenistic accounts deriving from Plato and Aristotle, though virtue is a necessary part of happiness and perhaps its most important ingredient, it is not all that a successful human life requires. The virtuous agent who is wholly unfortunate in his or her external circumstances will find his or her happiness marred, as Aristotle says. He or she will need the cooperation of fortune to secure the goal of happiness.<sup>12</sup>

What especially distinguishes Stoic ethics from the rival Hellenistic theories is the Stoics' defence, from within the framework of eudaimonism, of two theses closely associated with Socrates and the Socratic tradition. First, the Stoics follow Socrates insofar as they regard virtue or human excellence (*aretê*) as the *sole* ingredient of the happy human life and, in fact, as the only unqualified good.<sup>13</sup> This fits with the Socratic claim that no evil can befall a good individual and implies that happiness is fully within an agent's control, invulnerable to circumstances and the whims of fortune.<sup>14</sup> Second, the Stoics develop and defend the Socratic view that virtue is a kind of technical knowledge, the *technê tou biou* or *ars vitae*, the skill required to live one's life well. As such, Stoic theory rejects out of hand the Epicurean claim that virtue is valuable only for the results it secures. And although they agree with Plato and Aristotle that virtue is an intrinsic good and an essential component of the good life, the Stoics maintain, as Plato and Aristotle arguably do not, that happiness is available to an agent in even the worst external circumstances.

## Nature

The Stoics' effort to elaborate and defend these claims explains some of the most distinctive features of their ethical system. It also requires them to deal with a basic difficulty implicit in the Socratic view. In Plato's early dialogues, when Socrates asks his interlocutors to define one of the conventional virtues, such as justice or temperance or piety, he frequently insists that the definition must not appeal to any one of the other virtues or rely on any prior, unanalysed notion of what is just or right. In the *Meno*, for example, Meno is not permitted to define virtue in terms of one of its parts or, more generally, in ethical terms of the sort he and Socrates are investigating.<sup>15</sup> Instead, Socrates wants Meno to provide a non-circular analysis, one that identifies the basic property or properties in which virtue consists in terms he and Meno already understand.<sup>16</sup> Socrates seems to suppose that to possess such an account of one of the virtues would be to possess the virtue itself, that to know the properties on which justice or piety depends would enable an agent, with perfect consistency, to identify the just or pious course of action.<sup>17</sup> Yet most of the early dialogues

which features or aspects of nature do they have in mind? Many references to nature in later Stoic works, such as those of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, associate nature with the order of the cosmos as a whole. By contrast, Cicero's summary of Stoic ethics, which antedates these writings, gives central place to an account of human nature and of ethical progress in the human case. Commentators have wondered whether one of these conceptions of nature plays a more fundamental role in early Stoic theory. Some have concluded that, as in Aristotle, the dominant appeal in early Stoic ethics is to human nature in particular, while others have argued that an understanding of cosmic nature is foundational to Stoic ethics, and that the notion of agreement the Stoics defend centrally requires knowledge of the cosmic order.<sup>20</sup>

On balance, the evidence suggests that the early Stoics would have rejected a rigid distinction between human and cosmic nature, which the question seems to presuppose. As a fragment from Chrysippus emphasizes, human nature is part of the cosmos in such a way that one cannot live in agreement with human nature without also conforming to the rational principles expressed in the cosmos, and vice versa.<sup>21</sup> *Homologia* requires knowledge of what is essential to human nature, certainly, but also knowledge of the order of which human nature is a part. For the Stoics, such knowledge appears to include some of the facts that today we would regard as theoretical and scientific in nature. Seneca speaks, for instance, of knowing the causes of natural phenomena (*causas naturalium*), while according to Posidonius, the end is 'living as a student of the truth and order of the whole, and helping to promote this as far as possible.'<sup>22</sup> Here it is not simply knowledge of the processes that occur throughout the cosmos that is essential, on the Stoic view, but knowledge of how they contribute to an overarching set of rational ends that structure the natural world.<sup>23</sup> The surviving Stoic sources tell us far less about this teleological framework than we would like. They do say, however, that the highest end, with a view to which Zeus has ordered the physical world in the way that he has, is the manifestation of every sort of excellence and beauty.<sup>24</sup>

On the Stoic account, then, the knowledge that underpins right action is knowledge of the normative properties exhibited in the cosmos itself, properties that are ultimately to be analysed in

represent Socrates' interlocutors as failing to provide a reductive definition of the sort Socrates wants, and Socrates famously denies that he possesses any such knowledge himself.

In developing the Socratic claim that virtue is knowledge, then, the Stoics need to develop an account of its content, of what one must know in order to possess the virtues. Early Stoic definitions of the *telos*, or human end, indicate the Stoics' general line of response to this difficulty. The Stoic answer to the Socratic question is, roughly, that virtue consists in knowledge of a rational pattern implicit in the natural order. Zeno himself is said to have defined the *telos* simply as *homologia*, a Greek term indicating consistency or agreement. Later Stoic formulations of the end imply, however, that *homologia* should not be understood primarily as a matter of internal consistency – of consistency in one's reasoning or one's actions, say – but of agreement between the content of one's beliefs and the order of nature itself.<sup>19</sup> According to Chrysippus of Soli, the most important and influential Stoic to follow Zeno, the human good consists in 'living in accordance with experience' (*empeiria*, from which our word 'empirical' derives) is important, for it strongly suggests that when the Stoics speak of conformity to nature they are not thinking, in the first instance, of an individual who acts in certain ways that are more natural than others but of an individual who possesses an accurate and secure knowledge of nature's ends. As it happens, the Stoics do believe that an agent who possesses this knowledge will act in some ways rather than others. The emphasis in their definition of the good life falls not on an agent's actions, however, but on the knowledge that precedes and explains them.<sup>19</sup>

Later formulations of the Stoic *telos* elaborate the notion of agreement with nature in a distinctive way. They maintain, in particular, that the end consists in reasoning well in the selection (*eklogē*) and rejection (*apeklogē*) of things in accordance with nature (*ta kata phusin*). We will need to consider the significance of these formulations more carefully, for they help to explain how (on the Stoic view) knowledge of nature's purposes is connected with virtuous motivation and action. It is worth pausing, however, to consider a prior question with which commentators on Stoic ethics have been concerned: when the early Stoics speak of agreement with nature,

naturalistic and aesthetic terms.<sup>25</sup> A similar solution to the Socratic search for ethical knowledge is suggested in some of Plato's dialogues, most notably, perhaps, in the programme of philosophical education proposed in the *Republic*, which includes a long and searching study of science and mathematics as part of the ascent to knowledge of the Form of the Good. Though the Stoics reject Plato's doctrine of transcendent Forms, they agree that knowledge of nature's ends is an explicit and foundational part of ethical theory. Such a view implies a distinctive meta-ethical account, one that treats central forms of value as both natural and objective, independent of an agent's psychological state and which regards evaluative judgements as true or false depending on whether they correctly represent these independent, axiological facts.<sup>26</sup>

## Ethical progress

In adopting the core of Socratic ethics, the Stoics place epistemology at the centre of their ethical theory. Virtue, in their view, is an essentially cognitive achievement, a systematic form of knowledge directed towards the end of living well, and one that arises through a grasp of nature's principles. According to one of the Stoics' formal definitions, virtue is 'a disposition and faculty of the governing principle of the soul brought into being by reason, or rather: reason itself, consistent, firm, and unwavering'.<sup>27</sup> This condition is built up from a form of representational cognition the Stoics characterize as *katalépsis*, a mental grasp or grip on the world. As the Stoics describe it, *katalépsis* is a mental state with propositionally structured content that is both true and justified. By itself, however, *katalépsis* does not amount to virtue. The Stoics draw a clear distinction between *katalépsis* and *epistémê*, the highest form of cognition, and the form on which virtue depends. In isolation, none of the *katalépsis* or mental grasps on the world is constitutive of knowledge in this more demanding sense, but only when it is anchored by a system (*syntéma*) of beliefs that has been entirely purged of error and cannot be undermined by further experience or argument. Since on the Stoic account even a single false belief is sufficient to undermine the stability of the whole, virtue turns out to be an all or nothing affair,

an ironclad cognition of the world consisting in a thoroughly secure system of true and justified beliefs.

It goes without saying that virtue, so conceived, is an exceptionally demanding and difficult condition to achieve. In practice, this conception of virtue came to function in Stoic ethics as something of a regulative ideal: to specify the virtuous course of action is to say what someone who has achieved an epistemic condition of this sort (*sophos* or sage) would do. In principle, however, virtue is a condition available to every rational agent. A central task of Stoic theory is to show how it is possible for human beings to achieve the epistemic relation to the world the Stoic analysis of virtue requires. The Stoics defend this possibility, in part, by arguing for an epistemological account according to which agents are able to discriminate between true and false impressions and to assent only to those which are true and justified.<sup>28</sup> Because each of the cognitive steps on the road to virtue is in our power in this way, the responsibility for virtue and vice lies wholly with the agent. But the Stoics also offer a theory of psychological development in both rational and non-rational animals, one designed to show that correct or appropriate action is everywhere the result of accurate perception and that, in animals and humans alike, teleological success depends on an accurate representation of the world. The latter theory is worth considering, for it is central to some of the most important extant accounts of Stoic ethics, and it seems clear that the Stoics appealed to it to support some of their most basic ethical claims.

Reports of the Stoic theory of *oikeiôsis* (as commentators tend to call it) are woefully incomplete, but the fragments that survive are fascinating, for they begin from a series of empirical claims about a range of phenomena readily observable in the animal kingdom. Every animal, the Stoics maintain, is born with an array of motivational tendencies given to it by nature, including, most saliently, the desire to preserve and care for itself. Some of these motivations are present immediately upon birth, while others, such as the desire to care for its offspring, are manifested as the animal matures. All of these impulses, however, arise only in virtue of a more fundamental capacity it possesses, namely, the capacity to perceive its own disposition and, more strictly, to perceive the correct orientation of its disposition to a range of elements in its environment. Without any instruction,

the Stoics observe, animals perceive their vulnerability or superiority in relation to a variety of predators and prey and know, as it were, how to make use of the faculties nature has given them. A chicken flees from the shadow of a hawk, while a bull by nature employs its horns as weapons against other animals. Stoic texts provide a range of further examples to support this account, each calculated to show that animals are born with an awareness of what their constitutions are like and of what their physical dispositions are *for*.<sup>29</sup>

Some of the elements of this theory seem to have originated in dialogue with the Epicureans. The Stoics share with the Epicureans the view that the earliest forms of behaviour manifested by animals constitute a criterion of what is natural to the animal and constitutive of its *telos* as such. The Epicureans, however, deploy this assumption in support of their hedonism: what animals pursue from birth, they argue, is pleasure or the absence of pain, and an animal's *telos* depends on the achievement of this goal. The Stoic theory seems intended to counter this analysis on the grounds that it misdescribes the case. A turtle on its back, writes Seneca, does not struggle to right itself because it is in pain but because it possesses a representational awareness, however vague or inarticulate, of its correct relation to the world.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, the Stoics argue that in a range of cases animals do not appear to act with a view to pleasure at all, but pursue various goals even in the teeth of pain and discomfort. This complex of goal-directed activities is made possible, they hold, only by a mode of perception with which animals are born: immediately from birth an animal *perceives*, in a teleologically informed way, the actions that are appropriate to it in virtue of the kind of animal it is and the environment in which it finds itself.

The Stoic term for this innate, reflexive awareness is *oikeiōsis*, while the motivation to which it gives rise is called *hormé*, a term mediaeval philosophers sometimes render as *instinctus naturalis*.<sup>31</sup> Central to the Stoic theory of *oikeiōsis*, then, is something recognizably similar to later notions of animal instinct: *oikeiōsis* depends on an innate capacity that enables the animal to structure its behaviour in ways conducive to its own preservation and to that of the species as the whole. Though most of the surviving discussions of *oikeiōsis* begin with examples from the animal world, it is clear that an analysis of animal behaviour is not the central import of the

Stoic theory. In each of the main accounts, this initial focus shifts to an analysis of psychological development in humans and, finally, to conclusions about the character of the human good. It is not easy to tell from the fragments that survive precisely how the Stoics applied their theoretical observations about animal behaviour to the human case. In general, however, the theory of *oikeiōsis* seems intended to support the Stoic account of the human *telos* in two respects.

First, the theory functions as a kind of inductive argument for the Stoic claim that human excellence depends, first and foremost, on a cognitive grasp of the natural order. Importantly, on the Stoic account, the capacity for *oikeiōsis* is an essentially perceptual capacity. What animals do by nature on the basis of non-rational perception, human beings do on the basis of rational or conceptually structured perception. Just as the appropriate behaviour of animals – the preservation of themselves or their offering, cooperation within and across species – depends on a rudimentary form of cognition, so appropriate action in human beings is explained by a form of rational cognition. In contrast to various ancient and modern models of action, and particularly that associated with Hume, the Stoic account assumes that cognitive states can also be motivating states, capable of generating action in virtue of their representational content. This assumption is a central legacy of the Stoics' Socratic inheritance and one fully integrated, within the Stoic system, with the claim that virtue consists in conformity to nature.<sup>32</sup>

Second, the *oikeiōsis* theory seems intended to support the claim that knowledge, because it is sufficient for right action, is also sufficient for achieving the human *telos*. What an animal pursues is not the experience of pleasure but a fixed pattern of behaviour determined by its nature and place within a wider order. Though pleasure may supervene on a correct pattern of action, it is incidental to the achievement of the pattern itself. The Stoics describe these patterns of actions in both animals and humans as *kathékonta*, a word Cicero translates as *officium* and which has often been rendered in English by the word 'duty'. In the human case, the actions appropriate to human beings in virtue of their nature and place in the world, and which are known through rational cognition, are the actions that a fully virtuous agent will perform. When these actions arise from the system of cognitive grasps or *katalépseis* in which virtue consists,

they are called not simply correct or appropriate actions (*kathékonta*) but right actions (*katorthômata*). *Katorthômata* are actions that, as Cicero says, are correct and complete in every respect.<sup>33</sup> They are appropriate actions done in the right way, from the stable and consistent disposition in which virtue consists.<sup>34</sup>

A basic aim of the *oikeiôsis* theory, therefore, is to make a cognitive analysis of motivation central to the Stoic account of ethical development. The examples of animal behaviour support a wider, perception-based account of action the Stoics also apply to the human case. Just as an animal exhibits appropriate modes of behaviour through the perceptual capacities that nature has given it, so also human beings achieve the virtues through a form of perception that includes a teleological or evaluative component. In human beings, perception is governed by the faculty of reason, a sophisticated set of conceptions built up from experience of the natural order. This faculty supervenes as the craftsman of impulse on human experience, as one source puts it, structuring motivation through an accurate representation of the world. Its fullest development leads both to the perfected expression of the actions appropriate to human agents, and to the recognition that this pattern of action, and the knowledge from which it flows, is the central goal of human existence. Cicero describes the final stages of this process as follows:

But as soon as [one] has acquired understanding, or rather, the conception which the Stoics call *ennoia*, and has seen the regularity and, so to speak, the harmony of conduct, he comes to value this far higher than all those objects of his initial affection; and he draws the rational conclusion that this constitutes the highest human good which is worthy of praise and desirable for its own sake.<sup>35</sup>

Cicero does not tell us as much as we would like about the final transition to virtue in human beings. It is clearly accompanied, however, by the agent's recognition, in the fullest possible sense, that the human good does not depend on external conditions or circumstances, on the presence or absence of pleasure or pain, but simply on an understanding of the harmony implicit in the natural order and expressed in the actions of a virtuous agent. It is

this condition, the outcome of a developmental process in which an agent's beliefs are gradually freed from error, which the Stoics characterize as *homologia*, the defining excellence of a human being. It is one that enables an agent to determine the appropriate course of action in every instance, and to structure her actions by the same rational principles that order and inform the natural world.

## Virtue and indifferents

The claim that virtue is the only good and sufficient for human happiness may strike us, as it struck the Stoics' critics, as an extreme view. It seems clear that throughout Stoicism's history this thesis remained a basic target of criticism from rival schools. Though the theory of *oikeiôsis* may have been intended to provide some inductive support for the sufficiency thesis, it is not the only ground on which the Stoics defend it. Two other forms of argument are worth mentioning. On the one hand, some of the Stoic arguments for the claim that virtue alone is good appear to have been offered in the spirit of conceptual analysis. For example, the Stoics accept the claim, which Plato sometimes puts forward, that every good thing is intrinsically beneficial. They argue, however, that resources like health or wealth may be used both well and badly, and so cannot be intrinsically beneficial, and so cannot be goods. Though a number of variations of this argument are attributed to the Stoics, it seems unlikely that they gained much traction with the Stoics' critics. Cicero describes one argument of this sort as a 'dagger of lead', noting that the Stoics' opponents will simply deny the first premise, that all good things are essentially beneficial and therefore beneficial in every circumstance.<sup>36</sup> Such arguments were probably not intended to bear the weight of the Stoic view by themselves, but rather to confirm a set of claims rooted in the teleological framework I have described.

A deeper rationale for the sufficiency thesis, I suspect, depends on a very different form of argument, one already suggested by the *oikeiôsis* account and ultimately bound up with Stoic physics and the Stoic vision of the cosmos as a whole. The thesis that health and wealth, pain and poverty are indifferent is a fundamental consequence of the Stoics' attempt to reconcile their understanding of nature as

a rational order with the fact that this order has not been arranged in such a way that rational agents may infallibly attain these things. Accordingly, the Stoics draw the conclusion that the attainment of these things cannot be essential to the human good.<sup>37</sup> This direction of argument puts a tremendous amount of weight on the Stoic supposition that the cosmos exhibits a providential structure and that, in consequence, teleological success and happiness are within our power. The Stoics' critics were fully prepared to reverse the direction of argument, arguing that since goods such as health and wealth are not universally available to human agents, the cosmos is not, after all, such a providentially ordered place. The cosmological premises from which this argument begins may sound implausible to modern ears. From the ancient perspective, however, the attribution of reason and intelligence to the cosmos plays an important role in explaining the order, symmetry and beauty that (as both the Stoics and their critics agree) are present within it.<sup>38</sup>

We may wonder how far Stoic arguments for the sufficiency thesis succeed and whether the claim that virtue is sufficient for happiness can be defended adequately. A deeper challenge for the Stoic position, however, is to show that the sufficiency thesis can be squared with the framework of rational eudaimonism. This brings us to a second central difficulty with which the Stoics must deal in their effort to defend the Socratic claims I have outlined. Rational action, it seems, aims essentially at some objective worth achieving. Yet on the Stoic hypothesis, there are no goods or rational ends distinct from virtue itself. The Stoics' commitment to rational eudaimonism seems to threaten their identification of virtue with happiness, for in order to give content to the notion of virtue it appears that something other than virtue must be a worthwhile end in its own right. Most of us suppose that health and physical well-being are genuine goods and that the endeavour to secure these goods for ourselves and others is an important part of a virtuous life. Yet if such outcomes are not good and if virtue, as the whole of happiness, is the only final object at which a rational agent may aim, what exactly is the virtuous Stoic agent to *do*? Since the Stoics deny that objectives such as health or wealth are an appropriate focus of rational desire, it may seem that the Stoic agent has no reasonable basis at all for acting in one way rather than another.

The Stoics reply to this difficulty by drawing a distinction within the class of objects and conditions they regard as indifferent to virtue and happiness. Though they maintain that external circumstances cannot disturb the happiness of the fully rational agent, they argue that one is rationally required to pursue some outcomes and avoid others, and that a failure to do so constitutes a failure of virtue and rationality. Those indifferent outcomes that one is rationally required to pursue, the Stoics call 'preferred' (*proégmena*), while those outcomes that an agent is rationally required to avoid, they call 'dispreferred' (*apoproégmena*). It is just this pursuit and avoidance, they maintain, that comprises the actions that are appropriate to a human being.<sup>39</sup> Later formulations of the Stoic *telos* emphasize this process of rationally selecting and rejecting preferred and dispreferred indifferents. Though the Stoics argue that it is no part of our good that we actually *succeed* in securing or avoiding indifferent things (whether for ourselves or for others), they insist that virtue requires us to manage them rationally, and, indeed, that virtuous activity consists in managing them rationally. Indifferents are, in this sense, the material with which virtue must work. Even though one may be happy without indifferents, 'the manner of using them is constitutive of happiness or unhappiness', as one source puts it.<sup>40</sup>

Such a reply may seem like an enormous cheat, and it is clear that many of the Stoics' ancient critics regarded it as such. The Stoics argue that although it makes no difference to our good whether or not we actually secure or avoid various indifferent outcomes, we are rationally required to act so as to secure or avoid them. Yet, this reply seems merely to push the problem back a step. For how can it be good and rational to *pursue* or even *make use* of a thing if having it does not in some way contribute to a good and rational objective? The Stoics seem to embrace two incompatible theses. On the one hand, they hold that preferred indifferents contribute nothing to happiness, the final goal of rational action. On the other, they hold that the effort to achieve these things is somehow constitutive of rational agency. If the Stoics acknowledge that it is rational to pursue a given outcome, it seems they should also acknowledge that the outcome is good, that it is an appropriate focus of rational motivation and that a human life is better for including it. Such criticisms have been urged against the Stoics by both ancient and modern commentators.<sup>41</sup>



I think that the tendency to charge the Stoics with incoherence in this respect is due, in part, to a tendency to conceive of practical rationality in different terms than do the Stoics themselves. The key to understanding the Stoic view is to recognize that because they defend a cognitive account of motivation, according to which beliefs play the role of motivating states, the Stoics are not working with any sharp distinction between theoretical and practical rationality, or even, indeed, with a distinction between practical and epistemic norms. A rational action is not one calculated to secure an intrinsically good outcome, on their account, but one that arises from a cognitive state that is itself justified and which is itself an intrinsically good state of affairs. On such an analysis, actions will be rationally justified just in case and insofar as they result from a rationally justified cognitive condition. Because the value of a virtuous action derives from its origin in this way, to show that an agent has acted for good reasons is not to show that he or she has acted for the sake of securing an independently valuable end but to show that he or she has acted on the basis of true and reliable beliefs.

Preferred and dispreferred indifferents play an important role in practical reasoning, therefore, but not as practical objectives independent of virtue and happiness. Rather, their justificatory role is epistemic. Because the Stoic classification of indifferents codifies the states and conditions that rational nature allots to human agents usually or on the whole, it constitutes part of the grounds on which an agent's beliefs about the natural order are based.<sup>42</sup> All else being equal, a rational agent will select health because she truly believes that, in the usual order of things, the rational pattern of nature assigns this condition to human agents.<sup>43</sup> His or her final objective, however, is simply to reason well, where this consists in forming true and unshakeable beliefs about the structure of nature. The actions of the virtuous agent will follow on these beliefs automatically, as it were, but they will not be good because they are aimed at valuable outcomes. They will be good because they arise from an understanding of the place these things have within a broader order.

The axiology implicit in this account is quite clearly expressed in the Stoics' metaphors for virtuous activity. Virtue, the Stoics maintain, is like the skill expressed in the motions of an actor or a dancer.<sup>44</sup> These motions are not valuable because of any further result they secure

but simply because of the pattern or order they exemplify. The point of these analogies is to help the Stoics' critics understand why health and wealth, though they are indeed indifferent, are not irrelevant to the concerns of the virtuous agent. Their status as preferred or dispreferred is a reflection of the rational pattern exhibited by nature, and a consideration of this status will figure in a justification of the beliefs that explain and motivate the virtuous agents' actions.<sup>45</sup> In treating rationally justified action as a product of true and justified belief, the Stoics effectively treat the norms of practical justification as epistemic norms and indifferents as a source of epistemic reasons. The difficulties that arise in understanding the place of indifferents in Stoic theory arise, in part, from a failure to appreciate that Stoic theory applies cognitive standards in its appraisal of actions.

## The legacy of Stoic ethics

I have so far focused on some of the foundational features of Stoic ethics, on the Stoic conception of virtue, on the fundamental role of nature and on the claim that virtue is sufficient for happiness. The Stoics have much more to say about a range of narrower normative issues, including political matters, human sexuality and obligations to self and others. Some of the Stoics' most striking ethical claims are related to their cosmopolitanism, to the view that the cosmos as a whole has the character of a city and that, as a result, many of our obligations are universal in scope, comprising duties to humanity as such.<sup>46</sup> These claims are worthy of study in their own right. Attention to the foundations of Stoic ethics, however, helps to bring out some of the respects in which Stoic theory has had an enduring influence on Western ethical thought and prefigures later ethical views.

Two features of Stoicism are especially salient in this respect. The first is one I have not yet mentioned: the Stoic characterization of the natural order and of reason itself as a kind of law (*nomos*). This is a striking characterization, in part, because it is a clear departure from the opposition between nature and law articulated by many earlier thinkers in the Greek intellectual tradition. In identifying law with a rational structure implicit in nature, the Stoics are arguably committed to a quite extensive form of ethical naturalism: they regard the facts

that fix the ethical facts as part of the natural order and, indeed, as a consequence of cosmic teleology. There are important differences between the Stoic account and later theories of natural law, yet the Stoic theory, particularly as transmitted through the work of Cicero, has played an important role in the natural law tradition in ethics.<sup>47</sup>

A second important feature of Stoicism, less often remarked, is the axiology of virtue the Stoics defend and the account of moral motivation it implies. Other Hellenistic thinkers agree that virtue is good, at least in part, because of the good results it secures. The Stoic theory reverses this order of priority, holding that actions are good only as expressions of a virtuous character. This point is reflected in many Stoic texts, but the easiest way to see that the Stoics are committed to the claim that virtue's value is wholly intrinsic is to note that this thesis is a consequence of two of the Stoic commitments I mentioned earlier. Since happiness is that for the sake of which every rational action is undertaken and is not itself sought for the sake of anything further, and since happiness and virtue are extensional equivalents, nothing that falls outside the scope of virtue can supply the justificatory ground of virtuous character and action.<sup>48</sup> Together with the identification of virtue and happiness, the acceptance of rational eudaimonism effectively commits the Stoics to a view sometimes attributed to Kant: that the intentional features of a virtuous action exhaust the ground of its value.<sup>49</sup>

This axiological point has a further, psychological corollary, one that goes to the heart of the difference between the Stoics and their critics. For the Stoic position, like the Kantian, concerns more than the source of virtue's value. It has corresponding implications for the character of appropriate motivation. Since the single end of rational desire consists in virtue alone, and since virtue is wholly up to the agent, no desire for any final end that cannot be realized through one's own agency will be rational, according to the Stoics. Seneca puts this point with characteristic flair:

I have, says [a good conscience] what I wished (*volui*), what I strove for. I do not regret it, nor shall I ever regret it, and no injustice of Fortune shall ever bring me to such a pass that she will hear me say, what was it I wished? What profit have I now from my good intention (*bona voluntas*)?<sup>50</sup>

As Seneca here makes clear, there is no room in the Stoic account for rational regret so long as an agent has acted virtuously. Such an account reverses the axiology of consequentialism and strongly anticipates elements of the deontological tradition, including Kant's claim, in the beginning of the *Groundwork*, that nothing is intrinsically good, either in this world or out of it, other than a good will.<sup>51</sup> Many Stoic images express a similar point. Virtue is to be chosen, on the Stoic account, not because of a further outcome it enables the agent to achieve but because it imposes on a human life the same orderly structure exhibited in the cosmos as a whole.

## Notes

- 1 On Zeno of Citium, see J. Brunschwig (2002), 'Zeno between Kiton and Athens', in T. Scaltsas and A. Mason (eds), *The Philosophy of Zeno. Larnaca: The Municipality of Larnaca*, pp. 13–27. For the school's history during the Hellenistic period, see D. Sedley (2003), 'The school, from Zeno to Arius Didymus', in B. Inwood (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 7–32.
- 2 For an overview of the surviving source material, see especially, J. Mansfeld (1999), 'Sources', in K. Algra, J. Barnes, J. Mansfeld, and M. Schofield (eds), *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3–30. The standard collection of Greek and Latin fragments is H. von Arnim (1903–5), *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*. Leipzig: Teubner (hereafter SVF). An outstanding translation of and commentary on many of the most important passages is provided in A. Long and D. Sedley (1987), *The Hellenistic Philosophers Vol. 1*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (hereafter LS).
- 3 The most extensive and systematic accounts of Stoic ethics are Cicero, *On Ends* Book 3; Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* 2.7; Stobaeus, *Eclagues* 2.57–2.116. The summaries of Cicero and Diogenes are available in the Loeb Classical Library series. The summary preserved by Stobaeus, along with an English translation and commentary, may be found in Arthur Pomeroy (1999), *Arius Didymus: Epitome of Stoic Ethics*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- 4 These distinctions presuppose a conventional division of Plato's dialogues into early, middle and late (on which cf. Chapter 1, note 13). For discussion of the Socratic background to Stoic ethics, see

- especially G. Striker (1994), 'Plato's Socrates and the Stoics', in P. Vander Waerdt (ed.), *The Socratic Movement*. Ithaca: Cornell, pp. 241–51; S. Menn (1995), 'Physics as a virtue', *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy*, 11, 1–34.
- 5 The Cynic influence on Stoicism is most clearly reflected, perhaps, in the Stoic doctrine that virtue depends on conformity to nature. Though the Stoics develop this doctrine in a way that differs from the ideals of Cynicism, it may well have originated in Zeno's early association with Crates.
- 6 The view that Aristotle exercised any significant influence on the early Stoics is comprehensively criticized in F. H. Sandbach (1985), *Aristotle and the Stoics*. Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society. For a more moderate view, see B. Inwood (1986), 'Review of Sandbach', *The Philosophical Review*, 95, 470–73.
- 7 According to one important summary of Stoic views, the Stoics 'say that being happy is the end, for the sake of which everything is done but which is not itself done for the sake of anything' (LS 63A = SVF 3.16, trans. Long and Sedley). Happiness, says another fragment, is the final object of rational desire (*orexis*), desire that is informed by considerations about what is good (SVF 3.3). When he sets out to explain the Stoic view, Cicero assumes that each of the central philosophical schools of his time shares the conviction that one should always pursue the sort of life that is beneficial to the agent, and which renders the agent happy in Aristotle's sense. Ethical theorists who take the eudaimonist perspective for granted during the Hellenistic period include the Stoics, Epicureans, Academics and Sceptics. The Cyrenaics are a notable exception. Rational eudaimonism, it should be noted, is also compatible with various forms of immorality, such as that of Thrasymachus (Plato's *Republic*, Book I), according to whom *injustice* is one of the virtues essential to the good life, and that of Callicles (Plato's *Gorgias*), who argues that some of the traditional virtues (e.g. courage) but not others (e.g. justice) are required for happiness. For discussion of this framework, see especially, J. Annas (1993), *The Morality of Happiness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 27–46.
- 8 *Nicomachean Ethics* 1094a23–5. Cf. Plato, *Symposium* 205a1–8.
- 9 See, for example, R. Kraut (1979), 'Two conceptions of happiness', *The Philosophical Review*, 88, 167–97; Vlastos G. (1991), 'Happiness and virtue in Socrates' moral theory', in G. Vlastos, *Socrates, Ironist and Moral Philosopher*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp. 200–35; J. Annas (2004), 'Happiness as achievement', *Daedalus*, 138, 44–51.
- 10 Later thinkers, most notably Kant, reject the framework of eudaimonism on the grounds that it cannot accommodate the form of motivation essential to morality. For recent criticism of

- eudaimonism along these lines, see T. Nagel (1989), *The View from Nowhere*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 195–7.
- 11 As some of the Hellenistic thinkers appear to interpret Aristotle, these goods will not merely supply the agent with the means or scope for exercising his or her virtue; they also comprise independently necessary and valuable components of happiness. See, for example, Cicero, *On Ends* 2.19: 'Many and great philosophers have made these ultimate goods a composite, as Aristotle conjoined the exercise of virtue with prosperity in a complete life'.
- 12 See, for example, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1100b ff.
- 13 The claim that virtue is identical to happiness has been associated with the Socrates of Plato's early dialogues on the strength of passages such as *Crito* 48b4–10, but it remains controversial as an interpretation of Socrates' considered position. Terence Irwin argues at length that although Socrates regards virtue as a sufficient condition of happiness, he does not regard it as *constitutive* of the happy human life. Such an interpretation aligns the Socratic position more closely with the Epicurean view. See, especially, T. Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 4; T. Irwin, *Plato's Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 6. For some criticisms of Irwin's interpretation, see J. Cooper (1982), 'The *Gorgias* and Irwin's Socrates', *The Review of Metaphysics*, 35, 577–87. Cf. also Vlastos (1991).
- 14 Thus, Cicero (*On Ends* 3.29) describes the Stoic sage as 'holding that no evil can happen to a wise man'. Cf. Plato, *Apology* 41d.
- 15 *Meno* 79a–d.
- 16 Cf. *Meno* 75c–d.
- 17 Socrates provides examples of the kind of reductive definition he is seeking at *Meno* 75b–c and 76d.
- 18 The Stoic notion does not approximate neo-Kantian views of procedural rationality. See, especially, T. Brennan (2005), *The Stoic Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 138–41.
- 19 Cf. especially, Cicero, *On Ends* 2.34, 3.31, 4.14. In Stoic theory, actions themselves are analysed as a kind of cognitive performance. See Seneca, Letter 113.23 (= LS 53L).
- 20 For an example of the former approach, see, especially, J. Annas (1993), pp. 159–79; for the latter, see A. Long (1970), 'The logical basis of Stoic Ethics', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 71, 85–104; N. White (1979), 'The basis of Stoic ethics', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, 83, 143–78.
- 21 LS 57A.

- 22** Trans. Long and Sedley. Cf. Seneca, Letter 88.26; LS 63J. Cf. also G. B. Kerford, 'What does the wise man know?' in J. Rist (ed.) (1978), *The Stoics*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 125–36.
- 23** It seems clear that the early Stoics developed a comprehensive teleological framework that included an analysis of the ends appropriate to various biological species. According to Cicero (*On Ends* 4.28), Chrysippus composed a treatise in which he surveyed a range of animal species and offered an account of the final good of each. It is likely that this is the treatise *On Ends* cited in Diogenes Laertius' report of the Stoic theory of *oikeiōsis* (Diogenes Laertius 7.85–6 = LS 57A). Other fragments indicate that the Stoics attempted to say how the realization of these ends serves a broader cosmic purpose.
- 24** Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods* 2.57–8. Cf. SVF 2.1027 (= LS 46A).
- 25** The latter terms also have a normative valence for the Stoics. Though the Stoics offer a broadly naturalistic account of morality, there is little reason to suppose that they succeed in eliminating normative terms from their analysis of basic moral properties or that they take themselves to have done so. In this respect, their answer to the Socratic question is one Socrates himself might well have rejected. Stoicism reduces moral properties to those properties in virtue of which nature itself is orderly and rational. Given the state of the sources, it is impossible to say how the Stoics attempted to characterize these features of nature at the most fundamental level, if indeed they attempted to do so. It seems clear, however, that they regard the cosmos as rational in part because they regard it as an aesthetically perfect whole. There is some reason to suppose that their account of moral properties ends with an appeal to aesthetic properties. See, for example, Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods* 2.35. Cf. M. Frede (1999), 'On the Stoic conception of the good', in K. Ierodiakonou (ed.), *Topics in Stoic Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: pp. 71–94; R. Bett (2010), 'Beauty and its relation to goodness in Stoicism', in D. Sedley and A. Nightingale (eds), *Ancient Models of Mind: Studies in Divine and Human Rationality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 130–52.
- 26** The Stoics agree with Plato and Aristotle in treating moral norms as objective and accessible to reason. Yet their theory is more explicitly naturalistic than that of Plato, who has been regarded as a non-naturalist in ethics because of his commitment to transcendent, immaterial Forms. At the same time, Stoic naturalism is arguably more extensive than that of Aristotle. Like Aristotle, the Stoics regard the goal-directed functions of individual organisms as a basis for norms that, in the human case, partly determine the requirements of virtue. But the Stoics also incorporate this account

- (as Aristotle arguably does not) within a more comprehensive teleological framework, treating the organization of the cosmos itself as an expression of substantive principles of rationality that play a role in fixing the character and scope of moral obligation. The wider scope of Stoic naturalism is apparent, for instance, in the Stoic doctrine that the cosmos itself has the character of a city, citizenship of which imposes duties of mutual concern upon its members.
- 27** Plutarch, *On Moral Virtue* 441c (= SVF 1.202), trans. A. Long.
- 28** The best discussion of these features of Stoic epistemology is Michael Frede (1987), 'Stoics and Skeptics on clear and distinct impressions', in M. Frede, *Essays in Ancient Philosophy*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 151–78.
- 29** The classic account of the Stoic theory is S. Pembroke (1971), 'Oikeiōsis', in A. Long (ed.), *Problems in Stoicism*. London: Athlone, pp. 114–49. For a discussion of the cognitive dimensions of *oikeiōsis*, see, especially, A. Long (1991), 'Representation and the self in Stoicism', in S. Everson (ed.), *Companions to Ancient Thought 2: Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 101–20; A. Long (1993), 'Hierocles on *oikeiōsis* and self-perception', in K. J. Boudouris (ed.), *Hellenistic Philosophy Vol. 1*. Athens, pp. 93–104; C. Brittain (2002), 'Non-rational perception in the Stoics and Augustine', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 22, 253–88.
- 30** Letter 121 (= LS 57).
- 31** Cf. Pembroke (1971), p. 117, 141 n. 10.
- 32** For a systematic discussion of these and other details of Stoic moral psychology, see Tad Brennan (2003), 'Stoic moral psychology', in B. Inwood (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 257–94.
- 33** *On Ends* 3.32 (= LS 59L).
- 34** For a discussion of the theory's ethical import, see, especially, B. Inwood (1984), 'Hierocles the Stoic: theory and argument in the second century A. D.', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 2, 151–84; G. Striker (1983), 'The role of *oikeiōsis* in Stoic ethics', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 1, 145–67; T. Brennan (2005), Chapter 10.
- 35** *On Ends* 3.21 (= LS 59D), trans. Long and Sedley.
- 36** *On Ends* 4.48.
- 37** For a further discussion of this mode of argument, see J. Cooper (1996), 'Eudaimonism, the appeal to nature, and "moral duty" in Stoicism', in S. Engstrom and J. Whiting (eds), *Aristotle, Kant and the Stoics: Rethinking Happiness and Duty*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 261–84.

Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature. Accounts of Musonius Rufus' lectures are collected in C. Lutz (1947), *Musonius Rufus: The Roman Socrates*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Important selections from Musonius, Epictetus and Seneca are included in B. Inwood and L. Gerson (2008), *The Stoics Reader*. Indianapolis: Hackett, pp. 177–205.

- 47** The work of Thomas Aquinas (A. D. 1225–74) is central to this tradition. See Chapter 4 of this volume.
- 48** This point needs to be spelt out. I am here assuming an essential connection between intrinsic value and objective normative reasons, that is, that as Scanlon puts it, 'to claim that something is valuable (or that it is "of value") is to claim that others also have reason to value it, as you do'. Cf. T. Scanlon (1998), *What We Owe to Each Other*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. 95. Since the Stoics regard *eudaimonia* as the only source of ultimate reasons for acting, and since they identify *eudaimonia* with virtue, they cannot consistently regard anything other than virtue itself as a source of value that could supply a rational agent with normative reasons that regulate her desires and actions.
- 49** Cf. G 4:399: 'an action done from duty has its moral worth not in the purpose attained by it but in the maxim in accordance with which it is decided upon' (trans. H. J. Paton).
- 50** *On Benefits* 4.21 (trans. Basore).
- 51** G 4:393. Cf. Chapter 6 of this volume.

## Recommended reading

*The best and most accessible general account of Stoic ethical theory:*  
Brennan, Tad (2005), *The Stoic Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

*A comprehensive, groundbreaking study of Stoic moral psychology:*  
Inwood, Brad (1985), *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism*.  
Oxford: Oxford University Press.

*Two recent, detailed studies of Stoic political theory and the Stoic account of natural law:*

Schofield, Malcolm (1999), *The Stoic Idea of the City*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Vogt, Katja Maria (2008), *Law, Reason and the Cosmic City*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- 38** Cicero's *On the Nature of the Gods* records a number of Stoic arguments for the claim that the cosmos exhibits a rational structure, together with ancient criticisms of the Stoic view. See, especially, 2.29–39, 3.20–28.
- 39** Here, a clarification is perhaps in order. In speaking of the selection and rejection of indifferents, the Stoics are not thinking simply of selection or rejection for oneself but, much more broadly, of disposing of indifferents in the way that reason as expressed in nature requires. So understood, the appropriate pattern of selection and rejection may well be guided by other-regarding principles. The best accounts of the role of preferred and dispreferred indifferents in Stoic deliberation are R. Barney (2003), 'A puzzle in Stoic ethics', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 24, 273–302 and T. Brennan (2005), Chapters 11–13.
- 40** Diogenes Laertius 7.104–5 (= LS 58B), trans. Long and Sedley.
- 41** Some of the ancient criticisms are preserved by Plutarch (*On Common Conceptions*) and Alexander of Aphrodisias (*Supplement to 'On the Soul'*). For a recent criticism of the Stoic doctrine, see C. C. W. Taylor (1987), 'Hellenistic ethics', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 5, pp. 235–45 (especially 239).
- 42** On this point, see, especially, B. Inwood and P. Donini (1999), 'Stoic Ethics' in K. Algra, J. Barnes, J. Mansfeld, and M. Schofield, *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 675–738 (especially 690–99).
- 43** Cf. Epictetus, *Discourses* 2.6.9 (= LS 57J).
- 44** Cicero, *On Ends* 3.23–5.
- 45** According to the summary of Stoic ethics preserved by Stobaeus, natural states and conditions are variously preferred and dispreferred in virtue of their relation to a set of generative principles (*spermatikoi logoi*) by which the cosmos as a whole is ordered (*Eclogues* 2.82). How the Stoics themselves conceived of these principles, or what reductive account they may have given of them, is a matter of debate. That the principles by which Zeus structures the cosmos have an aesthetic character is suggested by Cicero's discussion in *On the Nature of the Gods* (cf. n. 24–5 above). Very little material that bears on these questions survives.
- 46** On Stoic cosmopolitanism, see M. Schofield (1991), *The Stoic Idea of the City*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. For Stoic views on more specific normative issues, see, for example, Seneca, Letters 94–5; Cicero, *On Duties* 1.15–161. Fragments of Hierocles' ethical treatises are collected in Ilaria Ramelli (2009), *Hierocles the Stoic: 'Elements of Ethics', Fragments, and Excerpts*.