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SOMETHING AND NOTHING: THE STOICS ON CONCEPTS AND UNIVERSALS

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. . . τί δέ τις; τί δ' οὔ τις; σκιᾶς ὄναρ
Pindar, *Pythian* 8. 95

IT is commonplace to find the Stoics described as nominalists.[1] As early as the fifth century CE they are described as holding that 'there are only particulars' and, a century later, that 'common entities are

[1] e.g. E. Zeller, *Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung* [*Philosophie der Greichen*], 5th edn. (3 vols. in 6 parts; Leipzig, 1923; 1st edn. 1844–52), iii/1. 80–1 (cf. ii/1. 295–6); C. Prantl, *Geschichte der Logik im Abendlande* [*Geschichte*] (4 vols.; Leipzig, 1855–70), i. 420, 427–33; L. Stein, *Die Erkenntnistheorie der Stoa* [*Erkenntnistheorie*] (Berlin, 1888), 276–300; V. Brochard, 'La logique des Stoïciens', in his *Études de philosophie ancienne et de philosophie moderne* [*Études*] (Paris, 1926), 220–38, esp. 221–4, 235–8, and his 'La logique des stoïciens (Deuxième étude)', in his *Études*, 239–51, esp. 242–6; P. Couissin, 'La critique du réalisme des concepts chez Sextus Empiricus' ['Critique du réalisme'], *Revue d'histoire de la philosophie*, 1 (1927), 377–405 at 390; J. B. Gould, *The Philosophy of Chrysippus* (Leiden, 1970), 43, 60, 106, 119, 159, 201, 203, 208–9; A. Graeser, *Zenon von Kition: Positionen und Probleme* [*Zeno*] (Berlin, 1975), 84; G. Verbeke, 'Der Nominalismus der stoischen Logik', *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, 2 (1977), 36–55; M. Schofield, 'Preconception, Argument, and God', in M. Schofield, M. Burnyeat, and J. Barnes (eds.), *Doubt and Dogmatism: Studies in Hellenistic Epistemology* (Oxford, 1980), 283–308 at 286; M. Forschner, *Die stoische Ethik: Über den Zusammenhang von Natur-, Sprach- und Moralphilosophie im altstoischen System* (Stuttgart, 1981), 74, 81. For more qualified endorsements see A.-J. Voelke, *L'Idée de volonté dans le stoïcisme* (Paris, 1973), 28; B. Inwood, *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism* (Oxford, 1985), 28, 37–8, 83, 204.

nothing'.[2] More recently, however, it has been argued that the Stoics are best understood as 'conceptualists', after the manner of British empiricists such as John Locke, rather than nominalists in the strict sense.[3] There are, unfortunately, texts to support both positions. Worse, there are even texts that suggest a kind of realism:[4] the Stoics are committed to the existence of qualities such as wisdom and moderation that make an individual, for example, wise or moderate. One might well wonder whether there is a coherent position here at all and, if there is, just what sort of position it might be.

The process of solving this puzzle has been thwarted by a second and more troubling one. According to virtually every modern treatment of the subject, (1) the Stoics identify Platonic Forms with concepts, while (2) denying that a concept is something, even though (3) they regard the genus *Something* as the highest genus, comprehending both what exists and what does not.[5] It is hard to un-

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[2] Syr. *In Metaph.* 104. 21 Kroll and Simpl. *In Categ.* 105. 11 Kalbfleisch, respectively. On the translation of οὕτινα see sect. 4.1.

[3] D. N. Sedley, 'The Stoic Theory of Universals' ['Stoic Universals'], *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 23 (1985), suppl. 87–92; A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers* (2 vols.; Cambridge, 1987), i. 181–3. An earlier denial of nominalism can also be found in V. Goldschmidt, *Le Système stoïcien et l'idée de temps [Le Système stoïcien]*, 4th edn. (Paris, 1989; 1st edn., 1953), 166–7.

[4] C. H. Kahn, 'Stoic Logic and Stoic LOGOS' *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, 51 (1969), 158–72 at 165–6.

[5] The best statement of this position is to be found in David Sedley's succinct but forceful 'Stoic Universals', and at full length in Jacques Brunschwig's magisterial 'La théorie stoïcienne du genre suprême et l'ontologie platonicienne' ['Genre suprême'], in J. Barnes and M. Mignucci (eds.), *Matter and Metaphysics* (Naples, 1988), 21–127. But their position is in fact the culmination of a long tradition: H. Ritter, *Geschichte der Philosophie [Geschichte]* (4 vols.; Hamburg, 1829–34), iii. 548–9; Prantl, *Geschichte*, i. 420, 427; Stein, *Erkenntnistheorie*, 292–8; A. C. Pearson, *The Fragments of Zeno and Cleanthes* (London, 1891), 72–5; L. Robin, *La Pensée grecque et les origines de l'esprit scientifique [Pensée grecque]* (Paris, 1923), 415; Couissin, 'Critique du réalisme', esp. 401–5; O. Rieth, *Grundbegriffe der stoischen Ethik: Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung [Grundbegriffe]* (Berlin, 1933), 90–1, 173–5, 180; A. Orbe, *En los albores de la exegesis iohannea* (Rome, 1955), 280–6; P. Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus* (2 vols.; Paris, 1968), i. 158–62, 174–6; K. Wurm, *Substanz und Qualität: Ein Beitrag zur Interpretation der plotinischen Traktate VI 1, 2, und 3* (Berlin, 1973), 169, 175–81; A. A. Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics*, 2nd edn. (Berkeley, 1986; 1st edn. 1974), 141, 147; Graeser, *Zeno*, 69–78; M. Frede, 'The Origins of Traditional Grammar' ['Origins of Grammar'], in R. E. Butts and J. Hintikka (eds.), *Historical and Philosophical Dimensions of Logic, Methodology, and Philosophy of Science* (Dordrecht, 1987), 51–79, repr. in his *Essays in Ancient Philosophy* (Minneapolis, 1987), 338–59 at 349; D. E. Hahm, *The Origins of Stoic Cosmology* (Columbus, 1977), 8; P. Pasquino, 'Le statut ontologique des incorporels dans l'ancien stoïcisme' ['Statut ontologique'], in J. Brunschwig (ed.), *Les Stoïciens et leur logique* (Paris, 1978), 375–86 at 378; Long and

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derstand why the Stoics would have introduced concepts, only to banish them in this way; or what it could mean for items to fail to be something and fail to be either existent or non-existent. Such a position appears difficult to motivate and even unintelligible. Something seems to have gone badly wrong.

A fresh look at the evidence suggests a more charitable reconstruction. First, our evidence presents not one Stoic theory, but *several* (Section 1). Concepts are mentioned only by the founder of the Stoa, Zeno of Citium, and his successor Cleanthes (Sections 2–7); beginning with Cleanthes' successor, Chrysippus, they cease to be mentioned. Later Stoics appeal to linguistic conventions instead, retaining only certain broad features of the earlier theory, while correcting for some of its more egregious consequences (Sections 8–9). If this is right, the appeal to concepts is *not* part of the 'canonical' form of Stoicism, which coalesced under Chrysippus and his followers. Both theories, on the other hand, acknowledge qualities, but in neither case do they imply realism: Stoic qualities are similar to what are sometimes called 'quality instances' or 'tropes'. In a scheme that already appeals to concepts or language, such items might seem otiose. But in fact they constitute one of the more philosophically insightful manœuvres the Stoics make in responding to Plato.

Second, the Stoics never identify Platonic Forms with concepts or, for that matter, anything else. Their strategy is *eliminativist*, not reductivist. On their view, there are *no such things* as Platonic Forms—they are literally nothing at all. Concepts, however, *are* something. They are precisely what *replace* Forms; they actually perform functions that Forms were supposed to. *Something* is thus not only the highest genus for the Stoics, but fully com-

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Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, i. 163–6, 181–3; P. Aubenque, 'Une occasion manquée: La genèse avortée de la distinction entre l' "étant" et le "quelque chose"', in P. Aubenque (ed.), *Études sur le Sophiste de Platon* (Naples, 1991), 365–85 at 379.

The only exceptions to this tradition are partial and confused, because they continue to identify concepts with Platonic Forms: E. Elorduy, *Die Sozialphilosophie der Stoa [Sozialphilosophie]* (Leipzig, 1936), 85, 88 (though cf. 124–5); 'La lógica de la Estoa', *Revista de filosofía* (Madrid), 3 (1944), 7–65 and 221–65 at 229–31; and *El estoicismo* (2 vols.; Madrid, 1972), i. 248 ff.; M. Pohlenz, *Die Stoa: Geschichte einer geistigen Bewegung*, 4th edn. (2 vols.; Göttingen, 1970; 1st edn. 1943–7), i. 64–5, 295; J. M. Rist, *Stoic Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1969), 156, 165, and 'Zeno and the Origins of Stoic Logic' ['Zeno'], in J. Brunschwig (ed.), *Les Stoïciens et leur logique* (Paris, 1978), 387–400 at 394–5; C. Atherton, *The Stoics on Ambiguity [Stoic Ambiguity]* (Cambridge, 1993), 76–7, 144, 256.

prehensive as well: it includes every item, whatever its status, that is acknowledged by what they take to be the correct ontology.[6]

I shall finish by drawing some general conclusions about 'the problem of universals' and in particular the difference between the ancient and modern debates (Section 10). This appears to be yet one more area where we have much to gain from our predecessors.

1. Stoic responses to Plato's theory of Forms

Modern treatments generally speak as if all the early Stoics agreed that a solution to the problem of universals involves an appeal to concepts. One late source does collapse the position in this way, claiming simply that 'the Stoics think the Ideas are our concepts' (Ps.-Galen, *De hist. philos.* 25 = *Dox. Gr.* 615. 16 Diels). But our other sources do not. The most nuanced account is given by Syrianus, who distinguishes a variety of approaches:

> The Forms, then, were not introduced by these divine men [sc. Socrates, Plato, the Parmenideans, and the Pythagoreans] *for the use of conventions concerning names* [τὴν χρῆσιν τῆς τῶν ὀνομάτων συνηθείας], *as Chrysippus, Archedemus, and most of the Stoics later thought*, since in themselves the Forms differ in many ways from what is said by convention. Nor do they supervene on the understanding, analogous to the much-talked-about expressibles [λεκτά], as Longinus recommended, given that what supervenes is insubstantial—how could the same thing both be an intelligible and supervene? Nor, according to these philosophers, *are Ideas concepts* [ἐννοήματα], *as Cleanthes later said*. Nor do they supervene on the understanding in the way conceptual ideas do, as Antoninus said, combining the views of Longinus and Cleanthes. (*In Metaph.* 105. 21–30)

The historical sketch from which this excerpt is taken is not intended to be chronological. Syrianus has instead organized the positions systematically, with special attention to how they deviate from the orthodox Platonic position.[7] Several of them re-

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[6] For the sake of convenience, I shall forgo etymological scruples and use 'ontology' and 'entity' to designate, respectively, the domain of a metaphysical theory and what falls within that domain, *including what does not exist or have being of any sort* (should there be such according to the theory in question).

[7] This should answer Brunschwig's concern about the reliability of Syrianus' report ('Genre suprême', 78). Chronologically, it is a jumble: immediately after

main a mystery: nothing else is known about Longinus' and Antoninus' position, not to mention Cornutus' position, which Syrianus discusses later in the passage (106. 7–13). But one point is clear. Beginning with Chrysippus, '*most of the Stoics*' did not appeal to concepts when responding to Plato, but conventions involving names. In fact, what distinguishes Antoninus is precisely his *reintroduction* of concepts into the discussion and the syncretism in which it results. This strongly suggests that *Cleanthes was the last mainstream Stoic to appeal to concepts* in responding to Plato.

The position does not seem to have originated with Cleanthes, though. We know that Zeno severely criticized Plato in an effort to strike at Arcesilaus—a strategy as misdirected, Numenius tells us, as when Cephisodorus criticized Plato's Forms in order to attack Aristotle (ap. Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* 14. 6. 9–11, ii. 275. 6–276. 7 Mras). Numenius further claims that in making this critique, Zeno 'wickedly and shamelessly introduced' alterations to Platonic doctrine (ii. 276. 5 Mras). But he fails to tell us exactly what these innovations were. Other testimonia suggest it might have been the same theory as Cleanthes': 'The Stoics who follow Zeno said the Ideas are our concepts.'[8] The same position is elaborated in parallel passages of Diogenes Laertius and Stobaeus that constitute our most important evidence for the early Stoic theory. Because it has attracted more discussion, we shall begin with the later report from Stobaeus:

> Zeno's position. (1) They say that concepts are neither something nor something qualified, but (2) as if they were something and as if they were something qualified, being apparitions of the soul. (3) They were called 'Ideas' by past philosophers. For Ideas are of things that fall under concepts, such as men, horses, and (to speak more generally) all animals and as many other things they say there are Ideas of. But the Stoics say

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mentioning Antoninus, Syrianus goes back to consider the views of Socrates; he then skips forward to middle Platonists (Plutarch, Atticus, and Democritus); and then finally he goes back again to earlier moderates such as the Peripatetic Boethus and the Stoic Cornutus. But it is extremely unlikely that Syrianus would be confused about Socrates' dates. In any event, ὕστερον at 105. 29 does not pose a problem: it is to be taken with παρ' αὐτοῖς in the previous line to refer to 'these divine men' at 105. 20–1, just as ὕστερον does at 105. 22–3, a point already recognized by Zeller (*Philosophie der Griechen*, ii/1. 81 n. 4).

[8] Ps.-Plut. *Epit.* 1. 10. 5 (= *Dox. Gr.* 309. 9–10); Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* 15. 45. 4, ii. 413. 8 Mras. Ps.-Galen's report mentioned above (p. 148) clearly derives from these.

that the latter are non-existent and that while we participate in concepts, we bear those cases they call 'common nouns'. (*Ecl.* 1. 136. 21–137. 6 Wachsmuth)

There is a great deal in this passage, and we shall return to it often. For ease of reference the text can be subdivided according to the following rubrics: (1) what concepts are not; (2) what concepts are; and (3) the relation between concepts and Platonic Forms. The first topic immediately leads us into a thicket of metaphysical difficulties, though, which must be cleared away (Sections 2–4) if we are to understand properly the second and third (Sections 5–7).

2. Something

The first clause of the passage claims that concepts are 'neither something nor something qualified'. How on earth, though, could concepts fail to be *something*? A natural response would be the following: only if they were *nothing at all*, only if there were *no such things* as concepts. But it is hard to see how that would help matters. One might intelligibly claim that Platonic Forms were fictions or, alternatively, that concepts were. But it is not clear what could be gained by introducing one fiction and identifying it with another. How can concepts pull the load Forms are supposed to, if they are just as illusory?

Scholarly opinion has been more sanguine, though. In fact, it is one of those rare moments when scholars have been virtually unanimous. The opening clause, they believe, must be taken as referring to the Stoics' highest genus, *Something* (τό τι), so that by denying concepts are something, Zeno places them *outside* this genus, banishing them to a 'logical and metaphysical limbo'.[9] Such claims require us to reflect on the very foundations of Stoic ontology. In this section, therefore, we shall consider what it is to be something according to the Stoics, before evaluating in Section 3 what it might be *not* to be.

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[9] The phrase is Sedley's ('Stoic Universals', 89; cf. Long and Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, i. 181).

2.1. *Being vs. being something*

In making *Something* the highest genus, the Stoics are rejecting the view that *Being* or *What Is* (τὸ ὄν) constitutes the highest genus.[10] According to Plutarch (*Comm. not.* 1073 D–E), the Stoics claim that

(NE) There are some things which are not.

Put in this way, the position sounds contradictory (as Plutarch clearly intended it to). But it needn't, once it is taken in its proper sense. For the Stoics reject the Platonic identification of *being* with *being something*.[11] On their view, to speak of something as 'a being' (ὄν) is precisely to mark an item's ontological status, in contrast with other uses of 'to be', which are unmarked. By disambiguating these two uses of 'to be', the Stoics can thus avoid contradiction—indeed, nothing short of this will work. To remove the sound of paradox,

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[10] Alex. Aphr. *In Top.* 301. 19–27, 359. 12–18 Wallies; Philo, *Leg. alleg.* 2. 86, 3. 175, *Quod det. pot.* 118; S.E. *PH* 2. 86, 223, *M.* 10. 234; *Scholia in Arist. Categ.* 34^{b}8–11 Brandis; Plot. 6. 1. 25. 3–6, 26, cf. 6. 2. 1. 22 Henry–Schwyzer. According to an older tradition, beginning with Ritter (*Geschichte*, iii. 553–5) and Zeller (*Philosophie der Griechen*, iii/1. 94–5 n. 2), the earliest Stoics accept *What Is* as the highest category, while *Something* is elevated to that status only by Chrysippus or a later Stoic in order to accommodate incorporeals. But the evidence for this hypothesis is slight and can be satisfactorily explained away. (1) Although in most printed editions D.L. 7. 61 cites τὸ ὄν as a Stoic example of the highest genus, this reading does not occur in any of the manuscripts, but stems from the Latin translation of Aldobrandini. For a judicious discussion see Brunschwig, 'Genre suprême', 50–1. (2) The 'quod est' of Sen. *Ep.* 58. 7–14, 16–22 is not Stoic, but middle Platonic: see the detailed analysis of J. Mansfeld, 'Substance, Being and Division in Middle Platonist and Later Aristotelian Contexts' ['Substance, Being and Division'], in his *Heresiography in Context: Hippolytus' Elenchos as a Source for Greek Philosophy* (Leiden, 1992), 78–109 at 84–5 n. 22, where he argues that Seneca's use of the first person does not in context entail endorsement (against Brunschwig, 'Genre suprême', 51–60). (3) As for τοῦ γενικωτάτου τοῦ ὄντος at S.E. *M.* 8. 32–6, Brunschwig ('Genre suprême', 46–7) plausibly follows W. Heintz, who obelizes τοῦ ὄντος, despite his own acceptance of Zeller's thesis (*Studien zu Sextus Empiricus* [*Sextus Empiricus*] (Halle, 1932), 151–3)—cf. the parallel passage, *PH* 2. 86–7, which correctly declares *Something* to be the highest genus.

[11] For the classic discussion of this view see G. E. L. Owen in 'Aristotle on the Snares of Ontology', in R. Bambrough (ed.), *New Essays on Plato and Aristotle* (London, 1965), 69–95, repr. in his *Logic, Science and Dialectic: Collected Papers in Greek Philosophy* (Ithaca, 1986), 259–78 at 260 and 264–5; although see his later qualifications in 'Plato on Not-Being' ['Not-Being'] in G. Vlastos (ed.), *Plato*, i. *Metaphysics and Epistemology* (Garden City, NJ, 1970), 223–67, repr. in his *Logic, Science and Dialectic*, 104–37 at 135–6. For an excellent recent discussion see L. Brown, 'Being in the *Sophist*: A Syntactical Enquiry', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 4 (1986), 49–70.

we can use a distinct verb, 'to exist', for the ontologically marked use, while reserving 'to be' for the copula and the particular quantifier 'there is/are'.[12] The Stoics' claim can then be reconstrued as follows:

(NE′) There *are* some things which do not *exist*.

The Stoics thus reject half of the Platonic position. Both accept that if an item is—that is, if it *exists*—then it is something. But Platonists also insist on the converse; and it is this that the Stoics reject. An item may be something *even though it does not exist*. The genus *Something* is thus wider than *What Is*, or as we might now say, *What Exists*.

Such a position inevitably conjures up thoughts of Meinong and his *Gegenstandstheorie*. This comparison has been thought to gain support from a further distinction drawn in canonical Stoicism, between what exists (τὸ ὄν) and what subsists (τὸ ὑφεστός: Galen *Meth. med.* 10. 155. 1–8).[13] Although some things do *not* exist, they nevertheless *subsist* and even on occasion *obtain* (ὑφεστῶσι καὶ ὑπάρχουσιν: Plut. *Adv. Colot.* 1116 B–C). Here we have a distinction clearly associated with Meinong's name ever since Russell.[14]

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[12] A striking example of the unmarked use of the quantifier occurs in Chrysippus, who uses it to posit entities that, on his theory, are *non-existents*: 'given that there *are* also such expressibles . . .' (ὄντων δὲ καὶ τοιούτων λεκτῶν: *Quaest. log.* 3, fr. 3, col. 8. 15–16 von Arnim). To speak of an 'existential' quantifier in this context thus begs the question against positions like the Stoics'. For a discussion of the larger issues involved see A. Orenstein, *Existence and the Particular Quantifier* (Philadelphia, 1978), esp. 28.

[13] For a defence of this distinction in connection with Meinong see A. A. Long, 'Language and Thought in Stoicism' ['Language and Thought'], in A. A. Long (ed.), *Problems in Stoicism* (London, 1971), 75–113 at 89–90, and later adopted by Long and Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, i. 164; but cf. G. Watson, *The Stoic Theory of Knowledge* [*Stoic Knowledge*] (Belfast, 1966), 92–6, who more correctly draws a comparison with the early Russell (see n. 14 below). There has been extensive controversy over the Stoics' terminology here: see R. E. Witt, 'Ὑπόστασις', in H. G. Wood (ed.), *Amicitiae Corolla* (London, 1933), 319–43; H. Dörrie, 'Ὑπόστασις, Wort- und Bedeutungsgeschichte', *Nachricht. d. Akad. d. Wiss. in Gött.*, Philol.-hist. Kl. (1955), 35–92; P. Hadot, 'Zur Vorgeschichte des Begriffs "Existenz": ὑπάρχειν bei den Stoikern', *Archiv für Begriffgeschichte*, 13 (1969), 115–27; A. Graeser, 'A propos ὑπάρχειν bei den Stoikern', *Archiv für Begriffgeschichte*, 15 (1971), 299–305; V. Goldschmidt, 'ὑπάρχειν et ὑφιστάναι dans la philosophie stoïcienne', *Revue des études grecques*, 85 (1972), 331–44; and A. Schubert, '"ὑπάρχειν" und "ὑφίστασθαι" bei den Stoikern', ch. 5 of his *Untersuchungen zur stoischen Bedeutungslehre* (Göttingen, 1994).

[14] For the popular interpretation of Meinong see B. Russell, 'Meinong's Theory of Complexes and Assumptions', *Mind*, 13 (1904), 204–19, 336–54, and 509–24, repr. in Douglas Lackey (ed.), *Essays in Analysis* [*Essays*] (New York, 1973), 21–76

But we should be more careful. Meinong does distinguish *bestehen* and *existieren* in a way that closely parallels this distinction, but it is not the distinction for which he is famous. The objects that subsist on his view are *abstract objects*, such as numbers, properties, and states of affairs.[15] They thus differ from a centaur, say, or the object of my secret desire, which would be concrete if they were to exist; but seem to lack being (*Sein*) entirely—such things neither exist nor subsist. What distinguishes Meinongian objects, therefore, is *not* a certain kind of being, but rather their *independence* from being of any kind, whether existence, subsistence, or some other kind (should there be any). Their independence consists in just this: objects have their nature or character (*Sosein*) independent of being (*Sein*), independent of whether they are or are not; taken in themselves, they are 'beyond being and not-being' (*jenseits von Sein und Nichtsein*). Thus, when Meinong speaks of the '*Außersein* of the pure object', he is precisely *not* assigning some new type of being to objects, but rather considering them *apart from* being altogether (literally, *außer Sein*).[16] A true Meinongian is thus prepared to say that objects *have* certain attributes or characteristics, even if they lack being entirely. In fact, it is only this last thesis that has radical implications. Someone who accepts abstract objects need not agree to it, even if he thinks abstract objects do not exist, since he might insist that attributes belong only to objects that have some sort of being or other, even if less than existence in the full sense. Thus, while there are non-existents on such a view, the logic remains fundamentally the same: the difference is merely verbal, with 'being' in place of 'existence'. For the Meinongian, though, the difference

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at 21, 36; *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy* (London, 1919), 169; and 'My Mental Development', in P. A. Schilpp (ed.), *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell* (2 vols.; Evanston, Ill., 1944), i. 1–20 at 13. At points Russell recognizes that this is not Meinong's position: see his review of Meinong's *Untersuchungen zur Gegenstandstheorie und Psychologie* ['Review of Meinong'], *Mind*, 14 (1905), 530–8, repr. in Lackey, *Essays*, 77–88 at 78; as well as his 'On Denoting', *Mind*, 14 (1905), 479–93, repr. in Lackey, *Essays*, 103–19 at 109. In fact, the position Russell ascribes to Meinong and criticizes was actually *Russell's own* only a few years earlier: *The Principles of Mathematics*, 2nd edn. (London, 1937; 1st edn. 1903), 43, 71, 450–1.

[15] A. Meinong, 'Über Gegenstandstheorie' ['Gegenstandstheorie'], in A. Meinong (ed.), *Untersuchungen zur Gegenstandstheorie und Psychologie* (Leipzig, 1904), 1–50, repr. in the *Alexius Meinong Gesamtausgabe* [*Gesamtausgabe*], ed. R. Haller and R. Kindiger (7 vols.; Graz, 1968–78), ii. 481–535 at 486–8.

[16] Meinong, 'Gegenstandstheorie', 489–94, esp. 492–3; the expression '*jenseits von Sein und Nichtsein*' occurs at 494.

is not verbal. The question is whether having an attribute presupposes *any* kind of being at all—whether 'Pegasus is a winged horse' can be true, for example, even if 'Pegasus' fails to denote any sort of being. I shall refer to a theory as 'Meinongian' if it *rejects* such a presupposition, even if it departs from Meinong's theory on other points.[17]

If we now reconsider the four types of subsistent acknowledged by canonical Stoicism, we find that they are all abstract objects: place, time, void, and what can be expressed by language. The Stoics insist that such objects are not bodies and cannot act or be acted upon. On their view, bodies are alone capable of this and as such constitute the sole existents (see p. 208). Such characterizations are very much in line with what Meinong has to say about subsistents. But they are neither here nor there as regards 'Meinongianism' in the sense I have described. For these later Stoics could still insist that attributes belong only to entities with *some* form of being or other, that is, which either exist *or subsist*.[18]

2.2 Thought and object

That having been said, it appears that some Stoics *were* committed to the more well-known Meinongian position:

> To some Stoics it seems that *Something* is the first genus, and I shall explain why. In the nature of things, they say, some things exist and some do not. In fact, the nature of things includes even those things that do not exist but come to mind, such as centaurs, giants, or anything else that, having been made up by a false thought, takes on an appearance, even though it does not have reality.[19] (Sen. *Ep.* 58. 15; cf. S.E. *M.* 9. 49)

As on the view just considered, what exists does not exhaust all there is: there are things that do not exist. But on the present view they are not assigned any other type of being—they are simply said not to exist. The examples are quite different: they include

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[17] I am thus using the term in a somewhat more stringent sense than R. M. Dancy ('Ancient Non-Beings: Speusippus and Others', in his *Two Studies in the Early Academy* (Albany, NY, 1991), 63–119, esp. 63–4 and 72–6), who characterizes the acceptance of any kind of non-existent (including subsistents) as 'Meinongian'.

[18] As Watson, for example, takes the Stoics to do, in line with the early Russell (*Stoic Knowledge*, 95).

[19] 'Substantia' is the Latin for οὐσία and so stands for a *real* object; 'substantiam habere' can be used as an equivalent to the marked use of 'esse' (as e.g. at Sen. *Ep.* 113. 4). See p. 169 below.

centaurs and giants, objects that *would* be concrete *were* they to have being. What counts as something, moreover, is characterized quite broadly. *Anything we can think of* falls 'within the nature of things' and thus is something, whether or not it has being of any kind—all that matters is that we can think of it. Our thoughts, therefore, not only have a content on every occasion, but an *object*: even if a thought fails to correspond to an existent object, there still will be *something* of which it is a thought. And, as a Meinongian view requires, we can truly say that such objects *are* centaurs and giants, regardless of whether they exist. On its most obvious construal, the principle underlying their position guarantees not only that there *is* an object of which we are thinking, but also that it is the *sort* of thing we are thinking of—if I am thinking of an *F*, then there is an *x* such that I am thinking of *x* and *x* is an *F*. (For more on this principle see Section 5. 2.)

This new characterization of the genus *Something* is more nuanced than it at first appears. At first, one might think it amounts to the following claim:

(TS) $\forall x$ (It is possible to think of $x \rightarrow x$ is something).

But put in this way, the claim is nothing remarkable—*every* ontology is committed to (TS). The universal quantifier in (TS) is objectual and so ranges over the objects in the domain of an ontology. But, according to any ontology, *every* object in its domain is something in the broad sense in question here, *no matter what the ontology*. The consequent of (TS) is thus trivially satisfied in every ontology, and so (TS) will be as well.

The Stoic claim, however, is meant to be controversial, precisely because the range of what we can think seems to outstrip most ontologies. We generally assent to sentences of the form

It is possible to think of *x*,

where '*x*' is replaced by a singular noun phrase such as 'Chiron' or 'a centaur', even if nothing in our ontology corresponds to that phrase. And that is just where the Stoics' principle kicks in. For whenever we assent to such a sentence, they claim, it will also be true that

x is something,

where '*x*' is replaced by the same phrase—a result most of us ob-

viously cannot accept, since we think there are *no such things* as centaurs, for example, or giants. In accepting every instance of the following schema (where '*x*' is replaced by a singular noun phrase)

(TS′)   It is possible to think of $x \rightarrow x$ is something

the Stoics are thus making a radical claim. Substitutional quantification shows how capacious their highest genus is really meant to be.

Such a principle need not weaken their sense of reality. For these Stoics do *not* accept every instance of the following schema (where '*x*' is replaced by a singular noun phrase):

(TE)   It is possible to think of $x \rightarrow x$ exists.

Consider 'Chiron' again. Here the consequent is as false for the Stoics as it is for anyone else; hence, since the antecedent is true, the conditional as a whole will be false. These Stoics are in fact quite restrictive about what exists, reserving it exclusively for those things that can act or be acted upon. Thus, while they reject the modern dogma that 'Everything exists',[20] they nevertheless maintain a more stringent, causal conception of reality than many philosophers do.

Perhaps the most tantalizing aspect of Seneca's report is the suggested connection between thought and object. If these Stoics were also to accept the *converse* of (TS′), that is, the thesis that everything can be thought, by accepting every instance of the following schema

(ST′) x is something $\rightarrow$ it is possible to think of x

they would be in a position to accept the following intentional definition of 'something': to be *something* is just to be *a possible object of thought*. The highest genus is described in just these terms by Kasimir Twardowski, who, like Meinong, was a student of Brentano's and advocated a 'Meinongian' theory of non-existent objects. Having argued that every presentation has not only a content, but also an object,[21] Twardowski continues:

[20] e.g. W. V. O. Quine, 'On What There Is', in his *From a Logical Point of View: 9 Logico-Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge, Mass., 1961), 1–19, esp. at 1.
[21] *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen: Eine psychologische Untersuchung* [*Inhalt und Gegenstand*] (Vienna, 1894), § 6, 29–34. Cf. also 36: 'Something is presented in each presentation, whether it exists or not, whether it is represented as independent of us and impressing itself on our perception or whether it is formed in imagination by ourselves; whatever else it might be, it stands, in so

The view that locates the *summum genus* in the object thus turns out to be justified. Everything there is is an object of a possible presentation; everything there is is something . . . In short, everything which is not nothing, but is in some sense 'something', is an object.[22]

Twardowski's position is a natural extension of the one Seneca reports. What there is is the same as what there is to be thought—a Parmenidean formula (DK 28 B 3), even if taken in a very un-Parmenidean spirit. But the Stoics need not have taken this step. They might have held, like Meinong's student Ernst Mally, that being something is independent not only of *actually* being thought (as on Twardowski's view), but of even the *possibility* of being thought. On Mally's view, the genus *Something* extends even beyond the range of thought—some things *cannot* be thought.[23] Or, alternatively, the Stoics might not have taken any position at all. There does not appear to be sufficient evidence on this question.

As Seneca does not identify the Stoics who hold this doctrine, we do not know when it originated[24] or even whether it is related to the other division of the highest genus into existent and subsistent objects. The two characterizations are compatible; but they are not equivalent, as the examples of centaurs and giants show. Thus, while it is possible that some Stoics combined the two,[25] it is by no means certain—they may not belong to the same stage of theorizing or even to the same theory. Without further evidence, we simply

far as we have a presentation of it, in contrast to us and our presentational activity concerning it.'

[22] Twardowski, *Inhalt und Gegenstand*, 37–8.
[23] E. Mally, 'Über die Unabhängigkeit der Gegenstände vom Denken', *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und philosophische Kritik*, 155 (1914), 37–52. For a discussion of these issues see D. Jacquette, 'The Origins of Gegenstandstheorie: Immanent and Transcendent Intentional Objects in Brentano, Twardowski, and Meinong', *Brentano Studien*, 3 (1990–1), 177–202 at 188–90.
[24] Brunschwig argues that the view Seneca reports is late, because he thinks this position is an extension of Seneca's own (*Ep.* 58. 8–16, cf. 22), which is itself heterodox and late ('Genre suprême', 56–7; cf. Pohlenz, *Die Stoa*, ii. 37). But Mansfeld has questioned whether the heterodox view is Seneca's own ('Substance, Being and Division', 84–5 n. 22); and we may question whether the Meinongian view is its extension: nothing precludes it from being *earlier* than the orthodox, Chrysippean one.
[25] Mansfeld does combine the two, taking Seneca's summary to be 'hurried and incomplete' ('Substance, Being and Division', 101). But this assumption leads him to worry whether Seneca confuses 'unqualifiedly non-existent' objects with those which are only 'qualifiedly non-existent', viz. incorporeal subsistent *abstracta*; or whether Seneca has only chosen the examples for rhetorical reasons (101–2). Such worries evaporate if we are dealing with two different stages of Stoic theory.

cannot assume that both are in play in a given context. This a question to which we shall return shortly (see pp. 175–6).

3. 'Not-somethings'?

Yet it is hard to see how such doctrines help. They only seem to make our initial worry worse: if concepts aren't even something, when 'something' applies so broadly, then they can't be anything at all. But that, it seems, is just tantamount to *excluding* concepts from Stoic ontology altogether.

Commentators are unanimous in *not* excluding concepts from Stoic ontology, though. If concepts are not something, they maintain, they are not nothing either; instead, they are 'not-somethings'.[26] This neologism is supposed to be the Stoics' own: according to Simplicius, the Stoics declared common entities to be οὔτινα (*In Categ.* 105. 11), a word ordinarily translated 'nothing' when in the singular, but etymologically composed from 'not' (οὐ) and 'something' (τι)—hence, in the plural, 'no-things' or 'not-somethings'. Simplicius mentions this term, moreover, in connection with an argument of Chrysippus' known as the 'No One' argument (ὁ λόγος Οὔτις), which, it is thought, constitutes 'the formal Stoic proof' of their anti-Platonic position.[27] The argument runs as follows: 'If someone is in Megara, he is not in Athens; but man is in Megara; therefore, man is not in Athens.'[28] The mistake, it is argued, is to treat man as someone (τις), or in general to treat any common entity as *something* (τι); they are 'not-somethings' instead. Attempts to extract a criterion for 'not-somethings' from this ar-

[26] Prantl, *Geschichte*, i. 420, 427; Robin, *Pensée grecque*, 415; Couissin, 'Critique du réalisme', 403; Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, i. 159–62; Wurm, *Substanz und Qualität*, 169; Pasquino, 'Statut ontologique', 378; Sedley, 'Stoic Universals', 87; Long and Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, i. 164; Brunschwig, 'Genre suprême', *passim.*

[27] The phrase is Sedley's ('Stoic Universals', 87). But Brunschwig also thinks that the argument plays a central role ('Genre suprême', 80–6, cf. 92–9) and believes, like Rist ('Zeno', 394–5), that it passed through Zeno's hands first, because of the related argument offered by his teacher Stilpo (D.L. 2. 19). See sect. 8.3.

[28] In what follows I shall use the unfashionable 'man' as an unmarked term for all human beings, because of a peculiarity of English usage which allows 'man' (but not 'human') to occur in statements without an article or quantifier preceding it—e.g. 'Man is a rational animal' or 'Man has reached the Moon'. This usage preserves an ambiguity present in the Greek that proves crucial for understanding the Stoic analyses of such sentences.

gument have failed, however;[29] and so it is still an open question how exactly Chrysippus used this fallacy. I postpone analysis of it until our discussion of Chrysippus (see Section 8.3).

3.1. *The place of concepts*

It is surely right to keep concepts within Stoic ontology. The first reason is that the Stoics seem willing to *quantify* over concepts, since they recognize a plurality of them, including the concepts of horse, man, and animal.[30] These are not chance examples. For the Stoics posit a hierarchy of genera and species, which are defined in terms of concepts:

> A conjunction of many concepts that cannot be removed is a genus, e.g. Animal, since this comprehends the different animals . . . That which is contained by a genus is a species, as Man is contained by Animal. That which is a genus but does not have a genus, such as *Something* [οἷον τό τι], is the most generic;[31] that which is a species but does not have a species, like Socrates, is the most specific. (D.L. 7. 60–1)

The first definition commits the Stoics to a plurality of concepts: every genus is a conjunction (σύλληψις) of *many* concepts, which essentially constitute it and cannot be separated from it.[32] The

[29] Of those who take the argument to provide such a criterion, Brunschwig has been the most conscientious, not only in trying to formulate it precisely, but also in testing it ('Genre suprême', 92–9). He demonstrates that it will *not* work with mass terms such as 'water' or 'earth' (85): the sophism seems to behave in these cases in the same way that it does for 'man'; and yet such terms clearly designate something. Nor is the counter-example idle. For the same reasons, Brunschwig points out (97–8), the 'οὔτις test' will be 'powerless' to justify the Stoics' inclusion of void in the category of *Something*, since 'void' is a mass term—despite the fact that the 'test' was supposed to distinguish precisely a non-existent something like void from what is not even something. We can inoculate the test against this counter-example, Brunschwig argues, by restricting it to *extra*cosmic void (99). But the need for ad hoc restrictions just shows that the 'test' itself does not constitute a genuine criterion after all.

[30] Stob. *Ecl.* 1. 137. 1–3; D.L. 7. 60–1; S.E. *M.* 11. 9; Origen, *In Ioan.* 2. 13. 93, 68. 29 Preuschen.

[31] Following Egli's emendation (printed by Hülser); the principal manuscripts have οἷον τοῦ (B) and οἷον τον (P), or omit the phrase entirely (F). See n. 10 above.

[32] The passage offers no further clues as to what σύλληψις means in this context. But the only other logical use I have found supports the above interpretation, though not itself Stoic: 'a species is not a differentia, but the conjunction of differentiae with the genus' (Simpl. *In Phys.* 282. 14–15). This suggests that when the Stoics speak of the genus as a conjunction of concepts, the concepts in question are *not* concepts of the different *species* falling under the genus, but rather the general concepts expressed in the definition of the genus and 'inseparable' from it in so far as it must

distinction between genus and species, of course, is a relative one: a species will also be a genus if it contains other species beneath it, just as a genus will be a species if it is contained by a higher genus; in fact, all but the highest genus and the lowest species will be *both* genus and species. But then—provided that a conjunction of concepts is itself a concept—*every genus and every species (above the lowest) will be a concept*, a point confirmed by Sextus Empiricus (*PH* 2. 219). Concepts can differ both in extension, depending on what falls under them (Stob. *Ecl.* 1. 136. 24–137. 3), and in intension as well, since each will be *constituted from* different concepts. Concepts of natural kinds are not the only concepts, moreover. According to Plotinus, the Stoics recognize concepts for *each of the different numbers*, starting with 1, which are distinct from the existent units, pairs, triplets, and so on, that fall under them (6. 6. 12. 13–29). (For more on genera and species see Section 7.2.)

The second reason is that the Stoics are quite happy to assign robust epistemological and psychological roles to concepts. Concepts are critical for Stoic dialectic: each of the many kinds of division the Stoics employ is defined in terms of genera and species (D.L. 7. 61–2), which, as we have just seen, are defined in terms of concepts. Division is not simply a mainstay of Stoic argument. It is also the means by which we articulate the structure and order of concepts into a system, which guides enquiry and ultimately the acquisition of knowledge. Concepts thus provide a crucial underpinning for rational investigation. Nor can this be a mere *façon de parler*. As we shall see below, the Stoics offer a psychological account of concepts and how they are related to our mental states, and they are willing to speak of particulars as 'falling under' and 'participating in' concepts. All of these positions underscore the genuine role concepts play within Stoic theory.

How could such a role be played by what is not something? David

apply *only* to those instances that actually fall under it. For species concepts to be at issue, σύλληψις would have to signify disjunction; and this conflicts with its use in grammatical and embryological contexts. It would also be at odds with the other Stoic definitions, since a lowest genus would be a disjunction of the species falling under it as well; yet these are individuals, such as Socrates, and *not* concepts. This has led Michael Frede to conjecture that the Stoics are committed to 'individual concepts' as well ('The Stoic Notion of a Grammatical Case' ['Grammatical Case'], *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, 39 (1994), 13–24 at 19–20). But given the availablity of a 'conjunctive' reading, such speculation is unnecessary.

Sedley is unusual in having candidly confronted this difficulty.[33] Although identifying concepts as 'not-somethings' relegates concepts, he says,

to a logical and metaphysical limbo, the Stoics also give [them] a key role in the business of dialectical analysis . . . Is this a contradiction? I doubt it. The logical and metaphysical outlawing of concepts is not a denial of their epistemological value. It is a warning to us not to follow Plato's path of hypostatising them. ('Stoic Universals', 89)

This response might be construed in either of two ways. (1) We might understand it as advocating a form of *fictionalism*, or even *instrumentalism*, about concepts: that while there are no concepts strictly speaking, talk of 'concepts' is nevertheless a useful or convenient way of speaking, whose truth or usefulness is to be explained hygienically, without reference to Forms or concepts.[34] But ontologically speaking, this just puts us back at square one, by *excluding* concepts from Stoic ontology. Alternatively, (2) we might take the warning against hypostatization at face value. Plato's mistake, on this reading, does not consist in assigning Forms an ontological status, but in assigning them an *elevated* ontological status. The Stoics, in contrast, only give them their due: as not-somethings, concepts possess an ontological status, though just barely. Unlike the fictionalist reading, this is *not* an anti-realist reading. However etiolated their status, concepts still fall within the Stoics' ontological scheme: they belong to the class of not-somethings. As Sedley puts it: 'if a centaur is "something", this is not opposed to "nothing at all" in Stoic usage, but to "not-something" (*outi*)' ('Stoic Universals', 87).

Between these two readings, most commentators decidedly fall in the second camp, although the former, more sophisticated, reading

[33] Stein too, we should note, is aware of the difficulty; but he attempts to solve it by fabricating a distinction between νοήματα, which are valuable for acquiring knowledge, and ἐννοήματα, which are not (*Erkenntnistheorie*, 294–6). Such a distinction would make nonsense of the reports concerning genera and species, which are said to be ἐννοήματα.

[34] This is suggested by Sedley's frequent reference to concepts as 'convenient fictions' ('Stoic Universals', 87), 'mere projections', and even 'putative objects' ('Stoic Universals', 89), not to mention his claim that statements about universals are only 'shorthand for conditionals with indefinite subject terms' ('Stoic Universals', 88; cf. Long and Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, i. 182) and so contain nothing which denotes a concept. If this is the thrust of Sedley's interpretation, though, it is misleading to describe the Stoic position as 'conceptualism'.

may represent Sedley's considered view.[35] If so, his interpretation will differ less from the one I shall defend, at least as regards the ontological status of 'not-somethings'; there are also elements which I think correctly characterize Chrysippus' position (see below, pp. 196–7). But it would still be mistaken as regards the nature and role of concepts, as well as Zeno's and Cleanthes' overall strategy. Fictionalism about concepts adds nothing to fictionalism about Forms. If fictionalism works at all, it will work straight away with Forms: we can construe all such talk as fictional discourse, without appealing to further fictions. The introduction of concepts is entirely unmotivated on such a view. But the Stoics *do* assign a rich and positive role to concepts, as we have just seen; and this suggests that they adopted a more realistic attitude. Not-somethings cannot play the roles assigned to concepts, if 'not-something' refers to nothing at all. For this reason, I shall stalk the vulgate interpretation instead, according to which not-somethings form a discrete class of entities.

3.2. *Against not-somethings*

Despite its avowed intentions, on the vulgate reading the Stoics' strategy is *not* genuinely deflationary—on the contrary, they posit a whole *new* class of entities. And acknowledging such entities has peculiar consequences, whatever their status. I shall mention three such difficulties, before reconsidering whether concepts are not-somethings for the Stoics after all.

(1) If there are not-somethings, by definition they fall outside the genus *Something*. But then either there will be a superordinate genus, which includes both somethings and not-somethings, or there will not. Neither result is acceptable to the Stoics.

(*a*) If there is a superordinate genus (as in Diagram 1), *Something* would no longer be what many of our sources attest (see n. 10 above), namely, the highest genus. Some commentators are willing to bite the bullet here and simply reject this evidence, preferring to speculate as to what the superordinate genus might be.[36] But the

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[35] Sedley has said (in personal correspondence) that he never intended to ascribe a class of not-somethings to the Stoics when he contrasted 'not-something' with 'nothing at all'. His claim was rather about the *expression* 'not-something', namely, that it does not *mean* what the word 'nothing' does, even though both have the same extension (i.e. the empty set); instead, 'not-something' means *what is not something* and therefore (on Sedley's interpretation) *what is not a particular*.

[36] The candidate usually put forward (Rieth, *Grundbegriffe*, 90; Hadot, *Porphyre*

X?

Something   Not-something
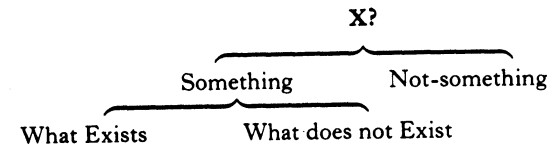
What Exists   What does not Exist

DIAGRAM 1

price seems prohibitive. It is true that Alexander of Aphrodisias argues that there must be a genus higher than *Something*, such as *What is One* (τὸ ἕν: *In Top.* 359. 12–16). But he offers this precisely as a *refutation* of the Stoic view. His attack would completely misfire if the Stoics thought there were a superordinate genus; to interpret him charitably, we should assume he has not gone so far wrong.
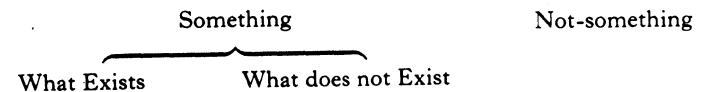

Something   Not-something

What Exists   What does not Exist

DIAGRAM 2

(*b*) If there isn't a superordinate genus, on the other hand, then *Something* can retain its status as highest genus. But it will *no longer* be a *fully comprehensive* genus. There will be entities—not-somethings—which fall outside of it (see Diagram 2).[37] If so, the status of being highest genus is much less significant ontologically: it does not tell us about all there is. It is 'highest' *only* in the sense that there is no genus that subsumes it. In fact, it need not even be unique. For *Not-something* will also constitute a 'highest' genus in just the same sense, given that *ex hypothesi* it is not subsumed by a higher genus. The Stoics seem to have had higher aspirations, though. Plotinus says that the Stoics posited *Something* in order to 'comprehend *everything* within a single genus' (6. 1. 25. 3–5 ἑνὶ

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et Victorinus, i. 162) is *What is Thought*, τὸ νοούμενον, a word that occurs in several Stoic contexts: e.g. D.L. 7. 52 and S.E. *M.* 3. 40–50; 9. 393–411. Such a conjecture is incompatible with Seneca's testimony, however, which assigns anything that can be thought to the genus *Something* and so would require us to posit a separate group of Stoics who disagree with Seneca's Stoics, piling one conjecture on top of another. I cannot, however, accept Brunschwig's objection to this conjecture—that τὰ νοούμενα are always particulars and therefore cannot include concepts which are universal ('Genre suprême', 41)—for two reasons: (1) he assumes that concepts are not-somethings, a position I reject below (see sect. 4); and (2) it would be paradoxical for the Stoics to claim that concepts are not 'something thought' (see p. 165).

[37] This is the option Brunschwig endorses ('Genre suprême', 40).

γένει περιλαμβάνοντας τὰ πάντα), 'ranking first a single genus of what exists *and the rest*' (6. 1. 25. 26–7 τοῦ ὄντος καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἕν τι γένος προτάττειν).[38] A number of criticisms, moreover, turn precisely on the assumption that the highest genus is the genus 'of *everything*' (πάντων).[39] In making *Something* the highest genus, the Stoics seem to have thought it was also fully *comprehensive* and *unique*. But if so, there cannot be any not-somethings.

(2) The claim that there *are* not-somethings—that there are items which can be quantified over, even though they neither exist nor fail to exist—is in itself problematic. One might have thought this shouldn't trouble philosophers accustomed to Meinongian heights; it shouldn't be any *more* vertiginous than allowing non-existent objects of thought. If there were Stoics willing to countenance non-existent objects and even non-subsistent objects, why not not-somethings as well? It seems a little late to feel scruples over a burgeoning ontology.

But in fact the vulgate interpretation is much more radical. It seems to commit the Stoics to the claim that *there is something which is not something*, a position which is straightforwardly contradictory. The sound of paradox can be avoided, of course, by speaking of 'items' or 'objects' rather than 'something' when using the particular quantifier. But at this point that is mere word-play. We *can* use the particular quantifier without presupposing that an item in the domain of an ontology exists, subsists, or has any other kind of ontological status. But we *cannot* use the quantifier without presupposing that such items are *something* (cf. Plato, *Parm.* 160 E 2–7)—which is just to say that 'something' must be a fully comprehensive predicate. Everything is something.

(3) The most decisive objection, however, is that if concepts were not-somethings, *they could not even be thought*. Sextus Empiricus comments that 'It is not possible to be taught by means of not-somethings [διὰ τῶν οὐτινῶν]; for according to the Stoics they are *non-subsistent for thought* [ἀνυπόστατα τῇ διανοίᾳ]' (*M.* 1. 17). It

[38] We should perhaps understand along similar lines the claim that something is the 'highest genus of *existents*' (γενικώτατον τῶν ὄντων: Philo, *Leg. alleg.* 3. 175) and the genus 'of all *existents*' (πάντων τῶν ὄντων: *Scholia in Arist. Categ.* 34ᵇ8–11). These reports are not false—a comprehensive genus would trivially be the genus of all existents—but so understood, they would not have the force they were clearly intended to have. (Brunschwig is less charitable: cf. 'Genre suprême', 44–5.)

[39] See esp. Alex. Aphr. *In Top.* 301. 25, 359. 12–16; S.E. *PH* 2. 86–7; cf. also Philo, *Leg. alleg.* 2. 86 (rather than the more careless version at 3. 175; see n. 38 above).

is not clear whether 'non-subsistent' is to be understood here in the technical Stoic sense or not. But to say that not-somethings are 'non-subsistent *for thought*' means, at the very least, that they are *unavailable* to thought—that we *cannot think of* such items. No other reading will make sense of Sextus' argument about the impossibility of learning. But it also fits hand in glove with what Seneca reports; in fact, the Stoic principle (TS′) is just its contrapositive. Given that these Stoics are committed to every instance of the schema

(TS′) It is possible to think of $x \rightarrow x$ is something,

they will also be committed to every instance of the following schema:

(TS″) ¬(x is something) $\rightarrow$ ¬(it is possible to think of x).

But that is just to say in more careful terms what Sextus does: if a sentence of the form 'x is not something' is ever true, then it must also be true to say that 'It is not possible to think of x', for the same value of 'x'. Or as Sextus puts it, not-somethings are non-subsistent for thought.

Yet such a result, when applied to concepts, is intolerable. For a concept (ἐννόημα) cannot function as a concept *if it cannot be thought*—it cannot function in divisions and definitions or perform any of the epistemological and psychological roles the Stoics assign to them. To attribute to any Stoic the view that concepts are unthinkable is, therefore, uncharitable in the extreme. But if concepts *do* fall within thought's reach, then by the same token they will fall within the 'nature of things' for these Stoics and *so will be something after all*, against the vulgate reading. We ought, then, to reconsider the evidence for concepts as not-somethings.

4. The ontological status of concepts

4.1. *Much ado*

There are several reasons for doubting whether the Stoics ever spoke of concepts as 'not-somethings'. To begin with, the word οὔτι is *never* explicitly applied to concepts. In fact, the term is quite rare. Apart from the text of Sextus just quoted, there are only two

other occurrences in Stoic testimonia. The first is in Simplicius, in connection with Chrysippus' analysis of the 'No One' argument: *common entities* (κοινά), he claims, are said by the Stoics to be 'not-somethings' (οὔτινα: *In Categ.* 105. 11). For a Platonist like Simplicius, though, common entities are just Forms; and so it would follow that concepts are not-somethings only if the Stoics *identify* them with Forms. A similar problem confronts the second text. Origen compares the view that evil is nothing (οὐδέν) to that of 'certain Greeks [who] say that among not-somethings (τῶν οὔ τινων) are *genera and species*, such as animal and man' (*In Ioan.* 2. 13. 93, 68. 28–30)—items that Origen not only takes to be Forms himself,[40] but believes were Forms for these unnamed Greeks, too.[41] But without such identifications, neither text provides incontrovertible evidence that the Stoics said *concepts* were 'not-somethings'.

One should also question whether οὔτι is a technical term. In the singular, it simply means *no one* (οὔτις) or *nothing* (οὔτι), depending on gender.[42] And, though rare, the plural does occur: in each case, it has the same meaning as the singular, serving only as a slightly more emphatic variant.[43] In fact, this is precisely how Origen understands it in the text just cited, where it is taken to be equivalent to 'nothing' (οὐδέν). *To speak of not-somethings or no-things, then, is*

[40] e.g. *Princ.* I. 4. 5, 67. 20–68. 15 (esp. 68. 10); cf. I. 2. 2, 30. 2–8; 2. I. 4, 110. 7–10 and 111. 7–9; 3. 6. 8, 289. 33–290. 1 Koetschau; cf. *In Ioan.* 1. 19. 113–15. See Henri Crouzel, *Origène et Plotin: Comparaisons doctrinales* (Paris, 1992), 457–63.

[41] At *Princ.* 2. 3. 6 (cf. also 1. 2. 2, 28. 13–17) Origen rejects a view according to which the exemplars that constitute the higher world are mere objects of thought: 'For that reason, we have just said that an exposition of this world is difficult, lest it occasion in some the belief that we posit certain apparitions [imagines] which the Greeks call ἰδέαι; but nothing could be further from our reasoning than to say that the incorporeal world consists in the mind's merely being appeared to [in sola mentis fantasia] or in a stream of thoughts [vel cogitationum lubrico].' The language here, though slightly jumbled, echoes our evidence from Stobaeus and Seneca—even Wolfson, who links 'imagines' with Philo's εἰκόνες ἀσώματοι (conveniently ignoring 'sola' in the second half of the line), is forced to cite Zeno's views when he comes to the 'vel' clause at the end (*The Philosophy of the Church Fathers* (3 vols.; Cambridge, 1956), i. 270–4).

[42] Pohlenz seems to have understood it this way: 'Dagegen wurde vielleicht erst in der Spätzeit dem Etwas als logische Antithese ein "Nichts" entgegengestellt (οὔτινα), das natürlich nur theoretische Bedeutung hatte' (Pohlenz, *Die Stoa*, i. 295).

[43] Apart from the texts cited from Sextus, Simplicius, and Origen, we have the following plurals: Homer, *Od.* 6. 279; Aesch. *Ag.* 1099; Callim. frr. 254. 8, 255. 9 (21) Pfeiffer; Eustathius *In Od.* 1. 249. 13 Stallbaum; *Anth. Gr.* 5. 8. 1 Beckby. (*Il.* 7. 196 and *Od.* 2. 199 *could* be construed as neuter plurals; but they can also be read as being in the masculine singular.)

just to speak of nothing at all.[44] As the Cyclops Polyphemus learnt, 'no one' does not *name* anyone, not even a 'not-someone'. Rather, it signifies the *absence* of any such person. In just the same way, 'nothing' doesn't name anything either, not even a putative 'not-something'. Far from designating an item belonging to a special metaphysical category, it signifies the complete *absence* of any such thing.

Thus understood, the only options for the Stoics are something and nothing—*tertium non datur*. And, of course, nothing isn't anything at all. Therefore, *everything* in the domain of Stoic ontology is something:

(S) ∀x (x is something).

The genus *Something* thus has the status of a unique and fully comprehensive genus after all, the one genus that comprehends everything there is—'something' *is* just opposed to 'nothing' on the Stoic view. We should therefore reconstrue reports allegedly about 'not-somethings' more simply as follows:

(A) *Nothing* cannot be thought.[45] (S.E. *M.* 1. 17)
(B) Common entities are *nothing*. (Simpl. *In Categ.* 105. 11; Origen *In Ioan.* 2. 13. 93)

Both theses are familiar. As we saw in the last section, (A) is just another way of saying what Seneca's Stoics say: what isn't anything can't be thought.[46] We have encountered a version of (B) before as

[44] It is instructive to compare the excellent discussion of οὐδέν and μηδέν in A. P. D. Mourelatos, '"Nothing" as "Not-Being": Some Literary Contexts that Bear on Plato', in G. W. Bowersock, W. Burkert, and M. C. J. Putnam (eds.), *Arktouros* (Berlin, 1979), 319–29. His main thesis might at first seem to support the introduction of not-somethings: he shows that in addition to an 'existential use', where οὐδέν and μηδέν function like the negation of an 'existential' quantifier—i.e. where they signify that *there is no such thing*—they sometimes have a 'characterizing use', where they mean 'not a something' or 'not a thing' in the sense of being *of no account or worth*, like the Homeric οὐτιδανός (319–22). Nevertheless, Mourelatos points out that 'The Homeric indefinite pronoun οὖτις, from which οὐτιδανός is derived, *has only the existential sense of 'nobody', never the characterizing sense*' (322, my emphasis; cf. esp. n. 6 on *Od.* 9. 364 ff.), citing in turn A. C. Moorhouse, 'A Use of οὐδείς and μηδείς', *Classical Quarterly*, NS 15 (1965), 31–40 (cf. esp. 32).

[45] Fabricius' gloss on *M.* 1. 17 is thus correct: 'secundum Stoicos quos potissimum Sextus oppugnat, *nihili* nullam in mente conceptionem formare possumus' (*Sexti Empirici Opera Graece et Latine* (2 vols.; Leipzig, 1840–1; 1st edn. 1718), ii. 12 note e; my emphasis).

[46] Again, compare Twardowski: '"Nothing" is not to be conceived as the name of objects of possible presentation, but rather as a syncategorematic expression:

well. If there aren't any common entities, it follows that there are *only particulars* for the Stoics, just as Syrianus claims (*In Metaph*. 104. 21).

Syrianus' report has added significance. *Had* the Stoics identified Forms with concepts and included them within their ontology as not-somethings, Syrianus' global claim would be false—there would be common entities as well as particulars. But if there are not, then the Stoics are not admitting Forms when they acknowledge concepts. The two are on a different footing. It does *not* follow, then, that concepts can be characterized as οὕτινα just because Forms are.

4.2. *Concepts as something*

The only text, in fact, which suggests that a *concept* is not something is our original passage from Stobaeus, who clearly states that concepts are 'neither something nor something qualified [μήτε τινὰ εἶναι μήτε ποιά]'. But he omits a crucial word, a word we find in the parallel report by Diogenes Laertius. This has been overlooked because virtually every commentator has understood Diogenes' report in the same way as Stobaeus', which the Greek certainly allows.[47] But

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"Nothing" indicates the limits of presentation, where it ceases to be presentation . . . Whoever, therefore, says he has a presentation of nothing has no presentation whatsoever; whoever has a presentation has a presentation of something, of an object' (*Inhalt und Gegenstand*, 35).

[47] Rist (*Stoic Philosophy*, 156; 'Zeno', 394) is the lone exception, although he does not draw any further conclusions from it. The only commentator to notice that there is an ambiguity in the Greek is Brunschwig, who concedes that Diogenes' words can be read either way, viz. as denying that concepts are somethings or as denying that they are existents ('Genre suprême', 79–80). He rejects the latter reading on the grounds that the ὄν in Diogenes' version can be understood as representing the εἶναι in Stobaeus' version, where it functions unambiguously as a copula ('is not something'). But, of course, this argument can be run exactly in reverse: the εἶναι in Stobaeus' version can just as easily be seen as representing the ὄν in Diogenes' version, which *Stobaeus* has construed copulatively, even though it can also be taken as a predicate complement ('is not some existent'). There is no reason to think that Stobaeus' phrasing derives from a more authoritative source than Diogenes' and consequently no independent reason to favour the copulative reading. We do, however, have independent reason to *reject* it: as I have argued above in sect. 3.2, it leads to incoherence and is therefore a highly uncharitable reading.

Interestingly, Victor Goldschmidt takes *Stobaeus'* text only to deny that concepts are existents, in line with the reading of Diogenes' text I have suggested—'il est notable que τινά présente ici le sens de "substance"' (*Le Système stoïcien*, 18 n. 5; see also Wurm, *Substanz und Qualität*, 179–80). A similar thought presumably lies behind the otherwise unfounded claim, made by both F. Ravaisson ('Mémoire sur

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it also allows for a different construal, which for our concerns is pivotal:

A concept is an apparition of thinking, which is neither something *existent* nor a qualified thing [οὔτε τὶ ὂν οὔτε ποιόν]; but it is as if it were something *existent* and as if it were a qualified thing [ὡσανεὶ δέ τι ὂν καὶ ὡσανεὶ ποιόν], as for example an image of a horse occurs even when none is present. (D.L. 7. 61)[48]

On this reading, the Stoics do not banish concepts from the highest genus at all. They just deny that concepts are anything *existent*, and that, as we know, is still compatible with their being *something*. In one stroke, this reading dissolves all of our earlier worries. Unlike Platonic Forms, which are nothing, concepts are something for Zeno and Cleanthes—they are non-existent objects.

Reading the text in this way further allows us to understand the dual denial, otherwise not well explained,[49] that concepts are *neither* something existent *nor* something qualified. What Zeno is denying is that concepts belong to either of *the first two Stoic categories*. Socrates, for example, is both

(1) a real subject (ὑποκείμενον) and an existent (ὄν, *ens*) in virtue of his existence (οὐσία, *essentia*, *substantia*), and

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le Stoïcisme', *Mémoires de l'Institut Impérial de France*, 21 (1857), 37–8 n. 4) and Stein (*Erkenntnistheorie*, 293 n. 656), that τινά and ποιά represent the first two Stoic categories.

[48] Wolfgang Mann has argued (in his comment on an ancestor of this paper) that Diogenes' words should have occurred in the *reverse* order to be construed this way: that is, it should have been ὄν τι instead of τι ὄν. But parallel uses of τι ὄν can be found with the required sense: Arist. *Phys*. 1. 8, 191ᵇ24; *Metaph*. Γ 5, 1010ᵃ20, 1084ᵃ30; Alex. Aphr. *De fato* 176. 19; *In Metaph*. 265. 39, 309. 11; S.E. *PH* 3. 148.

[49] Long and Sedley (*The Hellenistic Philosophers*, ii. 181–2) offer three possible interpretations of the denial that concepts are 'something qualified': either (1) it is an unnecessary *a fortiori* conclusion (they are not even something, *let alone* something qualified): or (2) it is to emphasize that concepts are neither corporeal nor incorporeal; or (3) it is to deny that concepts are either 'discrete entities' or qualities (corresponding to the Platonic and Aristotelian positions, respectively). The first two of these construals, though, do not seem especially apt in context, while the last reading (which they favour) would make even more sense if we translate Diogenes as I have suggested: what is distinctive about Plato is not that he made Forms *something*, but rather that he made them *beings* (οὐσίαι) and the things that *really are* (ὄντως ὄντα). But once we translate the text in this way, the relevance of the Stoic categories surely takes precedence.

(2) something qualified (ποιόν, *quale*) in virtue of a quality (ποιό-
της, *qualitas*).[50]

These distinctions are clearly attested for Zeno, most notably in his
treatise *On Existence* (Περὶ οὐσίας, D.L. 7. 134). There he takes the
cosmos, itself a material object, to be constituted by two ultimate
principles, matter and God, which are identified respectively as
qualityless existence (ἄποιος οὐσία) and rational order (λόγος). The
former is described as that in virtue of which things exist (Calcid.
In Tim. 290 'quod tam his quam ceteris ut sint causa est'; Plot. 6.
1. 25. 21–2 παρὰ τῆς ὕλης . . . τοῖς ἄλλοις τὸ εἶναι ὑπάρχειν). The
latter is explained as a quality that permeates all matter and blends
with it totally, making the qualified things in the cosmos distinct
from one another.[51] Zeno clearly intends these distinctions to apply
at both the cosmic and the individual level. Thus, each qualified
thing is analysed as a total blending of qualities with existence
(ὡς τὰς ποιότητας οὕτω καὶ τὰς οὐσίας δι' ὅλου κεράννυσθαι),[52] while
the cosmos as a whole is considered an individual, 'the peculiarly
qualified thing constituted from the whole of existence' (τὸν ἐκ τῆς
ἁπάσης οὐσίας ἰδίως ποιόν).[53] Zeno even finds an allegorical basis for
this doctrine in the Titan Coeus (Κοῖος), whose name is just a dialect
variant of 'qualified thing' (ποιός). But according to the scholia on
Hesiod's *Theogony*, Zeno identified Coeus with quality (ποιότης):[54]
as Cornutus explains, it is 'in virtue of [Coeus] that existing things
are certain *qualified things*' (*ND* 17, 30. 11–13 Lang καθ' ὃν ποιά
τινα τὰ ὄντα ἐστί).

The remaining two Stoic categories, in contrast, are not attested
for Zeno. If these are a later development, as seems likely, we can

[50] For these distinctions see Stephen Menn's excellent reconstruction in 'The
Stoic Theory of Categories' (this volume).

[51] Calcid. *In Tim.* 289–93; Themist. *In De an.* 35. 32–4 Heinze; Hippol. *Philos.*
21 (=*Dox. Gr.* 571. 7–10); Epiphan. *Adv. haeres.* 3. 36 (=*Dox. Gr.* 592. 24). For the
Stoic doctrine more generally cf. Origen *Orat.* 2, 368. 1–19 Koetschau; S.E. *M.* 9.
75–6, 10. 312; Galen *Qualit. incorp.* xix. 478 Kühn.

[52] Galen, *In Hipp. De humor. 1*, xvi. 32 Kühn, *Nat. fac.* 1. 2, ii. 5 Kühn; cf. S.E.
PH 3. 56–62; Plot. 2. 7. 1. 8–12. For other relevant doctrines attested for Zeno cf.
Themist. *In Phys.* 104. 14–18 Schenkl; Hippol. *Philos.* 21 (=*Dox. Gr.* 571. 7–10,
23–5); Stob. *Ecl.* 1. 153. 4–6. On Zeno's theory of total blending see J. Mansfeld,
'Zeno and Aristotle on Mixture', *Mnemosyne*, 36 (1984), 306–12 at 308–10.

[53] D.L. 7. 137 together with 148; Clem. *Strom.* 5. 14, 104. 1–105. 1 Stählin; Euseb.
Praep. Evang. 15. 15. 1–3, ii. 379. 9 Mras.

[54] *Scholia in Theog.* ad 134, 29. 17–30. 18 Di Gregorio; cf. ad 404, 70. 2, as well
as *Etym. magnum* and *Etym. genuinum*, s. v. Κοῖος.

understand Zeno's characterization of concepts in a new light. He is
denying that concepts belong to *any* of the categories he recognizes
in the analysis of bodies. One clear reason is that each category
implies existence. Nothing can be a qualified thing unless it has a
quality blended with matter, and ultimately prime matter, without
which nothing can be a subject. But prime matter is identified as
existence. Therefore, concepts cannot fall in either category: they
are neither something existent nor something qualified and so not
bodies at all. But they may still be *something*.

5. The nature of concepts

The first part of Zeno's denial, then, is not problematic after all.
Much like Seneca's Stoics, Zeno is simply concerned with non-
existent objects of thought. On the reading I have proposed, it is
the *second* part of his denial that raises questions. For even if we
understand 'something qualified' in a technical sense, as applying
only to existents, there is still something startling about the claim
that concepts are not something qualified. It seems at odds with
the Meinongian doctrine we find in Seneca, which acknowledges
centaurs and giants. Worse, it seems as though concepts might
lack *every* quality whatsoever, in which case statements about them
could not be true in virtue of some feature they possess.

What Zeno actually says is more nuanced, though. It is true that
the concept of man is not *literally* a man, nor the concept of horse a
horse. But each is 'as if' it were an object of the relevant sort (ὡσανεὶ
ποιόν). The analogy he offers is to an image of a horse that appears
in the absence of any horse. Since *ex hypothesi* there are no horses,
the image cannot be a horse either. Nevertheless, it is *as if it were*
a horse, in so far as it is an *image* or *representation* (ἀνατύπωμα) of
one (D.L. 7. 61).[55] Concepts are like Macbeth's dagger. There *is*
something which Macbeth sees, but it is neither a genuine dagger
nor anything existent; it is only *as if* it were an existent and *as if* it

[55] The word ἀνατύπωμα is a *hapax legomenon*. But the verb it derives from is not:
it is frequently used of imagining and dreaming, especially when the object does not
presently exist: Philop. *In De an.* 261. 3 Hayduck; David, *Proleg. phil.* 58. 13 Busse;
Ps.-Alex. *In Metaph.* 587. 8 Hayduck; Philostr. *Imag.* 2. 17. 9; Origen *Adn. in Ex.*
(=PG 17, 16. 36 Migne); Simpl. *In Ench.* 20. 15; Eustr. *In Eth. Nic.* 260. 4; cf. Philo
fr. 19 Lewy (*Sitz. d. preuß. Akad. d. Wiss. z. Berlin*, phil.-hist. Kl., 1932); Phot.
Bibl. 280ᵃ38, ᵇ32.

were a dagger.[56] To be sure, it is has *some* connection with being a dagger and being, say, razor-sharp—otherwise Macbeth would not be tempted to think it was a dagger. But it cannot *literally* instantiate these qualities, since non-existent objects cannot literally cut or pierce or, more generally, possess causal powers.[57]

5.1. *Apparitions*

·It is in this sense, no doubt, that Zeno defines a concept as an *apparition* (φάντασμα), as *what* appears (φαίνεται) when we have a non-veridical experience, something that seems to thought to be the case (δόκησις διανοίας: D.L. 7. 50).[58] Normally, when we are appeared to, there is something apparent (φανταστόν) that *both* produces the experience *and* appears to us as a result.[59] But sometimes we only have an appearing (φανταστικόν), which is not of things as they actually are. Such an experience is still directed towards something, but not what produces the experience—in such cases, cause and object diverge. The Stoics describe the experience as 'an empty attraction' (διάκενος ἑλκυσμός):

An appearing is an empty attraction, an affect in the soul which does not arise from anything apparent, just as when someone fights with a shadow or beats his hands against the air; for being appeared to is anchored in what is apparent, but an appearing is not anchored in anything. An apparition is that towards which we are attracted in virtue of an appearing, that is, an empty attraction. It occurs in both the atrabilious and the mad.[60]

[56] For a contemporary treatment along these lines see Don Locke, *Perception and Our Knowledge of the External World* (London, 1967), esp. 16–19 and 95–8.

[57] Against Elorduy, who claims that according to the Stoics centaurs and giants have bodies and causal powers (*Sozialphilosophie*, 87; cf. *El estoicismo*, i. 250).

[58] D.L. 7. 61; Stob. *Ecl.* 1. 136. 23; Ps.-Plut. *Epit.* 4. 11. 4–5 (=*Dox. Gr.* 400. 26–401. 5). Long and Sedley translate φάντασμα as *figment*, following Sedley ('Stoic Universals', 89), who argues: 'The force of this stricture must not be underestimated. For "figments" (*phantasmata*) are defined as the putative objects of delusory impressions, and exemplified by the things falsely imagined by dreamers and madmen.' But the Greek is not so pejorative. All that is wrong with the impressions of dreamers and madmen is that what they imagine does not in fact exist, which would hardly make them 'nothing' in the Stoics' eyes. On the contrary, it is in virtue of the fact that they *can* be thought of—by dreamers, madmen, logicians, or anyone at all, including *God* (if Ps.-Plutarch is right; see n. 62)—that they are held to be *something* and so can genuinely be referred to.

[59] Ps.-Plut. *Epit.* 4. 12. 3 (=*Dox. Gr.* 402. 6–9); Ps.-Galen, *Hist. phil.* 93 (=*Dox. Gr.* 636. 12–13); cf. Nemes. *Nat. hom.* 6, 55. 19–20 Morani.

[60] Ps.-Plut. *Epit.* 4. 12. 4–5 (=*Dox. Gr.* 402. 10–20); Ps.-Galen, *Hist. phil.* 93 (=*Dox. Gr.* 636. 14–16); Nemes. *Nat. hom.* 6, 55. 20–2.

An apparition is thus *not* a mental state, but an *intentional object* towards which certain mental states are directed. It is the appearing that is the modification of the soul (πάθος ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ).[61]

Not every apparition is a concept, though.[62] In particular, no image is a concept, since concepts are not perceptual—they are apparitions *of thought* (διανοίας),[63] the intentional objects of *conceivings* (ἔννοιαι).[64] But they are analogous to images in so far as we can mistakenly attribute to them both reality and the various qualities they seem to have. For example, one might think that the sentence 'Man is an animal' is true because there is such a thing as Man himself and he is literally an animal. But on Zeno's account, Man is a concept, an apparition of the intellect, and so cannot genuinely be what he seems to be, with all the relevant causal properties, such as the ability to breathe or reproduce. At most, it is *as if* he were an animal. Still, this shows that concepts bear some sort of internal relation to the qualities in question: what makes a concept the concept of *F*, say, and not of *G*, is that it is *as if* it were *F*, but *not* as if it were *G*. The relevant qualities *determine* the nature of their respective concepts, even though they are not literally *exemplified* by them. And they determine them in such a way as to tempt

[61] Plotinus and Proclus thus speak incorrectly when they describe concepts as 'a posterior *affection* in us arising from things' (ὕστερον ἀπὸ τῶν πραγμάτων γεγονέναι ἐν ἡμῖν πάθημα: Plot. 6. 6. 12. 18–19) and 'activities arising from cases of being appeared to' (ἐνεργήματα ἀπὸ τῶν φαντασιῶν ἀνεγειρόμενα: Procl. *In Parm.* 896ᵇ12–17 Cousin²), unless the -μα endings are meant to indicate a kind of mental entity produced by, and hence distinct from, a mental affection or activity.

[62] According to Ps.-Plutarch, the Stoics distinguish the completely sensuous apparitions of non-rational animals from those of humans and gods, which are concepts (*Epit.* 4. 11. 4–5 =*Dox. Gr.* 400. 26–401. 5). Long and Sedley reject this text as 'completely out of step with all the other evidence on ἐννοήματα', on the grounds that not every apparition in a rational soul is a concept (*The Hellenistic Philosophers*, ii. 185). While the last claim sounds reasonable, there is no direct evidence for it; and given that the Stoics notoriously think that *all* cases of being appeared to in a rational animal are rational (D.L. 7. 51), they might also hold that every apparition is a concept. But nothing here turns on this part of the report.

[63] Stobaeus describes it as an apparition *of the soul* (ψυχῆς: *Ecl.* 1. 136. 23), rather than of thought, as in Diogenes' version (7. 61). But the fuller report in Ps.-Plutarch agrees with Diogenes' version (*Epit.* 4. 11. 4–5 =*Dox. Gr.* 400. 26–401. 5).

[64] Following Sedley's extremely plausible conjecture, based on the parallel construction of 'apparitions' (φαντάσματα) and 'being appeared to' (φαντασίαι): Sedley, 'Stoic Universals', 88–9; Long and Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, i. 182; see also Atherton, *Stoic Ambiguity*, 144, 256. His suggestion is supported by a further parallel: just as concepts are considered a species of apparition, conceptions are considered a species of being appeared to (Plut. *Comm. not.* 1084 F). It would be strange if the relation between the genera were not preserved in the species.

mistaken attributions—they must, in some way, be 'like' the objects they are of.[65] Iconic representation is one such case. An image of a horse is not only *of* a horse; it also *looks like* a horse. Conceptual representation is analogous: the concept of a horse is not only of a horse, but it *seems like* a horse as well.

5.2. *Non-existent objects and their attributes*

Since Zeno is committed to non-existents that are characterized by attributes, at least in an 'as if' sort of way, he can be seen as accepting a form of Meinongianism, recently described as a 'dual copula' theory, on account of the two ways it construes predications.[66] When a true predication involves an existent, such as 'Clinton is an animal', it is true because Clinton genuinely is an animal; he literally exemplifies the property. But when a predication involves a non-existent, say, 'Mickey Mouse is an animal'—or, following Zeno, 'Man is an animal'—matters are different. Such sentences are true (when they are true) because the objects in question stand in a different relation to these properties: they are determined, or better, *characterized* by such properties.[67] Although these predications are grammatically of the same form as predications about existents, they signify some-

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[65] To my knowledge, Rist is the only commentator to have paid any attention to this feature of concepts (*Stoic Philosophy*, 156–7). But talk of *likeness* and *analogy* might wrongly suggest that while the concept of *F* does not literally exemplify *F*, it does exemplify qualities *similar to F*. The difference between a concept and what it is a concept of is *not*, however, a matter of *which* qualities they exemplify, but rather the *relation* they bear to *exactly the same* quality: the concept of *F* does not exemplify *F*, but is determined by it.

[66] The phrase 'dual copula' is due to K. Fine, 'Critical Review of Parsons' *Nonexistent Objects*', *Philosophical Studies*, 45 (1984), 95–142 at 97, although the distinction itself is usually traced back to E. Mally, *Gegenstandstheoretische Grundlagen der Logik und Logistik* (Leipzig, 1912), 63–4, 75–7; for a contemporary exploration see E. N. Zalta, *Intensional Logic and the Metaphysics of Intentionality* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988), ch. 2. Mally and Zalta are not the best examples, however, since they use this approach precisely to *deny* the Principle of Independence (see E. N. Zalta, 'Lambert, Mally, and the Principle of Independence', in R. Haller (ed.), *Non-Existence and Predication* (Amsterdam, 1986), 447–59) and so *reject* what I am calling a 'Meinongian' theory—in this respect, their theories are closer to Chrysippus' than Zeno's. For an example of a strictly Meinongian dual copula theory see W. J. Rapaport, 'Meinongian Theories and a Russellian Paradox', *Noûs*, 12 (1978), 153–80, esp. 158–65.

[67] Exemplification and characterization need not be mutually exclusive: it might be the case that anything which exemplifies an attribute *F* is also characterized by it. It is just the *converse* that is denied here: not everything that is characterized by *F* exemplifies it.

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thing different. The type of predication involved depends upon the status of the object.

Meinong himself, of course, is a thoroughgoing literalist. Notoriously, he believes there are such things as round squares, objects that are *literally* both round and square—in fact, that is one reason why they cannot exist. But impossible objects are not the worst of it. Consider a principle such as the following (where *F* is to be replaced with any predicate complement):

(TF) It is possible to think of $F \rightarrow \exists x(x \text{ is } F)$.

If interpreted naïvely, (TF) quickly leads to paradox. For it seems possible to think of *an existent round square*, to use Russell's famous counter-example;[68] but then some round squares would be existent after all and so exist, despite being impossible. Such results would be intolerable, even for Meinong. One way to avoid the difficulty is to restrict the range of *F*, so as to exclude problematic substituends like 'existent' (a strategy sometimes referred to as the 'dual property', or as I would prefer 'dual predicate', approach).[69] Another is to keep the range unrestricted, but abandon literalism and interpret '*x* is *F*' differently in different cases (the dual copula approach).

Seneca's Stoics are clearly committed to (TF). For they accept (TS'), the thesis that *whatever* we can think of is included in the nature of things; and on its most obvious construal, this implies not only (1) that there *is* some thing of which we are thinking, but also (2) that it is the *sort* of thing we are thinking of (see p. 155 above). But they need not interpret (TF) naïvely. On the contrary, there is reason to think that they favoured a dual copula approach like Zeno's. For they claim that the nature of things includes, in addition to centaurs and giants, 'anything else that, having been made up by a false thought, takes on an appearance [*imaginem*], even though it does not have reality [*substantiam*]' (Sen. *Ep.* 58. 15). The thoughts

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[68] 'Review of Meinong', 81.

[69] Meinong's initial response was to object to the inference from 'is an existent' to 'exists' (*Über die Stellung der Gegenstandstheorie im System der Wissenschaften* (Leipzig, 1907), repr. in his *Gesamtausgabe*, v. 16–18); but he later abandoned this in favour of a 'dual property' approach, by restricting schemata like (TF) to 'constitutive properties', thus excluding 'extraconstitutive' ones like 'existent' or 'exists' (A. Meinong, *Über Möglichkeit und Wahrscheinlichkeit: Beiträge zur Gegenstandstheorie und Erkenntnistheorie* [*Über Möglichkeit*] (Leipzig, 1915), repr. in his *Gesamtausgabe*, vi. 176–7). The phrase 'dual property approach' is again Fine's (see n. 66 above); and the distinction can, once again, be traced back to Mally. For a contemporary version see T. Parsons, *Nonexistent Objects* (New Haven, 1980).

in question have objects that only *appear* like the genuine articles: it is not just that they appear to exist; they appear to be the same *sorts* of things. We are thus dealing with something *very much* like Zeno's apparitions. Though it cannot be proven with certainty, the doctrines are sufficiently close for one to think that the Stoics Seneca has in mind *just are* Zeno and Cleanthes—it is without a doubt the simplest hypothesis. Far from reporting the renegade doctrines of some later and otherwise unknown faction, Seneca would then be concerned with the doctrine of the founders of the school, a doctrine soon abandoned by 'Chrysippus, Archedemus, and most of the other Stoics'.

6. The rejection of Platonic Forms

6.1. *Elimination vs. reduction*

Against the traditional interpretation, which identifies concepts with Platonic Forms, I have argued that the Stoics treat them differently: though mere 'apparitions', concepts are something, not nothing. This reasoning is borne out by Stobaeus' fuller report. It doesn't say that Platonic Forms *are* concepts for Zeno and his followers, or that the Stoics call Forms 'concepts'. They claim that concepts are what the *Platonists* were in the habit of *calling* 'Ideas' (*Ecl.* 1. 136. 23–4 ταῦτα δὲ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχαίων ἰδέας προσαγορεύεσθαι). For the Stoics, concepts are the only things the Platonists could possibly be trying to describe, since (1) there are no such things as Forms (ἀνυπάρκτους: 137. 4–6) and (2) concepts play some of the roles Forms were *meant* to play. In particular, they are supposed to stand in similar relations. Both types of entity are said to possess extensions: what each Idea is supposedly of in fact 'falls under' a concept (136. 24–137. 1 τῶν γὰρ κατὰ τὰ ἐννοήματα ὑποπιπτόντων εἶναι τὰς ἰδέας), such as men, horses, and 'whatever else *they say* there are Ideas of' (137. 2–3 καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὁπόσων λέγουσιν ἰδέας εἶναι). This relation is said to be *the reason why* (γάρ: 136. 24) the Platonists must have been describing concepts, in spite of themselves. To underscore the parallel, the Stoics appropriate the word 'participation' (μετέχειν: 137. 5) to describe the relation between a concept and what falls under it, the exact word that Plato uses for

Forms and particulars (*Phaedo* 100 D 6; for more on participation see below, pp. 183–4).

The Stoics are not trying to preserve Plato's Ideas by *identifying* or *reducing* them to concepts and so keep them within their ontology. They are trying to do *without* them, by *replacing* them with something that actually does the job. According to the Stoics, when the Platonists made claims about Forms, they spoke *incorrectly*— their theory cannot be salvaged. The most that can be done is to address the concerns that led Platonists to posit Forms; and this, the Stoics believe, can be done without positing anything more than concepts. They are *eliminativist* about Platonic Forms, *not* reductivist.[70]

It would therefore be a mistake to transfer what the Stoics say about Platonic Forms to concepts, in particular their claim that common entities are nothing. Suppose someone were to say about witches, 'Look, it's all a fiction. There aren't any witches—they don't exist. Witches are just women who don't conform to the prevailing conventions of their day.' If this last remark were taken as an identity statement, it would follow that there *aren't* any nonconformist women, contrary to what the speaker obviously intends. Such women and such behaviour are quite real—it is *witches*, properly speaking, that don't exist. Far from including witches within our ontology, the speaker is trying to explain the phenomena that lead people incorrectly to *speak* of 'witches'. The women they refer to happen to be nonconformist, and this helps to explain why they are *called* 'witches'. But no one can actually *refer* to witches for the simple reason that there aren't any, just nonconformist women.

If the Stoics say that common entities are nothing, then they mean just that, namely, that there are no Platonic Forms—they are nothing at all. There *are* concepts, on the other hand, even if they are not full-blown existents. They are possible objects of thought, whose differences can be articulated and intelligently used in reasoning. By distinguishing concepts from each other and the objects each stands in relation to, the Stoics show their commitment to them. Concepts have a secure place within their ontological scheme.

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[70] The only commentator who approaches an eliminativist reading is J. Mansfeld: he claims that while Ideas do not exist, 'within ourselves there exist concepts' ('Zeno of Citium' ['Zeno'], *Mnemosyne*, 31 (1978), 134–78 at 156). This seems just a loose way of saying that there *are* concepts, on Zeno's view; for, as we have seen, the Stoics deny that concepts *exist*, given their definition as φαντάσματα.

One might object, however, that someone who accepts (TS′) cannot consistently be an eliminativist about Forms. For given

(TS′) It is possible to think of $x \rightarrow x$ is something,

it follows that if it is possible to think about Platonic Forms, Forms will be *something* after all, against what the Stoics claim. This is where close attention to the logical form of (TS′) pays off. For although Zeno accepts every instance of (TS′), he needn't accept the *antecedent* in each case. By maintaining that the sentence 'It is possible to think of a Platonic Form' is not true, he can avoid being committed to the conclusion that they are something, *without* altering his commitment to (TS′).[71] This response is analogous to Aristotle's denial that Heraclitus accepts contradictions: even if Heraclitus sincerely *says* he can, he can't actually do it—it's simply not possible to believe a contradiction (*Metaph. Γ* 3, 1005ᵇ23–6). So, too, when people *claim* they are thinking about Forms, Zeno can respond that they are confused. What they are *actually* doing, to the extent they are doing anything, is thinking about the corresponding concepts.

A neat trick, one might think; perhaps too neat. For why couldn't it be applied in the case of centaurs and giants as well, or any other putative non-existent? Zeno can respond that the cases are not on a par, though. To deny that we can think of centaurs or giants is highly counter-intuitive. But with regard to theoretical entities, there *is* a serious question as to whether our words express a coherent idea at all or just confusion. In such cases, our own offhand impressions may not be enough to settle what we actually succeed in thinking. And in the case of Platonic Forms, Zeno can urge, we do not in fact think what we claim to. The closest we get are thoughts of concepts.

Still, Zeno should be careful in how he phrases the eliminativist denial. If he claims, in his own voice, that Platonic Forms are non-existent—as Stobaeus at one point puts it (ἀνυπάρκτους: 137. 4–6)— Zeno will be guilty of the same confusion he accuses the Platonists of, or else he will arguably have conceded that thought about Forms is possible and so run foul of his own (TS′). But he is safe so long

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[71] In a similar way, Zeno *could* avoid any commitment to impossible objects, such as the round square, by denying that it is possible to think such a thing. But to my knowledge we do not have evidence as to whether he would have accepted or rejected impossible objects.

as he couches his rejection in the formal mode, in terms of the *expressions* the Platonists use, since even nonsensical expressions exist and can be referred to. Significantly, this is how Stobaeus first introduces their position—concepts are what the 'ancients used to *call* Ideas'—and it is the only strictly hygienic way of stating the claim. The presence of such a nuance in our testimonia may be seen as further confirmation of the eliminativist reading.

6.2. *Zeno and Plato's* Parmenides

The only direct evidence we have as to why Zeno responded to Plato the way he did is Stobaeus' suggestion that concepts actually possess the extensions Forms are alleged to. But this is not sufficient to explain the resulting account of concepts, nor the choice of concepts over, say, words. The answer, I believe, can be found in Plato's *Parmenides*, in the famous passage where Socrates suggests that a Form might be a *thought* (νόημα) that occurs 'nowhere else but in souls' (οὐδαμοῦ . . . ἄλλοθι ἢ ἐν ψυχαῖς), in an effort to escape the 'Third Man' regress (132 B–C).[72] Here, as elsewhere,[73] the Stoics can be seen responding directly to a Platonic argument, by isolating problematic premisses and rejecting them, thus evading its conclusions.

Parmenides gets Socrates to agree that if each thought is one thing, it is of something (τινός) rather than nothing (οὐδενός); and if of something, then of something that is (ὄντος) rather than of something that is not (οὐκ ὄντος). But then, he argues, if each such thought is of some one thing that is set over all the instances, then it is the object of this thought rather than the thought itself which has a better claim to being a Form. That is, Parmenides has Socrates agree to the following three theses:

(1) Whatever a thought might be of is something. (132 B 7–11)
(2) Whatever a thought might be of exists. (132 C 1–2)

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[72] This connection was first suggested by David Sedley, who used the passage to establish the Stoic distinction between ἔννοιαι and ἐννοήματα as their intentional objects ('Stoic Universals', 88). But if I am right in what follows, the connection is even more thoroughgoing.

[73] For an analysis of the Stoic response to Plato's *Sophist* see Brunschwig, 'Genre suprême', 66–73, which conclusively demonstrates how the Stoic distinction between bodies and incorporeals rests on a very precise response to the arguments in the battle between the Giants and the Friends of the Forms.

(3) Every thought about a kind *F* must be of some unique thing.
(132 c 3–7)[74]

But if Parmenides' argument is to succeed, he must establish the existence of a certain kind of object towards which our thoughts are directed, and that requires that he understand (1) not merely as the claim that every thought has a content, but that every thought has an object; (2) and (3) should therefore be construed similarly.[75] All general thoughts concerning a given kind will thus be about a single, existent object, which Parmenides can then argue is the Form itself.

Zeno is sympathetic to the main lines of this analysis. He agrees entirely that we must distinguish the object from the act; and that we should be more concerned with the object than the act. What he disputes is the ontological status of the object and its title to be a Form. To forestall Parmenides' conclusion, Zeno must reject at least one of the premises; and he is arguably committed to both (1) and (3). (1), of course, is just (TS'), the doctrine which Seneca reports and I have argued stems from Zeno. As for (3), different thoughts of a given kind *F* will involve the same object of thought, given that (*a*) such thoughts are directed towards concepts and (*b*) concepts are jointly individuated by their extension and their composition from other concepts (as suggested by the Stoic definition of a genus; see pp. 159–60). If you and I are both thinking of the kind Man, there is a single thing we are both thinking of, the concept Man, whatever else we might think about it.

Rejecting (2) is enough to do the trick, though. Although our general thoughts are always of some single thing, it is not something existent on Zeno's view, but something non-existent that is literally *in thought* ($\check{\epsilon}\nu + \nu\acute{o}\eta\mu\alpha$)—to use Brentano's quite similar terminology, a concept is an 'immanent' object, an object that is in some sense contained in the thought. Such an object is distinct from the mental act which is directed upon it; and it may not even depend on it

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[74] Cf. Arist. *Metaph. A* 9, 990[b]24–6; Alex. Aphr. *In Metaph.* 88. 7–13.

[75] Against R. E. Allen (*Plato's* Parmenides (Minneapolis, 1983), 150–1, 152–3), who defends a content interpretation. He argues that an object interpretation would make the subsequent dilemma in Plato's text (132 c 9–11) 'impossible' and so is precluded by it (154, 157). But this is unconvincing given his own reading of the dilemma, which slides from one equivocation to another. On the contrary, an object interpretation is perfectly compatible with the dilemma as stated in Plato's text, against Allen's claims.

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ontologically. But it can be so without being an existent, much less a Form.

From Zeno's perspective, Socrates should not have allowed Parmenides to lead him down the garden path. Plato, of course, was happy to go down that path. What impresses him about Parmenides' argument is precisely (2). Elsewhere he reaffirms the coextension of what is ($\check{o}\nu$)—understood both existentially and predicatively—with what is something ($\tau\iota$).[76] What impresses Zeno, in contrast, is intentionality and the distinction between act and object, (1). As his own position shows, (1) does not entail (2): we can accept that there is always something a thought is of *without* accepting that it is always something that exists. But if so, then Parmenides' argument goes awry. Far from establishing the existence of Forms, it can be used to introduce non-existent objects of thought. In short, Zeno emends Socrates' proposal: to evade Parmenides' criticisms, he should appeal not to thoughts ($\nu o\acute{\eta}\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$), but immanent objects of thought ($\dot{\epsilon}\nu\nu o\acute{\eta}\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$)—non-existent objects which are *as if* they were certain kinds of things. In this way, the Third Man regress can successfully be disarmed. For the concept does not literally exemplify the same characteristics as the objects that fall under it, even though it is in some sense 'like' them; and it therefore does not generate a 'new' man above them.

If we have been correct so far about the outlines of Zeno's theory, the closest historical comparison is not to Locke, who explains universals in terms of existent ideas, but rather William of Ockham (at least in his early *fictum* theory), Thomas Reid, and Kasimir Twardowski.[77] The central and most striking feature of all their theories is the appeal to non-existent objects of thought. Twardoski is perhaps the most succinct:

Plato's Ideas are nothing other than the objects of general presentations. Plato attributed existence to them. Today we no longer do this: the object of a general presentation is presented by us, but it does not exist—at most one

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[76] *Soph.* 237 c 10–d 4; *Parm.* 164 A 7–B 2, 166 A 4–6.

[77] On William of Ockham see M. M. Adams, 'Ockham's Nominalism and Unreal Entities', *Philosophical Review*, 86 (1977), 144–76; P. Boehner, 'The Realistic Conceptualism of William of Ockham', *Traditio*, 4 (1946), 307–35. On Reid see K. Lehrer, 'Reid on Conception and Nonbeing', in Haller (ed.), *Non-existence and Predication*, 573–83, esp. 579–83; M. David, 'Nonexistence and Reid's Conception of Conceiving', in *Nonexistence and Predication*, 585–99; R. D. Gallie, *Thomas Reid and 'The Way of Ideas'* (Dordrecht, 1989), 107–29. For Twardowski's view see his *Inhalt und Gegenstand*, 102–11.

can speak of its existence in the sense that it manifests itself in the objects
of the corresponding particular presentations, in a form that has been
somewhat altered by the individual modifications of that object. (*Inhalt
und Gegenstand*, 106)

Reid speaks similarly about Plato's Forms, identifying them as non-
existent objects of thought.[78] Taken at face value, such statements
retain Forms within the ontological scheme and so appear reduc-
tionist, rather than eliminativist. If so, Zeno takes a more careful
stand, by acknowledging the gulf that lies between concepts and
Forms.

7. Concept and object

The only features of Forms that Zeno retains, then, are (1) their
role as intentional objects of thought and (2) their possessing an
extension. Everything else he rejects, especially the features most
important to Plato. It is not simply that concepts do not exist.
Concepts are *not* paradigmatic instances or exemplars either: they
do not literally have the attributes their instances all possess, but
merely in an 'as if' sort of way. It follows from this that concepts
lack the most distinctive feature of Platonic Forms, their role as the
'causes' or *explanantia* (αἰτίαι) of why particulars have the character-
istics they have. To use Plato's terminology, concepts are *copies*, not
models—it is the *concrete individual* which is the original. Concepts
are posterior to individuals in every way: ontologically, epistemi-
cally, and causally. They cannot therefore reasonably be considered
a new type of Form. They are simply the only thing that comes even
close to what Socrates and Parmenides are describing, namely, the
one item that 'stands over all the instances' of a kind.

7.1. *The relation of concepts to objects*

The most significant relation concepts bear to objects is that they
possess *extensions*. According to Stobaeus, objects such as humans
or horses *fall under* (ὑποπιπτόντων: 1. 137. 1) the relevant con-
cepts. Individuals such as ourselves can even be said to *partici-
pate* (μετέχειν ἡμᾶς) in concepts, just as we *bear* (τυγχάνειν) certain

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[78] T. Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (1785; new edn. Cambridge,
Mass., 1969), 5. 5. 507–8.

cases or terms (τῶν πτώσεων), namely, those which later Stoics call
'common nouns' (προσηγορίας: 137. 5–6).[79] Simplicius confirms this
terminology: concepts are called 'participable' (μεθεκτά) because
they are participated in (ἀπὸ τοῦ μετέχεσθαι); cases are called 'bear-
able' (τευκτάς) because they are borne (ἀπὸ τοῦ τυγχάνεσθαι); and
attributes are called 'properties' (συμβάματα) because they are pro-
prietary or belong to something (ἀπὸ τοῦ συμβεβηκέναι). Certain
Academics followed a similar pattern, calling qualities 'possessible'
(ἑκτά) because they are possessed (ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔχεσθαι: *In Categ.* 209.
10–14; cf. 214. 24–7).

The appeal to 'participation' here is not crypto-Platonism. Zeno
is using the term simply as a place-holder for whatever primitive
relation actually holds between concept and object, much as Plato
himself does (*Phaedo* 100 D 6 ὅπῃ δὴ καὶ ὅπως προσαγορευομένη).
With one crucial difference. For Plato, the relation is a 'causal'
or, more precisely, an *explanatory* one. It is that *because of which*
(δι' ὅτι) an individual is, for example, admirable (100 D 1): what is
admirable itself *makes* admirable things admirable (ποιεῖ: 100 D 5)
and is thus their *explanans* or 'cause' (αἰτία: 100 C 6).[80] It therefore
constitutes their being (οὐσία) as admirable things—literally, their
being admirable—because it alone truly *is* admirable. What is not
(μὴ οὖσι), in contrast, cannot be the ground of anything's having
that characteristic (*H.Ma.* 287 C).

Zeno can agree with a surprising amount of this. Concepts are
not responsible for the way things are. But that does not imply
that nothing is. On the contrary, Zeno endorses a 'simple-minded
theory of causation' much like Socrates' in the *Phaedo*. For any *F*,
what makes something *F* is just the quality of *F*-ness. It is wisdom,
for example, that makes someone possess the attribute of *being wise*
and moderation the attribute of *being moderate* (Stob. *Ecl.* 1. 138.
14–22). But, again, with one crucial difference. In every case, Zeno
takes the *explanans* to be, not a Form or a concept, but a *body*.[81] The
quality of *F*-ness is thus something immanent within the object,

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[79] The 'Stoic philosophers' in Stobaeus' report who 'call cases *common nouns*'
belong to a later stage, since Zeno distinguishes only four parts of speech: names,
verbs, articles, and conjunctions. The canonical five are due to the additional dis-
tinction between proper and common nouns, introduced only later, presumably by
Chrysippus (D.H. *Demosth. dict.* 48, 232. 19–233. 2; *Comp. verb.* 2, 6. 17–7. 13
Usener–Radermacher).

[80] *Phaedo* 100 B–102 E; *H. Ma.* 287 C–D, 289 D, 294 B, 299 E; cf. *Euthph.* 6 D.

[81] Stob. *Ecl.* 1. 138. 15; cf. Simpl. *In Categ.* 209. 2–3, 217. 32–218. 2.

that permeates its existence or matter, in virtue of which the object is the sort of thing it is (δι' ὃ γίνεταί τι: 1.138. 14, 18). It is impossible for an object in which a quality is present to lack the corresponding attribute and so fail to fall under the corresponding concept (1. 138. 16–17, 21–2).

The labour Plato assigns to Forms is thus divided. Concepts are that which particulars *fall under* or 'participate' in, by means of which we can classify them and draw inferences about them; but it is qualities that *make* objects what they are. This might tempt one to think that in spite of the emphasis given to concepts in our sources, Zeno's response to Plato is actually to be found in his teachings on qualities (see n. 4). But qualities do not do all the work. Because they are themselves bodies, they occupy discrete locations: each is present in a single, contiguous, unified body (Simpl. *In Categ.* 214. 26–37). Thus, if two non-overlapping individuals, Dion and Theon, are both wise, there will be a body present in each of them, the quality of wisdom, that makes each wise. But the wisdom in Dion and the wisdom in Theon are not the same body. When Dion dies, his wisdom perishes with him, but not Theon's (S.E. *PH* 2. 228). They are what are sometimes called 'particularized qualities', or 'quality instances', or 'tropes'. What they have in common is simply the fact that they both fall under a single concept.

This division of labour is confirmed by Simplicius, in a discussion of whether anything is common to the different types of quality mentioned by Aristotle in the *Categories*:

What is common to quality in bodies, the Stoics say, is '(1) a differentia of existence that (2a) cannot be isolated by itself [οὐκ ἀποδιαληπτὴν καθ' ἑαυτήν], but rather (2b) is exhausted by a concept and a peculiarity [εἰς ἐννόημα καὶ ἰδιότητα ἀπολήγουσαν]; and is characterized (3a) not by duration or strength, but rather (3b) by its intrinsic suchness [τῇ ἐξ αὑτῆς τοιουτότητι], in virtue of which a coming-to-be of something qualified subsists [καθ' ἣν ποιοῦ ὑφίσταται γένεσις]'. (*In Categ.* 222. 30–3)[12]

The opening phrase 'what is common to quality' (τὸ κοινὸν τῆς ποιότητος) does not stem from the Stoics, but Simplicius, who uses it in the larger context to discuss the positions of quite disparate

[12] Following Petersen's emendation of ἐννόημα, with Kalbfleisch, Hülser, and Long and Sedley—for the ἐν νόημα of the manuscripts (defended by Zeller, *Philosophie der Griechen*, iii/1. 98 n. 1, and accepted by von Arnim). As Kalbfleisch notes in his critical apparatus, the subsequent gloss ἐννοίᾳ at 223. 6 clearly militates in favour of Petersen's reading.

philosophers (221. 14, 221. 34–222. 4, 223. 12). But the remaining description is entirely Stoic. Simplicius immediately begins to pick at each formulation, phrase by phrase, leaving no doubt that he has taken it verbatim from a Stoic source (222. 33–223. 11).

Each clause of the Stoic characterization has clearly been weighed and the antitheses balanced. According to (1), existing things can be grouped according to genuine differentiae. But if we push further and ask what is *common* to, say, Dion's wisdom and Theon's wisdom, the answer will be (2a), that there is no such thing that can be isolated in itself. If we were to divide each man up into his constituents, there would be no single thing that was in both of them. Of course, it is still true in some sense to say that both 'have the same quality', namely, wisdom. But (2b) there is nothing more to this than the distinctive characteristics each possesses and the concepts they fall under—analysis literally terminates (ἀπόληγουσαν) with these.[13] In speaking of a *peculiarity* (ἰδιότης), the Stoics draw a clear contrast with commonality (κοινότης): a peculiarity is not something that different objects share, but rather that by which one differs from the others (cf. 238. 10–20). Each peculiarity, moreover, has (3b) an intrinsic character or suchness, literally from *within itself* (ἐξ αὑτῆς)—it does not acquire this from some transcendent quality, as Socrates seems to suggest in the *Phaedo* about the large 'in us' and the large itself (102 A–B). The point may be significant, since Plato never says that the large in us is a 'cause', only the large itself—he may be anxious about just the sort of independent role Zeno is suggesting. For if the large in us suffices to make us large, what need is there for another *explanans*?

On Zeno's view, then, what *makes* something the sort of thing it is is just the peculiarity present in it and in it alone—there is no single thing that makes all the individuals of a certain kind that kind of thing. There is a single thing they all *fall under*, of course, namely, a concept, and it is by means of this that we can think of the suchness we find in each quality instance. But this hardly implies that a suchness exists isolated in any way. Concepts are *merely* intentional objects—they are completely without being and so cannot provide the *explanantia* the Platonist seeks.

[13] ἀπολήγειν and καταλήγειν εἰς often signify a process of analysis into ultimate elements. Mereological and geometrical analyses are the most common—e.g. Plut. *Comm. not.* 1078 E—but Sextus Empiricus uses it for etymological derivations as well (*M.* 1. 242, 244).

Simplicius' criticisms are also revealing. He is no longer reporting the Stoics verbatim: what he attributes to them here is tangled with his own point of view. For he begins by suggesting that the Stoics claim that qualities do *not* subsist:

Still more absurd is to claim that (4) qualities lack subsistence [ὑπόστασιν], but terminate in a concept, unless these [words] mean *not* (*a*) that it is exhausted by a concept and a peculiarity *on the grounds that* the quality is non-subsistent [ὡς ἀνυποστάτου οὔσης τῆς ποιότητος], but rather (*b*) that it cannot in itself be isolated in the way that substance [οὐσία] is, instead being separable by thought and by a peculiarity. (*In Categ.* 223. 2–6)

It certainly would be absurd for the Stoics to craft such an elaborate characterization of quality and, in the same breath, deny that qualities even subsist, as (4) alleges. But (4) is easily explained if it is phrased in the way Simplicius *understands* their position, that is, as a denial of what *Simplicius* takes a quality to be, that is, quality in the *Platonic*, not the Stoic, sense. Then the absurdity he envisages, (*a*), would just be the denial that anything *common* to Stoic qualities subsists—a denial absurd to a Platonist, perhaps, but not an incoherent position outright.

The fact that Simplicius offers two different interpretations suggests that it was not fully evident from the context which position the Stoics took. Simplicius attempts to domesticate the Stoic position, by assimilating it to an Aristotelian one, (*b*). On this view, there *is* something genuinely common to distinct objects; it simply denies that there are transcendent universals (*ante rem*), existing separately from the object. It is thus not eliminativist about common entities (τὰ κοινά) at all, but embraces immanent universals (*in re*). In another passage Simplicius describes such a position, without attribution, in the following way: 'Those who destroy the nature of common entities, while taking them to subsist in particulars alone, do not consider them to be anywhere themselves by themselves' (*In Categ.* 69. 19–21). Simplicius finds this sort of position less objectionable, since even if it does away with the true nature of common entities as he conceives of it, nevertheless a kind of commonality is *retained* as an inseparable part of concrete objects. He thus allows that such philosophers 'speak correctly about subordinate commonality' (τῆς κατατεταγμένης κοινότητος), even if the unsubordinated commonality (ἀκατάτακτος) or transcendent Form is not given its due (69. 21–3). Syrianus similarly tolerates a later Stoic

position—I suspect it is Cornutus'—in so far as it posits subordinate common entities, which are prior to individual characteristics (*In Metaph.* 28. 11–40).[84]

For just these reasons, though, we might suspect that the original Stoic position was stronger and more radical, namely, Simplicius' first option, (*a*). On this view, there is no room for any genuinely common entity, whether transcendent or immanent. For the Stoics, common entities are 'nothings' (οὔτινα), as Simplicius elsewhere reports (*In Categ.* 105. 11). The only qualities there are qualities in the *Stoic* sense, which are peculiar to the individual to which they belong. Any 'commonality' they have is due to their each falling under a single concept, which is entirely *post rem*. If so, their position should not be confused with a more moderate Aristotelianism.

7.2. *Concepts as generic objects*

Because concepts are themselves characterized by the attributes their objects instantiate, they appear like all the objects that fall under them. Therefore, even if they are not common entities, they do seem to be general *in some sense*; and it is this which allows them to serve as genera and species.

In an intriguing, but unparalleled, report (*M.* 7. 241 ff.), Sextus Empiricus refers to 'being appeared to *generically*' (γενικαὶ φαντασίαι: 7. 246),[85] as part of an extended catalogue of the different ways in which the Stoics say we can be appeared to. Although Sextus presents the distinctions as if they all belong to a single, elaborate division, it appears to be a conglomerate of at least two different divisions.[86] The division which interests us is

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[84] The position cannot antedate Chrysippus, as it depends on the distinction between common qualities and peculiar qualities. But the priority of the common over the peculiar is an unusual position for a Stoic to take: as Syrianus notes, it is one of the things that makes Cornutus' position distinctive and more moderate (*In Metaph.* 106. 7–13).

[85] The context shows that this expression specifies a *type* of appearance, and not the 'generic' case of being appeared to, against Heintz (*Sextus Empiricus*, 116–17). He emends the plural γενικαί to the singular on the grounds that the expression 'γενικὸς X' always signifies *the* genus X. But this is refuted by the plurals εἰδικαί and γενικαὶ ζητήσεις at *PH* 1. 188. (The other arguments he offers for emendation are equally nugatory.)

[86] The division consists of three subdivisions: the first is based on whether one is appeared to convincingly (πιθαναὶ φαντασίαι); the second on whether one is appeared to truly (ἀληθεῖς φαντασίαι); the third on whether one is appeared to securely (καταληπτικαὶ φαντασίαι). The third is a natural subdivision of the second and so

the second, according to which we can be appeared to (1) truly, (2) falsely, (3) both truly and falsely, and (4) neither truly nor falsely. Being appeared to generically is offered as an example of (4).

To think of man generically—or as the Stoics also seem willing to say, of 'the generic man' (ὁ γενικὸς ἄνθρωπος)—is not to think of an average man so much as an *arbitrary* man: it is a way of focusing on all and only those characteristics that *every* man has, in contrast with average features, such as having 2.5 children, which might not be possessed by any man.[87] More precisely, anything that can truly be said of every individual man will also be true of the generic man, but anything that fails to hold of even one will not. It will thus be true that

(1) Man is an animal

since '*x* is an animal' applies to any man you like. But it will *not* be true that

(2) Man is Greek

since '*x* is Greek' does not apply to every individual man. Nor will it be true that

(3) Man is non-Greek (βάρβαρος)

since '*x* is non-Greek' does not apply to every man either. Sextus elaborates this in the material mode: the generic man is neither Greek nor non-Greek and, more generally, 'the genera of those items whose species are of such-and-such a sort or such-and-such a sort are neither of such-and-such a sort nor of such-and-such a sort' (*M.* 7. 246). Thus, while the generic man is, by hypothesis, a

the two seem to go together, while neither seems to belong with the first. Long and Sedley argue for a similar breakdown of the passage (*The Hellenistic Philosophers*, ii. 242), but inexplicably print the second subdivision with the first (39 G) and not the third (40 E). The first division is unlikely to be earlier than Chrysippus, the first Stoic to whom the technical term 'convincing' (πιθανόν) can be attributed: it occurs prominently in the titles of some of his treatises (D.L. 7. 190, 199; cf. 200), but also, significantly, to characterize certain ways in which we are appeared to: Galen, *PHP* 5 .5. 19, 320. 16–18 De Lacy (cf. D.L. 7. 89); Plut. *Stoic. repugn.* 1055 F–1056 A (cf. 1057 B–C).

[87] For a sophisticated and in-depth treatment of arbitrary objects see K. Fine, *Reasoning with Arbitrary Objects* [*Arbitrary Objects*] (Oxford, 1985), esp. ch. 1. For a discussion of the principle of generic attribution and the alleged paradoxes it gives rise to see 9–14; for a comparison with Meinongian objects see 44–5.

man—since '*x* is a man' is true of every individual man—he cannot be found in any of the subdivisions in which any other one can. He is a very peculiar man indeed.

The problem is more serious than just a commitment to kooky objects, though—*that* much the proponents of this view had surely bargained for. As Sextus construes it, the position seems dangerously close to violating the Principle of the Excluded Middle (where '*p*' can be replaced by any declarative sentence),

(PEM) $p \lor \neg p$,

since it seems as though *neither* alternative obtains in the case in question. The only difference is that Sextus has a privative statement like (3) instead of the external negation of (2), namely,

(4) ¬(Man is Greek).

But it is clear, by just the same reasoning, that (4) is not true either, since 'it is not the case that *x* is Greek' is *not* true of every individual man. And if we construe this result in the material mode, as Sextus does, then it follows that it is neither the case that Man is Greek nor not the case,

(5) ¬[Man is Greek ∨ ¬(Man is Greek)],

thus violating (PEM).

But the original Stoic formulation is more carefully stated in the formal mode, in terms of *truth*: some cases of being appeared to are 'neither true nor false' (οὔτε ἀληθεῖς οὔτε ψευδεῖς). And that makes sense. For (5) would be true only if 'it is neither the case that *x* is Greek nor not the case that *x* is Greek' were true of every individual man. But in fact it isn't true of any of them—on the contrary, what is true of every individual man is that 'either *x* is Greek or it is not the case that *x* is Greek'. That is, it is not (5), but

(6) Man is Greek ∨ ¬(Man is Greek)

which is true. Far from violating the Principle of the Excluded Middle, then, the original Stoic formulation is committed to it.[88]

[88] As one might expect given the Stoic commitment to the rule of Double Negation (D.L. 7. 69), since (¬¬*p*→*p*) entails (*p*∨¬*p*). Certain Stoics, moreover, are known to have criticized a position, possibly Epicurean, for violating (PEM): cf. Plut. *Comm. not.* 1080 C.

It *does* violate the Principle of Bivalence, however, since this is also framed in the formal mode:

> (PB) Any declarative sentence '*p*' (in the object language) must be evaluated either as true or as false.

But on the view we have been considering, 'Man is Greek' turns out to be *neither* true *nor* false. For suppose (PB) did hold. Since (2) is not true, it will follow that it is *false* that 'Man is Greek'. But then, given a classic conception of falsehood (which the Stoics share),[89]

> (F) Any sentence '*p*' (in the object language) is evaluated as false just in case '¬*p*' is evaluated as true,

it follows that

> (4) ¬(Man is Greek)

will be true. But (4), by hypothesis, is *not* true. Therefore, even though (2) is not true, it is not false either, thus violating (PB).[90] The report that we are sometimes appeared to 'neither truly nor falsely' is accurate:[91] on this view, some general thoughts will be neither true nor false.[92]

[89] S.E. *M*. 8. 103, 323; D.L. 7. 65, 78.

[90] One *could* maintain that such cases are 'neither true nor false' without violating (PB), if one were to restrict (PB) to *propositions* (as Chrysippus does: see p. 193 below) *and* hold that sentences such as 'Man is Greek' do *not* express 'well-formed propositions' (Long and Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, ii. 184). But nothing is amiss with the syntax of such sentences; on the contrary, sentences of the form '*F* is *G*' include definitions and other true generalities, which *do* express propositions. If there is a problem, then, it must be with the semantics. But unlike Liar sentences—the only type of declarative sentence for which we have evidence that a proposition fails to be expressed according to Chrysippus (see n. 100 below)—specifying the truth conditions for 'Man is Greek' does not involve contradiction. The issue is simply whether there is anything that verifies or falsifies it.

[91] Being appeared to 'neither truly nor falsely' thus differs from the third class of cases in the Stoic division, of being appeared to 'both truly and falsely', which merely *appear* to violate the Principle of Non-Contradiction (PNC), but in fact do not. The explanation Sextus offers (*M*. 7. 245) is entirely deflationary: while such mental states are true in so far as *part* of what they claim is true, they are false in so far as *another part* of what they claim is false, which clearly does not violate PNC.

[92] Once again, care must be taken not to confuse statements in the material mode with those in the formal mode (see p. 189 above). For if (PB) is framed in the *object language* as

> (PB′) It is true that *p* ∨ It is false that *p*,

This violation of the Principle of Bivalence is not like other cases where the principle is allegedly violated, moreover. It is not, for example, due to a predicate's being inappropriate to an object: although we might hesitate to say whether '*x* is green' can be applied to numbers, no such problem is posed in the present case by '*x* is Greek', since many humans *are* Greek. Nor is there any real problem of fuzzy boundaries or vagueness, despite the fact that a predicate like 'is Greek' depends on national affiliations. Precisely the same problem arises for 'the triangle is right-angled', where the boundaries are perfectly precise. For if this sentence is about the generic triangle, it is neither true nor false, for reasons similar to those outlined above.

Indeterminacy has a different ground here. The generic man is what Meinong called an 'incomplete' object:[93] he is determinable, but not determinate. Like each individual man, it is true to say of the generic man that he is either Greek or not Greek. But unlike them, it is not true to say of him either that he is Greek or to say he is not. Typically, the distinction between determinates and determinables is used to draw a contrast between objects and attributes. But the generic man is quite different from attributes. Consider the attribute expressed by the predicate 'is a man'. It is simply *false* to say of this attribute that it is a man or an animal. In contrast, it is *true* to say of the generic man that he is a man and an animal, and even to say that he is made of flesh and blood and extended in space and time. Such predicates are as true of him as they are of Socrates and Plato—they share this in common.[94] The generic man differs from them not because he

it follows from (PEM) trivially, given an object-language version of (F) and Convention T,

> (T) It is true that *p* ↔ *p*,

a convention that plausibly should govern the use of any truth predicate. In fact, once we have added such a predicate, we can argue even more directly that

> (*) It is true that Man is Greek ∨ it is false that Man is Greek

is *true* in the object language, since 'it is true that *x* is Greek ∨ it is false that *x* is Greek' is true of every individual man, and hence of the generic man. But notice that (PB) is *still* violated on the level of the *metalanguage*: for while (*) is true, *neither* disjunct will be evaluated as true or as false, thus reinstating the position at a higher level.

[93] Meinong, *Über Möglichkeit*, 168–81.

[94] The predicate is equally *true* of the generic man and individual men, even though it holds in each case for different reasons. On Zeno's theory, the generic man does not exemplify the attribute of being an animal, but is instead character-

lacks these attributes, but because he lacks the *further* determi-nations by which they differ from one another. Thus, although it is true to say he is spatially extended, it is neither true nor false to say, for example, that he is six feet tall. And what we think about *does* at times seem incomplete in this way: for I am able to think of a man, without thinking of a man of any particular height.[95]

On this view, genera and species are not attributes, or sets or classes, or the extensions of these. They are *objects* of a certain sort, characterized by exactly those attributes that determine their extension. Viewed from this perspective, it is no longer odd to con-sider the individual Socrates as a species. He is not an exception at all: he is an object, *like all other species*. To be sure, he differs from others in so far as he is existent and corporeal, and not a concept. But such differences are accidental to the example, since there are other lowest species that *are* incorporeal, non-existent concepts: those under the genus *Concept*, for example. What dis-tinguishes all genera from lower species is that genera are less determinate—they stand above the differences that separate the objects falling under them. It is this feature that gives them their 'generality'.

8. Chrysippus' critique

8.1. *Problems with generic objects*

However natural such a view might seem for Zeno, it would wreak havoc on Chrysippus' theory. Because it violates the Principle of Bivalence, it is not a position Chrysippus could have accepted him-

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ized by it (see pp. 173–5 above). One might object that the distinction provides a counter-example: for '*x* exemplifies being an animal' is true of every individual man, but not of the generic man. But a dual-copula theorist should deny this last claim: since 'exemplifies being an animal' is true of all individual men, it will be true of the generic man as well. But in his case it will be true because he is *char-acterized* by the *second-order* attribute of exemplifying being an animal, unlike in-dividual men, who exemplify it along with the first-order attribute of being an animal. The same strategy can obviously be applied again to still higher-order at-tributes. For a dual-predicate response to this objection see Fine, *Arbitrary Objects*, 13–14.

[95] Cf. G. E. M. Anscombe, 'The Intentionality of Sensation: A Grammatical Fea-ture', in R. J. Butler (ed.), *Analytical Philosophy*, 2nd ser. (Oxford, 1981), 156–80 at 161.

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self and so not a position any later Stoic could have held without abandoning orthodoxy.[96] Chrysippus steadfastly maintained that there are no exceptions to the Principle of Bivalence—*every* propo-sition (ἀξίωμα) is either true or false[97]—not just with regard to future contingents,[98] but even when confronting the Sorites,[99] the Liar,[100] and Democritus' cone paradox.[101]

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[96] It is unclear whether Cleanthes, falling between Zeno and Chrysippus, could have tolerated violations of (PB), given his own response to the Master argument. I do not know of any direct evidence either way; but it is worth noting that, according to R. Gaskin's exhaustive survey, Cleanthes' rejection of the first premiss of the Master argument *can* be understood as tantamount to an objection to (PB), on one of the two main construals of this premiss, the broadly 'Priorean' one (*The Sea Battle and the Master Argument: Aristotle and Diodorus Cronus on the Metaphysics of the Future* (Berlin, 1995), 297–8). Gaskin himself thinks that, even if this construal were right, Cleanthes would have avoided rejecting (PB) in favour of Ockhamism, *because* he was a Stoic; but that would beg the very question at issue here.

[97] Cic. *De fato* 21, 38; *Luc.* 95; *Tusc.* 1. 14; Plut. *Comm. not.* 1066 E, *De fato* 574 F; Aul. Gell. 16. 8. 8; Simpl. *In Categ.* 406. 34–407. 5. Cf. D.L. 7. 65–6; S.E. *M.* 8. 73–4; Stob. *Ecl.* 1. 621. 12–13 Hense; *Suda* 1. 255 Adler. For further discussion see M. Frede, *Die stoische Logik* [*Stoische Logik*] (Göttingen, 1974), 40–1.

[98] Cic. *De fato* 21, 38; Plut. *De fato* 574 F; Simpl. *In Categ.* 406. 34–407.5.

[99] Chrysippus notoriously held that, rather than admit indeterminacy, at a cer-tain point one should not answer and simply 'be silent' in response to the ques-tion whether a predicate applies or not. For the most recent reconstruction of Chrysippus' solution to the Sorites paradox (with references to the literature) see M. Mignucci, 'The Stoic Analysis of the Sorites', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 93 (1993), 231–45.

[100] Our testimonia concerning Chrysippus' solution to the Liar paradox are prob-lematic and in conflict with one another. He knew himself that it was prone to misinterpretation: in addition to his many responses to other solutions, he found it necessary to write two introductions to his solution (D.L. 7. 196), as Rüstow has rightly pointed out (*Der Lügner: Theorie, Geschichte und Auflösung* (diss. Erlangen, 1910), 63–5). With Rüstow (80, 82 ff.), I am inclined to think that Chrysippus' so-lution was that Liar sentences do *not express propositions* and so do not represent exceptions to the Principle of Bivalence, which the Stoics explicitly frame in terms of propositions. The failure of such sentences to express propositions is stated ex-plicitly by Chrysippus in his *Quaest. log.* III in fr. 3, col. 10. 16–18, a treatise which, even in its fragmentary state, is manifestly concerned with the lack of any simple correspondence between language and what it expresses (e.g. cols. 12. 13–19, 13. 30–3, 15. 12–14; cf. col. 8. 12–22). This solution is confirmed by Alex. Aphr. *In Top.* 188. 19–28 (cf. 189. 13–15).

The absence of any proposition corresponding to Liar sentences, we should note, also makes good sense of Chrysippus' refusal to accept or reject the validity of the Liar argument (Cic. *Luc.* 96 'hoc negas te posse nec adprobare nec inprobare'), as well as his denial that a disjunction composed of the Liar sentence and its negation is false (Plut. *Comm. not.* 1059 D)—in the absence of determinate truth-values, both refusals are entirely proper. Plutarch's further claim, however, that Chrysippus held that such arguments are valid and have true premisses, while the *contradictories* of their conclusions are true (*Comm. not.* 1059 D–E), must be dismissed. If correct, Plutarch's report would imply that Chrysippus abandoned the Law of Non-Contradiction in

Worse still, it seems that the principle underlying generic objects leads to absurdity and even paradox, especially when we consider the highest genus *Something*, which is comprehensive and so includes everything within its extension. As a generic object, it cannot be characterized by *any* of the differences that characterize the various objects that fall under it. Given that there are incorporeal objects as well as corporeal ones in its extension, for example, it will not be true to say either that the concept *Something* is incorporeal or that it is corporeal, a criticism already made by several of the Stoics' opponents.[102] Such a result would presumably be acceptable to people who posited so generic an object; and, in any case, it clearly does not result in the absurdity that it is nothing at all or that nothing applies to it (S.E. *PH* 2. 224; *M.* 10. 236), since every universal predicate will still apply to it. Much worse does follow, though. Since some things exist and other things do not, it will not be true either to say that the concept of *Something* exists or to say that it does not exist (Plot. 6. 1. 25. 8–10). In fact, since it includes

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order to solve the Liar Paradox, an option Chrysippus explicitly rejects (*Quaest. log.* III in fr. 3, col. 10. 12–13). A simpler solution would be the following: what Plutarch reports is not from a passage where Chrysippus is speaking *in propria persona*, but rather a dialectical one in which he traces out the consequences of a view he will *reject*, namely, that Liar sentences express propositions and so are truth-evaluable.

For an excellent discussion, with a reconstruction along different (Kripkean) lines, see W. Cavini, 'Chrysippus on Speaking Truly and the Liar', in K. Döring and T. Ebert (eds.), *Dialektiker und Stoiker: Zur Logik der Stoa und ihrer Vorläufer* (Stuttgart, 1993), 85–109. Like the solution above, however, Cavini's interpretation preserves bivalence.

[101] Chrysippus' response—namely, that the surface is 'neither equal nor unequal'—*would* violate the Principle of the Excluded Middle, *if* what is not equal is always unequal (as Plutarch explicitly assumes at *Comm. not.* 1079 c). But the Stoics deny exactly that: according to Plutarch, they held that the proposition

   If something is not equal, then that thing is unequal

is *false* (1080 c). The Stoics can therefore consistently uphold PEM, by accepting

   x is equal ∨ ¬(x is equal)

while denying

   x is equal ∨ x is unequal.

This appears to treat 'equal' and 'unequal' as mere contraries rather than contradictories, thus leaving the Stoics open to Plutarch's complaint that they never explain what this 'middle' could be (1080 b). But this does not seem fatal, as there are many answers open to them (e.g. the one Long and Sedley provide: *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, i. 302).

[102] S.E. *PH* 2. 223–5, *M.* 10. 234–6; Alex. Aphr. *In Top.* 359. 14–16; cf. Plot. 6. 1. 25. 6–7.

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objects which are not concepts as well as concepts, and individuals as well as genera, it will not be true to say that *Something* is a concept or even a genus.

Such considerations would appear to be decisive. Without seemingly *ad hoc* restrictions on the principles underlying generic objects, paradox is unavoidable. But there is also reason to think that these criticisms originated *from within the Stoic school* and were directed at an earlier Stoic theory. The critique occurs most extensively in Sextus, where it ends with several arguments that clearly derive from later Stoic material: they argue that general terms like 'man' and 'sees' need not refer to something shared by many individuals, but can be applied to one without applying to another and so designate a distinct quality in each case (*PH* 2. 227–8). Moreover, the terminology—a 'common noun', for example, is said to be 'introduced into the syntax of a proposition'—suggests that the material is no earlier than Chrysippus. When Alexander claims that 'the Stoics say' that the concept of *Something* is neither corporeal nor incorporeal (*In Top.* 359. 14–16),[103] therefore, he need not be reporting anything from Zeno or Cleanthes themselves, but rather something from *their later Stoic critics*. It is thus conceivable that Zeno and Cleanthes were never aware of the difficulties in their theory, and that it was only subsequent criticisms that paved the way towards new developments.

8.2. *Linguistic conventions*

If this is right, we should expect Chrysippus to reject objects like the generic man and to offer an alternative account of the intuitions that lie behind it. That is precisely what we find. When introducing Chrysippus' objections to Platonic Forms, Simplicius warns that one must recall

the Stoics' conventions [συνήθειαν] about *generically qualified things* [τῶν γενικῶν ποιῶν]: how, in their view, terms are uttered and how common entities [κοινά] are said by them to be nothing at all [οὔτινα]. (*In Categ.* 105. 9–11)

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[103] That Alexander is speaking of the concept of *Something*, rather than concepts in general, is clear from his use of the singular 'the concept' (τὸ ἐννόημα), in contrast to the plurals 'bodies' and 'incorporeals' (σωμάτων καὶ ἀσωμάτων). Alexander needs only one case to show that the genus *One* includes the genus *Something* and not vice versa; and the counter-example is the genus *Something* itself, which, unlike *One*, does not fall under itself.

The appeal to conventions seems to have the following point. Realists often take the use of general terms to have metaphysical implications. To cite the most notorious example, Socrates in the *Republic* claims that he and his companions are 'in the habit of positing a single Form for each of the pluralities to which they apply a single name' (596 A). And Zeno seems to operate on a similar principle, except that he posits non-existent intentional objects where the Platonist posits Forms. Both posit generic objects, with all their attendant difficulties. To avoid them, then, Chrysippus must eschew not this or that aspect, but the semantic principle that underlies both. And that is just what Simplicius reports. Strictly, there are no generically qualified things; therefore all talk ostensibly about them, by means of common nouns, must be reconstrued. Syrianus' report is similar: Chrysippus, Archedemus, and 'most of the Stoics' thought that Plato's Forms were originally introduced 'for the use of *conventions* involving names' (συνηθείας: *In Metaph.* 105. 22–3). Chrysippus is an eliminativist about *all* generic entities, whatever their ontological status.

We actually have some evidence as to how Chrysippus' analysis of such conventions went. A definition such as

(7) Man is a rational mortal animal

might easily be misconstrued as a statement about a generic object. But against such a construal, Chrysippus argues that (7) has the same meaning (δυνάμει τὸν αὐτὸν ὄντα) as the following universal generalization (καθολικόν: S.E. *M.* 11. 8):[104]

(8) If something (τι) is a man, then that thing (ἐκεῖνο) is a rational mortal animal.

Such generalizations have three significant features: (*a*) unlike definitions, they are conditional, rather than categorical, in form; (*b*) the common noun has been shifted from subject position to predicate position (in the antecedent); and (*c*) the subjects in the antecedent and consequent are a pair of 'indefinite' pronouns (D.L. 7. 70; S.E.

[104] Although Sextus begins by citing the writers of handbooks, Chrysippus is explicitly named as the source of this doctrine at 11. 11 (cf. Epict. *Diss.* 2. 20. 2–3); and this may even have roots in Zeno, who wrote a treatise entitled Καθολικά (D.L. 7. 4). On the meaning of οἱ τεχνογράφοι see Long and Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, ii. 185; for its use in connection with rhetorical handbooks, see R. Bett, *Sextus Empiricus: Against the Ethicists* (Adversus Mathematicos XI) [*Against the Ethicists*] (Oxford, 1997), 55.

M. 8. 97) linked anaphorically, similar to our use of variables bound by a quantifier, in this case a universal one:[105]

(8′) ∀x (x is a man →x is a rational mortal animal).

Such sentences, according to Chrysippus, differ from definitions 'only in syntax' (ψιλῇ τῇ συντάξει: S.E. *M.* 11. 8–9) and so signify the same proposition.[106] But then there is no need to take a definition as referring to a generic object. For (8) is clearly not a statement about a generic object, but a generalization that applies to any individual object that falls within the genus—that is precisely the point of using singular pronouns in the subject position and shifting the common noun to predicate position. And, since (7) does not differ from (8) in meaning, it should not carry any such implication either. (8) is clearly intended as the *analysis* of (7), which lays bare the underlying significance of our ordinary conventions involving names.

The conditional form is also important, in so far as it removes any hint of ontological import from the use of general terms. The definition of centaur, for example, would (given Chrysippus' interpretation of conditionals)[107] merely state that necessarily, *if* something is a centaur, then it will have certain features—if it didn't, it wouldn't be a centaur. But there needn't be any such thing for the conditional to be true; it just has to be the case that if there were, it *would* have such features. Unlike Seneca's Stoics, then, Chrysippus needn't be committed to this sort of non-existent in order to speak intelligibly about centaurs.

With this strategy for avoiding reference to generic objects, Chrysippus can easily maintain the Principle of Bivalence. For although the sentences we considered earlier,

(2) Man is Greek

[105] For further discussion of Chrysippus' analysis of definitions as universalized conditionals see P. Crivelli's careful 'Indefinite Propositions and Anaphora in Stoic Logic', *Phronesis*, 39 (1994), 187–206, esp. 199–201; also Bett, *Against the Ethicists*, 54–6. For an attempt to delineate the differences between the Stoic use of anaphora and contemporary predicate calculus see U. Egli, 'The Stoic Concept of Anaphora', in R. Bäuerle, U. Egli, and A. von Stechow (eds.), *Semantics from Different Points of View* (Berlin, 1979), 266–83.

[106] A point on which Frede agrees (*Stoische Logik*, 64), even though this undermines the hypothesis that subsentential expressions stand in a one–one correlation to what they signify.

[107] S.E. *PH* 2. 110–12; D.L. 7. 73. See also e.g. B. Mates, *Stoic Logic* (Berkeley, 1953), 47–51; Frede, *Stoische Logik*, 80–93.

(3) Man is non-Greek,

each violate the Principle of Bivalence when taken as statements about a generic object, once we construe them as generalizations,

(2′) If something is a man, then that thing is Greek
(3′) If something is a man, then that thing is non-Greek,

the problem evaporates. For (2′) and (3′) *have* determinate truth-values: both are *false*, as neither generalization holds universally. Not all humans are Greeks, nor are all humans non-Greeks; there are some of each. Such generalizations therefore do not pose a threat to (PB).

By the same token, such generalizations do not force him to recognize incomplete objects. For the falsehood of (2′) and (3′) is compatible with the truth of

(9) If something is a man, then [that thing is Greek ∨ that thing is non-Greek],

which Chrysippus surely accepts as true—on his account, this would be the proper construal of the claim that 'man is either Greek or non-Greek'. But from (9) it follows that there is no generic man. For suppose there were such a thing. Then it would satisfy the antecedent of (9), since by hypothesis the generic man is a man. But it would then follow that

(10) Man is Greek ∨ Man is non-Greek,

which is *false* for Chrysippus, since he construes its disjuncts as (2′) and (3′) respectively, both of which are false.[108] *Nothing* can be a man and yet fail to be Greek *and* fail to be non-Greek, as the generic man is alleged to. Consequently, there is *no such thing* as the generic man, whether this is taken to be a Platonic Form or a Zenonian concept. For Chrysippus, talk of 'genera' and 'species' amounts to nothing more than the relation between certain generalized ('indefi-

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[108] According to the Stoic definition, a 'disjunction' (διεζευγμένον) is true, strictly speaking, just in case exactly one of the disjuncts obtains *and* the disjuncts 'completely conflict'—it is impossible either that both be true or both false (S.E. *PH* 2. 162, 191; Galen, *Inst. log.* 9. 17–10. 2, 11. 22–12. 18 Kalbfleisch; cf. Aul. Gell. 16. 8. 12–14). Objects that satisfy the antecedent in (9) will in general satisfy these conditions, but not 'Man'. In this case the consequent is false.

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nite') propositions and the singular ('definite') propositions that are 'subordinated' to them (ὑποτάττειν).[109]

This strategy, of appealing to generalizations over individuals rather than to special objects, is confirmed by other evidence. Chrysippus is known to have compared Platonic Forms to certain kinds of geometrical *theorems*:

Chrysippus compared such theorems, Geminus says, to Ideas. For just as [Ideas] comprehend the occurrence of unlimited [objects] within defined limits, so too in these theorems the comprehension of unlimited [figures] occurs within defined loci. (Proclus, *In Eucl.* 395. 13–18 Friedlein)

The context of this remark shows that the kind of theorem at issue is one that does not lend itself easily to hypostatization, because it holds for an indefinitely wide range of cases, circumscribed only by a locus or general description: 'parallelograms with the same base and along the same parallel lines have the same area' (Euclid 1. 35). Here we are not even tempted to take the theorem as referring to a generic object such as 'the parallelogram', or even several such objects, which are indeterminate in all other respects: the perimeter of such parallelograms can grow indefinitely large, in fact, while still bounding the same area.[110] The theorem thus applies to an indefinite number of cases along an indefinite range, each of which is perfectly determinate and different from the others in some respects—the theorem states only those features which they all must have in common. And the theorem itself, of course, is not an object sharing these features, but a proposition. It restricts which objects fall under it by expressing certain specific conditions: for example, 'if something is a parallelogram of height *h* and base *b*, then that has an area *a*.'

The implication for Platonic Ideas is evident. We should not look for generic objects in this case either, but only the 'defined limits', that is, the specifications that circumscribe the relevant range of cases, from which generalizations can be made. No commitment is necessary here other than to particulars and their relation to what is expressible in language.

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[109] Following the very suggestive observation about the term 'subordination' in Crivelli, 'Indefinite Propositions', 193–4.
[110] I would like to thank Stephen Menn for having insisted on this point.

8.3. *The No One argument*

Chrysippus uses a related argument to reject Platonic Ideas called the 'No One argument' (Simpl. *In Categ.* 105. 7–20; D.L. 7. 187, 198, cf. 72). Despite some minor variations in our reports, the correct version appears to be that found in Philoponus (*In Categ.* 72 app. crit.):[111]

    (1) If someone is in Athens, he is not in Megara.
    (2) Man is in Athens.
∴ (3) Man is not in Megara.

We are not told precisely how Chrysippus interpreted these statements or how he thought they constituted an argument against Platonic Ideas. But the Neoplatonic commentators who report it all locate the trouble in the use of the pronoun 'someone' (τις) and the assumption that

    (o) Man is someone,

from which the argument derived its name.[112] For the upshot of Chrysippus' discussion—namely, that the universal man is *no one* (οὖτις)—is an allusion to Odysseus' famous ruse. When the Cyclops Polyphemus asks who has blinded him, Odysseus replies 'No One' (Οὖτις: *Od.* 9. 366–460, esp. 366–7, 409–11). To his chagrin, Polyphemus learns that 'no one' is not a proper name, but a syncategorematic term: his neighbours do not rush to his defence when he complains that 'No one is killing me', since in normal usage these words signify that there *isn't* any malefactor, even if Polyphemus takes them to express something else. Just so, the common noun 'man' does not function referentially like a proper name in sentences like (2) and (3), *even if* Platonists think it names an object. Normal usage does not require us to posit such entities. To claim that man is no one or, more exactly, *nothing* (οὖτι)—the masculine gender of the indefinite pronoun τις being added here only for colour—is precisely *not* to hold that 'man' names a shadowy 'not-

[111] Following Michael Frede's plausible and interesting reconstruction (*Stoische Logik*, 56–8), which is based on a conjecture about the significance of a book-title listed between two books on the No One argument at D.L. 7. 198. His reconstruction is confirmed not only by Marc. 217, which is printed in the app. crit. of Philop. *In Categ.* 72, but also by Elias, *In Categ.* 178. 3–5, as Mansfeld has convincingly shown ('Versions of the Nobody', *Mnemosyne*, 37 (1984), 445–7 at 445–6).

[112] Simpl. *In Categ.* 105. 14–16; Ps.-Philop. *In Categ.* 72 app. crit. (e cod. Marc. 217), ll. 38–41 (counting from the top of the note); Elias, *In Categ.* 178. 5–7.

something'. It is rather to *deny* that 'man' names anything at all. Like the crafty Odysseus, Chrysippus knows better. 'Man' signifies something here as part of a more complex expression.[113]

To show that the Platonists must reject (o), Chrysippus must aim his *reductio ad absurdum* against the Platonists—it must be directed *ad hominem*. The sophism must therefore be read in such a way that (*a*) on *Platonist assumptions*, it constitutes a *valid* argument; (*b*) they cannot accept the conclusion; and (*c*) they cannot abandon any of the stated premises. Only then can Chrysippus demand that they give up the unstated assumption, (o), and so abandon Platonic Ideas. The trick is to find a construal of propositions (1)–(3) that will allow them to play this kind of role.

From *Chrysippus'* perspective, the only acceptable readings of (2) and (3) render the sophism harmless. As they stand, (2) and (3) are ambiguous. Both use the common noun 'man' (ἄνθρωπος) as a grammatical subject without an article or quantifier. As we have already seen, this can signify the genus, as in the definition 'man is a rational animal' (ἄνθρωπος ἐστι ζῷον λογικὸν θνητόν: S.E. *M.* 11. 8). But it also can signify a member of that genus, in a so-called 'intermediate' proposition, e.g. '[a] man is sitting' (ἄνθρωπος κάθηται: S.E. *M.* 8. 97), which is true just in case there is *some* man and he is sitting (Alex. *In An. pr.* 402. 12–18; cf. Ps.-Apul. *Int.* 177. 17–31). If (2) and (3) are both read as intermediate propositions, the argument runs:

    (1′) If someone is in Athens, then it is not the case that he is in Megara.
    (2′) Someone is a man and he is in Athens.
∴ (3′) Someone is a man and it is not the case that he is in Megara.

So understood, the argument is not only valid, but *sound*: both premises are clearly true. But the conclusion is no longer objectionable: of course the man in Athens is not in Megara. If, on the other hand, (2) and (3) are both read as universal propositions, the argument runs:

[113] The allusion may just possibly have greater significance. In the *Sophist* Plato compared his materialist opponents to giants (246 A ff.), materialists who offer a causal criterion of existence much like the Stoics' (see Brunschwig, 'Genre suprême', 66–73). Here Chrysippus returns the compliment. The Platonist is like a blinded Cyclops, someone who is semantically one-eyed, so to speak, because he thinks nouns always name an object, even when a noun applies to many things.

(1′) If someone is in Athens, then it is not the case that he is in Megara.

(2″) If someone is a man, he is in Athens.

∴ (3″) If someone is a man, it is not the case that he is in Megara.

Although the argument is again valid, this time the conclusion is clearly false—it implies that no one is in Megara, which, we are assuming, is a populated town. This is plainly the outrageous conclusion the sophism is meant to suggest. But on this reading, the second premiss is also false: it maintains that every man is in Athens; yet not all of us are so fortunate. The argument, therefore, is unsound and harmless. For Chrysippus, the only way to get the shocking conclusion with true premisses is to combine the intermediate (2′) with the universal (3″). But then the argument is obviously invalid.

Chrysippus, then, can handle the term 'man' in several ways without untoward results: it does not produce absurdity or impose metaphysical costs. The No One argument is meant rather for someone who wants *more* from claims like 'Man is in Athens' than (2′) or (2″)—someone, in particular, who mistakes 'man' for a name, just as Polyphemus mistook 'no one' to be Odysseus' name. Suppose there is such a thing as the Platonic Form of man and the noun 'Man' names it:

(0*) Man is someone/something.

Then the argument can be construed as follows:

(1′) If someone is in Athens, then it is not the case that he is in Megara.

(2*) Man is in Athens.

∴ (3*) It is not the case that Man is in Megara.

So understood, the argument is valid. Moreover, the Platonist has strong reasons to accept (1′) and (2*) and to reject (3*). Common sense stands behind (1′); and given that Man is *instantiated* in Athens, the Platonist has good reason to endorse (2*). But by the same reasoning, (3*) must be denied, since it implies that Man is *not* instantiated in Megara, and we have just as much reason to suppose that Man is instantiated in Megara as in Athens. Yet if the validity of the argument cannot be called into question, or the truth of (1′) or (2*), then the Platonist has no choice but to abandon the

implicit assumption, (0*), namely, that there is something named by 'Man'.

Faced with this result, a Platonist might reconsider the common-sense intuition behind (1′). The Neoplatonic commentators, for example, argue that if (1) is unrestricted, it is *false*; in fact, the common entity, Man, is precisely a counter-example to it, since (they claim) he *can* be in both places at once. (1) is true *only if* it is *restricted to individuals*, i. e.

(1*) If something is an individual and it is in Athens, then it is not the case that it is in Megara.

But all that follows from (1*) and the claim that Man is *both* in Athens *and* in Megara is that Man is not an individual or a 'this something' (τόδε τι: Simpl. *In Categ.* 105. 11–12), something a Platonist can obviously accept. From this perspective, the No One argument is little different from the 'Sailcloth' objection in Plato's *Parmenides* (131 B): both crucially assume that *nothing* can be in two distinct places as a whole at once. But that is precisely what the Platonist denies.

The inspiration for the No One argument is often thought to derive from a similar argument used by the dialectician Stilpo— a teacher of Zeno's (D.L. 2. 114, 120; 7. 2, 24)—to 'destroy the Forms' (ἀνῄρει καὶ τὰ εἴδη).[114] The argument runs as follows:

A person who says man exists [says] no one [exists];[115] for he is neither this one here nor that one there—for why should he be this one here rather than that one there?—therefore, he is not even this one. Or again: lettuce is not what is being pointed to, since there was lettuce a thousand years ago, so this is not lettuce. (D.L. 2. 119)

Stilpo's argument is quite different. In the first place, it is an indifference argument ('no more this than that') and so differs in logical form from the No One argument. But it also has a more radical conclusion. It is not simply that 'man' does not *name* any particular man (as it is often taken to show)—if that were all, the conclusion would be compatible with Platonism. Rather, Stilpo denies that 'man' can be *predicated* of any individual, just as he claims that the green leafy substance before him is *not* in fact lettuce. The

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[114] Thus e.g. Rist, 'Zeno', 394; Brunschwig, 'Genre suprême', 80–4.

[115] Taking λέγοντα and εἶναι as implicit with μηδένα. For a discussion of possible emendations see G. Giannantoni, *Socratis et Socraticorum reliquiae* (4 vols.; Naples, 1990), iv. 105–6 n. 9.

astonishing claim Stilpo makes at the beginning of the report—namely, that 'no one exists'—is thus quite deliberate. Common nouns can never be truly predicated on his view (Plut. *Adv. Colot.* 1120 A–B; cf. Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* 14. 17. 1, ii. 303. 16–18 Mras). The only expressions that can are proper names.[116]

But the Stoics reject such sophistic reasoning, as it would force radical and large-scale revisions in our ordinary speech. Zeno and Chrysippus have no intention of disrupting such practices. Their worry, after all, is what makes such predications *true*. This is clear, moreover, from the two readings of the No One argument that Chrysippus can accept: each exchanges 'man' as a grammatical subject for 'man' as a predicate complement. Neither Zeno nor Chrysippus thinks this commits us to Platonic Forms; and Chrysippus doesn't even believe it commits us to generic objects. The Stoics thus attempt to steer a middle course between Stilpo's revisionism and Platonic profligacy. The No One argument plays a distinctive role in Chrysippus' theory.

9. Chrysippus' response

Chrysippus' strategy, then, is to *analyse* our ordinary ways of speaking by means of a logically hygienic paraphrase that shows its commitments perspicuously. In particular, he relies on a technique of shifting common nouns from the subject position of a sentence, a position where they might appear to refer to Forms or other generic objects, to predicate position, where they are supposed to be harmless. A similar technique is used in the analysis of singular sentences, this time with proper nouns, making the sentence's existential commitments fully explicit.[117]

As familiar as this ploy is to contemporary philosophers—one need only mention Quine in this connection[118]—it rests on several

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[116] I am much indebted here to Nicholas Denyer's reconstruction in *Language, Thought and Falsehood in Ancient Greek Philosophy* [*Language, Thought and Falsehood*] (London, 1991), 33–7.

[117] See esp. Alex. Aphr. *In An. pr.* 402. 12–19 and the illuminating discussion of it in A. C. Lloyd, 'Definite Propositions and the Concept of Reference', in Brunschwig (ed.), *Les Stoïciens et leur logique*, 285–95.

[118] For the general issue see esp. W. V. O. Quine, 'Designation and Existence', *The Journal of Philosophy*, 36 (1939), 701–9; 'On What There Is', 7–11. For details on the technique of eliminating such terms see *Methods of Logic*, 4th edn. (Cambridge, Mass., 1982; 1st edn. 1950), § 44, 278–83, and *Word and Object* (Cambridge, Mass.,

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key assumptions. First, Chrysippus must assume a certain semantic *asymmetry* between the subject and predicate of a sentence. Otherwise, his paraphrases are pointless. Second, he must believe that predicates are significant without committing us to the objectionable entities subjects would, were paraphrase unavailable. A proper defence of these claims would take us deep into the intricacies of the Stoic theory of 'expressibles' (λεκτά), a large and controversial topic. So as not to try the reader's patience further, I shall leave a detailed investigation for another occasion[119] and simply outline what I take to be the salient features of Chrysippus' response.

9.1. *Attributes and expressibles*

The Stoics begin from a distinction between *naming* and *attribution*, which takes its origin from Plato's *Sophist* (261 E–263 D). But the Stoics mark this difference in strongly ontological terms. What we *name* are bodies. But in speaking *about* bodies, we do something quite different. We say *of* Cato, for example, *that* he walks or *that* he knows—we *attribute* (κατηγορεῖσθαι) something *to* him. But that which we attribute to him—that is, the attribute (κατηγόρημα)[120]—is not a body, even though it is supposed to belong to a body (Sen. *Ep.* 117. 13). There is, however, a close connection between attributes and bodies. An attribute like *being wise* belongs to someone because of the presence of a bodily quality, wisdom, which is its 'cause' or

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1960), §§ 37–8, 176–86; *Philosophy of Logic*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge, Mass., 1986; 1st edn. 1970), 25–6. Mario Mignucci rejects any strict identification of the Stoics' technique with Quine's in his superb 'Sur la logique modale des Stoïciens' ['Logique modale'], in Brunschwig (ed.), *Les Stoïciens et leur logique*, 317–46, on the grounds that the Stoics do not allow names to function as predicates (322–3). But then, strictly speaking, neither does Quine, who *modifies* them to produce predicates. Names become an inseparable part of a predicate, and this is very much like what the Stoics do.

[119] This investigation forms part of my study of the Stoics in *The Problem of Intentionality in Ancient Greek Philosophy* (CUP, forthcoming).

[120] The more common translation of κατηγόρημα as 'predicate' causes unnecessary confusion. In English, one predicates *words* of an object, a 'predicate' being itself a part of speech. But, as modern commentators are often forced to point out, what is said to be 'predicated' in Greek philosophy is generally not a word, but something *signified by* a predicate, whose nature and ontological status are disputed by different theories. The Stoics are no exception: properly speaking, κατηγορήματα are *never* the predicates of a sentence. The English 'attribute' captures the topic-neutral significance of the Greek exactly, and it allows us to see the Stoic characterization of attributes as expressibles (λεκτά) for the substantive move that it is.

explanans—that in virtue of which such a person *is* wise (Stob. *Ecl.* 1. 138. 19–22).[121]

But what is an attribute, if not a body? The standard answer is first ascribed to Cleanthes, who devoted an entire treatise to attributes (Περὶ κατηγορημάτων: D.L. 7. 175): an attribute is something that is or can be expressed, literally an 'expressible' (λεκτόν: Clem. *Strom.* 8. 9. 26. 4). Our sources do not tell us anything more about how he characterized them. But surely the thought is something like this. To say that a quality is an *explanans* of an attribute is simply to say that it *makes* a certain attribution *true*, e.g. to say of Socrates that he knows. Our attributions are not always correct, of course. But even in such cases our attributions will express the same thing as they would if we were correct. The attribute is just that which is *expressed* by an attribution. A quality is that in virtue of which the corresponding attribute *belongs* to its host object (when it does so belong).

Such observations hardly amount to a theory, though, and one may wonder whether Cleanthes' remark involves anything like the fully developed views about expressibles we find in other testimonia. Whatever he meant by calling attributes 'expressible', he presumably thought it was compatible with Zeno's theory, since he also appeals to concepts when responding to Plato (Syr. *In Metaph.* 105. 28–9). He is unlikely, then, to have advocated a radical departure from Zeno; and on such a theory, attributes do not play a central role. Concepts and qualities do.

The situation is entirely different with Chrysippus. Syrianus explicitly distinguishes the response of 'Chrysippus, Archedemus, and most of the Stoics' from that of Cleanthes: the former appeal to the use of language, and not concepts, which no longer seem to get mentioned.[122] Once the theory of expressibles was sufficiently

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[121] The Stoics typically mark this connection by naming the bodily quality with (what we would call) an 'abstract' noun formed from the verb that expresses the corresponding attribute: for example, walking (*ambulatio*), dancing (ὄρχησις), shoeing (ὑπόδεσις), greeting (προσαγόρευσις), insulting (λοιδορία), and similarly for the names of the virtues, vices, passions, and mental states in general. Cf. Sen. *Ep.* 113. 23; Plut. *Comm. not.* 1084 A–C; Ps.-Plut. *Epit.* 4. 21. 1–3 (=*Dox. Gr.* 410. 25–411. 13).

[122] Archedemus may deserve special mention here, as someone who explicitly addressed issues surrounding expressibles, attributes, and Plato's theory of Forms (Clem. *Strom.* 8. 9. 26. 4; Syr. *In Metaph.* 105. 21–3). For more on Archedemus see E. Schmidt, 'Archedemos 5 und 6', *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, suppl. 12, cols. 1356–92. (There is a brief discussion of his criticism of Plato on 1364.)

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developed, the Stoics seem to have realized that it could easily be applied to the problems that gave rise to Plato's theory of Forms; and if so, then there would no longer be any special need for a theory of concepts, even when speaking about conceptions (ἔννοιαι) and preconceptions (προλήψεις)—all of this can be handled much more simply and elegantly by appealing to expressibles alone. This hypothesis gains strength if, as I have suggested earlier, there were Stoic criticisms of the theory of concepts (see Section 8.1). In so far as expressibles differ from concepts, they may offer a way of escaping these objections.

Although expressibles are clearly characterized by reference to language, they are not themselves linguistic items, like utterances or inscriptions. They are what is *signified* by linguistic items:[123] speakers and non-speakers of a language can equally hear the utterances of that language, but only its speakers can grasp what is signified.[124] But speech has intimate connections, both causal and intentional, with the speaker's mental states;[125] and it is here we should look for the nature of expressibles. In general, thought is able to voice in words what appears to us (D.L. 7. 49): the Stoics characterize an expressible as 'what subsists in virtue of an articulable state of being appeared to' (τὸ κατὰ λογικὴν φαντασίαν ὑφιστάμενον: S.E. *M.* 8. 70, D.L. 7. 63). This and other evidence suggests that expressibles, though distinct from mental states, nevertheless covary with them.[126] Mental states, according to the Stoics, are capable of acting and being acted upon, and so are considered existent bodies.[127] Ex-

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[123] D.L. 7. 43, 62; S.E. *M.* 8. 11–12.

[124] S.E. *M.* 8. 12; cf. 1. 145, 155, *PH* 2. 214, 3. 267.

[125] D.L. 7. 49, 55; S.E. *M.* 8. 80 (cf. 10. 218); Galen, *PHP* 2. 5. 15–20, 130. 29–132. 2, 3. 7. 42, 220. 16–18; cf. 2. 5. 9–13, 130. 7–19. For the causal connections between thought and speech see J. Barnes, 'Meaning, Saying and Thinking' ['Meaning'], in Döring and Ebert (eds.), *Dialektiker und Stoiker*, 47–61 at 57–9.

[126] Expressibles are said to 'supervene on thought' (παρυφιστάμενον τῇ διανοίᾳ: S.E. *M.* 8. 12; Syr. *In Metaph.* 105. 25–30) and to subsist 'from' or 'out of'—that is, as a consequence of—being appeared to (τῶν ἐκ τούτων ὑφισταμένων: D.L. 7. 43); cf. Origen, *Orat.* 27. 8, 368. 1–2. The translation 'supervene'—first used, to my knowledge, by Catherine Atherton (*Stoic Ambiguity*, 254, 258)—thus seems quite apt. A. C. Lloyd argues that παρυφεστάναι signifies that one entity is *parasitic* or *dependent on* another ('Parhypostasis in Proclus', in G. Boss and G. Seel (eds.), *Proclus et son influence* (Zurich, 1987), 145–57). But Stoic usage of the term may not require anything stronger than the covariation involved in supervenience. Thus, the Stoics maintain that place in general *supervenes* on the whole set of bodies (παρυφίσταται: Simpl. *In Categ.* 361. 10–11).

[127] Plut. *Comm. not.* 1084 A; cf. Calcid. *In Tim.* 220; Nemes. *Nat. hom.* 2, 20. 14–17, 21. 6–9, 22. 3–6; Tert. *De anima* 5. 3–6.

pressibles, in contrast, are incorporeal, inefficacious, non-existent, and yet still something.[128] They cannot, therefore, be reduced to mental states or bodies more generally. Most importantly, expressibles do not figure in our mental states by *causing* them (as sensible objects do). They are 'grasped' in thought, in so far as they constitute the intentional *contents* of thoughts.[129] They are *what* we think *about* objects, rather than the *objects* we in general think about (S.E. *M*. 8. 406, 409–10). A clear distinction is thus drawn between *content* and *object*.

9.2. Content vs. object

Linguistic conventions, as part of meaningful discourse, presuppose something expressible, which constitutes the content of the corresponding mental states, though not an existent or a body itself (as mental states are). In answering Plato, then, Chrysippus also appeals to non-existent, intentional entities, just as Zeno does. But expressibles differ from concepts in significant ways. First, expressibles are not the only kind of non-existent Chrysippus recognizes. According to the canonical list, there are *four* types of incorporeal—time, place, void, and expressibles.[130] The other three are clearly essential to the structure of the universe and its processes, and so something; but because they neither act nor are acted upon, they cannot be bodies or existents.[131] His motivations for positing non-existents are not Meinongian. He is simply trying to be scrupulous about the ontological presuppositions of physical theory.

Second, Chrysippus assigns incorporeals a *positive* ontological status. Although they are non-existent, they are still said to *subsist* (ὑφίστασθαι),[132] and some of them—such as properties, true

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[128] Incorporeal: S.E. *M*. 1. 20, 7. 38, 8. 12, 69, 75, 409–10; *PH* 2. 81, 3. 52. Inefficacious: S.E. *M*. 8. 406–10. Non-existent: Plut. *Comm. not.* 1074 D; Proc. *In Tim.* iii. 95. 7–15 Diehl. Something: Plut. *Adv. Colot.* 1116 B–C; S.E. *M*. 10. 218.

[129] S.E. *M*. 8. 12, 244; cf. 1. 20, 25, 28; *PH* 3. 48, 52; D.L. 7. 51, 52–3.

[130] The canonical list: Plut. *Adv. Colot.* 1116 B–C; S.E. *M*. 10. 218. Time: D.L. 7. 140; Procl. *In Tim.* iii. 95. 7–15 Diehl. Place: Stob. *Ecl.* 1. 161. 8–11; S.E. *M*. 10. 3. Void: Stob. *Ecl.* 1. 161. 14–15; S.E. *M*. 10. 3; Cleomedes, *Mot. circul.* 8. 10–14 Ziegler. (For expressibles see n. 128 above.)

[131] Only bodies can act or be acted upon: Cic. *Varro* 39; Plut. *Comm. not.* 1073 E; Nemes. *Nat. hom.* 2, 20. 14–17, 21. 6–9 Morani; Tert. *De anima* 5. 4–5; cf. S.E. *M*. 8. 263. Bodies are the sole existents: Alex. Aphr. *In Top.* 301. 19–27; Plot. 2. 4. 1. 7, 6. 1. 25. 22–5, 6. 1. 28. 7; Plut. *Comm. not.* 1073 E; Anon. *Proleg. Plat. phil.* 9. 2–4, 14; Hippol. *Philos.* 21 (=*Dox. Gr.* 571. 23).

[132] Galen, *Meth. med.* 155. 1–8; Plut. *Adv. Colot.* 1116 B–C, *Comm. not.* 1081 F–

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propositions, and the present moment—can even be said to *obtain* (ὑπάρχειν).[133] The difference between bodies and incorporeals is thus much more like the distinction between *concrete* and *abstract* objects, which each have a distinct type of being, rather than a distinction between those objects which have being and those which have none at all. There is no evidence that Chrysippus accepted *beingless* objects of any sort. On the contrary, the division of the genus *Something* into bodies and incorporeals appears to be exhaustive.[134]

Finally, and most importantly, expressibles and concepts differ with regard to their natures. Expressibles are not 'apparitions': in general, they do *not* have the features their subjects have. The attribute of being wise, for example, belongs to a person who possesses the quality of wisdom; but the attribute itself possesses neither the quality nor the attribute—it is just false to say that the attribute of being wise is itself wise. But if so, then expressibles need not pose a threat to the Principle of Bivalence, as generic objects do. Unlike Zenonian concepts, Chrysippean incorporeals can be fully determinate entities.

Zeno and Chrysippus therefore share the same strategy only at the most general level. Both seek to *eliminate* Plato's Forms by replacing them with non-existent, intentional entities. But the nature of these entities is quite different. Zeno posits apparitions which are 'like' the objects that fall under them, generic objects that possess all and only those characteristics that all of the objects

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1082 A; Stob. *Ecl.* 1. 106. 18–19, 161. 24; Procl. *In Tim.* iii. 95. 7–15 Diehl. Cf. Cleomedes, *Mot. circul.* 8. 10–14 Ziegler.

[133] Properties: Stob. *Ecl.* 1. 106. 20–1. A property (συμβεβηκός) is just an attribute which actually *belongs* (συμβεβήκη) to the body in question: S.E. *M*. 8. 100; Stob. *Ecl.* 1. 106. 20–1; cf. Simpl. *In Categ.* 209. 10–14. True propositions: S.E. *M*. 8. 10, 85. The present moment: Plut. *Comm. not.* 1081 F–1082 A; Stob. *Ecl.* 1. 106. 18–19. For a judicious discussion of 'obtaining', with references to earlier controversies, see M. Schofield, 'The Retrenchable Present', in Barnes and Mignucci (eds.), *Matter and Metaphysics*, 330–74 at 349–58.

[134] S.E. *PH* 2. 223, 3. 48; *M*. 1. 19, 8. 35, 10. 218, 234, 11. 224; Plot. 6. 1. 25. 6–8. See also Brunschwig, 'Genre suprême', 31–2. We differ only with regard to the apparent exceptions. On my view, there is no problem about concepts, since they belong to a different stage of theorizing; for similar reasons, I am inclined to think that the problem of fictional individuals like Chiron is no longer an issue either, given Chrysippus' use of paraphrase. The one case that requires a decision is geometrical limits, and I believe these should be classed with the canonical incorporeals that supervene on bodies—they are a consequence of bodies and *inconceivable* without them, Stob. 1. 161. 20–2, 25–6; cf. also 142. 2–4, Cleomedes, *Mot. circul.* 16. 2–5, 14. 1–2 Ziegler.

that fall under them share. Chrysippus wants to avoid such entities and the difficulties they raise for the Principle of Bivalence, and he calls in expressibles to fill the gap. Once we understand properly what utterances express and what they presuppose, he believes, we shall see that we do not need generic entities of any sort; in fact, we need nothing more than we are *already* committed to if we are to make sense of significant discourse. Thus, when Chrysippus comes to treat genera and species, he does so as part of his discussion of expressibles (D.L. 7. 43, 200).

10. 'The' problem of universals

A veteran of philosophical debates may be unimpressed by all this subtlety. After all, both Zeno and Chrysippus commit themselves to special entities with a special ontological status that stand in a special one–many relation to concrete objects in their extension, *much as universals do*. The appeal to quality instances may not help either. On the contrary, one might suppose (with Michael Frede) that this only makes their theory *more* like Plato's theory:

> So it seems that, right down to the terminology, the Stoics have a view quite like the Platonists considered earlier, except that the Stoics replace Ideas by concepts . . . Thus it seems that a case is something like the Stoic counterpart of an Aristotelian form or of a Platonist immanent Form, as opposed to the transcendent form participated in: i.e. it should be something like a common quality or an individual quality. ('The Stoic Notion of a *lekton*', in S. Everson (ed.), *Language* (Cambridge, 1994), 109–28 at 123)

Given such large structural similarities, the differences between these entities might seem to make little difference. If concepts and expressibles play exactly the same role as universals, why should we consider this as a *rejection* of universals at all, rather than a *different conception* of universals? Is there anything more than a verbal difference here?

The answer to these questions crucially turns on just what 'the' problem of universals is. Twentieth-century discussions frame it as an *existence* problem: whether, that is, a certain sort of entity exists (or subsists, or has being). The coherence of such an enquiry depends entirely on whether we are given an adequate characterization of the entity in question—we cannot evaluate whether

God exists, for example, unless we know exactly what is meant by 'God'. But definitions of 'universal' are much harder to come by than one might have imagined. What we find instead is a great deal of handwaving: either inadequate characterizations, such as being 'repeatable', which apply to entities that are not universals (such as scattered particulars); or appeals to metaphor and intuition, such as the same thing being 'in' each particular instance 'as a whole'. Without clearer criteria, debates over the existence of universals cannot but be confused and unresolvable.

The ancient and medieval debates are framed differently. Here we find a relatively clear definition: a universal is an entity whose nature is such that it *can be attributed to more than one thing* (Arist. *De int.* 7, 17ᵃ39–40). To deny that there are universals in this sense, then, will just be to deny that anything can be attributed to more than one thing: anything that can be attributed must be attributed to *exactly one thing*—only man, for example, can truly be said to be man and good good, and so on. Just such a position *is* ascribed, in fact, to several ancient philosophers, such as Antisthenes, Menedemus, Diogenes, and Stilpo.[135] But it is rejected by virtually everyone else, and for good reason: it undermines discourse as we know it. The existence of universals in this sense, therefore, can be questioned, but the answer is trivial. There is an obvious sense in which virtually all of us are committed to such attributes. The real question concerns *their nature*: just what sort of thing is an attribute and what is it to attribute it? On this point we find tremendous divergence. 'Attribute' and 'to attribute' are best viewed as *theoretical terms* belonging to our folk semantics, which are accepted by nearly everyone. What is in dispute concerns *what kind* of entities *actually play* these theoretical roles.

It is not surprising, then, that Platonists, Aristotelians, and Stoics each call on their own special entities to play formally analogous roles—they agree on this *precisely because* they are trying to answer the same question. What is significant rather is the detailed differences between these special entities, since this is just where *substantive* theories of attribution are to be distinguished. On this

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[135] Antisthenes: Arist. *Metaph. Δ* 29, 1024ᵇ29–34; Simpl. *In Categ.* 208. 28–32, 211. 18–21; Ammon. *In Isag.* 40. 6–10. Menedemus and the Eretrian school: D.L. 2. 134; Simpl. *In Phys.* 91. 28–33. Diogenes: D.L. 6. 53. Stilpo: Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1120 A–B; cf. Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* 14. 17. 1. For a discussion of these views see ch. 3 of Denyer, *Language, Thought and Falsehood*.

approach, conceptualism forms a very distinct alternative from both nominalism and realism, just as different 'nominalisms' do from each other—those, for example, which appeal to set-membership or to resemblance relations. The question is *not* whether these theories recognize a special one–many relation and special relata, but how good a job their own candidates do in filling that role. The terms of debate are completely different.

That having been said, the ancients *are* often concerned with an existence problem. It is not the existence of universals that concerns them, however, but the existence of Platonic Forms, the first serious candidate for the office of attribute. Naturally, Platonists believe their candidate is the right one for the job and so view attacks on it as *tantamount* to a rejection of universals, Simplicius and Origen being the clearest examples (see pp. 166, 186–7). The Stoics do *not* reject qualities, though, especially what they call 'common qualities'; and they certainly do not reject genera and species. They simply don't think these entities are what Simplicius and Origen think they are. The Stoics might, then, be able to accept 'universals' after all, at least in the sense given above—what they reject would only be the Platonic *account* of universals. If so, the title of this paper would have to be changed to 'Something and Nothing: The Stoics on Concepts *and Forms*', since it would only be Forms, properly speaking, that are not anything at all.

But the Platonists might well object. Forms, they could argue, are not merely important historically; they have something that any candidate worthy of the office must have. For Forms are not simply attributable to many things. They are also the ground or *explanans* of things being the way they are—indeed, it is precisely for *this* reason that Plato introduces them time and again. But neither Stoic concepts nor Stoic expressibles are an *explanans* for things' being what they are. Qualities are; and yet because these are distinct bodies, none can be common to more than one thing. A universal, the Platonist might argue, must be *both* (*a*) attributable to many things *and* (*b*) the *explanans* of those things having the attribute in question: it must, that is, be both what is *the same* in each case and what *makes* each the same sort of thing. Even twentieth-century philosophers, such as D. M. Armstrong, lean on each of these legs at different times. But they are not as consistent as the Platonist in insisting on both clauses.

The genius of the Stoic response, I believe, consists precisely in

separating these two conditions, by holding different entities responsible for each. What is the same in each case is a concept or, later, an expressible. But what makes each thing what it is is something corporeal, which belongs only to it. Whether we call concepts or expressibles 'universals', or whether we reserve that term exclusively for things that satisfy both of the Platonist's conditions, is in a sense immaterial. For what the Stoics have shown is that what is identical in each case need not be what makes a thing the sort of thing it is, and this is a genuine conceptual advance.

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