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# THE STRUCTURE OF STOIC METAPHYSICS

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All things that are, are equally removed from being nothing.  
(JOHN DONNE, *Sermon* 21)

πολλὰ γὰρ καὶ μεγάλα πράγματα τῆς τοῦ ὄντος ἀποστεροῦσι προσ-  
ηγορίας, τὸ κενὸν τὸν χρόνον τὸν τόπον, ἀπλῶς τὸ τῶν λεκτῶν  
γένος, ἐν ᾧ καὶ τἀληθῆ πάντ' ἔνεστι. ταῦτα γὰρ ὄντα μὲν μὴ εἶναι  
τινὰ δ' εἶναι λέγουσι, χρώμενοι δ' αὐτοῖς ὡς ὑφεστώσι καὶ ὑπάρ-  
χουσιν ἐν τῷ βίῳ καὶ τῷ φιλοσοφεῖν διατελοῦσιν.

(PLUTARCH, *Adv. Col.* 1116B-C)

For they [the Stoics] deprived many important things of the title of *being*: void, time, place, and generally the class of sayables, which contains all the truths. They said these beings *are not*, but *are something*, treating them as subsisting and obtaining, both in the conduct of their lives and in their philosophy.<sup>1</sup>

IN this paper I offer a new interpretation of Stoic ontology. I aim to explain the nature of, and relations between, (i) the fundamental items of their physics, bodies; (ii) the incorporeal items about which they theorized no less; and (iii) universals, towards which the Stoic attitude seems to be a bizarre mixture of realism and anti-realism. In the first half of the paper I provide a new model to explain the relationship between those items in (i) and (ii). This model clears up several problems in Stoicism and gives a precise answer to the

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<sup>1</sup> My translation, which I defend in the main text. Normally I shall be using the translations of A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers* [LS] (Cambridge, 1987), but frequently with modifications. I also adopt the practice of referring, wherever possible, both to LS and to the standard scholarly collection of Stoic fragments and testimonia, von Arnim's *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta* [SVF]).

question of how bodies and incorporeals differ in their mode of being. The second half of the paper considers the vexed issue of the status of those items in (iii), Stoic universals.<sup>2</sup>

### 1. Introduction

Stoicism is in one sense materialistic: the Stoics held that the cosmos is comprised exhaustively of bodies, the only things among which causal interactions can take place.<sup>3</sup> The Stoics therefore had a mania for analysing all manner of entities as corporeal. Some examples: the soul;<sup>4</sup> virtue, knowledge, and mental states in general;<sup>5</sup> anything of which one can correctly predicate goodness;<sup>6</sup> night and day;<sup>7</sup> even the truth itself.<sup>8</sup>

Yet Stoicism is in another sense non-materialistic: the Stoics spent a good deal of their time theorizing about items that they admit to be both immaterial and free from any causal networking. The Stoics therefore had a mania for analysing all manner of entities as incorporeal. Some examples: for them, the effects of causal interactions are predicates, not as we might think facts or events, much less corporeal individuals;<sup>9</sup> the objects of intentions gener-

<sup>2</sup> Throughout the paper, by 'Stoicism' and 'the Stoics' I mean the canonical school from Zeno to Chrysippus. It is outside the scope of this paper to consider what happened to the school's ontology in the Roman and Christian eras. I do mention several times Seneca's contribution to my topic, but for the purposes of my conclusions very little turns on exactly how his *Epistle* 58 is to be understood.

<sup>3</sup> In what follows I shall only be discussing the status of Stoic bodies as causally networked, and not also their status as in some sense living items imbued with soul and rationality (see e.g. D.L. 7. 138, 139 (=LS 47O=SVF ii. 634)). That Stoic bodies differ to this extent from the extended, mechanically entrenched but thoroughly intentionality-free bodies of early modern natural philosophy is not relevant to the thesis of this paper. For Stoic definitions of body as just that which is extended in three dimensions, or so extended together with being resistant, see D.L. 7. 135 (=LS 45E=SVF iii Apollodorus 6) and Galen, *Qualit. incorp.* xix. 483. 8–15 Kühn (=SVF ii. 381). Some have entertained the possibility that this text is not authentic Galen (see e.g. J. Westenberger, *Galenus qui fertur de qualitatibus incorporeis libellus* (diss. Marburg, 1906)). I follow the judgement of R. J. Hankinson, *Galen: On the Therapeutic Method, Books I and II* (Oxford, 1991) Appendix 2, 246, who accepts the authenticity of *Quod qualitates incorporeae sint*.

<sup>4</sup> See e.g. Nemes. *Nat. hom.* 78. 7–79. 2; 81. 6–10 Morani (=LS 45C, D=SVF i. 518, ii. 790).

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. Aët. *Plac.* 4. 11. 1–4 (=LS 39E=SVF ii. 83); Plut. *Comm. not.* 1084 F–1085 A (=LS 39F=SVF ii. 847).

<sup>6</sup> Sen. *Ep.* 117. 2 (=LS 60S).

<sup>7</sup> Plut. *Comm. not.* 1084 D (=LS 51G=SVF ii. 665).

<sup>8</sup> S.E. *PH* 2. 81–3 (=LS 33P).

<sup>9</sup> See e.g. S.E. *M.* 9. 211 (=LS 55B=SVF ii. 341).

ally, especially those of desire and knowledge, are also predicates;<sup>10</sup> and such things as places, times, and the bearers of truth-values must be likewise immaterial. In general they postulated at least four kinds of incorporeal: place, time, void, and ‘sayables’ or ‘expressibles’, their semantic items.

How is this disparity to be best understood? What approach to our sources will make sense of the strange contrast between the Stoics’ appetite for corporealizing all manner of entities, and their simultaneous tolerance of so many different immaterial items?

There is an approach to metaphysics, currently in vogue among contemporary analytic metaphysicians, which provides a new and better answer to this question than those currently available in the literature on the Stoics.<sup>11</sup>

According to this approach, fruitful metaphysics is not primarily the attempt to answer the question ‘What exists?’ in the manner in which Quine approached this issue.<sup>12</sup> Rather, metaphysics seeks to give an articulated *order* to the classes of things over which we quantify, all of which may be said to exist without this latter claim having settled anything interesting. Put another way, anything you like exists: the task of metaphysics is to say how it does so. Typic-

<sup>10</sup> See e.g. Stob. 2. 97. 15–98. 6 (=LS 33J=SVF iii. 91). For the former streak of immaterialism see S. Bobzien, ‘Chrysippus’ Theory of Causes’, in K. Ierodiakonou, *Topics in Stoic Philosophy* (Oxford, 1999), 196–242; *Determinism and Freedom in Stoic Philosophy [Determinism]* (Oxford, 1998). For the latter see J. Brunschwig, ‘On a Stoic Way of Not Being’, in id., *Papers in Hellenistic Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1994), 158–69.

<sup>11</sup> See e.g. J. Schaffer, ‘On What Grounds What’ [‘Grounds’], in D. Chalmers, D. Manley, and R. Wasserman (eds.), *Metametaphysics* (Oxford, 2009), 347–83; K. Fine, ‘Ontological Dependence’, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 95 (1995), 269–90. For a relevant historical perspective on ontological dependence see especially P. Corkum, ‘Aristotle on Ontological Dependence’, *Phronesis*, 53 (2008), 65–92. Schaffer, Fine, and others openly acknowledge the influence of Aristotle.

<sup>12</sup> See W. V. O. Quine, ‘On What There Is’, in id., *From a Logical Point of View: 9 Logico-Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), 1–19 at 1: ‘A curious thing about the ontological problem is its simplicity. It can be put in three Anglo-Saxon monosyllables: “What is there?” It can be answered, moreover, in a word—“Everything”—and everyone will accept this answer as true.’ The new metaphysics accepts Quine’s answer, but infers from its ease and triviality that it is not the central question of ontology. In relation to the thesis of this paper, Quine’s concept is perhaps more helpfully expressed by P. van Inwagen, who dubs it the ‘thin’ conception of being, in his *Ontology, Identity and Modality: Essays in Metaphysics* (Cambridge, 2001), 4: ‘The thin conception of being is this: the concept of being is closely allied with the concept of number: to say that there are Xs is to say that the number of Xs is one or more—and to say nothing more profound, nothing more interesting, nothing more’ (my emphasis).

ally, doing so will involve analysing what kinds of thing are *dependent*<sup>13</sup> for their being on other kinds of thing; or, to describe the relation in the other direction, it tries to say something about what *grounds* what.

This characterization arguably suits those metaphysical systems in ancient philosophy more familiar to modern readers than Stoicism. For example, Plato held that Forms are the fundamental constituents of reality; and that their participants, sensible particulars, are in some sense ontologically dependent on them; and hence that Platonic Forms ground the sensible world, to the extent that the latter is intelligible at all. Aristotle inverted this scheme, grounding his forms, universals, in the particular substances that enjoy them. In both cases, we have philosophers in substantial agreement about what *exists*: both Aristotle and Plato hold that sensible particulars exist (Plato was no eliminativist about the sensible world);<sup>14</sup> and also that immaterial beings worthy in some sense of being called ‘forms’ exist (Aristotle was no eliminativist about the immaterial). Their celebrated disagreement is not about *what* exists but about *how* those things exist. For Plato, the Forms are fundamental, existing separately from and grounding the being of a dependent sensible world. For Aristotle, primary substances are fundamental, existing separately from and grounding the being of everything else, including the non-separable forms they enjoy.

This paper argues that Stoicism manifests the same philosophical project; and that in particular, the metaphysics of grounding and dependence can clear up the perplexing fact that the Stoics are prepared both to say that in some sense only bodies *are*, but then repeatedly to quantify over the non-bodily. That Stoicism holds that bodies are in some sense fundamental or prior to other items they countenance is hardly news: the centrality of physics to any account of their curriculum entails at least this. But the way in which bodies ground other items, and the details of the mode of being these latter

<sup>13</sup> On this issue I am encouraged in my view by B. Inwood and L. Gerson, *The Stoics Reader: Selected Writings and Testimonia* [Stoics] (Indianapolis, 2008), glossary, s.v. ‘subsist’: ‘In Stoicism, the term indicates *the dependent mode of existence* that characterizes incorporeals’ (my emphasis). The devil is as usual in the details, though, which I attempt to provide below.

<sup>14</sup> I grant that Plato sometimes puts the Form/sensible contrast in terms of the being/becoming contrast; and that he adds that that which is always becoming, namely the sensible world, never *is* (see. e.g. *Tim.* 27 D 5–28 A 6). But few scholars would understand even this much as amounting to the claim that the sensible world does not *exist*.

items enjoy, have yet, I think, to be fully appreciated. And in this paper I aim to achieve an appreciation of just this without henceforth using the expressions ‘exists’ and ‘existence’ in my translations, and by modifying those of others. Talk of existence in this context has been a source of much confusion, no doubt in part because of the ingrained Quinean interpretation of the word, and the accompanying perplexity about how there might be different *ways to be*.<sup>15</sup> It is time to see if we can grasp the significance of Stoic metaphysics without it.<sup>16</sup>

## 2. Stoic corporealism

Numerous texts tell us that the Stoic cosmos is comprised only of bodies. It seems that the Stoics inferred their materialism from the view that being causally networked is the hallmark of the real; and that only bodies are causally networked.<sup>17</sup> Here are two among the relevant passages, from Cicero and Aristocles respectively:

- (C) Discrepabat etiam ab iisdem quod nullo modo arbitrabatur quidquam effici posse ab ea [sc. natura], quae expers esset corporis—nec vero aut quod efficeret aliquid aut quod efficeretur, posse esse non corpus. (Cic. *Acad.* 1. 39 (=LS 45A=SVF i. 90))

<sup>15</sup> As I argue in the main text, I also reject the strategy of Victor Caston, who uses ‘existence’ for the putatively ‘ontologically marked’ uses of *εἶναι* and its forms. See V. Caston, ‘Something and Nothing: The Stoics on Concepts and Universals’, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 17 (1999), 145–213 at 150–1. Such a strategy assumes that we can detect independently of our translations what counts as an ontologically marked use of *εἶναι*; and also that there is something *less* contradictory-sounding about a claim such as ‘There *are* some things that do not *exist*’ than such a claim as ‘There *are* some things *that are not*’. For good or ill, the pervasiveness of Quine’s influence makes me doubt the latter; and that is yet another reason to do without the word ‘existence’ so far as possible when approaching the Stoics’ views on being.

<sup>16</sup> The wisdom of this tactic is also urged by the persuasive conclusions of C. H. Kahn, ‘Why Existence Does Not Emerge as a Distinct Concept in Greek Philosophy’, in id., *Essays on Being* (Oxford, 2009), 62–74. Kahn holds that ‘existence in the modern sense becomes a central concept in philosophy only in the period when Greek ontology is radically revised in the light of a metaphysics of creation; that is to say, under the influence of biblical religion’. According to him, having the concept of existence leads straightaway to temptation: temptation towards the metaphysical optimism of Anselm’s ontological argument, and towards the epistemic despair of Cartesian scepticism, temptations to which philosophers in antiquity were supposedly not susceptible (although for a related discussion, ultimately coherent in its conclusion with Kahn’s view, see J. Brunschwig, ‘Did Diogenes of Babylon invent the Ontological Argument?’, in id., *Papers in Hellenistic Philosophy*, 170–89).

<sup>17</sup> LS 27 and 45 contain many of the relevant texts here. See also Sen. *Ep.* 65. 2 (=LS 55E).

Zeno also differed from the same philosophers [i.e. Platonists and Peripatetics] in thinking that it was totally impossible that something incorporeal . . . should be the agent of anything; and that only a body was capable of acting or of being acted upon. (trans. Long and Sedley)

- (A) στοιχειῶν εἶναι φασι τῶν ὄντων τὸ πῦρ, καθάπερ Ἡράκλειτος, τοῦτου δ' ἀρχὰς ὕλην καὶ θεόν, ὡς Πλάτων. ἀλλ' οὗτος ἄμφω σώματά φησιν εἶναι, καὶ τὸ ποιοῦν καὶ τὸ πάσχον, ἐκείνου τὸ πρῶτον ποιοῦν αἴτιον ἀσώματων εἶναι λέγοντος. (Euseb. *PE* 15. 14. 1 (=LS 45G=SVF i. 98))

He [Zeno] says that fire is the element *of beings*, like Heraclitus, and that fire has as its principles matter and god, like Plato. But Zeno says that they are both bodies, both that which acts and that which is acted upon, whereas Plato says that the first active cause is incorporeal. (trans. Long and Sedley, modified)

In identifying the fundamentally real as the bodily, the Stoics were adopting some version of the Eleatic Principle formulated by Plato at *Soph.* 247 D 8–E 4 (the Eleatic Stranger is speaking).<sup>18</sup> They did so with the conscious intention of turning this principle against its own author, by using it to ratify their distinctively anti-Platonist materialism:

- (EP) λέγω δὴ τὸ καὶ ὁποιοῦν [τινα] κερτημένον δύναμιν εἶτ' εἰς τὸ ποιεῖν ἕτερον ὁτιοῦν πεφυκὸς εἶτ' εἰς τὸ παθεῖν καὶ σμικρότατον ὑπὸ τοῦ φαυλοτάτου, καὶν εἰ μόνον εἰς ἅπαξ, πᾶν τοῦτο ὄντως εἶναι τίθεμαι γὰρ ὅρον [ὀρίζεω] τὰ ὄντα ὡς ἔστιν οὐκ ἄλλο τι πλὴν δύναμις.

I mean that a thing really *is* if it has any capacity at all, either by nature to do something to something else, or to have even the smallest thing done to it, even by the most trivial thing, and even if only once. I'll take it as a definition that *beings* [τὰ ὄντα] are nothing other than [those things with] *capacity*.<sup>19</sup>

We may infer from such passages as (C) and (A) that according to the Stoics, all and only beings (*ta onta*) pass the test of (EP). Hence all and only beings are bodies. In other words, unlike Plato,

<sup>18</sup> J. Bréhier, *La Théorie des incorporels dans l'ancien stoïcisme* [*Incorporels*] (Paris, 1928), 7, plausibly suggests that the Stoics were inspired in their anti-Platonizing use of the (EP) by Antisthenes, who was also their forerunner in the theory of knowledge and some aspects of their ethics.

<sup>19</sup> For a demonstration that the Stoics took the (EP) as their criterion of the corporeal and thereby turned it against Plato, see J. Brunschwig's magisterial 'The Stoic Theory of the Supreme Genus and Platonic Ontology' ['Supreme Genus'], in id., *Papers in Hellenistic Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1994), 92–157. See also K. Vogt, 'Sons of the Earth: Are the Stoics Metaphysical Brutes?' ['Sons'], *Phronesis*, 54 (2009), 136–54.

the Stoics took the (EP) as a criterion only of *corporeality*. By contrast Plato held that such non-bodily beings as Forms passed the (EP), either because they are possible objects of thought, or possible causes (in some non-efficient sense) of our thinking.<sup>20</sup> But the Stoics held that anything incorporeal must be causally inert, as (C) affirms.<sup>21</sup> Hence anything incorporeal is in some sense not among nature's beings (*ta onta*).

But now contrast the following passage:

(DL2) *δυοῖν δ' οὔσαν συνηθείαν ταῖν ὑποπιπτούσων τῆ ἀρετῆ, ἢ μὲν τί ἕκαστόν ἐστι τῶν ὄντων σκοπεῖ, ἢ δὲ τί καλεῖται.* (D.L. 7. 83 (=LS 31C=SVF ii. 130))

Of the two linguistic practices which do come within the province of his virtue, one studies *what each of the beings is* [ἕκαστόν ἐστι τῶν ὄντων], and the other what it is called. (trans. Long and Sedley, modified, my emphasis)

The practice Diogenes here ascribes to the Stoics certainly involved them in theorizing about the four incorporeals: time, place, void, and sayables. But this should seem strange: for strictly speaking such things cannot be beings (*onta*), because they do not satisfy the Stoic construal of the (EP).<sup>22</sup> We have other texts repeating the point that strictly speaking the only beings are bodies;<sup>23</sup> and yet other texts in which actual Stoics predicate being of the non-bodily.<sup>24</sup> And surely the Stoics' practice of dialectic was not restricted only to corporeal items as its subject-matter.

Perhaps there is no need to be puzzled by this contrast, and not

<sup>20</sup> For a discussion of Plato's use of the (EP) see L. Brown, 'Innovation and Continuity: The Battle of Gods and Giants, *Sophist* 245–249', in J. Gentzler (ed.), *Method in Ancient Philosophy* (Oxford, 1998), 181–207.

<sup>21</sup> For the same claim see S.E. *M.* 8. 263 (=LS 45B=SVF ii. 363).

<sup>22</sup> Similar remarks apply to the quotation with which this paper begins, Plut. *Adv. Colot.* 1116B–C. In explicitly referring to the four incorporeals of Stoicism as *ταῦτα . . . ὄντα*, we need not take Plutarch to be sneering at the Stoics, for all that he frequently does just that. They may well, as suggested by (DL2), have referred to such things as *ὄντα* when the context did not require them to be careful and explicit about the mode(s) of being peculiar to the incorporeals. And in this they would have been following Plato's practice.

<sup>23</sup> See e.g. Alexander of Aphrodisias, who affirms that 'they [the Stoics] would escape [some difficulty] by legislating for themselves that "being" is said only of bodies [τὸ ὄν κατὰ σωμάτων μόνων λέγεσθαι]' (from Alex. Aphr. *In Top.* 301. 19–25 Wallies (LS 27B=SVF ii. 329, trans. Long and Sedley, modified)).

<sup>24</sup> For example, a fragment of Chrysippus' treatise *Quaestiones logicae* contains a sentence beginning 'Since such sayables are . . .' (*ὄντων δὲ καὶ τοιούτων λεκτῶν*) (=SVF ii. 298a, col. XVIII, l. 16).



simply because we need not expect a writer as slipshod as Diogenes to adhere to a terminological precision that perhaps even cautious practising Stoics did not always manage. For after all, the Stoics had a significant philosophical precedent for the practice of officially restricting ‘being’ (*to on*) to a special class of thing, but then using the expression and related others for all manner of things falling outside that class. Plato several times restricts ‘being’ to the unchanging, but then almost immediately goes on to use the expression as the humble copula, and more besides, in discussing items subject to change.<sup>25</sup> Perhaps something similar is happening in Stoicism.<sup>26</sup> But just as Plato’s work constantly invites questions about the precise nature of the relation between the changeless intelligible real on the one hand, and mutable sensibles on the other, so the question arises what is the relation between Stoic bodies and those incorporeal items that figure in their dialectic without passing the (EP). Explaining that is the task of the next section.

### 3. Stoic incorporealism

Sen. *Ep.* 65. 11 provides a helpful initial view of the incorporeals. He suggests a reductive understanding of these items: they figure in mere necessary conditions for the interactions between causes proper, bodies, to take place. Only bodies can causally interact with one another, but whenever they interact they must do so at some time and in some place (cf. S.E. *M.* 10. 121 (=LS 50F)); the Stoics must therefore tolerate such items as times and places, even if they deny them causal power on account of their incorporeality.

<sup>25</sup> See esp. *Rep.* 5, 477 B 1, 478 E 4; *Tim.* 28 B 8; *Theaet.* 152 D 9.

<sup>26</sup> Perhaps too the Stoic view altered somewhat from the canonical views of Zeno: this might explain Seneca’s decision, in *Epistle* 58, to offer a Platonizing taxonomy according to which the supreme genus is ‘being’ (*quod est*), of which the first two species are corporeal and incorporeal items; and to then speak of an alternative taxonomy according to which the supreme genus is ‘something’, and hence includes ‘things which are not’, but where examples of the latter are *not* any of the standard four incorporeals, but rather fictional entities such as centaurs and giants. For the view that Seneca is here distancing himself from canonical Stoicism but without taking himself to be straying too far (and indeed is on the verge of giving in turn a suitably Stoicized taxonomy of Platonic ontology), see D. N. Sedley, ‘Stoic Metaphysics at Rome’, in R. Salles (ed.), *Metaphysics, Soul, and Ethics: Themes from the Work of Richard Sorabji* (Oxford, 2005), 117–42. The position I argue for in this paper is one way of explaining why Seneca should write here as he does: for clearly, Seneca appreciates that the canonical Stoic position from which he is distancing himself is *not* tantamount to the claim that such things as the incorporeals *do not exist*.

But there is more to the incorporeals than merely figuring in conditions necessary for material changes.<sup>27</sup> If that were all there was to them, we would still hanker after an explanation of why the Stoics go so far as to insist that they must have a different mode of being from bodies. Modern physics makes some admission that space–time of a sort is required for causal interactions to take place. But it does not go so far as arguing that space–time must have a mode of being different from that of the matter capable of occupying it.<sup>28</sup>

In fact a satisfactory account of Stoic metaphysics requires some story about three ways to be. There is the way enjoyed by bodies, typified by but not, as we saw above, always literally restricted to or by the Greek verb to be (*einai*), which I here translate as ‘being’ (again avoiding that ruined English word ‘exist’). Then there is the quite different way enjoyed by the incorporeals, usually translated as ‘subsisting’ (*huphistanai*). Finally there is a third way, enjoyed by the incorporeals when they bear some special actualizing relation to bodies, which I shall translate as ‘obtaining’ (*huparchein*).<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> As we shall see, stating this requires some care. Compare my account with the observation of J. Brunschwig, ‘Stoic Metaphysics’ [‘Metaphysics’], in B. Inwood (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics* (Cambridge, 2003), 206–32 at 213: ‘this list [of place, void, time, and “sayables”] apparently is not homogeneous (the first three items, roughly, are conditions for physical processes, whereas the fourth one seems rather to be connected to the philosophy of language’. But the incorporeals are homogeneous when it comes to being, or at least figuring in, conditions necessary for material processes. The cosmos will move about, and expand outwards at *ἐκπύρωσις* before coming to be again, only if there is void. Physical process P will occur only if there is a place and time in which P can occur. And finally, physical process P will occur only if some sayable *p*, whose content expresses the proposition that P will occur, is true. The last of these differs from the former cases at least in so far as the sayable is or figures in conditions necessary *and sufficient* for P: for P will occur *if and only if p* is true.

<sup>28</sup> Indeed, one can go so far as to affirm that there is some priority relation holding between, for example, times and the things that take place during them, *without* bothering to say anything about how time exists in some way distinct from ordinary material things. See e.g. P. T. Geach, *God and the Soul* (New York, 1969), 34–41, who argues that thoughts neither take some time to think, nor are they thought instantaneously, and that we should therefore reject those beliefs about the priority of time to what takes place in it that make us think that the activity of thinking must either take some time or be instantaneous. In rejecting the priority of time relative to the events it orders, Geach makes no claims about the way time is.

<sup>29</sup> So I am here following, with a view to extending, the achievements on this score of M. Schofield, ‘The Retrenchable Present’ [‘Present’], in J. Barnes and M. Mignucci (eds.), *Matter and Metaphysics: Fourth Symposium Hellenisticum* (Naples, 1988), 329–74. In particular I applaud Schofield’s insistence, against A. C. Lloyd (351), that even if the Stoics do not always use these expressions with technical force, it is overwhelmingly likely that in the passages that concern us on the incorporeals *ὑφιστάναί* and *ὑπάρχειν* are indeed being used as terms of art.

Bodies *are*; incorporeals as such *subsist*; and when the former are configured in such-and-such ways, as we shall see, the latter can be said to *obtain*.<sup>30</sup> Effectively, these three ways to be are the Stoics' radical alternative to Aristotle's matter/form metaphysics, and the receptacle/Form-participation view of Plato's *Timaeus*.

I shall shortly give a good number of Stoic illustrations of these ways of being. Before doing so, I provide a model from some much more recent philosophy that is helpfully isomorphic with the Stoic position. For it too seeks to answer a number of fundamental questions about reality by distinguishing between three ways of being.

Let me here introduce the concept of a *role* or *office*.<sup>31</sup> At its simplest, a role or office is something for a thing to be: a thing can be *the President of the United States*, or *a statue of David*, or *my watch*, or *a golden mountain*, where these italicized expressions refer to things particulars might be. A human being might come to be *the President of the United States*; a lump of marble might come to be *a statue of David*; a hunk of metal might come to be *my watch*, and so forth.

More precisely, an office is an immaterial object that sustains the same mode of being regardless of whether or not it is occupied, and regardless of which material object occupies or does not occupy it. So in (i) 'My watch was made in Switzerland', the expression 'my watch' refers, not, as you might think, to a piece of metal, but to an

<sup>30</sup> See Brunschwig, 'Metaphysics', 215 n. 26: 'This third ontological verb (*huparchein*) seems not to coincide either with *einai* or *huphistanai*. Usually, as here, it expresses a comparatively higher ontological status than *huphistanai*; but it still seems to be distinct from *einai*, in the sense that it is apposite to use it when speaking not of objects (bodies), but rather of *actual* states of affairs, or of predicates assertible of their subjects in a true proposition.' My interpretation accords with that of P. Hadot, 'Zur Vorgeschichte des Begriffs "Existenz": *ὑπάρχειν* bei den Stoikern', *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte*, 13 (1969), 115–27, where he writes that 'das Wort [*ὑπάρχειν*] innerhalb der Stoa *eine* Seinsweise bezeichnet' (my emphasis). But it diverges from that of V. Goldschmidt, '*ὑπάρχειν* et *ὑφίστασθαι* dans la philosophie stoïcienne', *Revue des études grecques*, 85 (1972), 331–44, where he speaks of 'ce dernier terme [sc. *ὑπάρχειν*] exprimant *le mode d'existence propre aux incorporels*' (my emphasis).

<sup>31</sup> I shall prefer the latter locution. The concept is due to Pavel Tichý, descended from work by Carnap. See especially Tichý's 'Einzeldinge als Amtsinhaber' ['Einzeldinge'], *Zeitschrift für Semiotik*, 9 (1987), 13–50. The topic receives a brisker but more accessible treatment in his 'Existence and God', *Journal of Philosophy*, 8 (1976), 403–20. It is by now common to cite, in unpicking the Stoics' complicated positions in ontology, the work of Brentano and such descendants of his as Meinong, Twardowski, and Mally: see Brunschwig, 'Supreme Genus'; Caston, 'Something and Nothing'. One aim of this paper is to show that the right model for the Stoics from the achievements in the philosophy of intentionality of the last two centuries comes from a later strand of this tradition.

immaterial office, a role for something to be, filled by some piece of metal. If you doubt this, and insist that the expression ‘my watch’ must surely refer to that very piece of wrist-bound metal itself, consider what happens if it becomes true that (ii) ‘Tomorrow I lose my watch and buy a new one’. If that happens, then a distinct piece of metal from the one currently on my wrist will tomorrow become my watch. But that is not at all to say that tomorrow the piece of metal currently on my wrist will become a distinct piece of metal. That is impossible: pieces of matter cannot exchange their identities in such a fashion. Therefore the expression ‘my watch’ hardly refers to any piece of material.<sup>32</sup>

So my having a watch is simply a matter of the office of my watch, an immaterial object, being filled by a concrete body, in this case a hunk of metal. Now were I watchless, or in possession of more than one watch, there would still be that immaterial office to which the expression ‘my watch’ actually refers; it is just that no body would occupy it. Similarly, there is no such thing as the golden mountain, or the King of France; but that is just a matter of the offices referred to by the relevant expressions being vacant, unoccupied by any matter. ‘The President of the United States’ is an expression for an office that has been occupied continuously since 1789, albeit by as many as forty-four different bodies. Meanwhile ‘The King of France’ is an expression for an office that has been vacant continuously since 1848. That the offices designated by these expressions are ontologically on a par should be strongly urged by the fact that the difference between the current occupation of the one, and constitutional vacancy of the other, is a matter of mere historical contingency. For things might quite easily have been otherwise. Had Louis-Philippe and George III acted differently, both countries might still be monarchies.

I take it that some offices are vacant in all possible worlds, such as the office of the non-self-identical being. Meanwhile, other offices

<sup>32</sup> See Tichý, ‘Einzeldinge’, for many further persuasive arguments designed to allay the fears of those horrified by the prospect of all definite descriptions referring, ultimately, to immaterial objects, and by a correspondingly large ontology of functions entering into all manner of humdrum facts. Note that horror at the claim that ‘my watch’ really refers to an immaterial object is *identical* to the horror with which their critics greeted Stoic doctrines about the incorporeal: in particular, their claim, reported in a passage at S.E. *M.* 8. 11–12 (=LS 33B=SVF ii. 166), that the ‘thing signified’ by vocal sounds is something immaterial, an incorporeal sayable. See also Ammon. *In Int.* 17. 28 Busse ad 16<sup>a</sup>3.

are filled in all possible worlds, such as the empty set.<sup>33</sup> But in any event, offices themselves, and the objects capable of filling them, are what are common to all possible worlds. They do not vary in number or nature according to circumstance; all that varies is whether and what material objects occupy them. Difference in this respect is all the variation there is between different possible worlds and times. Offices therefore constitute what Wittgenstein called (with not entirely dissimilar items in mind) the ‘unalterable form’ of the world.<sup>34</sup>

(a) *Incorporeals*

Stoic incorporeals are best understood as offices capable of being now occupied, now vacated by the fundamentally real, i.e. just those bodies passing the (EP).<sup>35</sup>

As in the case of immaterial offices, there is something shadowy about Stoic incorporeals: they fail the (EP). Yet that does not make incorporeals *nothing at all*, much as offices, regardless of whether they are occupied, are not nothing at all, and are importantly ontologically distinct from their occupiers.<sup>36</sup> As we shall now see, the

<sup>33</sup> Note that this is a second-order office, whose sole occupant, on many accounts of set theory, is something like the first-order office that is bound to be vacant in all worlds, namely *the non-self-identical being*. I doubt that any first-order offices are occupied in all possible worlds, because presumably some possible worlds are empty in so far as they lack material objects or any other *concreta* capable of occupying such offices.

<sup>34</sup> See L. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. D. Pears and B. McGuinness (London, 1961), 2.014–2.023.

<sup>35</sup> Note that office theory provides an excellent response to those who cavil at using ‘obtaining’ for *ὑπάρχειν*, and think that the verb is just a variant of *εἶναι*, since both can reliably be translated as ‘exist’ (LS *passim*). For that is just what the analogy with offices predicts. According to office theory, existence just *is* (=) offices being occupied. To exist is to occupy some office or other. The cavil about the intimate connection between *εἶναι* and *ὑπάρχειν* is quite right; and nothing less than a metaphysical story that so intimately associates, while still distinguishing between, the mode of being proper to material things, and of that which they occupy when they *are*, will do.

<sup>36</sup> The Stoics have to admit that their incorporeals do not have any properties, in the sense in which that English word translates *ποιότητες*. For as Bréhier, *Incorporeals*, 8, reminds us, all Stoic properties in this sense are bodies and hence cannot be enjoyed by incorporeals. Something similar is true of offices: they do not have any properties, at least not any interesting or natural properties. The office currently occupied by Obama but previously occupied by Bush and Clinton has no mass, colour, location, and so forth. Nor is it male or female, black or white, tall or short. It does have *requisites*—that is, occupation of such an office requires the occupant to have various properties, such as having been born in the United States, being a US Citi-

sorts of relations Stoic bodies bear to incorporeals is sufficiently similar to the relation of *office-occupying*, in the rough sense introduced, to make my analogy clearly worthwhile.

(b) *Time*

It will be easiest to start with the case of time. Here is a report of Chrysippus' view from Stobaeus:

- (T) *μόνον δ' ὑπάρχειν φησὶ τὸν ἐνεστώτα, τὸν δὲ παρωχημένον καὶ τὸν μέλλοντα ὑφεστάναι μὲν, ὑπάρχειν δὲ οὐδαμῶς φησιν, ὡς καὶ κατηγορήματα ὑπάρχειν λέγεται μόνα τὰ συμβεβηκότα, οἷον τὸ περιπατεῖν ὑπάρχει μοι ὅτε περιπατῶ, ὅτε δὲ κατακέκλιμαι ἢ κάθημαι οὐχ ὑπάρχει.* (Stob. 1. 106 (=LS 51B, part=*SVF* ii. 509))

He also says that only the present *obtains*; the past and the future *subsist* but *obtain* in no way, just as only predicates which are [actual] attributes are said to obtain, for instance, walking around *obtains at me*<sup>37</sup> when I am walking around, but it does not *obtain* when I am lying down or sitting. (trans. Long and Sedley, modified)

The idea here seems to be that time *qua* time, like the rest of the incorporeals, has *subsistence* as its mode of being; but that nevertheless time can be occupied in some special actualizing way, namely by present events, in virtue of which the present is the only time which goes beyond merely subsisting all the way to *obtaining*. Time is the temporal office, always subsisting, but only actually occupied by present motions.<sup>38</sup> The Stoics had good reason for making this special claim on behalf of the present: for they held that time is the dimension of the world's motion.<sup>39</sup> And like many of their

zen, and occupying the office for no more than two terms. But the requisites of the office of the President are not properties of it in the way in which being a US citizen etc. are properties had by Obama, Bush, and Clinton.

<sup>37</sup> This italicized expression is my modification of Long and Sedley's translation. Note how natural such locutions are to Greek philosophy since Aristotle formulated his theory of the syllogism. The syllogistic jargon for the premiss 'A is B', 'ὑπάρχει τὸ B τῷ A', is literally translated as 'B belongs to A' or 'B holds of A'. On this matter see C. H. Kahn, 'On the Terminology for *Copula* and *Existence*', in id., *Essays on Being*, 41–61 at 44.

<sup>38</sup> See also Plut. *Comm. not.* 1081 F 3–6 (=LS 51C 5=*SVF* ii. 518), where Chrysippus is again reported to have held that past and future do not obtain but merely subsist (τὸ παρωχημένον τοῦ χρόνου καὶ τὸ μέλλον οὐχ ὑπάρχειν ἀλλ' ὑφεστηκέναι φησὶ), while the present alone actually obtains (μόνον δ' ὑπάρχειν τὸ ἐνεστηκός). My phrase 'time is the temporal office' captures Tichý's intentions exactly.

<sup>39</sup> See e.g. Simpl. *In Categ.* 350. 15–16 Kalbfleisch (=LS 51A=*SVF* ii. 510); Philo, *Aet.* 52 (=LS 52A).

philosophical ancestors, they held that motion can occur only in the present. So it was natural for them to think of time in general as a subsistent office, occupied in the present by all and only present motions, in virtue of which the present is the sole *obtaining* Stoic tense. The past and future are equally office-like: the former is the once occupied but forever vacated temporal office, the latter the vacant but due-to-be-filled temporal office.<sup>40</sup> Stoic coming-to-be is just a matter of successive portions of the dimension of the world's motion obtaining—that is, becoming occupied by present motions.<sup>41</sup>

(c) *Sayables*

Something importantly similar is true of Stoic propositions, which according to their school are complete truth-evaluable sayables. At *M.* 8. 10 Sextus characterizes them thus:

(SAY) ἀληθές γάρ ἐστι κατ' αὐτοὺς τὸ ὑπάρχον καὶ ἀντικείμενόν τι, καὶ ψεῦδος τὸ μὴ ὑπάρχον καὶ [μὴ] ἀντικείμενόν τι. (*S.E. M.* 8. 10)

True is that which obtains and is contradictory to something, and false is that which does not obtain and is contradictory to something.<sup>42</sup> (my translation)

<sup>40</sup> I here leave aside complications associated with the Stoic commitment to the doctrine of everlasting recurrence. For an insightful discussion of how this thesis relates to Stoic views on the logic of tense see N. Denyer, 'Stoicism and Token-Reflexivity' ['Stoicism'], in Barnes and Mignucci (eds.), *Matter and Metaphysics*, 375–96. J. Barnes, 'The Same Again: The Stoics and Eternal Recurrence' ['Same Again'], in M. Bonelli (ed.), *Matter and Metaphysics: Essays in Ancient Philosophy*, 1 (Oxford, 2011), 412–28 at 427, asserts that 'Much about the Stoic incorporeals is obscure, but it may seem clear that insofar as time is incorporeal, times—moments or stretches of time—can only be individuated by the events that take place at or during them.' I doubt this, and not merely because it anachronistically neglects the Stoics' interest in tensed truths and appetite for token-reflexivity in favour of the tense-less dates of events. For the future tense of all future events will be individuated, not by them (for they do not yet obtain), but by the obtaining truth that *if* they take place at all they will obtain *only* after my writing this sentence, an event which is not now future but obtaining in the present (and subsisting in the past for the current reader).

<sup>41</sup> This and other remarks in this section are meant to be nothing more than alternative ways of expressing the judgement of Barnes, 'Same Again', 418: 'The events which constitute the history of a world are nothing but successive arrangements of the matter of the world.'

<sup>42</sup> I here avoid the confusing practice of translating the verb ὑπάρχω as 'subsists' (for which see e.g. Bobzien, *Determinism*, 25 n. 38, 64–5; Vogt, 'Sons', 146 n. 36). Instead I use the English verb 'obtains', as I did for the Stobaeus passage on time, reserving 'subsists' for the verb ὑφίσταται. My practice avoids giving readers the mistaken impression that false complete sayables do not even enjoy the characteristic

As in the case of time, treating such incorporeals as subsisting offices nicely captures Stoic intentions. Here the office is semantic rather than temporal; but like time, the subsisting office is capable of some special actualization whenever it is occupied. For example, when (and only when) it is day, the sayable expressed by the English sentence 'It is day' is true. That sayable is, as it were, a subsistent office that has become occupied by a body.<sup>43</sup> And in being occupied it is said to obtain; just as time is a subsistent office, obtaining at just those portions of its continuum occupied by present events.<sup>44</sup>

mode of being of Stoic incorporeals, subsistence. If they thought that false propositions *do not even subsist* when they are false, then they were tempted by the scepticism about falsehood suffered by their pre-Platonic predecessors. But they were under no such delusion (and not merely because they were careful readers of Plato's *Sophist*, as is persuasively argued at length by Brunschwig, 'Supreme Genus'). Perhaps just as bad: translating *ὑπάρχω* as 'subsists' makes a nonsense of the Stoic doctrine, for which we have much evidence, that cataleptic impressions, their ideal mental states, are only ever *ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος*. That the best kind of mental state should only ever be of what obtains makes sense. If, however, the Stoics merely thought that cataleptic impressions are only ever of what *subsists*, and false sayables subsist, then they have not blocked off the possibility of some cataleptic impression being from a falsehood, i.e. itself being false.

<sup>43</sup> I demur from identifying precisely which body. One candidate is the day itself, which Chrysippus identified as a body according to Plut. *Comm. not.* 1084 D (=LS 51G = *SVF* ii. 665). (For an alternative reading of this passage see Brunschwig, 'Metaphysics', 216.) Alternatively, perhaps the body that occupies the sayable expressed by 'It is day' whenever it is day is just some portion of *the truth*, which is an avowedly corporeal object according to Stoic doctrine (see S.E. *PH* 2, 81–3 (=LS 33P)). The idea seems perverse until one remembers that the Stoics mean by this something like the following: *the truth* is just that cognitive state that would be enjoyed by the material mind of an omniscient, infallible being. (The Stoics would not of course have used quite this terminology, but it captures their idea.) Their materialism about the referent of 'the truth' is really nothing other than their materialism about the mind, a position that hardly sounds so perverse today. False propositions, then, would be all and only those subsisting complete sayables not currently occupied by any portions of such an ideal being's material mind.

<sup>44</sup> My approach to Stoic incorporeals thus leaves me wholly out of sympathy with those who see a similarity between the Stoic theory of propositions and those modern views that seek to *identify* true propositions with facts. The truth-making state of affairs that occurs at a time when 'It is day' is true is some body or composite of bodies; it is, let us say, a matter of the sun and the earth standing to one another in a certain relation. That this composite should at that time be *identical* with the incorporeal subsisting sayable expressed by 'It is day' seems absurd. Even if an incorporeal sayable somehow *obtains* when it becomes true, it cannot be that it becomes *identical* to any composite of bodies: if it did, it would come to enjoy the mode of being had *only* by bodies, and thereby be causally networked, which is wholly wrong from the Stoic point of view. These remarks hold true, *mutatis mutandis*, if the occupiers of true Stoic propositions are not facts but *truths* or *aspects of the body known as 'the truth'*. I acknowledge that there are sophisticated views in metaphysics according to which something can be contingently material at a time, and immaterial at



But the office itself does not fizzle out into nothingness once day ends and night begins, any more than past and future times endure the darkness of utter non-being by comparison with the obtaining present. On the contrary, the sayable expressed by ‘It is day’ subsists throughout the night (thereby making meaningful (if false) any utterances of ‘It is day’ incorrectly tokened at night-time).<sup>45</sup> Similarly the past and future subsist, as formerly or due-to-be occupied offices, for all and only those events that either were or will be.<sup>46</sup>

The appeal of the analogy with offices should by now be fully apparent. For only something of its like will account for the fact that in Stoicism we have three different ways to be: (i) being (*einai*), (ii) subsisting (*huphistanai*), and (iii) obtaining (*huparchein*).<sup>47</sup> Only

other times: see e.g. T. Williamson, ‘Necessary Existents’, in A. O’Hear (ed.), *Logic, Thought and Language* (Royal Institute of Philosophy, suppl. 51; Cambridge, 2002), 233–51. Such views indeed relate interestingly to Tichý’s; but I can find no place for them in Stoicism. Even so comparatively informal a Stoic as Marcus Aurelius manifests understanding that the intimate relation between bodies, and the offices they occupy, falls short of identity: hence his remark that ‘*beings* stand fittingly in relation to all *obtaining* things’ (τὰ δὲ γὰρ ὄντα πρὸς τὰ ὑπάρχοντα πάντα οἰκείως ἔχει) (Marc. Aur. *Med.* 9. 1. 2).

<sup>45</sup> Hence I am in agreement with Jonathan Barnes, *Truth, etc. [Truth]* (Oxford, 2007), 68, when he says ‘if something holds, it does not follow that it is opposed to something; and if something is opposed to something, it does not follow that it holds’. Barnes correctly thinks that the latter claim is true because a false complete sayable will be opposed to something, its negation, without holding. He then says that he ‘cannot invent any plausible reason’ for the former claim in Sextus’ account, before going on to invent just such a plausible reason. For as he correctly observes, *ὑπάρχειν* is a predicate of both complete and incomplete sayables. More precisely, the complete sayable expressed by ‘Socrates sits’ holds or obtains (i.e. is true) when and only when the incomplete sayable expressed by the predicate ‘-sits’ holds of, or obtains at, Socrates. But of these, only the former, the complete sayable, is opposed to something (*ἀντικείμενον τι*). For as Barnes notes (69), according to the Stoics ‘two items are opposites . . . if and only if one of them says that so-and-so and the other says that it is not the case that so-and-so’. Therefore even if there is some sort of inconsistency between the incomplete sayables expressed by ‘-sits’ and ‘-does not sit’, these sayables are not opposed to one another: for even though either might obtain at Socrates at different times, neither by itself *says* that anything is the case or not. Only complete sayables *say* anything at all.

<sup>46</sup> Let me suggest a qualification that deepens the symmetry between time and complete sayables. Some events will never happen. It will never be both day and not light. Therefore the time at which that happens, if there is such a thing, always subsists, never obtains. Other events are always happening: it is always either day or not day, hence the time at which it is day or not day always obtains. Correspondingly, the sayable expressed by ‘It is both day and not light’ always subsists but never obtains, being necessarily false. And the sayable expressed by ‘It is either day or not day’ always both subsists and obtains, being necessarily true.

<sup>47</sup> In the terminology of modern metaphysicians, the distinctions among these

some story as logically complex as this will do, giving us as it does (i) potential occupants of (ii) various offices, and (iii) their occupying or vacating those offices.<sup>48</sup>

(d) *Place and Void*<sup>49</sup>

That places subsist but are contingently actualized whenever occupied seems a natural inference to make, given what we have said

three ways to be show that Stoic ontology is *sorted*. It will be the task of the next section to show in what way Stoic ontology, like Tichý's, is not merely sorted but *ordered*. See Schaffer, 'Grounds'.

<sup>48</sup> Consequently I see the analogy between Stoic incorporeals and offices as being (i) considerably less fanciful than the otherwise sober and useful comparison between, say, Stoic tensile motion and force fields in modern physics (S. Sambursky, *The Physical World of the Greeks* (London, 1959), 164); or between the non-evident causes of Stoic determinism and modern chaos theory (M. White, 'Stoic Natural Philosophy', in Inwood (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, 124–52 at 140); and (ii) considerably more helpful than the more common comparison between Stoic metaphysics and Meinong's *Gegenstandstheorie*, for which see Caston, 'Something and Nothing', 152 ff.

In general I sympathize with the alarm many readers will feel on encountering the doctrines of a school beginning in the late 4th cent. BCE compared with highly sophisticated developments in 20th-cent. analytic philosophy. Jerry Fodor refers to this as the 'If only he'd tried a bit harder, Aristotle might have been Quine' school of historiography. But in fact if we are to understand the Stoics, there is nothing else to which to turn. Let me give a single example independent of the topic of this paper. Recall that we are here dealing with a school whose theory of *causation* is much more highly developed than its ontology, and is the coping stone of many of its most important doctrines (in physics, ethics, philosophy of mind, etc.). But that theory insists that the effects of causation are *predicates*; that is, that what causes are causes *of* are a class of sayables, i.e. immaterial objects (see Bobzien, *Determinism, passim*). I know of no other resource besides the revived metaphysics of the second half of 20th-cent. analytic philosophy that could even begin to make such an outlandish claim plausible. At any rate, one need not know much about Stoicism to sense impending disaster from e.g. Bréhier, *Incorporeals*, 12, who, unable fully to stomach the Stoics' views about the immateriality of effects, proposes that instead they are talking about 'what we today would call facts or events' ('ce que nous appellerions aujourd'hui des faits ou des événements'), items that are neither genuine substances nor any of their properties. Any invitation to see the Stoics as theorizing that causes bring about logical fictions or constructions must be resisted at all costs.

<sup>49</sup> As with every interesting analogy, my analogues are not identical, and have important differences (it should not need saying but it does). Some incorporeals, place and void, are no doubt spatially extended. (Although even this requires a qualification: Chrysippus and his successors were clear on the point that void, being incorporeal, has neither up nor down, nor front nor rear, nor right nor left, nor centre, these directions being properties only of bodies; see Plut. *Stoic. repugn.* 1054 B–D (=SVF ii. 551, 550); Cleom. *Cael.* 1. 1. 150–3.) Arguably, in so far as offices are unlocated, none of them is extended. Barack Obama always has to be somewhere. But the Presidential office he currently occupies is not located anywhere (not even in the

about time and sayables.<sup>50</sup> Occupied places correspond to present times and true propositions. In each case, the incorporeal obtains because something distinct from it, a Stoic body, occupies it; and it carries on enjoying its characteristic mode of being even when the body occupying it (temporally, truth-conditionally, spatially) moves on.

It is therefore dangerously tempting to infer something like the following. Presently occupied places obtain in something like the way the present time, and presently true propositions, obtain. Meanwhile, just as there are merely subsisting times (the past and future) and merely subsisting complete sayables (the presently false ones), so likewise there are merely subsisting, unobtaining places, namely the unoccupied ones.

Sadly, things are not quite so simple. For instead the Stoic doctrine of places identifies them as those incorporeal spatial extensions that can be *and actually are* occupied by some body. Meanwhile for them *void* is that incorporeal spatial extension that can be occupied by a body *but actually is not*.<sup>51</sup> In other words, for the Stoics, strictly speaking there are no empty places. All place properly so called is filled; all empty space properly so called is not place but void. There is no place in the void outside the material cosmos, just as there is no empty space among the places of the material cosmos.

Therefore place is not something that can ever fail to obtain by being unoccupied. No places merely subsist in the way that past and future times do, or in the way that false complete sayables do. And the void never obtains in the way the present time does. There is a helpful analogy here with complete sayables. Places are like tautologies, just as bound to be filled by some body or other as tautologies are bound to be true. Void is like a contradiction, just as bound to be empty of any body as contradictions are bound to be false. Note

Oval Office), and to that extent it seems an unlikely candidate for being extended, as place and void no doubt are.

But even if there is some disanalogy here, matters are not quite so simple, and tell in favour of my argument. See e.g. G. Oddie, 'Scrumptious Functions', *Grazer philosophische Studien*, 62 (2001), 137–56, which defends the *identification* of all manner of features of the perceptible world, including features even more dramatically perceptible than extension (such as flavour), *with* some immaterial functions.

<sup>50</sup> For an explicit ascription of a form of the verb *ὑφίσταται* to place see Simpl. *In Phys.* 571. 22 Diels (=SVF ii. 507, *παρυφίσταται τοῖς σώμασιν ὁ τόπος*); to void, see Stob. i. 161. 8–26 (=LS 49A=SVF ii. 503, *κατὰ γὰρ τὴν αὐτοῦ ὑπόστασιν ἄπειρόν ἐστι*).

<sup>51</sup> See e.g. S.E. *M.* 10. 3–4 (=LS 49B=SVF ii. 505).

that contradictions, while never true, are not nothing at all. There really is something that I express when I say something of the form 'P&~P', just not anything that is ever true. Likewise, void is something no less than place, even though it is never occupied, with an important qualification I make below.

Consider the place currently occupied by my piano. It must be something distinct from my piano because it is incorporeal, while my piano is very much a body. What happens to that place when I move my piano? It cannot become an *empty* place. As we saw above, there are strictly speaking no such things. When a place ceases to be occupied, it ceases also to be a place, and becomes void. But the Stoics insist that there is no void *within* the cosmos, only outside it.<sup>52</sup> Nor can the place previously occupied by my piano have turned into a body: an incorporeal cannot *become* a body (any more than an office can itself become material). The only option left is that the place has been filled anew by something else, some other body. The extended office previously occupied by my piano must be occupied by something else the moment my piano vacates it.

You might think that there is a further possibility: that *the place of my piano* is just wherever my piano is at any moment, and hence that, far from being occupied by some other body when my piano moves, *the place of my piano* moves with it. But this cannot be right. For according to Chrysippus' definitions of place as we have them in Stobaeus' record of Arius Didymus (Stob. 1. 161. 8 (=LS 49A=SVF ii. 503), a text to which I shall return below), it is possible for some place to be occupied either by one body, *or by more than one body*, at one and the same time. Suppose (i) A alone occupies place X; then (ii) both A and B occupy X simultaneously (where A≠B); and then at a third time, (iii) B withdraws, leaving A just where it was, at place X. Chrysippus' second definition of place seems designed to allow for just such a possibility. And yet the scenario would not be possible if B had to take its own place with it on withdrawing. Given that it is at X in (ii), it cannot both withdraw *and* take its own place with it while leaving A at X as in (iii). Therefore bodies cannot generally, if ever, go around taking their erstwhile locations with them.

We thereby get a deep sense of that and why Stoic physics is so through-and-through material, that goes well beyond anything

<sup>52</sup> See, e.g. Stob. 1. 161. 8–26 (=LS 49A=SVF ii. 503); Galen, *Qualit. incorp.* xix. 464. 10–14 Kühn (=LS 49E=SVF ii. 502).

like the (EP), the insistence that the fundamentally real be causally networked. For them, even the smallest movement must count as the displacement of one body by another. Furthermore, we can use the analogy between incorporeals and offices to construct an office-analogue of place that helps to clarify its logical nature. Place is like the office referred to by (P):

(P)=The extension of matter in the world.

(P) is an office occupied by whatever bodies there are currently in the world in much the same way as the President of the United States is an office currently occupied by Obama.<sup>53</sup> (P) always has some quantity of matter as its value, just as constitutionally the US always has a President: for not even a conflagration is the overture to some body-less future. But it is not always the same matter that occupies (P), as it is not always the same person who is President of the US. The occupant value of (P) can alter in its mass, its volume, its density, and its overall shape. Stoic places are just like (P). They are offices always occupied by bodies in every possible world. But what bodies occupy them and when is a contingent matter. As the contents of the world shift about, places are occupied now by one thing, now by another; but never by nothing at all.

We can construct a helpful office-analogue of void too. For void presents us with something of a problem. The Stoic motivation for affirming that there is void outside the material cosmos was to have something for the corporeal world to expand into at the end of each world cycle, and into which something new could come to be at the beginning of another. Therefore for them void has to be ‘capable of receiving body’, as they realized.<sup>54</sup> And yet look again at the definition of void: void is extension that *can* be occupied but *actually* is not. It seems to follow that the extension occupied by the entire corporeal world within ‘the all’ is itself not strictly speaking void (for it is actually occupied).<sup>55</sup> Similar considerations make it seem

<sup>53</sup> (P) is therefore not quite the same as the concept of extension Inwood plausibly attributes to Chrysippus along with place and void; see his ‘Chrysippus on Extension and the Void’ [‘Extension’], *Revue internationale de philosophie*, 178 (1991), 245–66 at 246 ff.; I return to this in nn. 55 and 63 below.

<sup>54</sup> See e.g. Cleom. *Cael.* 10. 24–12. 5 (=LS 49H=SVF ii. 540). For the distinction between the world (the material cosmos) and ‘the all’ (the material cosmos taken together with the incorporeal void) see S.E. *M.* 9. 332 (=LS 44A=SVF ii. 524).

<sup>55</sup> That intuitively there is such a thing—the extension that is the world’s place within the all, distinct from the void by virtue of being occupied and yet other-

puzzling how the void could be the sort of thing *into* which a new world cycle of bodies, whatever continuant survives from the last one, could move at conflagration.<sup>56</sup>

The solution is simple once one sees that Stoic void is relevantly similar to a second-order office, the kind of office whose occupants are themselves offices. More precisely, void is like a second-order office whose identity at a time is dependent upon what occupies first-order offices; that is, what counts as void is dependent upon what counts as place. Secondly, and crucially, void is like an office that cannot be occupied by the sort of thing that can occupy first-order offices. Bodies can occupy places, but they cannot occupy void. Void is therefore similar to the office (V):

(V) The office of all and only the contingently occupied offices.

(V) is a second-order office whose identity is fixed by which first-order offices are occupied, at a time or world.<sup>57</sup> If having been watchless for a while, I buy a new one, a first-order office thereby becomes contingently occupied by a certain piece of metal, and therefore itself contributes to the identity of (V)'s extension. But that piece of metal does not come to occupy the office (V). Equally, had Romney won in 2012 instead of Obama, Romney would thereby have made a difference to (V)'s extension. But in coming himself to occupy the office of the President, he would not thereby come to occupy (V). For he is not himself an office.

The precision afforded us by the analogy with (V) gives us a better insight into Stoic void than we might otherwise have. Clearly,

wise undistinguished from it—is I think further grounds for being persuaded by Inwood's attribution of extension besides place and void to Chrysippus. See Inwood, 'Extension'.

<sup>56</sup> That is not to say that the Stoic account of void is inconsistent. There is nothing necessarily false about affirming that there is some space that *can* be occupied by a body, but never actually *is or will* be. Plato affirms something of the same logical form. In the *Timaeus* (41 A 3–B 6) he speaks of the world as *destructible* although it will never in fact be destroyed. But in the Platonic case, there is an *explanation* for why we have an instance of 'possibly *p* but never actually *p*': the world was put together out of various stuffs; anything with such a nature can be in principle disassembled; yet the Demiurge will never have a morally sufficient reason for undoing his sublime handiwork. No such explanation is so readily available for the nature of Stoic void, which hence cries out for something of the like. I try to provide one in the main text. For a good discussion of the Stoics' attitude to whether or not something might be possibly the case even though it neither is nor ever will be, see K. Algra, *Concepts of Space in Greek Thought [Space]* (Leiden, 1995), 291 ff.

<sup>57</sup> I am here taking '(V)' rigidly.

(V) is not an office that might be occupied by a hunk of metal such as that which contingently occupies the office ‘my watch’, and which will vacate that office if I lose it and buy another. Similarly, void is not something that can be occupied by a body. Bodies can occupy only places. Places may be said to occupy regions of the void, but here the verb ‘occupy’ is obviously not to be understood in that transitive sense that would allow bodies to occupy regions of the void. I shall shortly illustrate this with an example.

Nothing less than this sort of distinction will do to make sense of a problem in the single most important source we have for the Stoic theory of place, a scrap of Arius Didymus preserved by Stobaeus (=L&S 49A=*SVF* ii. 503). A full consideration of this complicated passage lies outside the scope of this paper.<sup>58</sup> I here note only the following requirement on making satisfactory sense of it. After telling us that void as such is empty, ‘for we speak of void on the analogy of empty vessels’,<sup>59</sup> Arius goes on to write as if nevertheless void can be filled. For void, he says, is ‘by its own nature infinite; but it is being limited *when it is filled up*’.<sup>60</sup> If we are not to fear incoherence in the Stoic position on void we must attribute to them some sort of conceptual distinction between different kinds of occupation. Only then will it make sense to speak of regions of the void, as Arius here does, becoming places in virtue of being occupied.<sup>61</sup> I conclude this section with an analogy designed to illustrate the Stoic position on this score.<sup>62</sup>

My Department Office contains, as I imagine most other Department Offices do, a large wooden structure containing individual mailboxes for each member of the Department. Curiously, such structures do not themselves have a clear proper name; so let me just call it the MB, after ‘Mailbox’. The MB contains lots of spaces,

<sup>58</sup> See primarily, for detailed assessments, Bréhier, *Incorporels*, 37–60; Inwood, ‘Extension’, *passim*; Algra, *Space*, 263 ff.

<sup>59</sup> τὸ μὲν γὰρ κενὸν τοῖς κενοῖς ἀγγείοις λέγεσθαι παραπλησίως.

<sup>60</sup> περατοῦται δ’ αὐτὸ ἐκπληρούμενον.

<sup>61</sup> So my distinction among orders of office is really just the technical truth required by such claims as e.g. Inwood, ‘Extension’, 265, that ‘Void is the *possible* place of a body’ (my emphasis).

<sup>62</sup> I cannot enter into the details here, but I believe this analysis also makes consistent the standard reports telling us that void as such is unoccupied (e.g. Arius Didymus (LS 49A=*SVF* ii. 503); S.E. *M.* 10. 3–4 (=LS 49B=*SVF* ii. 505)) with a later claim from the Stoic astronomer Cleomedes (*Cael.* 1. 1. 23, not in LS or *SVF*), which informs us that void ‘is able to receive body *and to be occupied*’ (οἷαν τ’ ἂν οὔσαν δέχεσθαι σῶμα καὶ κατέχεσθαι). For a discussion of this latter text see Algra, *Space*, 266 ff.

one for each Department member. Such spaces are seldom empty; even the most diligent at clearing out their mailboxes are likely to find a new flyer or essay there on any given day. Let us suppose that in fact the mailboxes are never empty. That is, let us suppose that for each and every Department member, there is some mailbox, and there is always something or other in it. So each space for a Department member is like a Stoic place.

In this analogy the MB itself corresponds to void (although see n. 63); each individual mailbox to some place. There is always something occupying each mailbox, but not always the same thing; in fact there is constant change in the visual image one has surveying all the mailboxes in the MB, with some filling up while others almost (but never quite) empty. Now in some sense, the extension of the MB is occupied by the mailboxes constituting it; and in something like that fashion, places can occupy the void. But the sense in which flyers, essays, books, and all the other things that come to Department mailboxes can occupy those mailboxes is obviously quite different from the sense in which each mailbox occupies a portion of the MB. A student's essay can be 'in' my mailbox; and that mailbox can be 'in' the MB; but we do not here have the same sense of the word 'in', as we do not in 'There's a hole in my bucket' and 'There's some water in my bucket'. My students' essays occupy my mailbox; it does not follow that they occupy the MB in any sense.

So void is occupiable only by places, not by the bodies which can occupy those places. And to that extent at least, Stoic void is not as such problematic. It is occupied by places; those places are themselves always occupied by bodies; but we need not infer that void is therefore itself *ever* occupied by bodies. It is in this sense, I suggest, that Stoic void is 'capable of receiving body' without itself ever being actually occupied by some body.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>63</sup> One may also take the MB to represent, not place or void, but a third spatial concept mentioned by Arius Didymus in our key passage. There he speaks of something capable of occupation by bodies, but where part of it is occupied and part not. Such an extension—and Inwood is surely right to so name it (Inwood, 'Extension', 248)—will be neither place nor void as such but 'a different something that has no name' (*ἕτερον δέ τι οὐκ ὀνομασμένον*). Inwood goes on to argue that this unnamed extension is fundamental to the more familiar Stoic spatial concepts of place and void; and that Chrysippus was the first to recognize this.

I cannot here enter into Inwood's arguments in detail, nor into the very complicated issue of exactly where Chrysippus differed from other Stoics on the meaning of the term *χώρα* (on which see Algra, *Space*, 278). Suffice it to say that the same



I am therefore in disagreement with a popular conception of what happens to Stoic void when there is cosmic movement. Long and Sedley write (LS, 296): ‘When filled, the void ceases to exist as such, and becomes a place.’ They therefore rest content with the idea that cosmic motion can be suitably described as ‘occupied’ regions of void being successively *destroyed* by the world’s movement.<sup>64</sup> The analogies with (V) and the MB help us to see that one need not go nearly so far. Neither (V) nor the MB ‘ceases to exist as such’ when there is some alteration in the occupants of first-order offices, or in individual mailboxes. And neither (V) nor the MB can *be filled* by those things otherwise capable of filling such items as first-order offices and individual mailboxes. There is no inconsistency whatsoever here.

#### 4. Stoic ontological dependence

Thus Stoic bodies and incorporeals belong to the universe to the same extent; what is important is that the former are the mutable agents of causation and change, while the latter are the offices that bodies occupy and vacate precisely in being causally active and changing. Bodies’ fulfilling their careers as agents and patients of change just is their occupying and vacating incorporeal offices over time.

However, whatever success is enjoyed by the previous section threatens the conclusion at which I am aiming: that incorporeals are ontologically dependent on bodies, and hence grounded by them. The interpretation I have so far offered of the incorporeals, as offices, is in a sense a Platonizing one. It is one of the leading aims of

passage of Arius reports the possibility of the void itself being filled and hence limited by something, and that this, rather than extension generally, is what I am trying to get at with the MB. I have no objection to the reader refocusing my analogy to express something about extension in this sense, which I take to be an office of higher order just like void. Such parallax is fine by me. But that will not be inconsistent with otherwise taking the MB to represent extra-cosmic void instead. Indeed, the finite size of any actual MB well supports Inwood’s further conclusion that the infinity of the extra-cosmic void is merely potential and not actual—a position I find plausible despite the doubts of Algra, *Space*, 324 n. 168, 328 n. 181.

<sup>64</sup> See also Brunschwig, ‘Metaphysics’, 213: ‘void is incorporeal, and even the incorporeal *par excellence*: capable of being occupied by body, but ceasing to be void when it is actually occupied (hence destroyed as such, not just acted upon and altered by the entering body)’.

this paper to show that the Stoics, for all their turning of the (EP) against its very author, were more sympathetic to Platonism than has so far been appreciated. But surely we have here gone too far, for the following reasons.

For the more office-like the incorporeals are, the less they seem grounded by, or dependent on, *anything*, let alone bodies.<sup>65</sup> One of the most powerful reasons for likening incorporeals to offices is that the former are still in some sense clearly *there* even when vacant. The mode of being characteristic of incorporeals, subsistence, is enjoyed by times other than the present, propositions other than the presently true ones, and such necessarily unoccupied extensions of 'the all' as void. The being of those incorporeals does not depend on their material occupants, for they can carry on in their own subsistent way without being occupied. How therefore can their being in some sense *depend* on the kind of thing that can occupy them, bodies? The point has intuitive force even without a satisfactory model for the incorporeals as a class: for we do not generally suppose that the time in which something takes place depends for its being on that event, or on any other; nor do we suppose that the place in which something is depends for its being on that thing or any other of its like; and finally, we think that there being something expressible alike by 'It's raining', 'Il pleut', and 'Es regnet' does not depend at all on how the weather is, or any other matter of contingent fact. On the contrary, times, places, and propositions are the way they are independently of what the bodies of the cosmos are doing. And this intuition is reinforced considerably once we see the incorporeals as kinds of office.

There is the clear case of the dependence on bodies had by places: necessarily for any place, there is some body occupying it, so any place requires the accompaniment of some body or other, even if there is no body such that some place requires just that one.<sup>66</sup> Yet consideration of the most important kind of incorporeal, complete sayables, will show us that in fact the Stoics are committed

<sup>65</sup> The point can be put more formally. For Tichý at least, offices are *functions*. But of course functions are not generally, if ever, ontologically dependent on either their arguments or their values. The functions represented by such expressions as '+2' or 'y=200' or '-is identical to the golden mountain' would have had whatever mode of being they have even if there had been no bodies at all.

<sup>66</sup> Note that the same structural dependence holds in the other direction. Necessarily for any body you like, there is some space it occupies, even if there is no place such that some body requires just that one.

to a much stronger, richer dependence relation than that holding between individual places and the class of bodies as a whole.

Intuitively there is some sort of priority among the incorporeals enjoyed by complete sayables. For only complete sayables stand in a certain asymmetric relation to the other kinds of incorporeal. All the incorporeals bring with them sayables, automatically. If there are times, places, and the void, then there are true and false propositions about times, places, and the void. And complete sayables themselves bring more of their own kind in their train: if there are true and false propositions, then there are true and false propositions about those propositions.<sup>67</sup> And yet this relation is asymmetric: for considered as such, complete sayables do not bring times, places, or void with them automatically.<sup>68</sup>

How will the priority of complete sayables among the incorporeals help to anchor incorporeals in their bodily possible occupants, as this paper aims to show? That consequence follows from two further details of the Stoic theory of sayables: their analysis of the truth-conditions of indefinite statements; and their commitment to the relation between demonstrative reference and bodies. I will here deploy these facts to show that Stoic incorporeals are ontologically dependent on bodies. The same texts will later on tell us much about the Stoic attitude to universals.

(a) *Stoic quantification and demonstration*

In the following passage Sextus reports the Stoic account of what we now call existentially quantified propositions, but which the Stoics referred to as ‘indefinite’ propositions:

(Q) τὸ ἀόριστον ἀληθές, τὸ “τις περιπατεῖ” ἢ “τις κάθηται”, ὅταν τὸ ὀρισμένον ἀληθές εὐρίσκηται, τὸ “οὗτος κάθηται” ἢ “οὗτος περιπατεῖ”. μηδενὸς γὰρ

<sup>67</sup> It strikes me as possible that the priority of sayables among the incorporeals is also suggested by their absence from the list mentioned in the following report from Stobaeus, where the remaining three kinds of incorporeal are likened to bodies: ‘Chrysippus said that bodies are divided to infinity, and likewise things comparable to bodies, such as surface, line, place, void, and time’ (Stob. 1. 142 (=LS 150A=SVF ii. 482), trans. Long and Sedley). The passage suggests to me that the *sayables* are the incorporeals *par excellence*; not, as Brunschwig suggests, the void (‘Metaphysics’, 213): for they alone among the incorporeals are so far from being bodies as not even to be comparable to bodies.

<sup>68</sup> For a different, beautifully constructed argument demonstrating the priority of *ὑπάρχει* as belonging to sayables in relation to its belonging to the present time, see Schofield, ‘Present’, 356–8.

τῶν ἐπὶ μέρους καθημένον οὐ δύναται ἀληθές εἶναι τὸ “τις κάθηται” ἀόριστον. (S.E. *M.* 8. 98 (=LS 34H=SVF ii. 205))

The indefinite ‘Someone walks’ or ‘Someone sits’ is true whenever the definite ‘This man sits’ or ‘This man walks’ is found to be true; for if none of the particulars is sitting, the indefinite ‘Someone sits’ cannot be true. (my translation)

In other words, predications involving the indefinite ‘something’ are true if and only if corresponding formulae containing demonstrative, indexical expressions are true; expressions, that is, that pick out individuals or particulars deictically.

This invites the question: what then are the truth-conditions of the indexical propositions the Stoics say are essentially involved in the truth-conditions of indefinite propositions? Sextus addresses the matter a few lines later:

(I) καὶ δὴ τὸ ὄρισμένον τοῦτο ἀξίωμα, τὸ “οὗτος κάθηται” ἢ “οὗτος περιπατεῖ”, τότε φασὶν ἀληθές ὑπάρχειν, ὅταν τῷ ὑπὸ τὴν δείξιν πίπτοντι συμβεβήκη τὸ κατηγορήματα, οἷον τὸ καθήσθαι ἢ τὸ περιπατεῖν. (S.E. *M.* 8. 100 (=LS 34I=SVF ii. 205))

And the definite proposition e.g. ‘This one sits’ or ‘This one walks’ is said to obtain truly whenever the thing indicated falls under the predicate, such as ‘sits’ or ‘walks’. (my translation)<sup>69</sup>

In other words, the fundamental truth-conditions of the simplest kind of proposition consist in the obtaining (or failure to obtain) of a predicate at an individual, in the sense given in the last section; that individual being the sort of thing at which one might point. That there is such a relevant demonstrable item is necessary for the truth of such less fundamental propositions as the indefinite ones. Put in modern terms: such general propositions as the existentially quantified ones require, in order to be true, the truth of atomic propositions. Such atomic propositions, if they are to give the truth-conditions for the existentially quantified ones, must essentially contain indexicals.

We have so far been dealing only with a symmetrical relation, that of material equivalence: indefinite propositions are true iff definite

<sup>69</sup> For an importantly related discussion see Alex. Aphr. *In An. Pr.* 402. 15–18 Wallies, where we are told that according to the Aristotelian tradition, if there is no such person as Callias then ‘Callias does not walk’ is just as false as ‘Callias walks’, there being the presupposition expressed by both, that ‘there is someone, Callias, and either walking or not walking obtains at him’ (ἔστι τις Καλλίας, τούτῳ δὲ ὑπάρχει ἢ τὸ περιπατεῖν ἢ τὸ μὴ περιπατεῖν).

ones are; and definite ones are true iff the relevant predicate obtains at the object indicated. The symmetry of this relation means it falls short of dependence: for dependence is non-symmetric.<sup>70</sup> We get dependence entering the subject once we reflect on the relation between complete definite sayables, and the availability of the items indicated by the demonstratives in those definite sayables.

For one of the most exotic features of Stoic propositional logic is their view that things—and crucially the only examples we have of such things are corporeal—can be referred to by demonstratives *only* while those things are in some sense available, even if they can be referred to by proper names at other times.

While Dion is alive, the body referred to by ‘Dion’ does not occupy the incorporeal predicate expressed by ‘is dead’. Hence in such circumstances no portion of the truth occupies the subsistent false proposition expressed by ‘Dion is dead’. Exactly the same considerations apply to the subsistent false proposition I express if I point at the animate Dion and say ‘This one is dead’.

But now suppose Dion has died. In those circumstances, I express a true proposition if I say ‘Dion is dead’, since the predicate ‘is dead’ now obtains at Dion; equally some portion of the truth occupies the propositional office expressed by ‘Dion is dead’. But if in these circumstances I say instead ‘*This one* is dead’, hoping to pick out the late Dion demonstratively, I do not manage to express *any* proposition. For according to the Stoics, Dion’s death has voided all those true or false sayables that formed the content of any sentences containing demonstrative reference to him. One may still speak of him, and speak truly, using his name. But one cannot succeed in expressing anything true or false of him by making use of a would-be deictic way of referring to him.<sup>71</sup>

Our source for this claim is Alexander:

<sup>70</sup> Dependence cannot be asymmetric, for intuitively everything depends for its being (of whatever mode) on *itself*. Nor can it be symmetric, given the abundance of cases in which the dependence relation clearly holds in only one direction: the Cheshire Cat’s smile depends on there being the Cheshire Cat; but there being the Cheshire Cat does not depend on whether or not he is smiling. Therefore dependence, whatever else may be said of it, is a non-symmetric relation like supervenience.

<sup>71</sup> ‘Voided’ in this paragraph does not mean ‘made false’. The ἀξίωμα expressed in English by ‘If it is day, it is not light’ does not express a possibility; hence it is not possibly true; hence it is necessarily false. But it is for all that a genuine subsisting ἀξίωμα among the sayables. Even though it can never obtain, it neither has been, nor could be, destroyed (φθείρεσθαι). In particular it could not be destroyed by such changes among bodies as those that remove indexical propositions about Dion from the realm of the sayables once he has perished.

(DD) (Χρύσιππος) . . . φησὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ συνημμένῳ τῷ “εἰ τέθνηκε Δίων, τέθνηκεν οὗτος” δεικνυμένου τοῦ Δίωνος ἀληθεῖ ὄντι τὸ μὲν ἡγούμενον (τὸ) “τέθνηκε Δίων” δυνατὸν εἶναι τῷ δύνασθαι ποτε ἀληθὲς γενέσθαι τὸ τέθνηκεναι Δίωνα, τὸ δὲ “τέθνηκεν οὗτος” ἀδύνατον· ἀποθανόντος γὰρ Δίωνος φθείρεσθαι τὸ ἀξίωμα τὸ “οὗτος τέθνηκε” μηκέτ’ ὄντος τοῦ τῆν δειξίν ἀναδεχομένου· ἐπὶ γὰρ ζώντος καὶ κατὰ ζώντος ἢ δείξις. (Alex. Aphr. *In An. Pr.* 177. 25–178. 1 Wallies (=LS 38F=SVF ii. 202a))

[Chrysippus] says that in the conditional ‘If Dion is dead, this one is dead’, which is true when Dion is being demonstratively referred to, the antecedent ‘Dion is dead’ is possible, since it can one day become true that Dion is dead; but ‘This one is dead’ is impossible. For when Dion has died the proposition ‘This one is dead’ is destroyed, the object of the demonstrative reference is no longer a being. For demonstrative reference is appropriate to, and said of, a living thing. (trans. Long and Sedley, modified)

Alexander reports Chrysippus as holding that when Dion is dead, the proposition ‘This one is dead’ becomes ‘impossible’; and this amounts to it being ‘destroyed’. These claims entail that Chrysippus must have meant that in such circumstances such propositions *cease even to subsist*. In such circumstances, they lose even that mode of being enjoyed by meaningful but false propositions, such as that expressed by an utterance of ‘It is day’ incorrectly tokened at night-time.

Chrysippus cannot mean anything less than that. He cannot be saying that ‘This one is dead’, said of Dion, is *true* once Dion is dead, for he would not then speak of that proposition’s impossibility or destruction. He cannot be saying instead that ‘This one is dead’, said of Dion, is *false* once Dion is dead. For ‘It is night’ said during the daytime is false without thereby being destroyed. Nor can he be saying that ‘This one is dead’, said of Dion, is *forever* false once Dion is dead. For ‘It will be night forever’ said at any time you like is forever false without thereby being destroyed: it subsists falsely for all of time. But by bivalence there is no third possibility for such a would-be proposition as the one expressed by ‘This one is dead’.<sup>72</sup> Therefore there is not even a subsisting proposition here, or any other proposition that would make demonstrative reference to such erstwhile beings as the late Dion.

There is therefore a contrast and comparison to be made between

<sup>72</sup> For the rigid Stoic commitment to bivalence see Cic. *De fato* 21–5 (=LS 20E); 38 (=LS 34C).

the weak dependence of Stoic places on bodies, and the kinds of dependence Stoic indefinite and definite propositions enjoy in relation to bodies. Propositions expressible by such forms as ‘*This man* is such-and-such’ depend for their very subsistence on their intended corporeal referents: for any such proposition, if it so much as subsists, its corresponding body must be an actual being, and *only* that body will do. Here contrast places: for any place you like there must be some body occupying it, but any body will do, and for any place we need not always have the same body occupying it. Places are like, not definite Stoic propositions, but the indefinite ones, those general propositions expressible by such forms as ‘*Someone* is such-and-such’, which require for their truth—for their obtaining—the truth, and hence subsistence of indexical propositions; but it does not matter exactly *which* bodies the indexicals refer to.<sup>73</sup> The point is obviously one of scope. According to the Stoic theory of place,  $(\forall x)(\exists y) (x \text{ is a place} \rightarrow y \text{ occupies } x)$ . According to their semantics  $(\exists x)(\forall y) (y \text{ subsists in relation to } x \rightarrow x \text{ is demonstrable})$ .

We have just seen how Stoic indefinite propositions depend for their very mode of being on the availability of demonstrable bodies. But the dependence of complete sayables on the material extends even further. For the Stoics were inclined to analyse universally quantified propositions as expressing indefinite propositions within the scope of conditionals. That is, they were inclined to think that such generalizations as ‘Man is mortal’, by which we express the universally quantified truth that all men are mortal, are just convenient ways of expressing such conditionals as ‘If something is a man, then *that* thing [ $\epsilon\kappa\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron$ ] is mortal’.<sup>74</sup> If such conditionals mean

<sup>73</sup> Are the fundamental units of Stoic ontology, bodies, the *only* demonstrable things? No; one can so indicate incorporeals as well, and this had better be so if the incorporeals are to belong to the widest genus of Stoicism, *Something*. For surely it is true that (i) ‘Something is the predicate expressed by “-is a piano”’. And surely it is true that (ii) ‘Something is the place currently occupied by my piano’, that (iii) ‘Something is the time at which my piano was manufactured’, and finally (iv) ‘Something is the unoccupied space known as “void” into which the cosmos will expand at conflagration’. But for these propositions to be true, by (Q), it must be true that all of an incomplete sayable predicate, an occupied place, an unobtaining time (for my piano was manufactured in the past), and an unoccupied region are deictically demonstrable. If (i)–(iv) are true then Stoic incorporeals, however shadowy their innocence of causality might make them, must nevertheless be no less demonstrable than the living body Dion. But that Stoic incorporeals must be demonstrable no less than bodies does not, I think, affect the asymmetry I am trying to argue for as far as their being is concerned.

<sup>74</sup> See e.g. S.E. *M.* 11. 8–11 (=LS 30I (=SVF ii. 224)). Sextus says that the con-

the same as universally quantified propositions, and the subsistence of the antecedents of those conditionals depends on the availability of various bodies, then it follows that *all* Stoic propositions (save perhaps, somehow, those using proper names, or other sorts of quantifier such as ‘many’, ‘most’, ‘few’) depend for their being on bodies.<sup>75</sup> Put another way: most contentful statements in Stoic dialectic (by ‘contentful’ I mean those that are true and have true antecedents, by contrast with those that are true merely because they have false antecedents) require, for both their truth and their very subsistence, the relevant bodies.<sup>76</sup>

Let us now put (Q), (I), and (DD) together. One obtains the key claim of Stoic Ontological Dependence (SOD):

(SOD) [‘Something is F’ is true  $\leftrightarrow$  ‘This thing is F’ is true (=Q+I)]  $\wedge$  [‘This thing is F’ subsists  $\rightarrow$  the referent of ‘This thing’ is available (=DD)].<sup>77</sup>

ditional ‘says the same thing in meaning’ as the universally quantified proposition ‘although it is verbally different’ (*τῆ μὲν δυνάμει τὸ αὐτὸ λέγει, τῆ δὲ φωνῇ διάφορον*). Caston, ‘Something and Nothing’, 196–9, very plausibly attributes the innovation to Chrysippus.

<sup>75</sup> You might think that generalizations with false antecedents count as an exception to this claim. That is, you might think that, since (U), ‘Every unicorn is mono-horned’, would get the Chrysippean analysis ‘If something is a unicorn, then it is mono-horned’, then since nothing is a unicorn, ‘Something is a unicorn’ is false, and therefore (U) as a whole is true; and true without requiring some fantastical body of a certain nature. But there is a problem about this. By (Q), ‘Something is a unicorn’ is true iff ‘This thing here is a unicorn’ is true. Therefore, by (Q) together with bivalence, ‘Something is a unicorn’ will be false iff ‘This thing here is a unicorn’ is false. But by (DD), ‘This thing here is a unicorn’ is not false at all, for there is no sayable it expresses; and if there is no demonstrative reference to the dead, as (DD) affirms, there is definitely no demonstrative reference to the altogether fictional. But if ‘This thing here is a unicorn’ is not false, then ‘Something is a unicorn’ will not be false either, by (Q). And if it is not false, then (U) cannot be true in virtue of its being false. In fact it must be that the expression ‘Something is a unicorn’ expresses no sayable at all.

<sup>76</sup> Some further mopping up: suppose every human perished. Then there would be no sayable expressed by tokens of ‘This one has died’. What would therefore become of the intuitively true sayable expressed by ‘Someone has died’? It could not be true, for it is true only if some relevant instance of ‘This one has died’ is true. But it could not be false either: for if it were then it would be true that ‘No one has died’. (Another reason: ‘Something is F’ is false iff every instance of ‘This thing is not F’ is true.) But in the imagined case there are not any subsisting items expressed by tokens of ‘This thing is not dead’. So such indefinite sayables are not true, nor are they false. But bivalence is unrestrictedly true according to the Stoics. Therefore the sayable expressed by ‘Someone has died’ must have been destroyed in these circumstances, no less than the ones containing indexicals.

<sup>77</sup> I would be happy for the second conjunct here to be a biconditional; but since all I need for my dependence claims is that it be a conditional, I leave things as I do.



I take it that by the transitivity of ‘ $\leftrightarrow$ ’ and ‘ $\rightarrow$ ’, the correctness of any indefinite proposition ultimately requires there to be some body at the bottom of a chain of semantic and ontological requirements. But as we have just seen, the Stoics are prepared to analyse universally quantified propositions as conditionals containing indefinite propositions as their antecedents. Therefore the truth of *all* quantified propositions (with the marginal exceptions just mentioned) is, for the Stoics, dependent on bodies. It is in this way at least that subsistence depends on corporeality, and is grounded by it.

We therefore have an answer to the worry with which this section began: if Stoic incorporeals are as relevantly office-like as I have attempted to show, why are *they* not prior to bodies? If Stoic metaphysics is grounded at all, why is it not grounded in subsisting incorporeals, with the bodies of Stoic physics coming only in their train? The answer is that complete sayables, the prior class among the incorporeals, ultimately depend, for their very mode of being, on the deictically demonstrable; that is, on bodies.

This paper therefore does justice to the surprising contrast with which we began. We can appreciate the priority of bodies within the Stoic Universe without having to suppose that they therefore denied the existence of, but then repeatedly quantified over, the incorporeals. Instead, alongside their materialism is a doctrine about other kinds of being, the *offices* required in order for bodies to alter in time and space, and thereby verify and falsify all manner of propositions. But conjoined to this theory of the incorporeals are some semantic commitments that nevertheless result in the non-material ultimately depending on, and to that extent being grounded by, the material.

It is now time to repeat a disanalogy between offices and Stoic incorporeals with which this section began. Offices do not bring their occupants with them, ontologically speaking: their number is fixed regardless of whether and what occupies them. But Stoic metaphysics does not keep its complete sayables fixed in number. They vary in quantity according to the fates of the bodies within the cosmos. The dependence of Stoic incorporeals on Stoic bodies is therefore hyperintensional: bodies and incorporeals stand to one another much as, in the familiar example, Socrates stands to his singleton set, Socrates. You will never get one without the other,

for all that the concrete former is prior to, and stands in a grounding relation to, the immaterial latter. But I do not see this as a defect in my analogy. Far from it. The work accomplished so far, if it is on the right track, enables us to see both how sympathetic to some sort of Platonism the Stoics are obliged to be, but also just how fundamental their materialism really is. Any model that helps us appreciate both of these contrasting features of their scheme at the same time, and renders it coherent, has much to be said for it. It is the task of the remainder of this paper to show how the model developed so far explains what happens when the Stoics confront the Platonists' immaterial objects, universals, directly.

### 5. Stoic universals

There is a grave problem with the reports we have about the Stoic attitude towards universals: their theory stands accused of perversity at best, downright incoherence at worst. That is a matter of history. But correlatively, there is a problem with one theory of universals, conceptualism, which seems to be the best candidate for what the Stoics intended.<sup>78</sup> That is a matter of philosophy. I now try to account for and defend the Stoic attitude that gives us the historical problem, in the hope that this will shed some light on the philosophical one.

Stoicism is in some sense realistic about universals.<sup>79</sup> For the

<sup>78</sup> This interpretation, for which I here offer new arguments, is that of D. N. Sedley, 'The Stoic Theory of Universals' ['Universals'], *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 23 (1985), 87–92.

<sup>79</sup> In what follows, I speak of 'universals' in the main text, but of 'concepts' in my translations. In English, the latter word is irritatingly ambiguous between a person's mental particular ('Gavin's concept of fish means he thinks whales are fish') and, by contrast, an immaterial mind-independent object with an extension ('Because whales fall under the concept *mammal*, they are not really fish'). Indeed, there are other uses. For example, see G. Bealer, *Quality and Concept* (Oxford, 1982), 10, who uses the expression for neither a genuine universal nor a mental particular: 'Consider the example of green and grue . . . Whereas green is a genuine quality . . . grue is only a concept (i.e. the concept expressed in English by the expression "green if examined before *t* and blue otherwise"). As such, grue plays no primary role in the objective, non-arbitrary categorization and identification of individuals' (my emphasis). The Stoics marked the difference by using *ἐννοια* for the mental particular and *ἐνώσημα* for the non-mental entity with the extension: that is, for the thing that objectively and non-arbitrarily collects together all and only individuals of a certain kind. Translators usually respect the difference by using 'conception' and 'concept' respectively. I shall nevertheless avoid the use of 'concept', in my own text at least, as

Stoics, universals are species and genera such as *man*, *horse*, *animal*.<sup>80</sup> To the extent that Stoic universals are identified with such items, they are as objective and mind-independent as species and genera. Consider, for example:

(SG1) γένος δέ ἐστι πλειόνων καὶ ἀναφαιρέτων ἐννοημάτων σύλληψις, οἷον ζῶων· . . . εἶδος δέ ἐστι τὸ ὑπὸ γένους περιεχόμενον, ὡς ὑπὸ τοῦ ζώου ὁ ἄνθρωπος περιέχεται. (D.L. 7. 60–1 (=LS 30C, part))

A genus is a collection of a plurality of inseparable concepts, such as *animal*. . . . A species is that which is contained within a genus, as *man* is contained within *animal*. (trans. Long and Sedley)

(SG2) εἰ μὲν ἐννοήματα εἶναι τὰ γένη καὶ τὰ εἶδη λέγουσιν, αἱ κατὰ τοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ καὶ τῆς φαντασίας ἐπιχειρήσεις αὐτοὺς διατρέπουσιν· εἰ δὲ ἰδίαν ὑπόστασιν αὐτοῖς ἀπολείπουσιν, τί πρὸς τοῦτο ἐροῦσιν; (S.E. PH 2. 219)

If, on the one hand, they [sc. the Stoics] assert that genera and species are concepts, then the criticisms of the ruling faculty and the imagination overthrow them. If instead they ascribe to them their own subsistence, how will they respond to the following question? (my translation)<sup>81</sup>

Yet Stoicism is in another sense profoundly *anti-realistic* about universals. According to some texts, universals are figments of the imagination: mere mind-made fictions. Some of those texts go even further in distancing universals from the real and objective. Accord-

dangerous given the ambiguity just mentioned, and speak of ἐννοήματα as universals rather than concepts. For whatever else is true of Stoic ἐννοήματα, they are immaterial individuals with extensions. To just that extent, I take myself to be justified in calling ἐννοήματα universals, while stopping short of using the English expression as a translation.

<sup>80</sup> In what follows I adopt the typographical conventions of e.g. J. Fodor, *Concepts: Where Cognitive Science Went Wrong* (Oxford, 1998), xii. That is, I use italics for properties, i.e. universals: so *man* is just *the property of being a man*; and I reserve capitalizations for the mental particulars: so MAN is just a mental representation of *man*. The distinction is meant to map that between, respectively, ἐννόημα and ἐννοια.

<sup>81</sup> This text presents a serious challenge to the interpretation of Caston, ‘Something and Nothing’. For it conversationally implies, if it does not outright entail, that even if the Stoics had different opinions about the ontological status of universals, there was never any possibility of ascribing them the ontological status enjoyed by the incorporeals, subsistence. For what Sextus here offers the Stoics is presumably meant to be an exclusive *dilemma*: either species and genera will be universals (ἐννοήματα); or they will have subsistence (ὑπόστασις) as their mode of being; *but not both*. If the Stoics were as realistic about universals as Caston rightly takes them to be, then they did not think of them as subsisting: for species and genera to be identified with universals is sufficient for them not to subsist.

ing to them, universals do not even belong to their widest genus, *Something*.<sup>82</sup> Paradoxical as it sounds, any universal you like does not even count as *something*, according to these attestations of the Stoic position. Consider, for example:

(NS1) Ζήνωνος (καὶ τῶν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ) τὰ ἐννοήματά φασι μήτε τινα εἶναι μήτε ποιὰ, ὡσανεὶ δέ τινα καὶ ὡσανεὶ ποιὰ φαντάσματα ψυχῆς. ταῦτα δὲ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχαίων ἰδέας προσαγορεύεσθαι. τῶν γὰρ κατὰ τὰ ἐννοήματα ὑποπιπτόντων εἶναι τὰς ἰδέας, οἷον ἀνθρώπων, ἵππων, κοινότερον εἶπεῖν πάντων τῶν ζώων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὁπόσων λέγουσιν ἰδέας εἶναι. ταύτας δὲ οἱ Στωϊκοὶ φιλόσοφοί φασιν ἀνυπάρκτους εἶναι, καὶ τῶν μὲν ἐννοημάτων μετέχειν ἡμᾶς, τῶν δὲ πτώσεων, ἃς δὴ προσηγορίας καλοῦσι, τυγχάνειν. (Stob. I. 136. 21 ff. (=LS 30A=SVF i. 65))

(Zeno's doctrine) They say that concepts are neither somethings nor qualified, but figments<sup>83</sup> of the soul which are quasi-somethings and quasi-qualified. These, they say, are what the old philosophers called Ideas. For the Ideas are of the things which are classified under the concepts, such as men, horses, and in general all the animals and other things of which they say there are Ideas. The Stoic philosophers say that they [sc. the Ideas] are unobtainable, and that what we 'participate in' is the concepts, while what we 'bear' is those cases that they call 'appellatives'. (trans. Long and Sedley, modified)

(NS2) συμπαρηληπτέον δὲ καὶ τὴν συνήθειαν τῶν Στωϊκῶν περὶ τῶν γενικῶν ποιῶν . . . πῶς (οὗ τινα τὰ κοινὰ παρ' αὐτοῖς λέγεται) . . . (Simpl. In Categ. 105. 9–11 Kalbfleisch (=LS 30E=SVF ii. 278))

One must also take into account the usage of the Stoics about generically qualified things . . . how in their school the common things [i.e. universals] are called 'not-somethings' . . . (trans. Long and Sedley, modified)<sup>84</sup>

<sup>82</sup> For the claim that *Something* is the widest genus in Stoic ontology see Sen. *Ep.* 58. 13–15 (=LS 27A=SVF ii. 332); Alex. Aphr. *In Top.* 301. 19–25 Wallies (=LS 27B=SVF ii. 329). I should add, although there is not space here to address, the fact that in the sentence immediately following those quoted as (SG) Diogenes says something inconsistent with this claim, namely that 'most generic is that which is a genus but has no genus—being' (γενικώτατον δὲ ἔστιν ὁ γένος ὄν γένος οὐκ ἔχει, οἷον τὸ ὄν).

<sup>83</sup> I here accept Long and Sedley's translation of φάντασμα as 'figment' while acknowledging Caston's concerns that the English is too pejorative, and 'apparition' is to be preferred (Caston, 'Something and Nothing', 172 n. 58). I prefer 'figment' to 'apparition', for of the two, only one sounds to me to be clearly a mental, mind-dependent phenomenon, which is what all parties must agree a φάντασμα to be. If ghosts are apparitions, and there are ghosts, then some apparitions at least are *not* merely mental.

<sup>84</sup> See also Origen, *In Ioh.* 2. 13. 93: καὶ ὡσπερ Ἑλλήνων τινές φασι, εἶναι τῶν οὐ

(NS3) ἐννοήματα δὲ ἐστὶ φάντασμα διανοίας, οὔτε τι ὄν οὔτε ποιόν, ὡσανεὶ δὲ τι ὄν καὶ ὡσανεὶ ποιόν, οἷον γίνεταί ἀνατύπωμα ἵππου καὶ μὴ παρόντος.  
(D. L. 7. 61 (=LS 30C))

A concept is a figment of thought, which is neither some being, nor a qualified thing, but it is *as if* it were some being and *as if* a qualified thing; in the way that an image of a horse arises even when none is present. (trans. Long and Sedley, modified)<sup>85</sup>

Stoic universals are therefore strange creatures indeed. They are in some sense comfortingly real and objective, in so far as they are species and genera, the mind-independent kinds to which individuals belong, the items of which any Stoic will speak whenever engaged in the characteristic practices of Stoic dialectic, definition, and division. They are in another sense disconcertingly unfamiliar and mind-dependent, perhaps even weirdly private, in so far as they are somehow mental while not themselves being any kind of individual. They are at best phantoms of the mind, at worst incoherent, some things that are not even somethings.

In what follows, I seek to explain firstly why the Stoics think of universals as ‘not-somethings’, and secondly how they can think of them both as being mental entities and as having an extension. Both tasks will oblige me to engage with Victor Caston’s magnificent paper on this topic.

As (NS1)–(NS3) suggest, the Stoics sought to give universals some obscure status on the very fringes of their ontology. The standard interpretation of these texts has the Stoics admitting that there *are* such things as universals, but denying them the status of *Something*, and thereby excluding them from their widest genus. Caston finds the claim that there is something that is not-something scarcely intelligible, and charitably reinterprets the Stoics as holding that each and every universal is indeed itself something, but

τινων τὰ γένη καὶ τὰ εἶδη, οἷον τὸ ζῶον καὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον (‘and just as some of the Greeks say, genera and species are not-somethings, for example *animal* and *man*’ (my translation)). Note that once again here we have εἶναι predicated, not just of the non-bodily, but of the *paradigmatically* non-bodily.

<sup>85</sup> My modification of Long and Sedley here expresses the agnosticism of this paper about translating εἶναι. Caston, ‘Something and Nothing’, 169, translates Diogenes as saying initially ‘A concept is an apparition of thinking, which is neither something *existent* . . .’. But given the (EP) as a criterion for existence, Diogenes would here be reporting the Stoics simply as saying no more and no less than that some figment of the imagination is not a body. And yet, as I shall argue in the main text, Diogenes is here attributing something much more radical and dramatic to the Stoic doctrine of universals.

nevertheless does not belong to the realm of the real (where this claim obviously amounts to more than affirming that universals are not fundamental, i.e. corporeal). If I am to present the view for which I argue later, I must first say something about this issue. Could the Stoics really have thought that there *are* universals, but still *excluded* them from their widest genus? My answer is yes, and requires a detailed treatment of Caston's contrary views.

Caston's objections to the intelligibility of 'not-somethings' are as follows:

1. Several sources indicate that, against Aristotle (*Metaph.* 1004<sup>b</sup>9–14; *Post. An.* 100<sup>b</sup>1–3), the Stoics maintained that there is in fact a highest genus, a genus that includes absolutely everything, namely the genus *Something*. If there are such things as not-somethings, they must lie outside this highest genus. In that case, then either (a) there is a further genus that encompasses both somethings and not-somethings, or (b) there is not. The former option (a) is unpalatable because no sources indicate, and neither can we easily guess, what the genus containing both somethings and not-somethings might be. The latter option (b) is unpalatable because then 'the status of being the highest genus is much less significant ontologically: it does not tell us about all there is'.<sup>86</sup> Therefore, we should avoid attributing to the Stoics a doctrine of not-somethings if we possibly can.

2. To say that there are not-somethings is tantamount to affirming that 'something is not-something'; and that is a straightforward contradiction. Any attempt to defang the contradiction with alternative formulations will, according to Caston, be mere wordplay at best.

3. Sextus Empiricus affirms that:

(NS4) καὶ μὴν εἰ διδάσκεται (τὸ) τί, ἤτοι διὰ τῶν οὐτινῶν διδαχθήσεται ἢ διὰ τῶν τινῶν. ἀλλὰ διὰ μὲν τῶν οὐτινῶν οὐχ οἷόν τε διδαχθῆναι· ἀνυπόστατα γάρ ἐστι τῇ διανοίᾳ ταῦτα κατὰ τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς στοᾶς. (S.E. M. 1. 17 (=LS 27C=SVF ii. 330))

If something is taught, it will be taught either through somethings or through not-somethings. But it cannot be taught through not-somethings, for these have no subsistence in thought [*ἀνυπόστατα τῇ διανοίᾳ*], according to the Stoics. (trans. Long and Sedley, modified)

<sup>86</sup> Caston, 'Something and Nothing', 163.

Caston translates ἀνπόστατα τῇ διανοίᾳ as ‘non-subsistent *for thought*’, which he understands as meaning ‘*unavailable* to thought’. In other words, he here has Sextus reporting that not-somethings, whatever they are, cannot even enter our thoughts. If Sextus is here correctly reporting a Stoic thesis about not-somethings, it would be most uncharitable to attribute to them also the view that universals are not-somethings. For that would be to attribute to them the view that universals cannot even enter our thoughts. But what is the use of any doctrine of universals that is (i) not straightforwardly eliminativist but which (ii) affirms that universals are unavailable to thought? Surely conceptualism about universals is not in so dire a position as this. On the contrary, conceptualism about universals aims to capture whatever middle ground is involved in (i) while denying precisely (ii): far from being unavailable to thought, universals are the useful creations of thought, and hence very much available to it. Caston takes the untenability of (i) and (ii) to be the most decisive of his three objections to the intelligibility of not-somethings. And he surely has a good point: there is something deeply weird, if not self-refuting, about the claim ‘There are these objective categories in the world; but they cannot so much as enter anyone’s thoughts.’

## REPLIES

In what follows I reply explicitly only to Caston’s 1 and 3; the response to his 1 in particular should make it clear that and why I reject his 2.

1’. The Stoics did hold that *Something* is the highest genus, but with an important qualification: they held that *Something* is the highest genus of *individuals*.<sup>87</sup> It contains all and only individuals, be they material bodies or incorporeals. But universals are not individuals, nor are they offices for individuals. Rather they are *quasi, as-if* individuals, as Stobaeus and Diogenes report; and this property marks their ontological difference from both bodies (ac-

<sup>87</sup> For this claim see D. N. Sedley, ‘Hellenistic Physics and Metaphysics’, in K. Algra, J. Barnes, J. Mansfeld, and M. Schofield (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1999), 353–411 at 410–11. See also Brunschwig, ‘Metaphysics’, 220: ‘To be something is to be *some* thing; that is, some *particular* thing . . .’. Brunschwig later advances (226) his own reasons for thinking that ‘It is probably unfair to demand from the Stoics that they introduce some supreme genus other than “something”, which would be common to somethings and not-somethings.’

tual individuals) and incorporeals (offices for individuals).<sup>88</sup> Since Stoic universals are neither bodies nor their offices, they are not even somethings: they lie so far away, ontologically speaking, from bodies that they do not even count as somethings. Conversely, if they were somethings, they would be bodies or their offices, and hence they would not be universals. The status of the highest genus *Something* is not made ‘much less significant ontologically’ because there are suitable subjects of quantification lying outside it. Rather, that status is clarified: *Something* is the highest genus of individuals and their offices, and anything that is not something is thereby neither an individual nor an office for one, whatever else may be true of its metaphysical status.

An office is itself a kind of individual. Or at any rate, whatever ontological differences there are between offices and the bodies capable of occupying them, they are not remotely captured by speaking of quasi-individuals. The hunk of metal on my wrist is an individual. It is numerically distinct from the office of my watch, for the reasons given earlier. But that is not to say that my watch is a quasi-individual. Equally, the office of the President of the United States is distinct from whatever living organism occupies it at any time. But it is not thereby made a quasi-individual. It is an individual *tout court*, just not any material one. Equally, the MB is an individual, just not one belonging to any faculty member, and quite unlike the individual bits of paper and periodicals etc. that can occupy individual mailboxes.

In fact, I am inclined to think the foregoing considerations from (Q) and (I) can be used to construct a simple *reductio* proof against Caston’s 1; a proof showing that if the Stoics thought that there is any sense in which there are universals, as they surely did, and also affirmed that *Something* is the highest genus, then they *ought* to have put universals outside it. Call the principle that one cannot deictically pick out either fictions or figments (and Stoic universals are figments by (NS3)) the *deixis* principle:

<sup>88</sup> This fact again speaks in favour of the analogy between incorporeals and offices. For there is no temptation whatsoever to think of an office as a quasi-individual. No one thinks that the office currently held by Barack Obama, and previously held by Clinton and Bush, is some fourth thing that is a bit like those three human substances but somehow more shadowy than they. That office is not a quasi-human in the way that a decoy duck is a quasi-duck. On the contrary, it is itself clearly an individual, but of a quite different kind. The Stoics were right not to be remotely tempted to think of incorporeals in the way they think of universals.



1. <i>Man</i> is something	Assumption
2. Something is <i>Man</i>	A, Conversion.
3. This thing is <i>Man</i>	2, (Q)
4. <i>Man</i> may be picked out	3, (I)
5. But <i>Man</i> may not be picked out	<i>deixis</i> <sup>89</sup>
6. ¬(This thing is <i>Man</i> )	5, (I)
7. ¬(Something is <i>Man</i> )	6, (Q)
8. ¬( <i>Man</i> is something)	7, Conversion
9. <i>Man</i> is not something	8, 1 RAA <sup>90</sup>

Now, I argued earlier that, since Stoic incorporeals lie within their broadest genus—since, that is, each is something—it follows by (Q) and (I) that Stoic incorporeals must be demonstrable. There is a beautiful example of what such demonstrating might amount to in the literature on this topic: ‘Mistaken. That is what you are if you doubt that I here demonstrate an immaterial something, the predicate of being mistaken.’<sup>91</sup> But you might threaten the case I am here building, and undermine the power of the *reductio* just formulated, by trying a similar trick with Stoic universals. Imagine something like: ‘*Man* is what you are thinking about when you think of that thing had in common by all and only human beings.’ The trouble here is that it will not be clear whether you and I are thinking of the same thing when we each think of *Man*: for as we are told in

<sup>89</sup> Note that this application of the *deixis* principle is just another way of stating the conclusion of the ‘No one’ argument the Stoics used against Platonic Forms (Simpl. *In Cat.* 105. 7–20 Kalbfleisch; D.L. 7. 187). This paper does not address that argument; but it is treated at length in Brunschwig, ‘Supreme Genus’, 130–1; Caston, ‘Something and Nothing’, 200–5; and Sedley, ‘Universals’, 87–8.

<sup>90</sup> I concede that one might reasonably have some qualms about the inferences in this *reductio* from 1 to 2, and from 7 to 8; that is, can one pass from *ἄνθρωπος τις ἐστὶ* to *τις ἄνθρωπος ἐστὶ*? I do not mean the qualm that some equivocation is going on: read aright, none is. I mean the qualm of so readily converting terms in Stoic logic. Such inferences are not merely tolerated but encouraged by Aristotle’s syllogistic and its core commitment to the thesis of interchangeability, with few exceptions (for the latter see P. T. Geach, ‘History of the Corruptions of Logic’, in id., *Logic Matters* (Oxford, 1972), 44–61 at 47–9). But Stoic logic is a propositional logic, not a term logic, and one in which indefinite statements such as ‘Something is a man’ count as *simple* propositions (see in particular D.L. 7. 69–70, and LS 34 in general). And as there is no monkeying around to be done inside the simple ‘It is day’, perhaps there is no getting the simple ‘Something is *Man*’ from the distinct but related ‘*Man* is something’. On the other hand, perhaps the very simplicity of 2 is a *reason* for getting it from 1. You would only resist the inference if you had some developed theory of something-said-of-something that resisted it, which the Stoics, to their credit, lack. On this issue see Barnes, *Truth*, 104–5.

<sup>91</sup> Denyer, ‘Stoicism’, 382.

(NS<sub>1</sub>) and (NS<sub>3</sub>), this universal is in some sense a figment of the mind. If you and I both form a mental image of, to switch the example, a horse, there will not in general be a fact of the matter about whether we are thinking of the same horse. There may be a fact of the matter about whether we think of the same thing when we each think of a fully fledged individual, be it a body or an incorporeal office for one; but not when the object of our thought is a mere quasi-individual. Therefore there will not in general be any horse that is the shared object of our mental images.<sup>92</sup> And if there is no such horse, there is no such deictically demonstrable horse, not even in the way in which I just picked out the predicate expressed by ‘-is mistaken’. Therefore when we think of universals, the thing about which we think, not being deictically demonstrable, will not be *something* either. Therefore if it is anything at all (as indeed it is, for it is a quasi-individual), it will be a not-something.<sup>93</sup>

That an item cannot be picked out demonstrably also allows us to clear up the status of fictional beings in the Stoic scheme. In his seminal paper on the topic, Jacques Brunschwig goes to impressive lengths to persuade us that fictional entities such as centaurs and giants are, like Stoic concepts, not-somethings.<sup>94</sup> But this truth follows much more straightforwardly from the truth that whatever fictions are, they are indemonstrable, for much the same reason that figments are indemonstrable offered in the last paragraph. Since there is no picking out of the mythical, there is therefore no proper quantification over them as somethings in the sense required by (Q). Even if it is true that ‘Pegasus is a winged horse’ is an instance of the general ‘Something is a winged horse’, it cannot be by Stoic lights that the former entails the latter. Put yet another way: since Pegasus

<sup>92</sup> Even if our respective tokens of HORSE are of precisely the same type, finely individuated.

<sup>93</sup> Hence there is considerable temptation to ascribe to the Stoics some crude version of some distinction between *content* and *object*, and have their theory of universals make them a composite of the two: so that when I think of *Horse*, the content of my thought—my HORSE—is a mental image peculiar to me, and not thinkable by you, while its object is just the species, the objective collection containing all and only the horses: that is, the referent of ‘*Horse*’. In the main text I shall later argue for something like this.

<sup>94</sup> See Brunschwig, ‘Supreme Genus’, 99–103. His argument puts him in disagreement with the interpretation of Long and Sedley, who hold, largely on the basis of Sen. *Ep.* 58. 13–15 (=LS 27A=SVF ii. 322), that fictional entities belong *in-side* the genus *Something*, but for all that are neither corporeal nor incorporeal, and hence that the last two properties do not exhaust the contents of *Something*. See LS, 163–4.

is a fiction, there can be no definite Stoic proposition (*axiōma*) mentioning him; and for this reason there cannot be any indefinite way of quantifying over such things either.

3'. Caston takes the observation he makes in 3 to be the master argument among his triumvirate. The key idea is that in (NS<sub>4</sub>) Sextus reports the Stoics as holding that not-somethings are not *subsistent* to thought (*anupostata tēi dianoiai*). They are therefore, he infers, *unavailable* to thought. They therefore cannot be concepts, however you understand that term; and we need to ask again, with much suspicion this time, whether the Stoics really thought that universals are not-somethings.

The appeal to non-subsistence, to (for, in) thought or otherwise, hardly seems to make a case against attributing to the Stoics an analysis of universals as not-somethings.<sup>95</sup> There are several texts saying they held universals to be not-somethings; and if they are not-somethings, above, beyond, but otherwise absent from the Stoic highest genus *Something*, it will straightforwardly *follow* that they do not subsist. For according to our sources only somethings subsist. One cannot be a subsistent and a not-something.<sup>96</sup> If Stoic universals are not-somethings, then they do not subsist. And if they do not subsist, it is hardly news to be told that they do not subsist to, for, or in, thought: that follows *a fortiori* from their not subsisting at all. It is quite compatible with this, as the traditional interpretation has it, that Stoic universals' being fit subjects for quantification is a matter of their being, in some sense, *products of* thought, and hence to be sure available to it.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Brunschwig, 'Metaphysics', 226–7, would agree; but not, I think, for quite my reasons.

<sup>96</sup> I think only somethings subsist. But it might be that *all and only* somethings subsist. A. Ju, 'The Stoic Ontology of Geometrical Limits', *Phronesis*, 54 (2009), 371–89, argues persuasively that in fact corporeal being is itself a species of subsistence. According to her construction of the Stoic scheme, with Seneca's *Epistle* 58 taken into account, all somethings, with the exception of fictional entities, subsist; and subsistence splits into two species, the existent (bodies) and the incorporeals. Bodies do not merely subsist; they make it all the way to the fullest kind of being there is, that of the causally networked, while their dependents, place, times, and meanings, are the *mere* subsistents. Ju's paper, into whose intricacies I cannot enter here, is a further reminder of the wisdom of dispensing with existence talk when approaching the Stoics. For if she is right, then it is really *subsistence* that corresponds to the Quinean concept of existence. And that will be even more reason to be horrified by those interpretations of Stoicism imputing to them the view that 'the incorporeals do not exist'.

<sup>97</sup> According to Seneca's report of the Stoics in *Epistle* 58, such fictions as centaurs and giants lack subsistence ('non habeat substantiam'), arrived at as they are by some

Therefore, this lone text of Sextus' seems to carry much less weight than Caston gives it. Certainly it cannot be a master argument *against* the idea that the Stoics had a doctrine of not-somethings. Instead, it looks like something one finds Sextus doing all the time: taking something the Stoics did say (that universals, being not-somethings, do not (even) subsist); stretching their point reasonably (that since not-somethings do not subsist, they do not subsist to (for, in) thought); and then adding his own opinion (not-somethings cannot therefore be used to teach anyone anything) in order to attack the Stoics. His doing so should not make us any the less persuaded that the Stoics did indeed analyse universals as not-somethings. The arguments of this section, especially those deploying (Q) and (I), tell us that in fact they had every reason to do so.

(a) *Why universals could not be offices*

I earlier tried to analyse Stoic incorporeals as offices. I now redepoly that analysis to answer the question of why universals could not be among the incorporeals for the Stoics; and why neither could any of the incorporeals do the job of universals in their scheme.

Let us turn briefly to Sextus' report of yet another reason why Stoic universals must have the queer status they do. Sextus' point is that Stoic species and genera (which are universals by (SG)) can be no more than (at best) quasi-individuals, for if they were proper individuals then they would violate the Stoic commitment to bivalence:

(GEN) ὦν γὰρ τὰ εἶδη τοῖα ἢ τοῖα, τούτων τὰ γένη οὔτε τοῖα οὔτε τοῖα, οἶον τῶν ἀνθρώπων οἱ μὲν εἰσὼν Ἕλληνες οἱ δὲ βάρβαροι, ἀλλ' ὁ γενικὸς ἀνθρώπος οὔτε Ἕλληνα ἐστίν, ἐπεὶ πάντες ἂν οἱ ἐπ' εἶδους ἦσαν Ἕλληνες, οὔτε βάρβαρος διὰ τὴν αὐτὴν αἰτίαν. (S.E. M. 7. 246 (=LS 30F=SVF ii. 361))

For of things whose species are of this kind or that kind, the genera are neither of this nor of that kind. For example, of men some are Greeks, others barbarians; but the generic man is neither Greek (since then all specific men would be Greek) nor barbarian (for the same reason). (trans. Long and Sedley)

The idea, suitably generalized, is as follows. Imagine the individual sort of false thinking ('falsa cogitatione formatum'). But we should not infer from this that Seneca is reporting the Stoics as thinking that fictions are unthinkable.

one might get from reifying a genus: say the genus of the Fs. This would be, in appropriately Platonic language, The F. And suppose that the genus of the Fs divides into exclusive and exhaustive species, the Fs that are G, and the Fs that are un-G.<sup>98</sup> Every F is either G or un-G; no F is both. Now what about the product of our reification, The F itself: is it G or un-G? It cannot be G, for then every member of the genus from which we reified The F would have to be G. But some Fs are un-G. The same reasoning shows that The F is not un-G either. So The F is neither G, nor un-G. But that violates the Stoic commitment to bivalence. If The F itself is not G, then 'The F itself is G' is not true; but it cannot be false either, for then 'The F is un-G' would be true. Therefore, as Sextus is here reporting, the Stoic commitment to bivalence is inconsistent with reifying genera—that is, universals—in anything like the fashion in which Plato did.<sup>99</sup>

This argument demonstrates decisively why there could not be a reified Stoic universal, the generic man. It shows why, of necessity, '*Man*' does not designate some office occupiable by some body, which when occupied would yield some individual man.<sup>100</sup> For anything to count as a man, he must be either Greek or non-Greek. But by the argument above, *Man* cannot be either, on pain of either all men being Greek, or no men at all being Greek. That is why the universal *Man* is not an office for any individual. That is why it, and all other universals, belongs to a class outside that of the four incorporeals.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>98</sup> The assumption of exhaustiveness is not necessary to make the point; but it helps to make it more vivid.

<sup>99</sup> For a more detailed treatment of this argument see Caston, 'Something and Nothing', 187–92.

<sup>100</sup> The idea is easily missed: see Caston, 'Something and Nothing', 188: 'To think of man generically—or as the Stoics also seem willing to say, of "the generic man" . . . 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 . . .'. But this is not right. To think of an *arbitrary* man is to think of some *individual* man. But no individual man enjoys *only* those properties enjoyed by *all* men. Therefore to think of an arbitrary man is *not* to think of something with all and only those characteristics that every man has.

<sup>101</sup> That is also why, as I tried to express in my modification of Long and Sedley, the crucial report of Stobaeus (=NS1) tells us that according to the Stoics, Platonic Ideas 'are unobtainable' (*ἀνοπάρκτους*). They are unobtainable because *Man* is not an office occupiable by an individual: as it were, no man could be *Man*. According to my interpretation, participating in a universal is *not* a matter of occupying an office, which is part of the reason why Stoic universals are not-somethings (and also part of the reason why, unlike the incorporeals at various times, Stoic universals are

Perhaps the point is best put by contrast with universals. No body could be the generic man, because any genuine man will bring with him properties that do not belong to all men. It is for a quite opposite reason that no body could be Sherlock Holmes, if we were to assume that being Sherlock is just a matter of satisfying all and only the claims Conan Doyle makes of Sherlock. For no such being would be a man: no such being would have *enough* properties, since any man is required to have properties besides those, no matter how intricate, that Conan Doyle ascribes to Sherlock Holmes. If instead we specify that anything must at least have all those properties needed to be a man in order to be identical to Sherlock, then once again there are too many candidates; once again, *Sherlock* is not an office occupiable by any individual.<sup>102</sup> Once again, we see the kinship between those two not-somethings of Stoic ontology, universals and fictions.

It is hence quite natural that the Stoics speak as frequently as they do of universals as being phantasms or mental images.<sup>103</sup> For again, these are not like offices or the things that occupy them, for

by nature unobtaining (*ἀνυπάρκτους*). Meanwhile, bearing a case *is* a matter of occupying an office. When some body is a particular human being, she occupies the predicable (an incomplete sayable) expressed by '-is a human'. I think it is this that Stobaeus is here conveying with his report of '*ἀνυπάρκτους*', rather than the rather different point, understood by Caston, 'Something and Nothing', 176–9, that according to the Stoics Platonic Forms are *nothing at all*. However, I am otherwise fully persuaded by Caston's excellent argument that the Stoics meant, not to *identify* or *reduce* Platonic Forms to *ἐννοήματα*, but to *eliminate* the former altogether in favour of the latter as they understood them.

<sup>102</sup> For such arguments in a modern context see S. A. Kripke, *Naming and Necessity* (Oxford, 1981), 66–7; C. A. McGinn, *Logical Properties: Identity, Existence, Predication, Necessity, Truth* (Oxford, 2000), 41. Similar ideas, albeit ones motivated less clearly by considerations that *τις* is always an expression for an individual having determinates of determinables, are suggested by Brunschwig, 'Supreme Genus', 99. I lack the space to develop these points in connection with the Stoic theory of categories, but for what it is worth I hold that the arguments of this section give us a better way of understanding the italicized expressions in Diogenes' report (= (NS3)) that 'A concept is a phantasm of thought, which is neither some being, *nor a qualified thing*, but it is as if it were some being and *as if a qualified thing*'. *Man* and *Sherlock Holmes* are not individuals; and part of the reason for this is that necessarily they do not enjoy, and hence are not qualified by, the sorts of determinates of determinables typically enjoyed by individuals.

<sup>103</sup> I agree with Brunschwig, 'Supreme Genus', 101, that mental images can be of not-somethings without being of universals: that is, the objects of some mental images may be quasi-particular, fictional *νοούμενα* without being of *ἐννοήματα*. I give an example in my closing paragraph. If I dream of a tiger, there is not generally some real particular tiger of which I dream. But nor is the object of my dream the universal *Tiger*.

they come without relevant determinates. If anything is to occupy the offices of ‘my watch’ or ‘The President of the United States’, such things must have all sorts of precise determinates, of mass, extension, colour, etc. But mental images not only do not, but cannot have such determinates. I did indeed dream of a tiger last night, and it did indeed have stripes; but there is no such thing as the number of stripes had by the tiger I dreamt of last night. And to this extent at least the tiger of which I dreamt is quite unlike any real tiger.

(b) *Stoic conceptualism*

So much for my reasons for continuing to think that the Stoics held that universals are not-somethings. I now turn to the issue of the Stoics’ conceptualism.

According to Caston’s interpretation, Stoic universals have only two features:

- (i) Universals have extensions.<sup>104</sup> (See e.g. (SG))
- (ii) Universals are *entirely* intentional objects.<sup>105</sup> (See e.g. (NS<sub>1</sub>) and (NS<sub>3</sub>))

But this gives us a problem. How can any object be both *entirely* intentional *and* mind-independent enough to have anything worthy of the name ‘extension’? If something has an extension, it is part of the furniture of the universe. But if it is *that*, it is not a *mere* figment of the mind.<sup>106</sup> I know of no better way to put the point for this context than a remark of Elizabeth Anscombe’s. She is expounding

<sup>104</sup> Caston, ‘Something and Nothing’, 159–60.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid. 185: ‘Concepts are *merely* intentional objects—they are completely without being and so cannot provide the *explanantia* the Platonist seeks.’ For whatever it is worth, the locution ‘*they are completely without being*’ sounds as bad to my ears as ‘*there are not-somethings*’. Obviously, I deny that the Stoics held that universals are *completely without being*. On the view of metaphysics this paper has tried to use to shed light on the Stoics, *nothing* is completely without being, not even contradictory objects such as round squares: the latter are just necessarily unoccupied offices.

<sup>106</sup> I agree with Caston, ‘Something and Nothing’, 173, that ‘[a *φάντασμα*] is *not* a mental state, but an intentional object towards which certain mental states are directed’. He must here be right, for if the *φαντάσματα* with which Diogenes here identifies *ἐννοήματα* were mental states, then *ἐννοήματα* would be *ἐννοιαί*. That would be bad enough. But worse, *ἐννοήματα* would then be bodies, for Stoic mental states generally are corporeal qualifications of the corporeal soul (see e.g. Plut. *Comm. not.* 1084 A (=LS 28A); Calcid. *In Tim.* 220 (=LS 53G=SVF ii. 879); Nemes. *Nat. hom.* 291. 1–6 Morani (=LS 53O=SVF ii. 991). But in that case, Stoic universals would be not just something, but real beings, bodies passing the (EP).

Aristotle (and echoing Wittgenstein): ‘if they are not marked out by anything, we cannot mark them out: if we do, they *are* marked out’.<sup>107</sup>

The point can be put more historically. Plato had already argued, in a text no doubt known to the Stoics (*Parm.* 132 B–C), that his Forms cannot be identified with thoughts. For that will invite the question what these thoughts are thoughts *of*: and whatever ends up appearing to the right of that preposition in some satisfying answer will itself have a better claim to be the Form in question than the thought itself.<sup>108</sup> For Plato is well aware that nothing can do the job required of Forms while still belonging only to the mind: and as Socrates admits, that is just where thoughts belong (132 B 4–5).<sup>109</sup>

Caston’s own illuminating illustration of the pure intentionality of Stoic universals reveals the problem sharply. Stoic universals are, he tells us, like Macbeth’s dagger. Macbeth’s dagger is indeed an excellent example of something entirely intentional. (Which particular, individual dagger was Macbeth hallucinating? None of them of course.) But to just that extent it is hard to see how anything so insufficiently objective could have anything as mind-independent as an *extension*.<sup>110</sup> Put another way: Macbeth’s dagger is in no way objective; it is a figment of his guilt-addled mind. It therefore lacks extension altogether; it could only be a joke to say that it is something under which all and only daggers fall.<sup>111</sup> But Stoic universals

<sup>107</sup> G. E. M. Anscombe, ‘The Principle of Individuation’, in ead., *Collected Philosophical Papers*, i. *From Parmenides to Wittgenstein* (Oxford, 1991), 57–65 at 60.

<sup>108</sup> As is acknowledged, without, I think, the sort of explanation I seek to provide, by Sedley, ‘Universals’, 88.

<sup>109</sup> ἄλλά, φάναι, ὃ Παρμενίδη, τὸν Σωκράτη, μὴ τῶν εἰδῶν ἕκαστον ἢ τούτων νόημα, καὶ οὐδαμοῦ αὐτῷ προσήκη ἐγγίνεσθαι ἄλλοθι ἢ ἐν ψυχαῖς.

<sup>110</sup> See Brunschwig, ‘Supreme Genus’, 113 n. 52, for the crucial observation that according to (NS1), ‘even if X is quasi Y, X still is not Y’. Brunschwig uses this to protest against Seneca’s attempt, in *Epistle* 58, to argue against the Stoic view that the supreme genus is *quid* rather than *quod est*. Caston, ‘Something and Nothing’, 173, helpfully observes here: ‘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.’ But again, this observation, while correct, seems to me to undermine Caston’s comparison between Stoic universals and Macbeth’s dagger in particular; and to again call into question the reductivism about universals he sees in them in general. If universals are determined by extra-mental qualities, then they are not purely intentional entities; nor are they usefully thought of as useful fictions, since there is something quite un-fictional about them, namely the relation they bear to their objective, mind-independent extensions.

<sup>111</sup> Note that even if you followed Meinong and supposed that Macbeth’s dagger



are species and genera, and hence to at least that extent objective. They carve the beast of reality at its joints; nothing doing that job, though, can also be relevantly like Macbeth's dagger.<sup>112</sup>

The point can be made more precise by relating it directly to one of our most important texts in this context, (NS1). One principle we can surely extract from the last sentence of (NS1) is the following:

(NS1') X participates in the universal *Man* iff X bears the appellative 'Man'; put another way, X participates in the universal *Man* iff the sayable expressed by '-is a man' obtains at X.

Again, (NS1') surely tells us that whatever Stoic universals are they are not merely intentional entities. A merely intentional entity such as Macbeth's dagger is whatever the person entertaining it thinks it is and nothing else besides. If my fever gives me the hallucination that before me is something that is both a hawk and a handsaw, then what I hallucinate is a hawk, and a handsaw. But no such thing can ever be true of Stoic universals if (NS1') is right. For they come bearing hard and fast logical relations to sayables, which, as I have

had to be part of the furniture of the universe in some sense, just because he manages to refer to it, and with a demonstrative to boot ('Is *this* a dagger which I see before me?'), that would still not be sufficient for Macbeth's hallucination *to have an extension*. Caston perhaps misses this problem because his sights are set on an aspect of realism about universals evinced by Plato that he rightly takes the Stoics to be rejecting, and as forming no part of whatever realism they are prepared to tolerate. I mean the idea that universals are *causes of* or *explanations for* the way sensible particulars are. I have said little about this topic in this paper because Caston's insights on the matter seem so decisive. But observing that the Stoics reject this feature of Platonism, and might be right to have done so while still being realists of a sort, is not by itself sufficient to show their position to be coherent. Even once we have admitted that universals lack causal powers of any sort, the question remains how they can be both mind-made and objective.

<sup>112</sup> This crucial point seems to elude Brunschwig, 'Supreme Genus', 103, shortly after he notes its very importance: 'Universal Man, a phantom-object created in our imagination by our noetic activity, is a *chimaera* just as much and for the same reasons as the universal centaur is' (my emphasis). This overlooks the crucial difference between them that Brunschwig has earlier noted: the Universal *Man* has actual individuals in its extension; the universal *Centaur* has either nothing at all, or merely quasi-individuals, in its extension. And this metaphysical difference between the two will not be explained merely by citing, as Brunschwig does, the facts of the philosophy of mind in connection with each of these intentional items, namely that our conception (*ἐννοια*) of the one is formed from our direct experience of actual men, while our conception of the other is formed from some method of mediation or transference in the manner suggested by D.L. 7. 53 (=LS 39D=SVF ii. 87).

argued, are as objective and mind-independent features of reality as the very bodies that ground them.

Precisely this tension had already been noticed in the literature on Stoic universals, and a solution proposed, by David Sedley. At the conclusion of his paper, aware of the apparent tension between the fact that Stoic universals both have extensions and are described as mental fictions, Sedley asks: 'Is this a real contradiction?' I have thus far suggested that it is. Sedley continues: 'I doubt it. The logical and metaphysical outlawing of concepts [i.e. their being banished beyond the realm even of the incorporeals, to the status of not-somethings] is not a denial of their epistemological value. It is a warning to us not to follow Plato's path of hypostatizing them.'<sup>113</sup>

The trouble is that this response alone does not do anything more to resolve the tension than Caston does. Granted, the Stoics do not reify universals as Plato did: their observation in (GEN) is sufficient to dissuade them from that. But even Plato probably realized that his own middle-period attempt at reifying universals was seriously mistaken: such is a very plausible way of taking the Third Man Argument and other puzzles from the *Parmenides*. But equally, few deny that Plato continued to be a realist about Forms, or think that he ever took seriously the idea that they could be reduced to, or eliminated in favour of, mental entities. The trouble is that in this the Stoics *followed* Plato, in having universals as objective species and *genera*.

(c) *The solution*

We have already seen one piece of the metaphysical machinery deployed in this paper—offices—contribute to our understanding of why the Stoics put universals even further away from bodies than they placed the incorporeals. For incorporeals are offices for bodies, while as (GEN) makes clear, universals could not be. I now use the other piece of machinery, the metaphysics of ontological dependence, to reconcile the intentionality of Stoic universals with their enjoyment of extensions.

It is frequently the case in metaphysics that while the options of being a *realist* about Fs and being an *anti-realist* about Fs are clearly exclusive, they are not clearly exhaustive; there is some *via media*. This is what conceptualism about universals tries to do. It tries to

<sup>113</sup> Sedley, 'Universals', 89.

say that realism about universals is correct, but in a way that should not upset nominalists.<sup>114</sup> But it is a deeply unattractive position. For to say ‘There are Fs, but only in people’s minds’ is to give something with one hand and immediately withdraw it with the other.<sup>115</sup> For after all, saying ‘The Fs are only in your mind’ is one of many ways to say: there are not any Fs. To say that X is a figment of your imagination is to say that there is no X.<sup>116</sup>

If we are to save Stoic conceptualism from this charge, then there will have to be some distinction in their theory, as there is not in the crude conceptualism just outlined, which yields some coherent alternative to realism and anti-realism about universals. Fortunately there is such a distinction. It is just that between the kinds of object Stoic universals are, and those things of which they are the objects.

Let us take more seriously the oft-used metaphor of the shadow in this context: conceptualism is the view that universals are sha-

<sup>114</sup> ‘Conceptualism holds that there are Universals, but they are mind-made . . . nominalists . . . object to admitting abstract entities at all, even in the restrained sense of mind-made entities’ (Quine, ‘On What There Is’, 14–15). Quine here writes as if conceptualism is an alternative to nominalism, one which makes concessions to realism that nominalists cannot tolerate. But on the very same page Quine speaks of ‘the old *opposition* between *realism* and conceptualism’ (my emphasis). That is, after characterizing realism and conceptualism about universals, he implies that the two *cannot both be true together* (and in his opinion they are both false). Put another way, it seems that one cannot consistently say that there *are* universals, but then say that they are *mind-made*. But that is just the problem we find in Stoicism.

<sup>115</sup> The self-cancelling that results from each aspect of conceptualism is no mere verbal slip. For a mere verbal slip see C. S. Peirce’s formulation of the type/token distinction: ‘There will ordinarily be about twenty the’s on a page, and of course they count as twenty words. In another sense of the word “word”, however, there is but one word “the” in the English language; and it is impossible that this word should lie visibly on a page or be heard in any voice, for the reason that it is not a Single thing or a Single event. It does not exist; it only determines things that do exist. Such a definitely significant Form, I propose to term a ‘Type’ (*Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, 8 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), iv. 537, underlining mine). It really is not the case that some of the contradictory-sounding things the Stoics said about items on the margins of their ontology manifest any peculiarly antique flavour.

<sup>116</sup> The point is made beautifully by Arthur Prior: ‘to say that there are centaurs in some person’s mind is to say that *that person thinks or imagines that* there are centaurs. . . . in general, to say that X is the case in some non-real world is to say that X is the case with some modifying prefix like “Greek myth-makers have said that”, “Jones imagines that”, or “It could be that”. But to say that X is the case in the real or the actual world, or that it is really or actually or in fact the case, is just to say that it is the case—flat, and without any prefix whatever . . . There is, if you like, no other place than the real world for God or centaurs to exist in . . . for God or centaurs to exist in the real world . . . is just for God or centaurs to exist’ (A. N. Prior, ‘The Notion of the Present’, *Studium generale*, 23 (1970), 245–8 at 246).

dows cast by our minds. As such, shadows are ontologically dependent on the things of which they are shadows, namely corporeal objects capable of blotting out rays of light. And yet shadows are in a sense robustly objective: they are public, measurable objects with a determinate size and shape that is simply not up to those whose shadows they are. There may be no fact of the matter about how many stripes the tiger I dreamt of last night had, or how heavy he was; or those facts may be up to me alone, as it is up to Conan Doyle alone whether Sherlock Holmes had an illegitimate child. But there is a fact of the matter about how large my shadow is, and of just what shape it is: and these things will vary objectively and determinately relative to my position in relation to the light source and the medium for the shadow. To sum up: if we were not here, neither would our shadows be; but for all that, our shadows have spatial extensions that are not up to us or controllable by anything like individual voluntary acts of the imagination.<sup>117</sup>

If Stoic universals are like shadows, what are the objects that cast them? The answer should already have been suggested by the whole thrust of this paper: something from the realm of the fundamental entities, bodies. And in fact that is just what we read: Stoic universals are the intentional objects of conceptions, mental states (*ennoiai*). Here is not the place to go into the Stoic theory of mental states, a far more developed matter as far as our surviving sources go than their theory of universals.<sup>118</sup> Suffice it to say that such mental states are unquestionably corporeal according to the Stoics: the point was made right at the start of this paper.<sup>119</sup>

Can we find anything like the shadow model in our texts? Fortunately we can, this time from the doxographer Aëtius (first/second century AD):<sup>120</sup>

<sup>117</sup> Hence my insistence on the inexhaustiveness of various realisms and anti-realisms. It would not be right to be anti-realistic about shadows: for they are not like unicorns and ghosts. But that is not an argument in favour of realism about shadows: for such realism might not contain the crucial issue of their ontological dependency on corporeal objects.

<sup>118</sup> See for this issue H. Dyson, *Prolepsis and Ennoia in the Early Stoa* (Berlin and New York, 2009).

<sup>119</sup> And for the view that Stoic bodily impressions are the primary bearers of intentionality, see e.g. D.L. 7. 43. 5–44. 1 (=LS 31A) and S.E. M. 8. 70 (=LS 33C = SVF ii. 187).

<sup>120</sup> The texts either side of these sentences are mentioned by Brunschwig, 'Supreme Genus', 101 n. 18, 102 nn. 19, 22, 127 n. 82, and Caston, 'Something and Nothing', 172, for what they tell us about the Stoic attitude to *ἐννοιαί* and *φάντα-*

- (M) ἔστι δ' ἐννόημα φάντασμα διανοίας λογικοῦ ζώου· τὸ γὰρ φάντασμα ἐπειδὴν λογικῇ προσπίπτῃ ψυχῇ, τότε ἐννόημα καλεῖται, εἰληφὸς τοῦνομα παρὰ τοῦ νοῦ—Διόπερ τοῖς ἀλόγοις ζώοις ὅσα προσπίπτει, φαντάσματα μόνον ἔστιν, ὅσα δὲ ἡμῖν καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς, ταῦτα καὶ φαντάσματα κατὰ γένος καὶ ἐννόηματα κατ' εἶδος· ὡσπερ τὰ δηνάρια καὶ οἱ στατήρες αὐτὰ μὲν καθ' αὐτὰ ὑπάρχει δηνάρια (καὶ) στατήρες· ἐὰν δὲ εἰς πλοίων δοθῇ μίσθωσιν, τηνικαῦτα πρὸς τῷ δηνάρια εἶναι καὶ ναῦλα λέγεται. (Aët./ps.-Plut. *Plac.* 4. 11. 4–5/900 C 4–D 14 (=SVF ii. 83, part))

And a concept is a figment of the intellect of a rational animal; for when a figment occurs in a rational soul, then it is called a 'concept' [ἐννόημα], taking its name from 'intellect' [νοῦς]. Therefore those that strike irrational animals are mere figments; but those that occur in the gods and in us are both figments, according to genus, and conceptions, according to species; *just as denarii and staters are, considered in themselves, just denarii and staters, but when they are given as fare on a ship, then they are called 'ship fare' in addition to denarii.* (trans. Inwood and Gerson, modified)

No single report of the Stoic attitude to universals makes quite so clear the problem we have been dwelling on: that they are at the same time intentional objects, but with some sort of objective correlate in the world, which makes them different from mere figments of the sort that even non-rational animals can enjoy, or from fictions. And no single text gives us a more helpful model for how such a thing might be possible. (Shadows are mentioned later on in

*σῑαι*. But what *these* sentences have to tell us about Stoic ἐννόηματα has not, I think, so far been adequately appreciated. This is partly no doubt because Long and Sedley refrain from translating them in their volume i, demoting them instead to an appearance labelled only by a lower-case letter (30j) in their volume ii. Their reasoning is as follows: 'This text is completely out of step with all the other evidence on ἐννόηματα. It represents them as *any* figments of a rational mind, implicitly including fictional individuals like Pegasus.' But there is nothing here to suggest that the source is purporting to give a rigorous, exceptionless definition of an ἐννόημα. Long and Sedley never say why the source here cannot be giving a correct description of ἐννόηματα that falls short of an exceptionless definition. (The title of this section of *Placita philosophorum* is Πῶς γίνεται ἡ αἴσθησις καὶ ἡ ἔννοια καὶ ὁ κατὰ ἐνδιάθεσιν λόγος, 'How perception, conception, and internal speech [ἐνδιάθεσιν] come about'. (Long and Sedley use 'internal speech' for ἐνδιαθέτω as it occurs at S.E. *M.* 8. 275 (LS 53T=SVF ii. 223).) Such a title should not lead anyone to think that only strict definitions will follow.) If I were to say, correctly, that water is a stuff, I should think myself much mistreated if you replied that this is not right because Coca-Cola is a stuff too, but not a natural kind, while water *is* a natural kind. Besides: by such reasoning, how many *other* texts that make it all the way to English versions in volume i should be relegated to their original, and awarded a lower-case letter to boot, in volume ii? I therefore applaud the decision of Inwood and Gerson to include a translation of this vital text in *Stoics*, 48 Text 21.

this passage, but not I think quite in the way I deployed them just now.) For the italicized passage about money, denarii and staters, gives us an excellent example of how something can be in a way dependent on the free creation of human rational thought, but at the same time tied down to objective facts that are not dependent on the whims of creating minds.

That certain tokens have such-and-such a value is something dependent on us, much as it is up to me, when I think of a horse, whether to think of a bay or a chestnut. But once I am trying to use these tokens when their value has been so fixed, to buy passage aboard a ship, their value is no longer something dependent on either my imagination or anyone else's. Rather, I am at the mercy of the extension of their value, and if I do not have enough when embarking then hard luck: neither I nor anyone else can change the value of these tokens in that context, in anything like the way I can think of a tiger with four legs and then one with only three.<sup>121</sup>

This passage strongly suggests to me that the Stoics were aware of the difficulty of reconciling the double-faceted nature of their universals; and that they came up with at least one promising model for solving the difficulty. If they sought to avoid both Platonism and outright anti-realism about universals, with anything like the idea that universals are, to use the clichéd expression, 'useful fictions', then the comparison here reported with money was apposite indeed. But it is especially useful in reminding us that here the adjective 'useful' must be attributive, not predicative.<sup>122</sup> If universals are to be useful at all, they must carve at the joints; but then they will not be fictional *simpliciter*. Fortunately it is possible for something to be like that. Money is like that.

<sup>121</sup> Aristotle grapples with the issue of money's being both somehow mind-dependent and also objective in book 5 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. He insists that money does not come into being naturally, but only by convention, and that its being changed or rendered useless is up to us (*ἐφ' ἡμῶν*, *NE* 1133<sup>a</sup>31). He must, though, surely have realized that altering the value of money or rendering its tokens useless is not something that is up to us individually, but only collectively: its subjectivity is at best political, not individual. And in the following pages he tells us much about those entirely objective relations between goods that money measures, and which we did not therefore invent: 'There *must* therefore be *one* standard . . . for this one standard makes all things commensurable, since all things can be measured by money' (*NE* 1133<sup>b</sup>20–2). That this is so is surely not so *ἐφ' ἡμῶν*.

<sup>122</sup> I here adopt the terminology of P. T. Geach, 'Good and Evil', in P. Foot (ed.), *Theories of Ethics* (Oxford, 1967), 64–73.

## 6. Conclusion

I am therefore inclined to think that Stoic metaphysics is considerably more coherent and thought through than has so far been seen. The insight that the incorporeals are offices accounts both for how their being differs from that of bodies, and yet for how they are such vital (if of course not fundamental) constituents of the Stoic system: this much the Stoics have to concede to Plato and Aristotle by way of admitting the immaterial. It also explains, given our texts, why universals could not be among the incorporeals: they must be immaterial items of a different order, even further from the fundamental. Meanwhile, the ontological dependence of sayables on bodies served to show just how deep Stoic materialism runs, whatever they conceded to Plato and Aristotle. And the ontological dependence of universals on those mental impressions of which they are the intentional objects serves to make attractive sense of a conceptualism that would otherwise seem a desperate compromise between Platonism and nominalism. What strikes me as most astonishing about this system is how much the Stoics achieve and account for while being so radically different from their predecessors. In terms of metaphysics, Plato was a bold new departure from Parmenides, and Aristotle from Plato. But neither competes with the strides the Stoics make in breaking with their predecessors while still accounting for the phenomena.

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