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# CALÍOPE

## Presença Clássica

*Dossiê “Estudos sobre a literatura helenística  
e a sua recepção antiga e moderna”*

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Mosaico que representa uma cena marinha. Séc. I d.C. Ampúrias, L'Escala, Alt Empordà (Espanha). Foto: Rainer Guggenberger.

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# The Dangers of Stoicism

## Robert Konig

### ABSTRACT

The philosophy of *Stoicism* has undergone a renaissance in recent years. It is prominently featured in self-help guides, management seminars, social media discourse, political statements, psychological recommendations, and ideological positions. This resurgence makes it all the more critical to subject ancient Stoicism to a thorough analysis and relate it to the claims of so-called *Modern Stoicism*, with the aim of identifying potential similarities and differences. This does not mean that ancient Stoicism must be reduced to its modern reception. However, certain philosophical tendencies already existed in antiquity that made the modern reception possible. Modern Stoicism extends far beyond the boundaries of academic discourse. The present article focuses exemplarily on these non-academic fields and poses the question of whether the ancient model could serve as a source of inspiration for the modern variant and what pitfalls and dangers might be spotted. For in antiquity, significant objections to Stoic doctrine were already raised, notably by Plotinus. These critiques aimed not only at Stoic metaphysics but also at its ethical framework,<sup>1</sup> particularly regarding a supposed absence of a concept of “moral responsibility”<sup>2</sup> in Stoic theories. Similar objections can also be raised against a Stoicism whose contemporary “modern comeback” has been aptly noted by Piotr Stankiewicz, among others.<sup>3</sup> To this end, the foundations of the unfortunately poorly preserved ancient Stoicism will first be explored, both in their theoretical and ethical foundations, to enable a comparison with Modern Stoicism. The latter’s own approaches will then be evaluated against the ancient model, addressing two key questions: first, whether the modern self-identification as “Stoics” can hold up, which we can largely affirm; and second, whether, from the perspective presented here, one should aspire to be a Stoic, to which the answer will be: no.

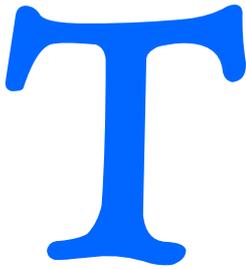
### KEYWORDS

Stoicism; Philosophy; Ethics; Epistemology; Anthropology.

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OUTLINE OF THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF  
ANCIENT STOICISM



he classical systematic division of the sciences attributed to the ancient Stoics consists of a tripartite structure: logic, physics, and ethics.<sup>4</sup> All three pillars are interconnected and form a systematic unity. Thus, recurring motifs among logical, physical, and ethical concepts emerge within Stoicism. From a Stoic point of view, our lifestyle, cognition, and nature are aligned with one another based on the same principles.

For this reason, it is possible to present Stoicism starting at any one of its system components. The same fundamental ideas, concepts, and structures are expressed in Stoic epistemology, natural philosophy, and moral philosophy. Anthony Long convincingly demonstrated decades ago the extent to which the Stoic system is based upon a fundamentally shared logical framework in each of its parts.<sup>5</sup> Recently, Juan Valdez emphasized the same perspective.<sup>6</sup> Thus, any outline of Stoicism must begin with this fundamental framework rather than simply isolating one particular component.

Now, the first basic concept in Stoicism is that of a given and stringent causal nexus of being. Ontologically, everything that exists follows the mode of a certain consequentialist causality. This nexus-like coherence manifests itself in nature (physics), in knowledge and cognition (logic), and in lifestyle (ethics). Marcelo Boeri comprehensively outlines this causal nexus as the foundation of Stoic thought, emphasizing that it is characterized by a “concern for keeping the coherence of the system”, which is reflected in every particular aspect.<sup>7</sup>

In the ancient texts, Seneca teaches us that in *rerum naturam*, everything ultimately has a *causa*, which is identical to its *ratio* (reason).<sup>8</sup> Cosmos and nature are causally ordered, and this order is synonymous with its reason and rationality. From this, it follows that the Stoics, with their concept of reason (most often expressed as *ratio* or *logos*), refer simultaneously to a universal world reason and to individual cognitive faculties. An individual, as Michael

Frede puts it, develops their reason “emerging over time”<sup>9</sup> by gradually learning to recognize and imitate the logical coherence and rationality inherent in nature and the cosmos. In Stoicism, the fundamental concept of a stringent causal nexus of all being is then also linked to the concepts of *providence* (*pronoia*)<sup>10</sup> and *fate* (*heimarmenē, fatum*).<sup>11</sup> Nature as a causal-consequentialist system is thereby imbued with theological, fatalistic, and ethical-normative significance.<sup>12</sup> Fate, according to Chrysippus, is the *logos tou kosmou*,<sup>13</sup> which is why the cosmos itself is structured in a rational (*logos-like*) manner. Its rational structure embodies coherence and consistency as the governing principle. This principle, referred to as the *hēgemonikon* (the ruling element), manifests both in the cosmos and in the individual in various forms. It appears as *hexis* (consistent habit) in all beings, as *kinēsis* (consequent movement), as *psyche* (harmonic soul) in living beings, or as *logos* or *nous* (reason, rationality) in humans.<sup>14</sup> Cicero similarly teaches that *fatum* as the “ordering and sequence of causes”, is not a matter of “superstition, but that of physics”.<sup>15</sup> Fate is not only a religious or mythological concept in Stoicism, it is a physical one, namely the presupposed and seemingly given natural nexus of causes and consequences. According to Sextus Empiricus, the Stoic notion of any “substance of what exists” (*ousia ton ontōn*) is itself “shapeless (*aschematistos*)” and therefore “needs to be set in motion and shaped by some cause (*hypo tinos aitiās*)”. This all-shaping and all-moving causal force is described as “a power” (*dynamis tina*) and also compared to the “soul” (*psychē*) as a world-soul. It is “everlasting (*aidios*)”, “self-moving (*kat’heautēn autokinētos dynamis*)”, and identified as “God (*theos*)”.<sup>16</sup> Said all-shaping and all-moving force is the consequentialist nexus of everything. Carlos Steel refers to it as a “connective or containing cause”.<sup>17</sup> In this way, according to the Stoics, an “unqualified substance (*tēn apoion ousian*)” is shaped by causal “reason (*logos*) in it, *i.e.* God (*theos*)”.<sup>18</sup>

The crux of the matter, however, is that this primal force in everything is always already assumed as a fact. This forms the foundation of the entire naturalism of the Stoics. Nature in the Stoic sense initially means that something is causally formed and,

as such, is always already entangled in the very nexus of causality. From this, it follows that the Stoics know “the world” only “in physical form”, according to Stefan Dienstbeck.<sup>19</sup> For its physical form is that of a given nexus of causes, reasons, effects and consequences. It manifests naturally, epistemologically, and ethically. Thus, Susanne Bobzien has pointed out that in the Stoic theory of causality, there is always an inherent “merging of teleology and universal causation”.<sup>20</sup>

Now, the epistemological part of Stoicism corresponds *eodem actu* to the sketched assumption of a given universal natural causality: they teach a rational empiricism. For knowledge (*katalēpsis*<sup>21</sup> or *mens*)<sup>22</sup> also has the above-mentioned “natural force (*naturalem vim*)” within it. Through it, knowledge is “activated (*movetur*)” and then “likenesses (*similitudinibus*)” with nature are formed.<sup>23</sup> Knowledge and cognition are products of the natural force, *i.e. fate*. True and correct knowledge and cognition therefore adopt consequentialist character. In this context, Boeri refers to the fact that, for the Stoics, “knowledge exhibits stability”.<sup>24</sup> According to Sextus Empiricus, they speak of a “cognitive impression [...] in a craftsmanlike way (*tēn katalēptikēn phantasia technikōs*)”.<sup>25</sup> Its “craftsmanlike” aspect is its consequentialist representation of the cognitively reproduced causal nexus of nature. Knowledge is practiced and skilled in searching for the causal, providential, and fatalistic element in everything, and in accepting only this element as true. For “nature (*phuseōs*) has given the sensory faculty (*aisthetikēn dynamin*) and the impression (*phantasian*) which arises thereby as our light, as it were, for the recognition of truth (*epignōsin tēs alētheias*)”.<sup>26</sup> Consciousness and knowledge are expressions and representations of the mechanics of nature, which is why the “cognitive impression (*katalēptikē phantasia*)” is also immediately “evident and striking (*enargēs ousa kai plektikē*)”. This striking evidence in our cognition stems from its assumed natural pre-formation through its “physical force (*naturalem vim*)”. Thus, according to Aetios, in matters of cognition the Stoics speak of a blank sheet (*chartēn*), onto which something is then written by nature.<sup>27</sup> Only that knowledge is considered to be

true, which is accompanied by empiricist “impression (*phantasias*)” and “sense-perception (*aisthēseōs*)” and thus, as in the case of Chrysippus, means nature’s direct “printing in the soul (*typōsis en psychē*)”.<sup>28</sup> This reproduction of nature through cognition must then also shape the higher cognitive faculties such as understanding, reason, or linguistic abilities in a consequentialist way. They are merely more abstract variants of *phantasia*, which in turn also forms the criterion of their validity. Thus, even in thought (*enoēthe*), a case (*periptōsin*) of objects of sense-perception (*aisthēta*) must occur. Reason creates a “similarity (*homoioteta*)” with sense-perception, as with a “picture (*eikona*)”, or an “analogy (*analogian*)”, or a “transposition (*metathēsin*)”, a “combination (*synthesin*)”, and several other forms, all of which are fundamentally based on the naturalistically conceived *aisthēsis* and *phantasia*.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, Plutarch refers to the Stoics, stating that “conception (*ennoia*) is a kind of impression (*phantasia tis*), and impression (*phantasia*) is a printing in the soul (*typōsis en psychē*)”. For this reason, he confirms the Stoic view of “conceptions (*ennoia*)” as abstractions from impressions like “printings (*typōseis*)”.<sup>30</sup> All concepts originate from the “impression (*phantasia*)” of a “cause (*pepoiēkōs*)” that is, from something that has caused them externally. In Stoicism, a real impression can only be *detectable* through detecting its natural cause.

Hence, Aetius also reports that the “Stoics call all causes corporeal”.<sup>31</sup> Corporeality means detectability in Stoicism. A detectable entity is called a “body (*sōma*)”,<sup>32</sup> which is why, according to Cicero, already Zeno of Citium taught that “it was totally impossible that something incorporeal [...] should be the agent of anything, and that only a body was capable of acting and being acted upon”.<sup>33</sup> The reason lies again in the idea of the causal nexus, where only like can act upon like, which is why, according to Chrysippus, “an incorporeal does not even make contact with a body. But the soul both makes contact with and is separated from the body. Therefore the soul is a body”.<sup>34</sup> Cleanthes seems to have taught something similar, as reported by Nemesius.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, the soul is, as Hierocles says, a detectable reaction of the body to its environmental conditions and arises from it and its experiences.

The body “does not hesitate to change into soul on meeting the environment”. The soul, conversely, acts as an empirically detectable body “by stretching out and relaxing [...] for the body, just like the soul, reacts to pressure; and the outcome is a state of their joint pressure upon, and resistance to, each other”.<sup>36</sup> Such passages demonstrate the empirical naturalism of the Stoics. Hence, the entire “world (*kosmos*)”, as Plutarch reports the teachings of Chrysippus, is “a complete body (*teleion sōma*)”.<sup>37</sup> In this context, Wolfhart Totschnig points out that “the Stoic incorporeals are to be understood as effects, as effects of the causality of bodies”<sup>38</sup> and must again be subordinated to the principle of the bodily detectable causal nexus. Correspondingly, it follows that “concepts (*ennoēmata*)” are ultimately “figments of the soul (*phantasmata tēs psychēs*)”. Concepts are merely abstractions of an empirically acquired perception. They lose their bodily detectability in the process and become only “quasi-somethings and quasi-qualified (*hōsanei tina kai hōsanei poia*)”.<sup>39</sup> They are only quasi-bodies.

From concepts as quasi-somethings, the Stoics then distinguish the structure of naturally given “genus” and “species” of being.<sup>40</sup> Nature, in contrast to concepts, is always already causally and objectively structured in and ordered by *genera* and *species*. Thus, cognition and knowledge must aim to reproduce them in order to be correct. They must imitate a seemingly given order of nature. Thus, as in any empiricism, nature’s impressions are endowed with belief and trust in their correctness, as Cicero states in his report on Zeno of Citium:

[H]e also attached reliability (*fidem*) to the senses because [...] he regarded cognition effected by them as true and reliable [...] because nature had given it [...] as the natural foundation for the subsequent impression of conceptions of things upon the mind

which is why cognition as driven by the senses is “to be trusted (*credendum*) on its own”.<sup>41</sup> The correctness of cognition thus

depends on a belief in the correctness of sensory perception and representation, which arise from the causal mechanics of nature.

From this, the imperatives of imitation and reproduction of nature through abstraction also generate the dogmatic rationalism in the Stoics. According to Sextus Empiricus, this is reflected in the fact that for a “convincing (*pitbanai*)” impression, not just any, but an “even movement of the soul (*leion kinēma peri psychēn*)” must be produced.<sup>42</sup> This even, non-contradictory, consistent, and stringent experience of a soul-movement forms the logical criterion for believing the correctness of a cognitive act. Rationally experienced consequentality is the image of the causal mechanics of nature. It always first arises from empirically obtained data. However, a firm belief (*fidem, credendum*) in the correct and evident givenness of such data in *aisthesis* and *phantasia* must already be present to be convincing (*pitbanai*) for rationality and reason. Ada Bronowski rightly refers to this primordial belief in given and causally-pre-designed data as the grounding “rational empiricism”<sup>43</sup> in all Stoicism.

Furthermore, the Stoics thus base their logic on “*axioma*”, which must be “complete (*autoteles*)”, *i.e.*, evident.<sup>44</sup> Such evident statements refer to “that what is (*to hyparchon*)” and what is, is always something “which activates a cognitive impression (*to kataleptikēn kinoun phantasian*)”.<sup>45</sup> Therefore, their propositional logic is connected to the empiricist theory of knowledge. Propositions, judgements and syllogisms have their origin in imitations of the seemingly given natural causal nexus too. Hence, they must always be logically verified using the principle of consistency and consequentality and, if necessary, be corrected. On this basis, the Stoics comprehensively examine the relations of consistency in propositions and their empirical correlates, of deductively verifiable inferences, of fallacious forms, and of grammatical systems. Stoic logic, which became famous in antiquity, bases its formalistic rationalism always on the empiricist assumption of a given and causally designed *nature* or *fatum* or *providence*. They hardly question the presupposed givenness and

hegemony of natural causality, which one must at most trust and believe in.

#### SKETCH OF THE ETHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ANCIENT STOICISM

So far, the third major area of science, alongside physics and logic, namely ethics, has been overlooked. It will now become clear to what extent the theoretical foundations of a causal cosmology, its consequentialist logic, and empiricist epistemology also have ethical significance – for the above-mentioned “even movement of the soul” corresponds ethically to terms gathered by Cleanthes in ethics, such as “consistent (*homologoumenon*)”, “well-ordered (*tetagmenon*)”, “self-controlled (*kratoun heautou*)”,<sup>46</sup> and the Stoic concept of “proper function (*kathēkon*)”,<sup>47</sup> which Cicero translates as *officium* and Seneca as *convenientia*. Ontology, cosmology, logic, and epistemology based on causality and consequence correspond to ethics of stringency. John Rist rightly emphasizes that, since Zeno of Citium, the ethically appropriate person in Stoicism “is above all consistent; his intentions and motives can be viewed as forming a coherent whole”.<sup>48</sup> The opposite of stringency, often referred to as “passions (*pathē*)”, keeps us from living by consistent “reason (*logos*)” according to the Stoics.<sup>49</sup> So, even in ethical terms, logical consequentialism and naturalistic mechanics keep manifesting themselves. In this context, the ethically required *kathēkon*, according to Stobaeus, is the “consequentiality in life (*to akolouthon en zōē*)” and, as such, has always “reasonable justification (*eulogon apologia*)”<sup>50</sup> at hand. That “reason dictates our doing (*logos arei poiein*)”<sup>51</sup> also ultimately leads us to live “in accord with nature (*kata physin*)”<sup>52</sup> – for the presupposed concept of nature remains the paradigm for everything.

Based upon this, as Plutarch reports about Chrysippus, we also ultimately derive our concepts of good and evil from an accord with “universal nature (*tēs koinēs physeōs*) and from the administration of the world (*tou kosmou dioikēseōs*)”.<sup>53</sup> In other words, the common nature (*koinēs physeōs*) in all things serves as the

criterion for the good. Since nature consists in the idea of a specific organization (*dioikēsis*) of the cosmos, and this organization is grounded in a consequentialist logic of causality, the criterion for the good is: *logical consistency itself*. To do good primarily means to act stringently, consistently, and consequentially. For in this case, the nexus of the cosmos is rationally fulfilled. However, what is consistent and consequential in nature itself is consistently determined only through the empirical impression of *aisthēsis* and *phantasia*, in whose validity initially trust always has to be placed. In other words, that which is detected in the empirical realm by those who *can* detect it, becomes the standard, norm and paradigm for natural action. For this reason, Seneca tells us, “that what is good is a body (*quod bonum est corpus esse*)”.<sup>54</sup> Again, by “body”, he means not necessarily a materially given thing in the naïve sense, but rather that which is *detectable*, *i. e.* which provides *aisthēsis* and *phantasia*, and serves as the foundation for logical-rational abstraction into consistency. Therefore, the starting point for action must always be chosen in accordance with a given sense-perception, and then the logic of consistency built upon it must be carried out, so that the good reveals itself as the very nature that we have initially trusted in (*kata physin*). As in epistemology, also in ethics the assumed consistency of nature, fate, and providence is the causal nexus of consistency, which can be logically reconstructed. Where this reconstruction is not carried out or cannot be carried out, bad or evil things could happen. Thus, as Epictetus states,

every soul’s nature (*pephyken pasa psyche*) is to assent to the true, dissent from the false [...] to be moved appetitively towards the good (*agathon*), with aversion towards the bad (*kakon*).<sup>55</sup>

When asking what the good is, towards which the soul is moved, it is, based on *aisthēsis* and *phantasia*, the realization of causality itself. It is not this or that object, a goal, or a specific end that constitutes the good, but rather standing in accord with the pre-supposed natural mechanism, and thus, independent of

specific goals and ends, realizing only a logical form in action and life. Julia Annas therefore clearly emphasizes “the relations of physics and ethics” when one seeks to understand Stoic ethics.<sup>56</sup> The specific ethical goals play a subordinate role compared to the form of consistency that has to take place in life. Ends or goals only become relevant inasmuch as they are consistent. If they lead to contradictions and thus contradict the presupposed idea of nature, cosmos, fate, and providence, they have to be corrected. The leading principle is consistency, not a specific subject matter. Now, from the dominance of this principle, anything can be made ethically plausible and be justified, as long as logical consistency holds up. From this standpoint, it becomes comprehensible why one of the fundamental ethical doctrines of Stoicism is that “virtue (*aretê*) is a consistent character (*diathesin homologoumenên*), choiceworthy for its own sake (*di’hautên einai hairêten*)”.<sup>57</sup> The *homologia* as a self-consistent *logos* in the way of life of a character, an attitude, inner order, or disposition (*diathesin*) is the decisive ethical criterion of virtue in harmony with Stoic natural philosophy and empiricist epistemology. Therefore, happiness (*eudaimonia*) also means the “consistency in the whole life (*tên homologian pantos tou biou*)”.<sup>58</sup> Those beings live virtuously, who do not deviate in their way of life, remain consequent, avoid and do not allow errors, deficiencies, mistakes, and the like. Plutarch thus says about the Stoics:

All these men agree in taking virtue to be a certain character (*diathesin tina*) and power of the soul’s commanding-faculty (*hēgemonikou tes psychês kai dynamin*), engendered by reason (*gegenēmenen tou logou*), or rather, a character which is itself consistent, firm, and unchangeable reason (*logon homologoumenon kai bebaion kai ametaptoton*).<sup>59</sup>

The commanding-faculty (*hēgemonikon, principatum*) is, in turn, the consistent *logos* itself, which manifests formally as an abstraction of the presupposed causal mechanism of nature.<sup>60</sup> Its consequentialist penetration of character represents the goal of virtuous living. Virtue generates itself as a non-contradictory, firm,

unchangeable and hegemonial *logos*. Therefore, it is no surprise that Gellius reports about Chrysippus that he taught,

all things are enforced and linked through fate by a certain necessary and primary rationale (*ratione quadam necessaria et principali coacta atque conexa sint fato omnia*)

and that concerning our “mind (*ingenia*)”, “all that external force exerted upon them as a result of fate slides over them fairly smoothly and without obstruction”.<sup>61</sup> All things intellectual follow the nexus of fate if they are to be considered rational, and thus, in matters of virtue, they likewise align with this nexus. The mind itself is determined by fate. It is in its hegemonic position precisely when it follows the fatalistic logic of non-contradictory natural causality.

With the ethically firm and unchangeable character also comes the claim to dominance, which is expressed in the concept of *hēgemonikon*. The dominant force in life has to be no other than “the product and necessary sequence of things called fate (*naturalis illa et necessaria rerum consequential efficit, quae fatum vocatur*)”.<sup>62</sup> Vice versa, this means that the dominant paradigm in everything is to produce and advance a non-contradictory fatalistic mechanism in it. The fact that Gellius repeatedly emphasizes terms like *consequentia* and *necessaria* further enforces the Stoic natural-mechanical rationalism, which is based on trust in empirical observations. In contrast, any uncontrolled “ineptitude and voluntary impulse” is seen as the cause of “continual wrongdoings and transgressions”.<sup>63</sup>

Now, “living in accordance with virtue (*kat'aretēn zēn*)” and “living in agreement (*homologoumenos zēn*)” are, according to Stobaeus, the same as “living in accordance with nature (*kata physin zēn*)”.<sup>64</sup> Here, all of Stoicism is summarized, its ethics (*aretē*), logic (*homologoumenos*), and physics (*physis*). From all these premises, it becomes clear why Seneca speaks of a process of “perfection (*perfecta*)” in human nature,<sup>65</sup> which Cicero sketches by stating that the wise man

does nothing which he could regret (*paenitere*), nothing against his will (*invitum*), but does everything honorably (*splendide*), consistently (*constanter*), seriously (*graviter*), and rightly (*honeste*).<sup>66</sup>

In other words, the perfection of virtue consists in the consequentialist flawlessness of not doing anything that one could regret, meaning not risking mistakes. Therefore, the assumed consistency of fate is recognized as the only behavior to be affirmed. Virtue is logically deducible from empirically discovered givens. But also anyone who does not follow fate in this regard does not escape it; rather, an anti-fatalistic tendency will again *consistently* (fatefully) manifest in their character, making them responsible for their vices.<sup>67</sup> From an ethical point of view, nature can either align with itself (*homologoumenos*) and become good or contradict itself and become bad. In any case it will act in a consequentialist logic. Being virtuous means to acknowledge and engage in this very logic in the first place. Thus, for the Stoics, resistance, rebellion or avoidance of fate and its consequentialist nature are the roots of evil and vice. Such naturalistic ethics lead to an important distinction within Stoicism: the distinction between the *inferior* and the *superior*. Marcus Aurelius, commonly regarded as the last classical Stoic, tells us, based on the considerations outlined above, that it is “evident (*enargēs*) that inferior beings (*ta cheiro*) exist for the sake of the superior (*ta kraitto*), and the superior for the sake of one another”.<sup>68</sup> The inferiors are, according to Galen following Chrysippus and Posidonius, those who are “sick in soul” and, as reported by Stobaeus,<sup>69</sup> the opposite of the “good man (*spoudaion*)” in being disordered, inappropriate, and unregulated.<sup>70</sup> According to Seneca, such “weak characters (*inbecillioribus ingeniis*)” therefore always need “someone to lead the way (*ingeniis necessarium praecire*)”, who tells them “this you will avoid, this you will do (*hoc vitabis, hoc facies*)”, so that the inferior learns to make himself consistent and non-contradictory again.<sup>71</sup>

The stoic elitism expressed here becomes particularly evident in the connection of the inferior with the sick and the mad. Galenus reports in the previously cited passage that those “sick in

soul” would, according to Chrysippus, also be comparable to numerous other illnesses, as they do not adapt to fate and thus the order of things. We also read in Cicero, “viciousness is a tenor or character which is inconsistent in the whole of life (*in tota vita inconstans*) and out of harmony with itself (*a se ipsa dissentiens*)” and as such full of “disturbances (*perturbations*) [...] disorderly and agitated movements of the mind (*turbidi animorum concitatique motus*)”.<sup>72</sup> The inferior life, thought of as sick, does not align with the empirically assumed and causal-mechanical fatalism. It thus represents a dysfunctional life. A similar account is given by Sextus Empiricus regarding the Stoics, who, in theoretical terms, teach that a

cognitive impression (*kataleptikē*) is one which arises from what is (*hyparchontos*) and is stamped (*enapomemagmenē*) and impressed (*enapēsphragismenē*) exactly in accordance with what is (*kath'auto to hyparchon*).<sup>73</sup>

In this, the two fundamental prerequisites of naturalistic empiricism (*what is, stamped and impressed*) and a consequentialist rationalism (*in accordance with*) are evident once again. However, those who do not conform to this are said to be “insane (*memēnotōn*)” and belong to the “deranged (*phrenizontes*)” and “melancholic (*melancholōntes*)”.<sup>74</sup> Aetius reports that Chrysippus also referred to such people as “melancholic and mad (*ton melancholōntōn kai memēnotōn*)”.<sup>75</sup> Sextus Empiricus notes that the Stoics spoke of “madness (*mania*)” in this context.<sup>76</sup> Baris Büyükokutan points out these challenging consequences of the idea of “perfection” and “superiority” in the Stoic concept of virtue, particularly when it is understood as “individualistic” and thus as normatively elitist.<sup>77</sup> Anyone who does not conform to the dominating concept of nature, its logic, fate, and the normative nexus of life appears to be mad, deranged, or insane. From Stoic ethics, some social and psychological consequences can be drawn, which are themselves in accordance with their naturalistic rationalism. Some of these consequences will now be reflected upon in an intermediary section as a transition to what is today known as *Modern Stoicism*.

REFLECTIONS ON SOME CONSEQUENCES OF STOICISM

It remains true that ancient Stoicism is not extensively preserved. Those who study it must rely on a largely testimonial tradition, a millennia-long interpretation, and various inadequate attributions. However, what remains from the Stoics allows for some conclusions about possible inferences that can be drawn from their foundations. The present text does not claim that these conclusions *must* be drawn, but Stoicism or its respective proponents nevertheless contain the *potential* to draw them. This means that ancient Stoicism certainly provided a well-considered ontology, epistemology, and ethics as its foundations. However, its derivatives throughout the history of philosophy have often failed to do justice to these foundations. We will see this as well in contemporary so-called Stoicism. It must also be said, though, that the traditions handed down from antiquity nevertheless already contain certain tendencies that could lead to the modern reception of Stoicism. These tendencies are particularly rooted in the underlying assumptions of the ancient Stoics: a consequentialist logic, a nominalist epistemology, a naturalistic ontology, and a fatalistic ethics.

First, as shown from the perspective of natural philosophy, Stoicism invites a fatalistic naturalism of causal logic. An efficient cause can only be established by an epistemology of measurable detection. This falls under the Stoic concept of a body, which can be understood as an expression of what is detectable, thereby giving rise to the doctrine that all that exists must always contain a measurable, physical correlate. In this context, perception (*aisthēsis* and *phantasia*) is extended to everything that can be detected, and thus made measurable and quantifiable. Furthermore, the processes of cognition then adapt to the progress of such a materialism and also acquire their somatic correspondents step by step (body parts, organs, neuronal activities, [...]).

However, the initially assumed empirical trust in the adequacy of such a naturalistic-materialistic approach to reality still rests on the universal acceptance of the dogma of the principle of causality and the primacy of natural mechanics. For what cannot

be measured within an approved framework of cause and effect is not truly a “being” in the proper sense. According to our sources, ancient Stoicism thus also teaches that what is not detectable in this manner may perhaps be “something (*quid*)”, but not “being (*sunt*)” in the proper sense.<sup>78</sup> This introduces a significant difference in meaning between the actually existing physical and the only comparatively existing immaterial. Moreover, as seen, the Stoics understand the immaterial as a gradual abstraction from the material (= detectable), and thus as its replica and imitation, which can only assume its place in conforming to the causal logic of nature. Anything else can be rejected as inexistent, wrong or inferior. Thus, such a *causalism* sacrifices everything non-causal and, consequently, everything that cannot be woven into consequentialist logics.

Furthermore, the empiricist primacy of the causally detectable, which for some Stoics allows causes to be valid only if they have detectable correlates, leads to an *algorithmic conception of reality* based on measurability and derivability. Since the cosmos is only material insofar as it can be detected through mechanisms of causes and effects, all discussions of reality are subordinated to the principles of consistency, measurement and consequence. Therefore, only that reality is considered truly existent which can be inferred, predicted, and deductively derived from the empirically assumed given. A primacy of derivability is created, which can lead to a status-quo dogmatism, where everything considered valid must be inferred from what is supposedly initially given. Only what can be derived from empirically assumed causal detectables has actual reality. With this imperative of causal detectability, not only quantification but also functionalization, prediction, and formalization of being go hand in hand. What cannot be woven into this presupposed logic is, as some Stoics say, only a quasi-being. Actual significance as being belongs only to what can be deduced from dogmatically given premises. However, by this implicit prioritization of the given, precisely those *status quos* are prioritized, from which more efficient, functional, and measurable inferences can be drawn respectively. In this, the

potential rationalist dogmatism of the Stoics clearly manifests itself. What leads to a more complete consequentialism is regarded as more real and more relevant.

However, alongside this rationalistic bias, even more is expressed through its empiricist aspect. For with the doctrine of a basic trust in the functions of *aisthesis* and *phantasia*, which are supposed to mirror the bodily-conceived cosmos up to the *hēgemonikon* of reason, the question arises: *what* is to be originally trusted at all? *What* are the immediately detectable causal factors upon which a logically coherent knowledge should be based? Or, in other words: *Who* can provide information on what the decisive initial detections for the processes of knowledge are? It will be those who strive for exactly the logical derivability and cosmic coherence that Stoicism originally and dogmatically pre-assumes as valid. Here a vicious circle emerges. For it is those who vouch for logical coherence who have accepted, deepened, and spread it as the initially true and basic assumption about reality. These are, with the Stoics, the *sages* and the *superior* as opposed to the erring and the inferior. In this, dominance and elitism are expressed, which are logically, epistemologically, and naturalistically grounded and potentially lead to a fatalism of the elite. Thus, the *fatum* leads to its own confirmation by its superior and wise sages, who follow its assumed causal mechanics in their knowledge and actions. In short, you have to become a Stoic yourself, to lead a virtuous life, to grasp the truth and to even have the justification to trust in your experience. In contrast, there is no place for the non-causal, contradictory, inhomogeneous, and defective, and thus it must be made consistent by the wise superior guides. Stoicism leads potentially to a dominance-driven elitism that could even develop into a cult of leadership, precisely due to its epistemological assumptions. For the sage is not the one who *thinks* in general, but the one who conforms to the consequentialist logic of a logically presupposed *fatum*. Since this logic is based on relatively abstract empiricist assumptions and on trust in *aisthesis* and *phantasia*, the question arises of *who* can consistently assert their original

abstraction. A Stoic power struggle thus drives the interpretative authority over the cosmic narrative.

From this dominance-dogmatism of the cosmos, which, *mutatis mutandis*, ultimately sees nature as a mechanism of the right of the causally stronger, the non-wise is then also positioned accordingly. For whoever does not live according to the respective *fatum* prescribed by the elite sages is considered disordered, unrefined, sick, or mad. Again, it is not the empiricist and rationalist assumptions themselves that are brought into focus by the sages, but the proper and correct way of aligning oneself with these assumptions. The individual and society must then psychologically and socially adjust themselves to those assumptions, rather than demanding a change in the very conditions presented as fatalistically given by the sage elite. Thus, a certain kind of psychologism and therapism becomes another possible consequence of Stoicism. Not conforming to the pre-defined mechanism of the cosmos must be addressed through psychological self-work, adaptation, and therapy. Stoicism thus leads, from an ethical, political, and social perspective to a potential conformism. To live and to act virtuously and ethically means to live in harmony with the causal and fatalistic mechanics of the cosmos, provided by the sages. This has been highlighted by Cristina Fragoeiro, who calls Stoicism the philosophical “heart of cognitive-behavioral therapy”, whose approach is based on Albert Ellis and Aaron Beck and their theories of cognitive self-management. A similar approach was taken by Donald Robertson before Fragoeiro, following Stoicism.<sup>79</sup> Contradiction, deficiency, and alternatives only occur insofar as they can be logically incorporated into the larger nexus. However, if they challenge the provided nexus itself, they are transferred to the individual psyche as chaotic, sick, or mad and will be rejected as in need of therapy. Whatever becomes stringent, consistent, and causally detectable is then considered the norm and paradigm to which life must conform in terms of ethics.

Ancient Stoicism can certainly also be read in a more moderate way. However, the potential consequences presented

here cannot be denied. Therefore, the position that today calls itself *Modern* or *New Stoicism* must now undergo an examination to determine to what extent it aligns with the ancient predecessor, perhaps expands upon it, or contradicts it.

#### “MODERN” OR “NEW” STOICISM

We now highlight some main ideas of contemporary Stoicism in relation to its original version. The term “Stoic” is used in contemporary debates both in scholarly discourses and in socially oriented discussions, political or ideological positions, psychological statements and self-help literature.<sup>80</sup> The latter has millions of copies in circulation.

Now, by providing some influential examples from those publications, we highlight the potential dangers that can arise from Modern Stoicism. The following list of issues is not exhaustive but aims to provide an overview of tendencies that can be found in the various psychological self-help books, lifestyle guides, management manuals, self-improvement meditations, and political essays that operate with the term *Stoicism*.<sup>81</sup> In any case, this is not a new phenomenon. Already in the 18th century, Leibniz described the views of those he called “the new Stoics”, suggesting that this new sect was “dangerous”.<sup>82</sup> Baris Büyükokutan highlights in this respect also for the 21st century that the anti-social “individualistic orientation of neo-Stoicism is a problem”.<sup>83</sup>

In addition, the non-academic contributions of “Modern Stoicism” rarely engage in an argumentative evaluation of their own philosophical assumptions and presuppositions, but instead simply accept Stoic premises. Their point of view is then mostly associated with modes of self-improvement, self-optimizing, and self-adjustment aiming at efficiency and elitism. This point is crucial. For the transformation of social relations into a psychologically conceived inner realm through an empiricist fatalism is already embedded in ancient Stoicism, as we have seen above. Elona Limaj has conducted a psychological study on the “Key principles and influence of Stoicism on the worldview of

modern man”, which primarily highlights the central importance of self-regulation, psychological adjustment, and moral utilitarianism as driving motives for contemporary Stoicism.<sup>84</sup> Anyone who wants to immerse themselves in the modern Stoic self-help mentality can thus mostly avoid the difficult reflection on logical and epistemological groundings and problems. Instead, we read that

practicing Stoicism doesn't require learning an altogether new philosophical dictionary or ruminating for a considerable length of time multiple times per day. Instead, it offers a prompt, valuable, and pragmatic approach to discover peacefulness and improve one's qualities of character.<sup>85</sup>

This seemingly attractive quick access in John Peterson's explanation of Stoicism is then complemented by the explicit call for the training of “mental toughness”, which is also referred to as *Stoic*. Despite all contemporary variations, such an approach is already embedded in the dogmatic empiricism of the ancient Stoics themselves. For from the trust that given empirical data is already correctly available for its rationalization, one may immediately move on to rationalistic conclusions for the so-called practice. Such an often observable anti-intellectualism in modern Stoicism is a consequence of the empiricism of the ancient Stoics. Of course, at least the ancient Stoics, in contrast to their modern counterparts, were interested in exploring the logical conditions of their philosophy to some degree. Nevertheless, they also hesitated to go all in on this endeavor, which is famously represented in Epictetus' position of realizing “what we can change and what we can't”. In the end, becoming skilled in accepting what is seemingly given remains a foundation even for ancient Stoics, all the more for modern ones. An example for this is the influential guide *The Daily Stoic*, which calls Epictetus' position the “single most important practice in Stoic philosophy”.<sup>86</sup> On this basis, recommendations for everyday self-adjustment follow, which teach how things can be accepted as unchangeable. The potential *status quo* dogmatism of the Stoics becomes clearly apparent here. To

“willingly accept what's outside your control” is elevated to an imperative.<sup>87</sup> The primacy of self-therapy sacrifices the habits of active participation in the shaping of the conditions and circumstances found in life. Such positions bear fruit as soon as the discussion of the conditions and assumptions of the empirical realm is rejected. Instead, therapism and elitism are promoted, carrying the Stoic doctrine of accordance to the given *fatum* in the background. Thus, even when *The Daily Stoic* teaches “say No”,<sup>88</sup> it does not mean rejecting and re-evaluating a dogmatically given empirical reality, but rather rejecting one's own participation in it. The consequence can be a quietism that justifies itself from the empiricist acceptance of the seemingly given: “Find the positive in the situation, but also sit with your pain and accept it, remembering that it is a part of life”.<sup>89</sup> *Lives of the Stoics* thus calls Stoicism the philosophy “that we need today more than ever”,<sup>90</sup> for the Stoics “wanted to know, as we want to know, how to find tranquility, purpose, self-control, and happiness”.<sup>91</sup> In Neo-Stoic literature, the impulses for such a life are often framed by the biographies of ancient Stoics, which are presented as role models. Within this lies the paradigm of an elite of sages, who, both through teachings and life anecdotes, are meant to provide guidance on how to appropriately engage with the dogmatically given empirical reality. Also, positions such as “the Stoics were never simply resigned to the current state of things, accepting without objection the injustices of the world”<sup>92</sup> do not change this fact, for they are usually merely claimed without any thorough philosophical justification. Stoic rationalism keeps demanding itself to be accepted as the “state of things”. Its fatalistic consequentialism corresponds, according to *The Obstacle is the Way* with a preceding reference to Marcus Aurelius, to the idea of

steeling ourselves. Shaking off the bad stuff that happens and soldiering on—staring straight ahead as though nothing has happened [...]. If your nerve holds, then nothing really did ‘happen’.<sup>93</sup>

These somewhat martial statements are immediately followed by a chapter titled “Control your Emotions”, which culminates in the imperative “I can control myself” in the face of any unwelcome situation.<sup>94</sup> Now, in a Stoic sense, to learn to act as though something is not there or has no significance is to regard it as undetectable. What impedes is not truly real. One can argue, then, that one should only engage with things that are empirically detectable and rationalistically present as logically influenceable – or otherwise to simply try to deny their detectability or render it meaningless. In this, the Stoic elitism reappears, as the question arises again and again: who *can*, *may*, and *should* determine what in a given situation is even detectable in a meaningful way and thus relevant, and what is not? Justifying this retrospectively from the Stoic perspective with the idea of a nature ordered by fate only further solidifies the relativistic claim to an elite in such an approach. For this concept of naturalism is a dominant behavior of those who, as the sages, claim to have a monopoly on so-called nature: “nature, in order to be commanded, must be obeyed.”<sup>95</sup> This is followed accordingly by a chapter on the famous *amor fati*, the acceptance and even love of *fate*.

Similarly, to provide another example from Salzgeber's *A Little Book of Stoicism*, the claim is not surprising that Stoicism is meant to produce a “Warrior-Philosopher”, *i.e.*, someone who is not “bookish” or merely a “librarian of the mind”. For, as Salzgeber states, “true philosophy is a matter of little theory and a lot of practice”.<sup>96</sup> Such a true philosophy, according to Salzgeber with reference to ancient sources, consists for all living beings “in the perfection of their own nature [...] as nature designed us to live”.<sup>97</sup> This does not conceal the problem that most of the literature of *Modern Stoicism* nowhere provides us with a concept of nature beyond empirically observed and relative phenomena. Once again, it becomes apparent that the “nature” to which one must conform as a modern Stoic is a relativistic concept that must simply be accepted in order to be considered reasonable. Once more, this reflects the dominance claim of an elite that empirically appropriates the concept of nature for itself. From this concept of

nature, Salzgeber again returns to the “cornerstone of Stoic philosophy”, namely, with a renewed reference to Epictetus: “[O]f things some are in our power, and others are not”.<sup>98</sup> The key is once again: “[W]e can decide what events mean to us”,<sup>99</sup> whereby the Stoic way of life is again shifted to inwardness and self-adjustment and is enriched with things like daily “morning routines”, “evening routines” and the like. Not following the imperatives of inner self-adjustment but rather meaningfully engaging with the external world is then labeled as “madness”.<sup>100</sup> Here, once again, the Stoic gesture is evident: it is not the conditions of life that maybe need to change, but individuals must adjust themselves to those conditions and deem them valid. Failure to do so is labeled as sick, insane, or in need of therapy. Such a reading of Stoicism thus entails a consistently conservative stance, advocating for the status quo, where general social challenges are transferred to the individual psyche. The individual must then fight for their place facing conditions assumed to be unchangeable, rather than collectively engaging in adjusting those conditions. This ongoing struggle is cloaked by the ancient and the modern Stoic ancient using ideals of reason and virtue that consistently demand such consequent conformity with the given.

The (neo-)Stoic reinterpretation of reason into psychological conformism within an empiricist natural relativism also manifests in other examples of Modern Stoicism. Reason, understood as the capacity for judgments about reality, means self-control: “[I]f the inadequate judgments disappear, the strong, nagging feelings also go away immediately”.<sup>101</sup> Among the few instances where an actual attempt is made to define the concept of “reason” philosophically, rather than simply assuming the term as clarified (just as it is the case with “nature” and “virtue”), the one that mostly stands out is the connection made between “reason” and “consistency”.<sup>102</sup> Here, too, ancient Stoicism is inherited, and logical consistency is presented as the appropriate way to conduct judgements about the world in accordance with its causally structured nature. Failing to adhere to this is again referred to as “a fit of madness”,<sup>103</sup> thus giving voice to the Stoic psychological

rationalism of therapy. From this perspective, it is not surprising that, e.g. Erik Wiegardt explicitly highlights (and maybe distorts) Seneca's position that to "live according to nature" includes, among other things, recognizing that "it is madness to avoid what is customary".<sup>104</sup> "What is customary" quickly becomes a socio-ethical demand for the consistent preservation of the status quo (a "plain life" with Seneca). With Thomas Beckett and his *Ultimate Handbook of Stoicism*, it is therefore stated that "if someone lived in accordance with nature", this person "caused no harm to others, led a quiet and peaceful life, reasonably and with full passion and commitment with regard to his work, family, and social context". Such a person would be

sure to attain happiness and contentment; the ultimate goal of Stoicism. And the beauty of this tenet is, that, once someone started walking on this righteous path, he almost never strayed from it.<sup>105</sup>

In addition to the demand for a certain ethical status-quo-consistency and logical coherence, numerous similar worldviews, labeled as "Stoic", are expressed in self-help literature, also extending to reactionary ideals of masculinity and femininity.<sup>106</sup> Such motives and approaches frequently appear in contemporary publications.<sup>107</sup>

Whether this fully aligns with ancient Stoicism is another question altogether. Especially epistemological perspectives are mainly absent in Modern Stoicism. Nevertheless, modern publications frequently base their statements upon preserved fragments of ancient Stoics.

All this marks certain consequences that ancient Stoicism entails. The reason they are referred to as *dangers* here is related to the Stoic idea of a community. For it is true that ancient Stoicism, already in Zeno of Citium's *Republic*, demanded a community where "we should regard all men as our fellow-citizens". In this egalitarian gesture, however, due to the metaphysics behind it, also the claim is made that "there should be one way of life and order".<sup>108</sup> This way of life is then compared to a herd of animals.

The idea of an egalitarian world community undermines itself through the thought of a stringent and homogenized world order. In Stoicism, this can be justified based on its naturalism through the concepts of a nature- or fate-determined order, the structure of which is justified by those who determine the discourse about what constitutes empirical data, nature, and the cosmos. In Stoic view, however, at best, this is the elite of the rationalistic-consequentialist sages, which of course does not mean that they are sages at all. They just have to hold dominion over what is “nature”, “fate”, “consistency” and therefore “reason”, to claim this position. In contrast to them, alternative concepts are referred to as inferior, sick, or mad. From this perspective, it is no surprise that Diogenes Laertius reports that the Skeptics had already criticized Zeno for teaching that “all who are not virtuous are foes (*polemious*)”,<sup>109</sup> in which the dangers of the fatalistic concept of virtue once again manifest. For the ideal of the virtuous person, as previously illustrated, is only the stringent, consistent, unchanging, and hardened individual.

So, what this article calls the dangers of Stoicism are potential consequences embedded in the concepts of ancient Stoicism. They are deeply rooted in the fatalistic metaphysics of the Stoics, which are defined both empirically and rationalistically, and from which anthropological, ethical, and political consequences are drawn. The renaissance of some of these ideas today under the title of Modern Stoicism often serves an ideological turn that is called its “philosophy”. That it is only philosophy in name is particularly evident through the frequent omission of an investigation into its own logical, epistemological, and ontological foundations. In their place, a dogmatic acceptance of empirical naturalism, fatalistic cosmology, and conformist ideas of virtue is substituted. These often culminate in the aforementioned dogmatizations of ways of life, where anything that does not conform is labeled as inferior, sick, or even mad. This elitism and conservative therapism, however, seems to be already embedded in ancient Stoicism, which is why it indeed provides the foundation for such “modern” positions. Therefore,

the philosophical evaluation of Stoicism remains necessary and should particularly be brought into conversation where the term Stoicism is used to justify a rationalized conformism, naturalistic elitism, and normative therapism.

RESUMO

A filosofia do estoicismo passou por um renascimento nos últimos anos. Ela figura proeminentemente em guias de autoajuda, seminários de gestão, nos discursos das redes sociais, declarações políticas, recomendações psicológicas e posicionamentos ideológicos. Este ressurgimento torna ainda mais crucial submeter o estoicismo antigo a uma análise minuciosa e relacioná-lo às alegações do chamado Estoicismo Moderno, com o objetivo de identificar potenciais semelhanças e diferenças. Isso não significa que o estoicismo antigo deva ser reduzido à sua recepção moderna. No entanto, já na Antiguidade existiam certas tendências filosóficas que tornaram essa recepção moderna possível. O estoicismo Moderno se estende muito além das fronteiras do discurso acadêmico. O presente artigo traz exemplos que se concentram nesses campos não acadêmicos e levanta a questão se o modelo antigo serve ou poderia servir como fonte de inspiração para a variante moderna e pretende detectar armadilhas e perigos. Na antiguidade, objeções significativas à doutrina estoica já foram levantadas, notavelmente por Plotino. Essas críticas visavam não apenas a metafísica estoica, mas também sua estrutura ética,<sup>1</sup> particularmente no que diz respeito a uma suposta ausência de um conceito de “responsabilidade moral”<sup>2</sup> nas teorias estoicas. Objeções semelhantes também podem ser levantadas contra o estoicismo do jeito como se apresenta na atualidade, apropriadamente notado por Piotr Stankiewicz, entre outros.<sup>3</sup> Para este fim, em um primeiro passo, os fundamentos do – infelizmente – mal preservado estoicismo antigo serão explorados, tanto em seus fundamentos teóricos quanto éticos, para permitir uma comparação com o estoicismo Moderno. Este último, portanto, será avaliado em relação ao modelo antigo, abordando duas questões-chave: primeiro, se a autoidentificação moderna com o rótulo “estoicos” se sustenta, o que podemos em grande parte afirmar; e segundo, se, da perspectiva aqui apresentada, alguém deveria aspirar a ser um estoico, ao que a resposta será não.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Estoicismo; Filosofia; Ética; Epistemologia; Antropologia.

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- <sup>1</sup>Cf. Gerson, 2016 (for further reading, see Long, 2013).
- <sup>2</sup>Idem, *ibidem*, p. 50.
- <sup>3</sup>Stankiewicz, 2017.
- <sup>4</sup>Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.39; Chrysippus, *De stoicorum repugnantiis*, 1035A; Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos*, 7.19.
- <sup>5</sup>Long, 1971.
- <sup>6</sup>Valdez, 2014.
- <sup>7</sup>Boeri, 2013, p. 206.
- <sup>8</sup>Seneca, *Epistulae morales. Ad Lucilium*, 65.2.
- <sup>9</sup>Frede, 1993, p. 51.
- <sup>10</sup>Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*, 7.2.3.
- <sup>11</sup>Stobaeus, *Antologii*, 1.79.
- <sup>12</sup>Stephens, 1992, p. 276.
- <sup>13</sup>Stobaeus, *Antologii*, 1.79.
- <sup>14</sup>Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.138; Philo of Alexandria, *Legum allegoriarum*, 2.22.
- <sup>15</sup>Cicero, *De divinatione*, 1.125f.
- <sup>16</sup>Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos*, 9.75-76.
- <sup>17</sup>Steel, 2002, p. 79.
- <sup>18</sup>Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.134.
- <sup>19</sup>Dienstbeck, 2015, p. 94 (our translation).
- <sup>20</sup>Bobzien, 2021, p. 217.
- <sup>21</sup>Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos*, 7.151.
- <sup>22</sup>Cicero, *Academica*, 2.22.
- <sup>23</sup>Idem, *ibidem*.
- <sup>24</sup>Boeri, 2019, p. 187.
- <sup>25</sup>Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos*, 7.252.
- <sup>26</sup>Idem, *ibidem*, 7.260.
- <sup>27</sup>Aetius in *Doxography Graeci* (Diels 1879), 4.11.1.
- <sup>28</sup>Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.49-50.
- <sup>29</sup>Idem, *ibidem*, 7.53.
- <sup>30</sup>Plutarch, *De communibus notitiis*, 1084F.
- <sup>31</sup>Aetius in *Doxography Graeci* (Diels 1879), 1.11.5.
- <sup>32</sup>Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.135.
- <sup>33</sup>Cicero, *Academica* 1.39.
- <sup>34</sup>Chrysippus via Nemesius, *De natura hominis*, 81.6.
- <sup>35</sup>Idem, *ibidem*, 78.7.
- <sup>36</sup>Hierocles, *Ethics stoicheiosis*, 1.33 ff.; 4.38 ff.
- <sup>37</sup>Plutarch, *De stoicorum repugnantiis*, 1054E.
- <sup>38</sup>Totschnig, 2013, p. 119.
- <sup>39</sup>Stobaeus, *Antologii*, 1.136.
- <sup>40</sup>Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.60.
- <sup>41</sup>Cicero, *Academica*, 1.41.
- <sup>42</sup>Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos*, 7.242.
- <sup>43</sup>Bronowski, 2016, 167 ff.

- <sup>44</sup> Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos*, 8.74; Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.65.
- <sup>45</sup> Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos*, 8.85.
- <sup>46</sup> Cleanthes via Clement, *Protrepticus*, 6.72.2.
- <sup>47</sup> Epictetus, *Discourses*, 2.10.1; Chrysippus via Plutarch, *De communibus notitiis*, 1069E; Stobaeus, *Antologii*, 2.85; Zeno of Citium via Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.107; et al.
- <sup>48</sup> Rist, 1977, p. 162.
- <sup>49</sup> Epictetus, *Discourses*, 3.2.5.
- <sup>50</sup> Stobaeus, *Antologii*, 2.85.
- <sup>51</sup> Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.108.
- <sup>52</sup> Idem, *ibidem*, 7.107.
- <sup>53</sup> Plutarch, *De stoicorum repugnantibus*, 1035C.
- <sup>54</sup> Seneca, *Epistulae morales. Ad Lucilium*, 117.2.
- <sup>55</sup> Epictetus, *Dissertationes*, 3.3.2.
- <sup>56</sup> Annas, 2007, p. 87.
- <sup>57</sup> Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.89.
- <sup>58</sup> Idem, *ibidem*.
- <sup>59</sup> Plutarch, *De virtute morali*, 441B.
- <sup>60</sup> For instance: Aetius in *Doxography Graeci* (Diels 1879), 4.11.1; Cicero, *De natura deorum*, 2.28; Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.138; Chrysippus via Calcidius, *In Platonis Timaeum*, 220; et al.
- <sup>61</sup> Chrysippus via Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*, 7.2.6 f.
- <sup>62</sup> Idem, *ibidem*.
- <sup>63</sup> Idem, *ibidem*.
- <sup>64</sup> Stobaeus, *Antologii*, 2.77. Cf. 2.75.
- <sup>65</sup> Seneca, *Epistulae morales. Ad Lucilium*, 76.10.
- <sup>66</sup> Cicero, *Tusculane disputationes*, 5.40.
- <sup>67</sup> Chrysippus via Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*, 7.2.12 f.
- <sup>68</sup> Marcus Aurelius, *Ad se ipsum*, 5.16.
- <sup>69</sup> Galen, *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*, 5.2.6.
- <sup>70</sup> Stobaeus, *Antologii*, 2.115.
- <sup>71</sup> Seneca, *Epistulae morales. Ad Lucilium*, 94.2.
- <sup>72</sup> Cicero, *Tusculane disputationes*, 4.29 ff.
- <sup>73</sup> Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos*, 7.248.
- <sup>74</sup> Idem, *ibidem*, 7.247.
- <sup>75</sup> Aetius in *Doxography Graeci* (Diels 1879), 4.12.5.
- <sup>76</sup> Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos*, 7.406.
- <sup>77</sup> Büyükokutan, 2021, p. 4.
- <sup>78</sup> Cf. Seneca, *Epistulae morales. Ad Lucilium*, 58.13; Galen, *De methodo medendi*, 10.155.
- <sup>79</sup> Fragoeiro, 2021, p. 397 ff.; Robertson, 2010.
- <sup>80</sup> For an overview cf. Arenson (ed.), 2020; Sellars (ed.), 2016; Inwood (ed.), 1999; Neymeyr, Schmidt, Zimmermann (eds.), 2008.
- <sup>81</sup> Cf. eg Kourtoglou ; Vavouras ; Sariannidis, 2024; Vaz, 2024; Oliveira 2024; Kutch 2020.
- <sup>82</sup> Sellars, forthcoming 2025, p. 14.

- <sup>83</sup>Büyükokutan, 2021, p. 4.
- <sup>84</sup>Limaj, 2024, p. 47.
- <sup>85</sup>Peterson, 2019, p. 4.
- <sup>86</sup>Holiday; Hanselman, 2016, p. 8.
- <sup>87</sup>Idem, ibidem, p. 11.
- <sup>88</sup>Idem, ibidem, p. 10.
- <sup>89</sup>Idem, ibidem, p. 364.
- <sup>90</sup>Holiday; Hanselman, 2020, p. x
- <sup>91</sup>Idem, ibidem, p. xiv.
- <sup>92</sup>Idem, ibidem, p. xii.
- <sup>93</sup>Holiday, 2014, p. 31.
- <sup>94</sup>Idem, ibidem, p. 37.
- <sup>95</sup>Idem, ibidem, p. 176.
- <sup>96</sup>Salzgeber, 2019, p. 13.
- <sup>97</sup>Idem, ibidem, p. 43.
- <sup>98</sup>Idem, ibidem, p. 56.
- <sup>99</sup>Idem, ibidem, p. 57.
- <sup>100</sup>Idem, ibidem, p. 194.
- <sup>101</sup>Wiersma, 2014, p. 74 f.
- <sup>102</sup>Idem, 2014, p. 125.
- <sup>103</sup>Idem, p. 128, 141.
- <sup>104</sup>Wiegardt, 2010, p. 19.
- <sup>105</sup>Beckett, 2010, p. 32.
- <sup>106</sup>Quest, 2024; Harrison, 2023; Flowers, 2023.
- <sup>107</sup>Cf. Panagiotidis, 2025; Sage, 2024; Tuitert, 2024; Luscombe 2024; Sterling, 2023; Martins, 2023; Fun, 2023; Sellars, 2020; Robertson, 2020; Pigliucci, Lopez, 2019; Farnsworth, 2018; Pigliucci, 2017; Robertson, 2013; and many more.
- <sup>108</sup>Zeno of Citium via Plutarch, *De Alexandri magni fortuna aut virtute*, 329A.
- <sup>109</sup>Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, 7.32.