CHAPTER 6

Common sense: concepts, definition and meaning in and out of the Stoa[1]

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The prevalence of philosophical appeals to universal agreement in ancient thought indicates that a limited notion of 'common sense' was around, at least implicitly, from the fourth century BC. But, despite the partial justification Aristotle gave for such appeals, a developed *theory* of common sense was not possible until the Socratic insight that rationality is in some sense constitutive of all adult human beings was adapted and elaborated by the Stoics.[2] In this paper, I argue that the earliest theory of common sense in the ancient world was not this Stoic doctrine – the theory of the 'common conceptions' – but a transformation of it found in Cicero's later rhetorical works.[3]

This transformation is part of a broader series of developments, from the Stoic understanding of common conceptions, and in the direction of 'common sense', in a variety of later philosophical and rhetorical traditions ranging from Carneades in the second century BC to Simplicius in the sixth century AD. Some of the earlier stages of this process seem relatively clear. Carneades initiated a sceptical attack on Chrysippus' theory of common conceptions, by reducing them to common-sense beliefs, and showing how

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[1] In this paper, 'concept' is used for the genus of which 'preconception' (*prolēpsis*) and 'conception' (*ennoia*) are species. A 'conception' is something in an individual's mind; and its intentional object, at least in some Stoic theories, is a 'conceptual object' (*ennoēma*).

[2] On Aristotle's use of consensus arguments, see e.g. Owen 1961 and Schian 1993: 91–133. The clearest arguments Aristotle gives to justify any such appeal are in his defence of the principle of non-contradiction in *Met.* 4.

[3] One might think that Epicurean and medical empiricism present rival or at least promising candidates for this role; I ignore them here owing to constraints of space and the difficulty of reconstructing their views in any detail. See e.g. Asmis 1984 Part 1: 19–80 (with further references) and Chandler 1996, on the Epicureans; and Frede 1990 and Allen 2001: 87–146 on the Empiricists.

the Stoics' doctrines conflict with those beliefs.[4] And in the hands of his more dogmatic Academic successors (Philo, Cicero, Plutarch), this form of argument acquired a more positive role, parallel to that of the various traditional arguments from *consensus omnium* of the Hellenistic schools, with the result that, rather than merely showing the inconsistency of the Stoics, it was taken to show the falsity of their basic doctrines.[5] But the later stages of the process are obscure. By the late second century AD, Alexander of Aphrodisias systematised Aristotle's hints at fundamental 'common-sense' constraints on philosophical inquiry in a way that seems to reflect a reinterpretation of the Stoic common conceptions; and Galen already seems to offer a theory of definition identifying a limited use for 'common sense', which was later disseminated by Porphyry, and may derive in part from the Stoic theory, though its nature and purpose is significantly different from Cicero's.

My aim here, however, is not to trace these more general developments but to identify a possible mechanism of translation from a Stoic theory about rationality to a different kind of theory, one that posits a general and immediate relation between *ordinary* thought or concepts and the essential nature of the world: a theory of 'common sense'. The basic idea is that we can discern a change from a Stoic to a common-sense theory of the relations between ordinary thought and its expression in language, 'preconceptions' or common conceptions, and definitions. A full study of this change would involve understanding five difficult topics: (a) the Stoic theory of common conceptions; (b) the Stoic theories of definition; (c) Cicero's reception of the Stoic theory of common conceptions; (d) Cicero's rhetorical theory of definition; and (e) at least some later rhetorical and philosophical theories of definition and common conceptions. Since the evidence for these topics is either too sparse (a and b) or too great (d and e) and the subjects are confusing, this paper offers only some fragments of such a study. Part 1 investigates some puzzles concerning the Stoic theory of common conceptions (a); Part 2 tries to reconstruct a Stoic theory of preliminary definition capturing the content of common conceptions (b), partly on the basis of some later evidence (my gesture at (e)); and Part 3 suggests that Cicero's rhetorical works may provide one route by which the common conceptions ended up as common sense (d).

[4] This is a principal point of Plutarch's *De communibus notitiis*. It is also more or less evident in some of the sceptical speeches in Cicero's philosophical works, and in some of the arguments Sextus borrowed from the Academics – e.g. in *De finibus* 4.21, 55, 67–8, and *M.* 9.137–66, esp. 138 (cf. *De natura deorum* 29–39).

[5] I attempted to trace Philo's contribution to this change in Brittain 2001 ch. 2.iv and ch. 3.iv.

PART I THE STOIC THEORY OF COMMON CONCEPTIONS

Section one: Meaning and signification

The Stoics believed that the mental or psychological experience of adult human beings is entirely constituted by 'rational thoughts' (Diogenes Laertius, 7.51). One consequence of this which our sources point out is that every adult 'impression' or occurrent psychological episode has a corresponding incorporeal 'sayable' (*lekton*, D.L. 7.63), i.e. some kind of 'rational' content. Another consequence – less explicit in the sources, and hence less universally recognised – is that all adult impressions, including perceptual impressions, are at least partly conceptualised. (This is more obvious if we recall that the Stoics thought that the faculty of 'reason' is constituted by a set of concepts, and hence that 'rational thoughts' are episodes that occur in a part of the soul that is 'conceptual' in a literal sense; see Galen, *PHP* 5.3 cited below.) So one function of a Stoic theory of concepts will be to determine, and at least partly, to constitute (through their own content), the 'rational' content of our thoughts or impressions.[6]

The Stoics also believed that the meaning of a sentence someone is uttering at least typically has something to do with the thought they are thinking concurrently. Our sources in this case, however, are much less forthcoming about the details of this relation. It is fairly clear that the Stoics tried to distinguish 'significant speech' from other vocal productions by identifying part of its cause as the activation of the speaker's concepts in the concurrent thought (which would then 'imprint, as it were' the air in the vocal cords; see Galen, *PHP* 2.5, cited below). But it is less clear whether this implies a theory of meaning (or fragment of one) that identifies the content or 'sense' of the utterance with the content of the activated concepts in such a way that the sense is *constituted* by the thought, or merely claims that the content of those concepts plays some role in determining which sense the utterance will have. In the latter case, we can say that the 'speaker's meaning' is typically determined by the thought and hence by the concepts the speaker has, but it will not follow that they determine, let alone constitute, the meaning of the sentence. On either account, however, it is clear that a second, unsurprising, function of a Stoic theory of concepts will be to determine, to some extent, at least the speaker's (and hearer's) meaning of the sentences we utter.[7]

If we consider what the Stoics say about such things as god or the good, however, we can see, I think, that there is often a considerable gap between

[6] See Frede 1987: 151–76. [7] See Barnes 1993.

what ordinary people take themselves to be expressing in their thoughts or utterances, and what, according to the Stoics, their thoughts and utterances actually 'signify'.[8] For ordinary people often say or think things like 'I don't know why god is harming me' or 'That's the right thing to do, but not the most beneficial,' without thinking that they are enunciating contradictions. But the Stoics think that 'god' signifies a blessed and imperishable animal that is beneficent to men, and that 'good' signifies benefit or not other than benefit, and hence that ordinary people are radically confused about the nature of god and the good, and that the 'ordinary' or 'linguistic' meaning of these words requires radical revision.[9] (These examples are examined in more detail below.)

These cases are particularly interesting, I will argue, because the concepts involved belong to the privileged set of concepts that the Stoics called 'the common conceptions'. If this is right, it follows that the Stoic theory of the common conceptions cannot be a 'common-sense theory', when the latter is characterised as one that posits a general and immediate relation between *ordinary* thought or concepts and the essential nature of the world, since in these cases ordinary thought and concepts clearly fail to pick out the essential features of their objects.

But in order to establish this claim, it is necessary to examine the exiguous and controversial evidence for the Stoic theory of common conceptions in some detail. In the remainder of this part, I will argue that the Stoics took the common conceptions to be constitutive of reason and the basis from which philosophical inquiry, and hence ultimately wisdom or perfected reason, sprang.[10] But since this is, I think, the standard view, I will focus on some of the more puzzling features of the Stoic theory of common conceptions, and in particular, their relation to ordinary thought.[11] Further, since much of the apparent evidence is commonly taken to have been contaminated either by incipient Platonism (Cicero, Epictetus) or by the development towards the 'common sense' we are trying to examine (Cicero, Plutarch, Alexander, Sextus), I will use – where possible – only texts that most of us

[8] I rely here on the force of Diogenes of Babylon's claim that nouns in general signify 'common qualities' (D.L. 7.58) – though this is not unproblematic, as Barnes 1999: 207–9 notes, and on the identifications of the relevant 'qualities' at e.g. Plutarch, *St. rep.* ch. 38, 1051F (*SVF* 3.A.33), on god, and Sextus, *M.* 11.22 (*SVF* 3.75), on goodness. See sections three and four below.

[9] The Stoics' disagreement with 'ordinary' language and thought about the good is explicit in e.g. Plutarch, *St. rep.* 17, 1041E, id. 30, 1047E–1048A, and Cicero, *Paradoxa* 7, and the passages in n. 4 above; cf. Atherton 1993: 94 n. 60.

[10] Cf. Schofield 1980, Frede 1994b.

[11] Cf. Sandbach 1996, Pohlenz 1940 and 1970, and e.g. Long and Sedley 1987: 1. 239–41, 249–53. By 'the Stoic theory', I mean the theory probably invented by Chrysippus, and applied by Diogenes and Antipater. Finer discriminations between Stoic views don't seem possible.

can be reasonably confident about.[12] An unfortunate result of this method is that, although the use of common conceptions by the Stoics, and by Chrysippus in particular, seems guaranteed by Plutarch's polemic in *De communibus notitiis*,[13] they appear to be mentioned explicitly in only four secure Greek fragments.[14] For this reason, I start with a general review of the secure evidence about Stoic concepts (section two), before turning to the nature of the common conceptions (section three), and their theoretical uses and the problems these uses suggest (section four).[15]

Section two: Stoic concepts

The most expansive piece of evidence we possess about Stoic concepts is the report in 'Aëtius', *Placita* 4.11. I cite this in full, since it serves as a useful anchor for the puzzles that follow.

When human beings are born, the governing part of their souls is like a piece of paper ready to be written on, and each one of its conceptions is written into it. The first method of 'writing' is via the senses. For when they perceive something white, for example, they retain a memory of it once it has gone. When there are many memories similar in form, we say that they have experience (experience is a plurality of impressions similar in form). Some conceptions come about in the ways mentioned, without skill; others already require teaching and attention. The latter are just called 'conceptions' (*ennoiai*); the former are also called 'preconceptions' (*prolēpseis*). Reason, in virtue of which we are called 'rational' <animals>, is said to be constituted by preconceptions at around the age of seven. Conceptual objects (*ennoēmata*) are phantasms of the thought of a rational animal – i.e. when a

[12] Cf. Pohlenz 1970: 1, 244–6, Todd 1973: 61–3, or Obbink 1992: 224–31. I avoid uses of the relevant terms that are not clearly tied to something a Stoic is supposed to have said.

[13] Plutarch's dialogue begins with an unnamed 'friend' soliciting help from 'Diadumenus' in response to what turns out to be a Stoic accusation that the former 'philosophises contrary to the common conceptions' (*Com. not.* ch. 1, 1058F). But it is notable that there are no direct quotations from Chrysippus or other Stoics using the phrase 'common conception'. (The closest Plutarch comes to this are apparent paraphrases at 1059B, 1082E, and 1083B, which use 'preconception and conception', but presumably mean by the latter 'common conception'.) The phrase thus *could* be a later one projected back onto the Stoics by our sources, as Susanne Bobzien suggested to me. But Plutarch's title, the use of this phrase in similar Stoic contexts by all our sources (see next note), Alexander's general preference for 'preconception' in other contexts, and the Stoics' theoretical need for something like 'common conceptions' (see section three), make this very unlikely.

[14] The relatively secure examples of common conceptions are from Alexander, *De mixtione* 154. 28–30, (*SVF* 2.473, cited in n. 44 below); S.E., *M.* 11.22 on the good (*SVF* 3.75, cited in n. 46); *M.* 9.123 on holiness (*SVF* 2.1017, cited in n. 71); and, though this is not explicitly Stoic, *M.* 9.196 on God (*SVF* 2.337, cited in n. 71). Origen yields two further possible cases, both on moral topics (*SVF* 3.218 and 2.964). Simplicius provides further possible cases (*in Ench.* pp. 68–9 Dübner, 319–21 Hadot), which are discussed in Part 2 (see n. 111).

[15] A full treatment of topics (a)–(d) on page 165 would show, I think, that Cicero in fact supplies the most detailed and plausible presentation of the Chrysippian theory (topic (c) above). He discusses the Stoic theory of concept formation in *Ac.* 1.42, 2.21–2 and 30–1 and *Fin.* 3.33; he employs common conceptions in *ND* 2.13, 45, *Fin.* 3.21 and *Tusc.* 4.53–4; and, arguably, he does both in *Leg.* 1.22–34.

phantasm occurs to a rational soul it is called a 'conceptual object' (its name derives from 'intellect' (*nous*)). So the ones that occur to non-rational animals are just phantasms; but the ones that occur to us and to the gods are generically phantasms and specifically conceptual objects. (*SVF* 2.83=*FDS* 277)[16]

The problem that will most concern us is to identify the distinction between preconception (*prolēpsis*) and conception (*ennoia*). This text asserts that preconceptions are the species of concepts that arises in us 'without skill' or without requiring 'teaching and attention', i.e. it seems, *naturally*. There are three reasons to ascribe this doctrine to Chrysippus. First, he distinguishes preconception and conception in two fragments.[17] Secondly, in one book at least, he claimed that the criteria of truth were perception and preconception (D.L. 7.54, *SVF* 2.105), and Diogenes glosses the latter as a '*natural* conception of the general characteristics <of a thing>' (in Sandbach's translation).[18] And thirdly, we have further evidence for a category of 'natural' conceptions that were in some sense criterial.[19] Hence I take it that preconceptions are natural conceptions.

[16] Aëtius, 4.11 (*SVF* 2.83): ὅταν γεννηθῇ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ἔχει τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν μέρος τῆς ψυχῆς ὥσπερ χάρτην εὔεργον εἰς ἀπογραφήν· εἰς τοῦτο μίαν ἑκάστην τῶν ἐννοιῶν ἐναπογράφεται. Πρῶτος δὲ [ὁ] τῆς ἀναγραφῆς τρόπος ὁ διὰ τῶν αἰσθήσεων. αἰσθανόμενοι γάρ τινος οἷον λευκοῦ, ἀπελθόντος αὐτοῦ μνήμην ἔχουσιν· ὅταν δὲ ὁμοειδεῖς πολλαὶ μνῆμαι γένωνται, τότε φαμὲν ἔχειν ἐμπειρίαν· ἐμπειρία γάρ ἐστι τὸ τῶν ὁμοειδῶν φαντασιῶν πλῆθος. Τῶν δὲ ἐννοιῶν αἱ μὲν φυσικῶς γίνονται κατὰ τοὺς εἰρημένους τρόπους καὶ ἀνεπιτεχνήτως, αἱ δὲ ἤδη δι' ἡμετέρας διδασκαλίας καὶ ἐπιμελείας· αὗται μὲν οὖν ἔννοιαι καλοῦνται μόνον, ἐκεῖναι δὲ καὶ προλήψεις. Ὁ δὲ λόγος, καθ' ὃν προσαγορευόμεθα λογικοὶ ἐκ τῶν προλήψεων συμπληροῦσθαι λέγεται κατὰ τὴν πρώτην ἑβδομάδα, ἔστι δ' ἐννόημα φάντασμα διανοίας λογικοῦ ζῴου· τὸ γὰρ φάντασμα ἐπειδὰν λογικῇ προσπίπτῃ ψυχῇ, τότε ἐννόημα καλεῖται, εἰληφὸς τοὔνομα παρὰ τοῦ νοῦ. Διόπερ τοῖς ἀλόγοις ζῴοις ὅσα προσπίπτει, φαντάσματα μόνον ἐστίν. ὅσα δὲ ἡμῖν καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς, ταῦτα καὶ φαντάσματα κατὰ γένος καὶ ἐννοήματα κατ' εἶδος.

[17] Galen, *PHP* 5.3 (*SVF* 2.841, cited in n. 25 below): reason is constituted by a collection of certain conceptions (*ennoiai*) and preconceptions (*prolēpseis*); Plutarch, *Com. not.* 1, 1059B (*SVF* 2.33): Chrysippus removed the confusion about preconceptions and conceptions caused by the sceptics by setting each right and in its proper place.

[18] D.L. 7.54 (*SVF* 2.105): ὁ δὲ Χρύσιππος διαφερόμενος πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ περὶ λόγου κριτηριά φησιν εἶναι αἴσθησιν καὶ πρόληψιν. ἔστι δ' *ἡ πρόληψις ἔννοια φυσικὴ τῶν καθόλου.* Von Arnim doesn't recognise this gloss as a 'fragment' of Chrysippus, perhaps because its source is probably Posidonius (see 7.54 fin.). But if so, the gloss is as authentic as the ascription of the criteria to Chrysippus. Kidd 1989 argued that the next element in Posidonius' report is unreliable; but if we should distrust anything in his summary of Chrysippus' views, it is presumably the claim that the scholarch 'contradicted himself' by saying in one book that the criterion was the cataleptic impression and in another that it was perception and preconception – both criteria are or derive immediately (or naturally) from cataleptic impressions.

[19] Chrysippus mentions '*connate preconceptions*' (*emphutos*) in Plutarch, *St. rep.* 17, 1041E (*SVF* 3.69): Τὸν περὶ ἀγαθῶν καὶ κακῶν λόγον ὃν αὐτὸς εἰσάγει καὶ δοκιμάζει συμφωνότατον εἶναί φησι τῷ βίῳ καὶ μάλιστα *τῶν ἐμφύτων ἅπτεσθαι προλήψεων*'– cf. *sumphutos* at *Com. not.* 24, 1070C. Alexander claims that Chrysippus took '*common conceptions*' to be criteria we get from nature (*SVF* 2.473, cited in n. 44); Plutarch claims that the Stoics responded to the *Meno* by reference to *natural conceptions* (Sandbach fr. 215f. *SVF* 2.104, cited in n. 61); and Origen, for what it's worth, mentions a *natural conception* of God (*SVF* 2.1052). See also n. 47 below.

To understand this distinction, it is useful to consider first what we learn about the *nature* and *contents* of concepts as such. Aëtius reports that we get the preconception of whiteness after a process involving perceptual impressions, memories and experience – i.e. a set of remembered perceptual impressions.[20] But it is unclear whether the concept is constituted by that experience under certain conditions – e.g. if the experience is the ground of a disposition in an adult that amounts to the possession of a concept – or by a further and distinct item in the soul.[21] However, Plutarch (*Com. not.* 47, *SVF* 2.841) informs us that a concept is 'a kind of impression' (*phantasia tis*), and hence characterised by the physical properties of impressions as such, and that concepts are defined by the Stoics as 'stored thoughts' (*enapokeimenas noēseis*).[22] In *De sollertia animalium* 961c, this definition is supplemented with the information that thoughts 'are called "conceptions" (*ennoiai*) when they are stored, but "rational thoughts" (*dianoēseis*) when they are activated'.[23] Hence, since any rational impression is technically a 'rational thought' (*dianoēsis*, D.L. 7.51), it is likely that the Stoics tried to identify concepts as a particular kind of rational thought, presumably ones that were general and abstract in a sense yet to be determined.[24]

The suggestion that concepts are distinct things in the soul, beyond sets of prior impressions, seems to be confirmed by Chrysippus' claims in Galen, *PHP* 5.2–3 that reason is constituted by 'a collection of certain (*tinōn*) conceptions and preconceptions', and that these are both *parts* of reason and *parts* of the soul (*SVF* 2.841 and 3.471a; cf. Aëtius, 4.11, cited above).[25] Chrysippus thought that the 'governing part' (*hēgemonikon*) of

[20] Aëtius' phrasing suggests that 'experience' is entirely constituted by a set of memories, and hence that it is not a further item in the soul beyond those memories or remembered impressions. This account clearly does not cover rational 'experience' of the kind Chrysippus appeals to in his *telos* formula (*SVF* 3.4, 12–15), though the Stoic definitions of 'art' suggest that we need not posit an additional mental item for the rational kind either – see *SVF* 2.93–7.

[21] Gould 1970: 59–66 seems to be alone in taking the first alternative; Sandbach 1996: 25, by his translation of the gloss on preconception, and e.g. Frede 1994b: 52–4 favour the second.

[22] Plutarch, *Com. not.* ch. 47, 1084f (*SVF* 2.847): φαντασία γάρ τις ἡ ἔννοιά ἐστι, φαντασία δὲ τύπωσις ἐν ψυχῇ . . . 1085a. ἀλλ' οὕτω παρακούουσιν ἑαυτῶν, ὥστε τὰς ἐννοίας ἀποκειμένας τινὰς ὁριζόμενοι νοήσεις, μνήμας δὲ μονίμους καὶ σχετικὰς τυπώσεις, τὰς δ' ἐπιστήμας καὶ παντάπασι πηγνύντες ὡς τὸ ἀμετάπτωτον καὶ βέβαιον ἐχούσας, εἶτα τούτοις ὑποτίθεσθαι βάσιν οὐσίας φερομένης ἀεὶ καὶ ῥεούσης. Concepts appear to differ in kind from 'memories', which are defined next (1085b) as stable and fixed imprintings (*tupōseis*), although, since a concept is itself an imprinting which is presumably stable and fixed, it is possible that the different definitions consider the same things under different descriptions.

[23] Plutarch, *Soll.* 961c: ὥσπερ ἀμέλει καὶ τὰ περὶ τὰς νοήσεις, ἃς ἐναποκειμένας μὲν ἐννοίας καλοῦσι κινουμένας δὲ διανοήσεις.

[24] D.L. 7.51 = *SVF* 2.61; cf. [Galen] *Def. med.* 126, *SVF* 2.89.

[25] Galen, *PHP* 5.3 (*SVF* 2.841): ἀναμιμνήσκων ἴσως ἡμᾶς τῶν ἐν τοῖς περὶ τοῦ λόγου γεγραμμένων, ὧν σὺ διῆλθες, ὡς ἔστιν ἐννοιῶν τέ τινων καὶ προλήψεων ἄθροισμα.' ἀλλ' εἴπερ ἑκάστην τῶν

the soul did not become rational, and hence that the rational part of the soul – i.e. reason, the relevant set of concepts – did not exist, until the age of seven (or possibly fourteen). Although the details of the process by which this radical transformation comes about are obscure, the generation of reason (*to logistikon*/*dianoia*) seems to amount to precisely the formation of concepts, i.e. a change from the prior state of the animal's 'governing part'.[26] And once reason is established, it is defined as the *part* in which subsequent thoughts or impressions occur (D.L. 7.159, *SVF* 2.837 – cf. 839). This suggestion seems to be confirmed by an argument from Diogenes of Babylon that the rational faculty (*dianoia*) is in the chest because:

> it is plausible that speech is made significant by the conceptions in the rational faculty and sent out thence, i.e. once as it were imprinted, and that the activities of thinking and speaking are temporally coextensive. (*PHP* 2.5, *SVF* 3.D. 29)[27]

Irrespective of the precise relation between thought and meaningful speech presupposed by this argument, it seems plausible that an individual sentence should be 'as it were imprinted' by a limited number of individual concepts combined in a determinate thought, rather than by sets of prior impressions.[28] So much for the *nature* of concepts.

One way to think about the kinds of *content* Stoic concepts may have is to consider the preconceptions we are fairly securely informed about – that is, the concepts we know of that arose naturally, or without teaching or attention. These concern holiness, the gods, white, and growth, as well as – probably – goods and bads, and mixtures.[29] The simplest example is the one used by Aëtius: we see white things, remember lots of white things, and then, presumably, end up with a concept of white. It seems plausible to construe Diogenes Laertius' gloss on the latter with Sandbach as an example of 'a natural conception of the general characteristics <of a thing>' (*tōn katholou*) (D.L. 7.54), where the thing is *whiteness*, and its general

ἐννοιῶν καὶ προλήψεων εἶναι μόριον νομίζεις τῆς ψυχῆς, ἁμαρτάνεις διττά. πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ οὐ ψυχῆς ἐχρῆν. ἀλλὰ λόγου ταῦτ' εἶναι μόρια φάσκειν, ὥσπερ οὖν καὶ γράφειν ἐν τῇ περὶ λόγου πραγματείᾳ.

[26] See nn. 55–7 below.

[27] Galen, *PHP* 2.5.12–13 (*SVF* 3.D.29): καὶ ἄλλως δὲ πιθανὸν ὑπὸ τῶν ἐννοιῶν ἐνσεσημασμένον τῶν ἐν τῇ διανοίᾳ καὶ οἷον ἐκτετυπωμένον ἐκπέμπεσθαι τὸν λόγον καὶ παρεκτείνεσθαι τῷ χρόνῳ κατά τε τὸ διανενοῆσθαι καὶ τὴν κατὰ τὸ λέγειν ἐνέργειαν. καὶ ἡ διάνοια ἄρα οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ, ἀλλ' ἐν τοῖς κατωτέρω τόποις, μάλιστά πως περὶ τὴν καρδίαν.

[28] See Frede 1987: 152–7, Barnes 1993: 57–61 and section one above.

[29] ***Preconceptions***: holiness (S.E., *M.* 9.123, *SVF* 2.197); Gods (*Com. not.* 32, *SVF* 2.126; *St. rep.* 38, *SVF* 3.A.34); white (Aëtius, 4.11, *SVF* 2.83); growth (*Com. not.* 44, *SVF* 2.762). ***Natural conceptions***: goods and bad – though Chrysippus only says that his doctrine of goods and bads depends on <some, unspecified> *connate* conceptions (*St. rep.* 17, *SVF* 3.69, cited in n. 19); God (Origen, *SVF* 2.1052). ***Common conceptions***: mixtures, the good, the fine and just, holiness, gods – see n. 14 above.

characteristics include being a colour or configuration of bodies.[30] At any rate, the content of the other examples of preconceptions, although they are more complex and perhaps involve a degree of reasoning (see section three below), is something like this. Our preconception of a god, for instance, is of 'a blessed and imperishable animal that is beneficent to men' (*St. rep.* 1051F). This, like the other cases, looks like *an abstract and general content*.

A problem for this view is Sandbach's suggestion that Aëtius' account of the formation of preconceptions contains a lacuna, which should be supplemented directly by the various lists of ways in which the Stoics think things are 'conceived' (*nooumena . . . enoēthē*, D.L. 7.52–3, *SVF* 2.86).[31] These ways include by 'direct encounter' or perception, and by similarity, analogy and composition of or with things conceived in the first way.[32] The problem is that the examples used in these lists suggest that these are primarily ways of actively *imagining* non-existent, or non-present, but *particular* things. This difficulty can be resolved, however, by distinguishing two senses of 'conceive' (*noein*): the sense here is simply 'think of' or 'imagine', as opposed to 'perceive'; the sense we are interested in is 'have a conception of'.[33] The former is no doubt an element in the process that produces the latter, but it cannot amount to the whole story for the Stoics.[34] For it seems clear

[30] S.E., *M.* 11.8–11 suggests that the Stoics used the term '*katholikon*' to designate the indefinite universal conditionals which Chrysippus thought were equivalent to definitions; see Bett 1997: 54–5 and Bobzien 1999: 112–13. If so, given the relation between preconceptions and definitions (see Part 2), Sandbach's construal seems plausible.

[31] Sandbach 1996: 25–6, followed by e.g. Pohlenz 1940: 82. Aëtius appears to give only the first of what he summarises as several 'ways mentioned' in which preconceptions come about. For doubts about this supplement, cf. Long and Sedley 1987: 11. 241.

[32] D.L. 7.52. (*SVF* 2.87): τῶν νοουμένων τὰ μὲν κατὰ περίπτωσιν ἐνοήθη, τὰ δὲ καθ' ὁμοιότητα, τὰ δὲ κατ' ἀναλογίαν, τὰ δὲ κατὰ μετάθεσιν, τὰ δὲ κατὰ σύνθεσιν, τὰ δὲ κατ' ἐναντίωσιν . . . . νοεῖται δὲ καὶ κατὰ μετάβασίν τινα, ὡς τὰ λεκτὰ καὶ ὁ τόπος. φυσικῶς δὲ νοεῖται δίκαιόν τι καὶ ἀγαθόν· καὶ κατὰ στέρησιν, οἷον ἄχειρ. Diogenes lists: (a) direct encounter (e.g. perceptible things); (b) similarity (e.g. Socrates from his picture); (c) analogy: (i) increase (Cyclops) and (ii) decrease (Pygmy); (also by analogy, the centre of the earth); (d) transposition (eyes on chest); (e) composition (centaur) ; (f) opposition (death). To this primary list he adds: (g) *a kind of transition* (*lekta* and space); (h) *naturally* (something just and good); and (i) privation (a handless person). In *De finibus* 3.33–4 (*SVF* 3.72), Cicero lists (a), (e), (b) and *collatione rationis*, which produces (h). In 3.34 the latter is distinguished from the two sub-categories of (c): (ci) and (cii). In *M.* 8.56–60, Sextus lists (a), (b), (ci), (cii) and (e); in *M.* 9.393–5 (a), (b), (e), (c), (ci) and (cii); and in *M.* 3.40–2 (a), (b), (e) and (ci) and (cii). In the latter two passages, Sextus groups all his categories except (a) into a genus, 'by transition'. (Sextus' lists aren't ascribed to the Stoics.)

[33] Cf. Brunschwig 1994: 99–103. The two senses seem to overlap in some cases, for instance in the report that Chrysippus thought that 'generic pleasure is *noetic*, while the specific pleasure that we encounter is perceptible' (Aëtius, 4.9.13, *SVF* 2.81).

[34] The latter two of Sextus' three lists of ways in which we achieve 'thoughts' (*noēseis*) of things – cited in n. 32 above – suggest as much since they are given in the course of arguments that we cannot 'conceive' of a line without breadth. That is, Sextus is arguing that there cannot be fully abstract general 'concepts' because we cannot have determinate representations ('thoughts') that are

that one can *imagine* a five-footed monster without having a concept of it in the requisite Stoic sense, just as one can *see* a rhododendron without having a Stoic concept of that class of shrub.[35] (This is not to claim that we only have preconceptions of general classes, like whites, goods, gods, etc. We may be able to form abstract natural concepts of particulars, for instance, of particular people. But if we can, they aren't relevant here, since they are unlikely to be constitutive of reason or criterial for progress in philosophy.[36])

The only hint of a Stoic mechanism that could generate *abstract* preconceptions 'naturally' from sets of particular perceptions or memories is supplied by one of the supplementary categories in D.L. 7.53: 'by some kind of transition, like our thoughts of *lekta* and of space'. This notion of 'transition' seems quite distinct from the other imaginative procedures given in Diogenes, including the sub-class of 'analogy' in his exposition. It is perhaps the kind of 'transition' alluded to by Sextus in *M.* 8.275–6 (*SVF* 2.223), where he distinguishes rational from non-rational animals by the former's possession of 'transitional and synthetic impression', which explains their grasp of the concept of 'logical consequence' (*akolouthia*).[37] Unfortunately, it is not at all clear how it does so.[38]

Two final questions concern the 'logical' *form* of the content of Stoic concepts. Assuming that concepts are distinct things in the soul, and that their contents are abstract, and general, we still need to know whether each of them has a unique 'sayable' (*lekton*) for its content, and, ideally, whether those *lekta* are 'predicates' (*katēgorēmata*) or 'propositions'

not particular. It is not clear to me what the Stoics thought about the representational content of the impressions or thoughts that express abstract propositions; but they clearly did think that we can 'conceive' of abstract objects in some sense. See also n. 38 below.

[35] The Stoic conditions for concept possession are more stringent than those of most modern philosophical accounts – see Frede 1999: 319–20 and Brittain 2002: 258–66.

[36] See e.g. Barnes 1999: 207–8, and, *contra*, Brunschwig 1994: 45, 54–5. I think that this is related to the issue of the existence of Stoic metaphysical 'cases' of the kind Frede 1994c argues for.

[37] S.E., *M.* 8.275 (*SVF* 2.223): <οἱ δὲ δογματικοὶ> . . . φασιν ὅτι ἄνθρωπος οὐχὶ τῷ προφορικῷ λόγῳ διαφέρει τῶν ἀλόγων ζῴων (καὶ γὰρ κόρακες καὶ ψιττακοὶ καὶ κίτται ἐνάρθρους προφέρονται φωνάς) ἀλλὰ τῷ ἐνδιαθέτῳ, οὐδὲ τῇ ἁπλῇ μόνον φαντασίᾳ (ἐφαντασιοῦτο γὰρ κἀκεῖνα) ἀλλὰ τῇ μεταβατικῇ καὶ συνθετικῇ· διόπερ ἀκολουθίας ἔννοιαν ἔχων εὐθὺς καὶ σημείου νόησιν λαμβάνει διὰ τὴν ἀκολουθίαν. The translation of this passage is controversial; see Long and Sedley 1987: 11. 319.

[38] A related question concerns Aëtius' report that '*ennoēmata* are phantasms of the thought of a rational animal – i.e. when a phantasm occurs to a rational soul it is called an *ennoēma*' (*SVF* 2.83, cited in n.16). Aëtius is probably wrong to identify any 'phantasm' as an *ennoēma*; see Long and Sedley 1987: 11. 185. But he may have meant that abstract 'thoughts' (*noēseis*) in general, and specifically the concepts (*ennoiai*) he has been explaining, supervene on representational 'images' of some kind, whose 'objects' are phantasms. I imagine the latter to be something like Lockean 'general ideas', but concepts are, I think, always treated as though they had purely abstract contents.

(*axiōmata*). Although the second question is controversial, three bits of evidence strongly favour the view that the contents of concepts are 'propositions'.[39] One is Plutarch's definition of concepts as 'thoughts' and 'impressions' (*Com. not.* 47, *Soll. an.* 961C, cited above), which can only be complete *lekta*. Another is the conclusion of Cicero's report of the formation of concepts in *Ac.* 2.21–2, which apparently offers 'If something is a man, it is a mortal animal capable of participating in reason' as an example of the content of a concept.[40] The third is the fact that preconceptions are considered to be true, and amount to knowledge (cf. *Ac.* 2.22 and e.g. *St. rep.* 38).[41] Thus I take it that the content of a preconception is probably one or more 'propositions'.

The first question, however, is the more relevant one here. Given the roles of concepts as constituents of ordinary rational thoughts and determinants of speaker's meaning, it seems necessary that the proper content of each concept should be a unique *lekton*. For if it were not, it is hard to see how rational impressions could express determinate thoughts in the absence of a mechanism for determining which part of a given concept's content was relevant to each thought.[42] This also seems right in view of the criterial function of preconceptions (see *Ac.* 2.22), although it introduces some difficulties, since some of the roles the Stoics ascribe to our preconceptions require them to be more complex than this result appears to allow (see section four below).

At any rate, there is, I hope, some reason to think that preconceptions are natural conceptions, and that conceptions are a distinct kind of rational impression, whose content is abstract and general, and probably takes the form of a unique *lekton*, and perhaps of a unique 'proposition'.

[39] Frede 1987: 156 argues for the predicate view, partly on the basis of S.E., *M.* 7.246 (*SVF* 2.65), which is itself a highly controversial text – see Heintz 1972: 116–18.

[40] Cicero, *Ac.* 2.21: *cetera series deinde sequitur maiora nectens, ut haec quae quasi expletam rerum conprehensionem amplecturtur:* '*si homo est, animal est mortale rationis particeps*'. *Quo e genere nobis notitiae rerum inprimuntur, sine quibus nec intellegi quicquam nec quaeri disputarive potest.* ('Next follows the remaining series linking more important terms, which contain, as it were, a full apprehension of the things, e.g.: "If something is a man, it is a mortal animal capable of participating in reason." From this class our concepts of things are impressed, without which one cannot understand, investigate, or argue anything.') I say 'apparently', since the claim in the next sentence (the last above) makes it a bit unclear whether the definition of man just given is itself a concept; see Reid 1885: 200 ad loc.

[41] But both of these points are surmountable: the Stoics apply 'true' to impressions etc. in a derivative sense, and talk indiscriminately about cataleptic impressions and *catalēpseis*. The main problem for the propositional view is to account for the manner in which conceptual contents 'conjoin' as constituents of a *simple* proposition in thoughts such as 'This is red'.

[42] See Frede 1987: 152–5. Perhaps this consideration is undermined once we allow for the possibility that the conceptual content is a complex *lekton*. Some evidence suggests that it may be a conditional; but it seems that there may be a number of conjuncts contained in its consequent (as in the case of god), and it isn't clear that this number must be small.

Section three: Stoic common conceptions

The identity of the class of 'common conceptions' in Stoic epistemology, and even the correct construal of the phrase itself, is controversial. Nevertheless, some points are clear. First, the common conceptions are general or *universal concepts* in the sense reviewed briefly above, rather than merely local 'empirical generalisations'.[43] If the latter were a correct description of the common conceptions, the Stoics' conceptual terminology would be remarkably inconsistent. That it wasn't is clear from the secure examples we have. One is from Alexander:

> He [Chrysippus] tries to confirm that there are these different kinds of mixture through the common conceptions, which, he says, we get from nature as our paramount (*malista*) criteria of truth. At any rate, he says that we have one impression of things composed by juxtaposition, and another of things mixed together when the elements perish, and another of things mixed and interpenetrating each other in such a way that each element preserves its own nature. But we wouldn't have this difference in our impressions if absolutely every element in every mixture were composed by juxtaposition. (*De mixtione* p. 217.2–4, *SVF* 2.473)[44]

It is clear from the remainder of this work that Alexander thinks that the Stoics' notion of total interpenetrative mixture – one of the three impressions he mentions – is falsely supposed by them to be a common conception (cf. 218.11–19). That this is the right *kind* of candidate for a common conception in Alexander's view is shown by his own candidate, 'the conception that the full is no longer able to receive anything in itself' (ibid.) – i.e. an abstract and fully general conception.[45] Sextus provides another fairly clear example in *M.* 11.22 (*SVF* 3.75; see Part 2 below):

[43] The latter is the view advocated by Todd 1973, followed by Obbink 1992: 202–7. Todd (ibid. 48 and 53–4) argues that we should identify (i) in the following citation from Alexander as a common conception, and (a) as a preconception: '. . .[i] the fact that many bodies preserve their own qualities both in lesser and greater visible masses ([a] as can be seen in the case of incense, which, though attenuated in burning, preserves its own quality to a large extent) (*Mixt.* 217.14–1).' Obbink seems to conflate Todd's view with Schofield's, but Schofield 1980 takes the common conceptions to be preconceptions, and does not think that the latter are 'empirical generalisations' of the kind Todd argues for.

[44] Τὸ δὲ ταύτας τὰς διαφορὰς εἶναι τῆς μίξεως, πειρᾶται πιστοῦσθαι διὰ τῶν κοινῶν ἐννοιῶν, μάλιστα δὲ κριτήρια τῆς ἀληθείας φησὶν ἡμᾶς παρὰ τῆς φύσεως λαβεῖν ταύτας. ἄλλην γοῦν φαντασίαν ἔχειν ἡμᾶς τῶν καθ' ἁρμὴν συγκειμένων καὶ ἄλλην τῶν συγκεχυμένων τε καὶ συνεφθαρμένων καὶ ἄλλην τῶν κεκραμένων τε καὶ ἀλλήλοις δι' ὅλων ἀντιπαρεκτεινομένων οὕτως ὡς σῴζειν ἕκαστον αὐτῶν τὴν οἰκείαν φύσιν· ἣν διαφορὰν φαντασιῶν οὐκ ἂν εἴχομεν, εἰ πάντα τὰ ὁπωσοῦν μιγνύμενα παρέκειτο ἀλλήλοις καθ' ἁρμήν.

[45] Cf. Plutarch's similar candidate in the same context at *Com. not.* ch. 37 1077E (*SVF* 2.465). Todd's identifications of Stoic preconceptions are thus incompatible with the next page of Alexander's *De mixtione*, as well as with the remaining evidence on Stoic concepts. The motivation for Todd's view is Alexander's remark at pp. 227.10–228.4, after he has said that the view that body passes through

The Stoics define the good in the following way, relying on the common conceptions: 'The good is benefit or not other than benefit.'[46]

These common conceptions are presumably identical with the 'connate preconceptions' Chrysippus claimed to be relying on for his doctrine of the good (*St. rep*. 17, *SVF* 3.69); and preconceptions, section two has argued, are Stoic concepts.[47]

Secondly, Alexander's claim that the common conceptions were supposed by Chrysippus to be *criteria of truth* is supported, I think, by all the evidence that we have.[48] An obvious way to understand this is to identify them as preconceptions or as a subset of preconceptions, since they are the only non-perceptual criteria Chrysippus is known to have named elsewhere (D.L. 7.54). In support of this identification is the fact that several sources appear to use 'common conception' interchangeably or in tandem with 'common preconception'.[49] Further, since preconceptions are natural conceptions, this would explain both why the common

body is contrary to the common conceptions, that the Stoics confirm this with the alleged evidence of heated iron. Todd thinks that this shows that we should take p. 217, which has the same example, to show that the Stoic *theory* of mixture is confirmed *by a common conception* about heated iron. This is a possible interpretation of p. 227, though one that ignores Alexander's use of the terms 'conception' and 'preconception'.

[46] οἱ μὲν οὖν Στωϊκοὶ τῶν κοινῶν ὡς εἰπεῖν ἐννοιῶν ἐχόμενοι ὁρίζονται τἀγαθὸν τρόπῳ τῷδε 'ἀγαθόν ἐστιν ὠφέλεια ἢ οὐχ ἕτερον ὠφελείας.'

[47] The use of two terms meaning something like 'connate' (*emphutos* and *sumphutos*) at *St. rep*. 17, 1041E, and *Com. not*. 24, 1070C, to qualify our ethical concepts is problematic. Plutarch suggests in the latter passage that Chrysippus isolated these concepts as in some sense dependent on impressions 'internal' to our nature, in contradistinction to 'perceptions' from the outside world. (Unfortunately the text is corrupt at the vital point at the end of 1070C, where Plutarch gave Chrysippus' own terminology – see Cherniss' app. crit. and note 'c', ad loc. p. 744.) Presumably the internality of such impressions has something to do with the process of '*oikeiōsis*', as Pohlenz 1940: 85–96 suggests. It seems likely that such impressions are connected to the equally obscure doctrine of indestructible 'starting points' (*aphormai*) to virtue – on which see n. 59 below.

[48] See Alexander, *Mixt.* 218.11–12: the Stoics say we should use common conceptions for proofs, since they are *natural* criteria of truth. The bulk of our evidence either shows the common conceptions being used criterially, or claims that they – or some of them – are preconceptions (e.g. Alexander, *Mixt*. 281.11–20), and hence criterial on Chrysippus' view, or argues that the Stoics are wrong because their views conflict with the common conceptions.

[49] In tandem: S.E., *M*. 9.123 (*SVF* 2.1017), Plutarch, *Com. not*. 1060A. In general, Plutarch, Alexander and Sextus all seem to move from one word to the other without an obvious motive beyond variation. For instance, when discussing the gods in *Com. not*. chs. 31–4, Plutarch criticises the Stoics for contravening the common conceptions, while all the Stoic evidence he cites talks of our *preconception* of god. But Plutarch sometimes seems to be distinguishing them as two kinds *common* concept, e.g. at 1059E, which connects the conception of demonstration (*apodeixis*) with the preconception of confirmation (*pistis*). And Alexander sometimes seems to use 'common conception' as if it were a translation of more familiar terminology – whether Aristotle's at *in Top*. 18.20 (*archai* are called 'physical and common conceptions'), or both Aristotle's (the general 'supposition') and his own ('the common preconception') at *in Met*. 982ab, pp. 8–10.

conceptions are called '*conceptions*', and why Alexander says that they come from nature and sometimes calls them '*natural*' conceptions or preconceptions.[50]

A third point concerns the sense in which these conceptions are 'common' (*koinos*). The obvious meaning of this adjective is 'shared'.[51] The most obvious groups that might share the conceptions in question are the Stoic doctrines, the Stoics, the wise and all rational human beings. Since our sources often say that the common conceptions belong to all men, and since we expect *natural* Stoic criteria of truth to be available in principle to all rational adults, it is likely that the relevant sense of 'common' is roughly 'shared by all human beings *qua* rational'.[52] (I note that this is only roughly correct in order to leave room for disassociating the common conceptions from common sense or the *consensus omnium* in section four.) Further, if this is correct, it is easy to see why the common conceptions are shared by the Stoics and the wise, and why their contents are common to Stoic doctrines.

Thus, I take it to be clear that the Stoic common conceptions are concepts, criteria of truth, and, in principle at least, common to all men *qua* rational. The more difficult questions are whether they are identical with preconceptions, or with a sub-set of them, or also include some conceptions. (Section four deals with their criterial functions and how common they are in fact.)

[50] See Alexander, *Mixt*. 218.15, 17, 20. Origen calls what looks like the preconception of god a 'natural conception' at *SVF* 2.1052.

[51] See the definitions of '*koinos*' by the commentators on Aristotle's *Categories* 1 a1, e.g. Porphyry *in Cat*. 62.16–29. *Pace* Obbink 1992: 225–7, principles are 'fundamental' or 'basic' (Obbink's favoured translations of '*koinos*') just when they are *shared by* or common to more than one science. (Proclus explains Euclid's 'common conceptions' – i.e. the 'axioms' in Proclus' terminology – at the beginning of the *Elements* as the set demarcated by two criteria: they are indemonstrable and self-evident principles accepted by all (and so what Proclus calls 'common conceptions/preconceptions' in his own terminology), and they are common to several genera (*in Eucl*. 193–6).)

[52] Common conceptions or preconceptions are said to belong to all men in e.g. S.E., *M*. 9.123 and 196, Plutarch, *St. rep*. ch. 38, 1051F (implicitly), and Alexander, *Mixt*. 213.10, though the relevant conception is only later identified as common.

There is also some evidence that the Stoics had a doctrine of 'common reason' (*koinos logos*) in the sense of 'reason belonging to all men' – see D.L. 7.201–2 (*SVF* 2.16, line 20), a header in the catalogue of Chrysippus' books, Cicero, *Leg*. 1.23 and Marcus Aurelius, 4.4. (cf. 6.35 and Epictetus, *Diss*. 1.3.5). But this is problematic for two reasons: first, 'common reason' more standardly refers to the universal reason that pervades the world, i.e. God (see Cleanthes' *Hymn to Zeus* 1.12, or e.g. *SVF* 2.599 and 937); and secondly, in Cicero and Marcus, 'common reason' grounds our obedience to the Law or 'right reason' in a way that is unclear, and possibly non-Chrysippian, whilst the Chrysippian header seems to identify 'common reason' with 'right reason' (since it avers that the virtues and sciences are constituted from it).

If common conceptions are, in principle, common to all, it is unlikely that they are identical with the set of preconceptions, since, as Sandbach pointed out, it would be unnecessary to talk of 'common' preconceptions or conceptions if none were non-common or 'private' to some smaller group.[53] This point can be strengthened by considering the genesis of preconceptions from perception: it seems clear that some groups of people will naturally arrive at some preconceptions on the basis of quotidian experience that is inaccessible to other groups, given the nature of their terrain – e.g. experience of llamas and alpacas.[54] Although one might object that this view is incompatible with Chrysippus' claim that preconceptions are criteria, there is no reason to think that relatively 'private' preconceptions are any more subjective than 'common' ones – in either case, what makes them criterial, or gives them epistemological warrant, is the natural process by which they arise, not public agreement on their contents.[55] Similarly, while Chrysippus is said by Galen to claim that each conception and preconception constitutes a part of reason (*PHP* 5.3, *SVF* 2.841), we do not need to infer that each person's reason is entirely constituted by exactly the same concepts even at the first onset of rationality. For Chrysippus' vague characterisation of reason as 'a collection of certain conceptions and preconceptions' (*ennoiōn te tinōn kai prolēpseōn athroisma*, ibid.) probably means 'some conceptions *and* some preconceptions'; and if the common conceptions are or include a sub-set of preconceptions, that may suffice to avoid any threat of homonymy of 'reason'.[56]

Perhaps more interesting is the idea that some of the 'common conceptions' might be conceptions strictly speaking, since this would imply that there are some conceptions that it is *natural* for humans to acquire by their own deliberate attention or their social training. But, although some evidence favours this possibility, it is hard to see how we can hold both that some common conceptions are in fact specifically conceptions – following

[53] Sandbach 1996: 23–5. Sandbach also notes that Epictetus' claim at *Diss*. 1.22.1 that 'preconceptions are common to all men' must be restricted to moral preconceptions, since Epictetus himself talks of the preconceptions of a builder and musician and of all the other craftsmen (4.8.10) and of Cynicism (3.22.1).

[54] If these examples seem too culture specific, cows and horses are presumably also ruled out as potential objects of preconceptions. But if so, our preconceptions begin to look too general to do their job. Further, if one can have a preconception of whiteness, one can presumably have one of turquoiseness, but there have probably been cultures without regular access to that colour.

[55] *Contra* Doty 1976: 146. Frede 1994b: 55–6; and 1999: 319–20 and Scott 1988: 146–7 argue that the natural mechanism that generates them from cataleptic impressions warrants the content of preconceptions.

[56] The use of '*te . . . kai*' as opposed to simple '*kai*' makes it likely that '*tinōn*' applies to both nouns.

the suggestive wording of Chrysippus' definition of reason – and that they are non-derivative criteria – as preconceptions are on his view at D.L. 7.54.[57] So, while it is possible that they extend to a limited number of conceptions, *the common conceptions are probably a sub-set of preconceptions*.

Section four: Problems in the Stoic theory

Chrysippus thought that reason was constituted by certain conceptions and preconceptions, some of which, I have argued, are the common conceptions. A vital implication of this claim is that we start off our rational lives with a stock of preliminary, but secure, knowledge about the world.[58] The point of starting out with this set of concepts is to enable us to gain further knowledge about the world by a process of inquiry, and hence arrive at the state of wisdom or perfected reason.[59] Unfortunately the general process of development implied by this theory is set out most perspicuously in controversial sources like Cicero (e.g. *Ac*. 2.21–3 and 30–1) and Epictetus (e.g. *Diss*. 2.11 and 17). But this complex of ideas is also attested widely in other sources.[60] The most significant of these is Plutarch, fr. 215F (Sandbach):

[57] See Frede 1994b: 55. Something like this is suggested e.g. by the apparently contradictory reports that the concept of the good arises 'naturally' (or at least, the 'thought' (*noēseis*) of *something* just and good, D.L. 7.52, *SVF* 2.87), and that we acquire it by a process of reasoning (*collatione rationis*, Cicero *Fin*. 3.33–4). One might try to resolve this by distinguishing between the onset and development of 'reason' in youths – which would also explain the discrepancy between Aëtius, 4.11 (*SVF* 2.83, cited in n. 16 above) and D.L. 7.55 (*SVF* 3.D.17), Iamblichus ap. Stobaeus 1.48.8 and a scholion (both in *SVF* 1.149), concerning the age at which we become rational.

[58] See Frede 1994b: 53–6. That preconceptions amount to or immediately yield knowledge is clear from their criterial status, and also from Antipater's explicit statement that the preconception of God is a case of 'clarity' (*enargeia, St. rep*. ch. 38, 1051F (*SVF* 3.A.38) – cf. *Ac*. 2.17).

[59] Something like this is implied by the doctrine of *natural* 'starting points' (*aphormai*) for virtue – and hence wisdom – possessed by all human beings; see D.L. 7.89 (*SVF* 3.228 – cf. 229); Stobaeus 2.60 (*SVF* 3.264.1–2); id. 2.60 (*SVF* 1.566); and Origen (*SVF* 2.988.10–11). It is unclear to me, however, what form the *aphormai* take in our souls, e.g. whether they are tendencies or dispositions to form certain conceptions or beliefs, or those conceptions or beliefs themselves. In Origen's account (the most detailed we have), the *aphormai* appear to precede and point to the formation of the (common) conceptions of the fine and the shameful, and yet they already constitute part of 'the nature of reason'. This suggests that they may be (or be derived from) a basic sub-set of our common preconceptions that is concerned with 'moral facts' but does *not* yet include the central concepts involved in ethics. On this view the doctrine amounts to the belief that minimally successful functioning as a human being inevitably requires concepts or beliefs that imply the correct concepts of ethics (cf. *SVF* 3.225 and 229–30).

[60] On inquiry and discovery, see – in addition to the passages from Cicero and Epictetus noted above – Clement, *Strom*. 6.14 (*SVF* 2.102; cf. 103), and S.E., *P.H*. 2.1–11. On the link between perception, concepts, definitions and 'the whole art of' dialectic, see Augustine, *CD* 8.7 (*SVF* 2.106), cited below, and D.L. 7.42. *Ac*. 1.42 explicitly ascribes a similar general view to Zeno, but this is still an Antiochian report (despite its anti-Antiochian reporter).

That it is unclear whether it is possible to inquire and make discoveries, as the *Meno* problem suggests. <For we can't inquire about or discover> either what we know – since that is pointless – or what we don't know – since even if we encounter the latter, we won't recognise it any more than things we encounter accidentally . . . . The Stoics explain this by the natural conceptions. But if they mean that these are potential, our reply will be as before [viz. that the problem concerns actualised knowledge]. And if they mean that they are actualised, why do we inquire about things that we know? (*SVF* 2.104)[61]

So preconceptions – and hence common conceptions – are supposed to enable us to acquire further knowledge, and, given sufficient tenacity, wisdom.

The way this is ideally meant to work seems to be that the inquirer begins with the content of his preconception of the thing he is inquiring about, and eventually ends up with a formal definition expressing his knowledge of it. This overall process is summarised by Augustine:

<The Stoics> thought that <dialectic> should be derived from the bodily senses, claiming that from this source the mind conceived its concepts (which they call '*ennoiai*') – that is, concepts of the things which they articulate by definition . . . (*CD* 8.7, *SVF* 2.106, cf. S.E. *P.H.* 2.1–12, D.L. 7.42)[62]

We can see roughly, and briefly, how this might work in practice by considering an example. The content of our preconception of god is set out by Antipater in the first book of his *On the Gods*, like this (*St. rep*. 1051F, *SVF* 3.A.33):

Prior to our whole inquiry, we can briefly call to mind (*epilogioumetha*) the clear evidence [von Arnim: conception] that we have about god. Well, we conceive of god as a blessed and imperishable animal that is beneficent to men.[63]

The final definition Antipater came up with was presumably something like:

[61] Plutarch fr. 215f (Sandbach): Ὅτι ἄπορον ὄντως εἰ οἷόν τε ζητεῖν καὶ εὑρίσκειν, ὡς ἐν Μένωνι προβέβληται· οὔτε γὰρ ἃ ἴσμεν· μάταιον γάρ· οὔτε ἃ μὴ ἴσμεν· κἂν γὰρ περιπέσωμεν αὐτοῖς, ἀγνοοῦμεν, ὡς τοῖς τυχοῦσιν . . . . οἱ δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς τὰς φυσικὰς ἐννοίας αἰτιῶνται· εἰ μὲν δὴ δυνάμει, τὸ αὐτὸ ἐροῦμεν· εἰ δὲ ἐνεργείᾳ, διὰ τί ζητοῦμεν ἃ ἴσμεν; εἰ δὲ ἀπὸ τούτων ἄλλα ἀγνοούμενα, πῶς ἅπερ οὐκ ἴσμεν.

[62] *ipsi Stoici . . . a corporis sensibus eam [dialecticam] ducendam putarunt, hinc asseverantes animum concipere notiones, quas appellant* ἐννοίας, *earum rerum scilicet quas definiendo explicant; hinc propagari atque conecti totam discendi docendi rationem.*

[63] Plutarch, *St. rep*. 1051F (*SVF* 3.A.38): ὧν ἵνα τοὺς ἄλλους ἀφῶ πάντας, Ἀντίπατρος ὁ Ταρσεὺς ἐν τῷ περὶ Θεῶν γράφει ταῦτα κατὰ λέξιν· 'πρὸ δὲ τοῦ σύμπαντος λόγου τὴν ἐνάργειαν [von Arnim: ἔννοιαν], ἣν ἔχομεν περὶ θεοῦ, διὰ βραχέων ἐπιλογιούμεθα. θεὸν τοίνυν νοοῦμεν ζῷον μακάριον καὶ ἄφθαρτον καὶ εὐποιητικὸν ἀνθρώπων·'

God is an immortal rational animal, perfect or noetic in happiness, un-receptive of any evil, and providential of both the cosmos and the things within it. (D.L. 7.147, *SVF* 2.1021)

(The example may be misleading in its details, but it should serve as a rough guide.[64])

One problem with this process concerns the nature of the result. Imagine that things go well: we have no difficulty in drawing on or expressing briefly the content of the relevant preconception, e.g. of god; we do the research appropriate to this subject, and a lot of conceptual thinking. The result is presumably that we have acquired quite a few further beliefs about the subject and a technical understanding of it. Hence, it seems, we now have a different concept from the one we started out with, perhaps a 'technical thought' (*technikē noēsis*, D.L. 7.51), but at any rate a conception rather than a preconception, since our concept now comes from teaching and attention (cf. Aëtius, 4.11). The problem is that we are supposed to hold onto our preconception, in order to use it not merely as a foundation for detailed knowledge, but also as a criterion or canon for confirming our developed understanding.[65] This difficulty is more serious in the case of foolish inquirers, who fail to use their common conception as a criterion for their further beliefs, and thus end up as e.g. anti-providentialists. Such inquirers have clearly modified – i.e. *subtracted* an element from – their original concept, and hence, it seems, no longer have the preconception.

Perhaps this is not much of a problem: good inquirers can remember the content of their preconception, and bad inquirers have perverted their reason, and are no longer of much interest.[66] But it points to a second problem concerning how we draw on the content of the preconception in the first place. For unless they start researching on this topic as soon as they become rational, it seems likely that ordinary people will already have a range of true and false beliefs about the object of inquiry. Hence either they won't have the preconception any more, or, if they do, its content may be confused and no longer stand out as the obvious starting point for inquiry.

[64] D.L. 7.147: Θεὸν δὲ εἶναι ζῷον ἀθάνατον λογικὸν τέλειον ἢ νοερὸν ἐν εὐδαιμονίᾳ, κακοῦ παντὸς ἀνεπίδεκτον, προνοητικὸν κόσμου τε καὶ τῶν ἐν κόσμῳ· The example is Sandbach's, 1996: 25. Whether this is actually a formal definition or not is unclear, since there are various other ways in which orthodox Stoics might have tried to define god – for instance, by following Zeno in *SVF* 1.102 and 171–2. (I am unsure how to understand 'perfect or noetic in happiness'; the text is perhaps corrupt – see Marcovich's Teubner ad loc. Pohlenz's emendation ('rational or noetic, and perfect in happiness') is clearly superior to Marcovich's ('rational, perfect and noetic in happiness'), since 'noetic' is a quality standardly ascribed to the Stoic gods in contexts where one might expect 'rational' – see e.g. *SVF* 1.120, 2.310 or 652.)

[65] On this function of the common conceptions, see below and Striker 1996: 62–8.

[66] On the perversion of reason, see the texts collected at *SVF* 3.228–36.

The Stoics can resolve this problem by distinguishing the ideal pattern of rational development from the one familiar to the rest of us. But this seems superficial, since it is clear that they want to claim not just that all of us have incorruptible low-level 'starting points' (*aphormai*) for knowledge, but also that we are somehow able to recognise the 'common conceptual' truths contained in e.g. their ethical 'paradoxes', *despite* the perversion of our reason. And this points to a more general problem about concepts, suggested by the second arm of Plutarch's dilemma in fr. 215F (above): it doesn't ever seem to be the case that we have an interesting pre-reflective concept that is properly expressible in a single formula.[67] If so, we can't start to inquire just on the basis of the preliminary knowledge contained in the 'clear evidence' of our preconception, let alone from evidence that we can identify as 'clear' (as Antipater recommends at *St. rep*. ch. 38, 1051F).

The Stoics have at least something of an answer to this problem for ordinary inquirers, but before considering this, it is worth looking at their response to the first arm of Plutarch's dilemma. In Augustine's account of the process, the Stoics are said to 'articulate' the things they have concepts of by defining them (*CD* 8.7, above). This metaphor of 'articulation' is one that is found repeatedly in Cicero, and also appears in the catalogue of Chrysippus' books in Diogenes (7.199).[68] It seems to capture an important feature of the Stoic account, in that the theory ideally involves filling out rather than revising the initial knowledge contained in one's preconception. So, for example, we start off conceiving of god as blessed and beneficent to man, and, ideally, end up understanding that his blessedness consists in being perfect, i.e. exercising virtue continually, his beneficence in universal providence, and so on. A large part of this process seems to depend on discerning the relations between our preconceptions, though part also consists in acquiring new factual beliefs – for instance, that the world is in fact god. But in either case, there doesn't seem to be any problem with solving Meno's dilemma by denying the first arm. For inquirers discover new information either by structuring their antecedent knowledge ('articulation') or by applying it to the world. In the first case, however, it is notable that there

[67] The mutually conflicting Stoic accounts of our preconception of god may be one indication of this. At any rate, Antipater's version in *St. rep*. 1051F differs slightly from the one in *Com. not*. 1075E, which replaces 'imperishable' with 'immortal' and 'beneficent to men' with 'philanthropic and caring and beneficial'; and considerably from the one in Cicero's *ND* 3.45–6, which has god as 'an animate thing', 'than which nothing in all of nature is more excellent'.

[68] At D.L. 7.199 (*SVF* 2.16), the catalogue has a new heading 'Ethics: concerning the articulation of ethical conceptions', Ἠθικοῦ λόγου τοῦ περὶ τὴν Διάρθρωσιν τῶν ἠθικῶν Ἐννοιῶν. (Von Arnim also supplies a similar addition for the Logic heading at 7.189 (his 2.13).) This has been doubted as a late interpolation or a sign of the lateness of the formation of the catalogue, but the reasons adduced for scepticism about early Stoic use of this term are feeble; see Tieleman 1996: 201.

is a sense in which the inquirer already knows the conclusion: as Plutarch suggested, it is potentially there in the inquirer's set of preconceptions.[69]

The common conceptions have a second criterial function, which is well attested in our sources: they serve as negative criteria, or as standards of knowledge which can be used to rule out some false beliefs and theories. The most common examples of this use concern the Epicurean conception of god. The argument, at least in its paradigm form, is straightforward: if your conception of god is incompatible with an element of the content of my preconception, e.g. with providence, you have an erroneous conception of god.[70] Sextus, however, offers a variant of this, when he argues that the preconceptions of god or of holiness – these are the two cases explicitly mentioning the common conceptions – prove the *existence* of the gods and of something holy (*M.* 9.196 and 123, *SVF* 2.337 and 1017).[71] There is nothing surprising in this as such: a preconception is precisely a conception formed by nature on the basis of repeated experience of a kind, and hence it is legitimate to infer from its existence to the existence of the kind (particularly if the kind is immortal). But it rather invites a demand for proof that these are in fact preconceptions, and thus returns us to the Stoic response to the problem of the apparent incapacity of ordinary inquirers to identify the content of their preconceptions.

The general form that response must take is pretty clear, I think: the Stoics need to argue that there is evidence supporting the identification of some particular concept as a preconception. Given their theory on the nature of preconceptions, such evidence ought to show either that the concept has an appropriate causal history or that it is deeply embedded in human nature – i.e. that it arises naturally. At least two texts show that this is what

[69] Hence I don't agree with Malcolm Schofield that the Stoics face any particular difficulties in proving something that is already clear (1980: 289–91). Schofield resolves the problem in Stoic theology by distinguishing the knowledge generated by the preconception that god exists from the proofs that the world is god (ibid. 302–4). But the preconception Balbus appeals to in *ND* 2 isn't that the god exists, but that if something is a god, it is a living thing than which nothing in nature is more excellent.

[70] See e.g. *St. rep.* 1052B, *Com. not.* 1075E, or Cicero, *Tusc.* 4.53–4, which argues that the Peripatetic conception of courage is incompatible with the preconception. This is often taken to be a bad kind of argument, but it isn't clear why it is bad to infer that a position that is incompatible with your knowledge is false. A more serious objection is that preconceptions don't amount to knowledge.

[71] S.E., *M.* 9.196 (*SVF* 2.337): πρὸς τούτοις εἰ ἔστι θεός. ἔστιν αἴτιον· οὗτος γὰρ ἦν ὁ τὰ ὅλα διοικῶν· ἔστι δέ γε κατὰ τὰς κοινὰς ἐννοίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων θεός· ἔστιν ἄρα αἴτιον· καίτοι κἂν μὴ θεὸς ὑπάρχῃ, ἔστιν αἴτιον· τὸ γὰρ μὴ εἶναι θεοὺς διά τινα αἰτίαν γίνεται· καὶ τῷ οὖν ὑπάρχειν θεὸν καὶ τῷ μὴ ὑπάρχειν ἐπ' ἴσης ἀκολουθεῖ τὸ εἶναί τι αἴτιον. *M.* 9. 123 (*SVF* 2.1017): σκοπῶμεν δὲ ἐξῆς καὶ τὸν τρόπον τῶν ἀκολουθούντων ἀτόπων τοῖς ἀναιροῦσι τὸ θεῖον . . . καὶ πάλιν εἰ μὴ εἰσὶ θεοί, ἀνύπαρκτός ἐστιν ἡ ὁσιότης, δικαιοσύνη τις οὖσα πρὸς θεούς· ἔστι δέ γε κατὰ τὰς κοινὰς ἐννοίας καὶ προλήψεις πάντων ἀνθρώπων ὁσιότης, καθό τι καὶ ὅσιόν ἐστιν. καὶ <τὸ> θεῖον ἄρα ἔστιν.

they did. The first option, the more difficult one in theological contexts, is found, somewhat obscurely, in Cicero's *De natura deorum* 2.4–15, where we learn that the origin of our concept of god lies in the world, i.e. in god. The second option, perhaps more promising in this case, consists in arguing that certain facts about human culture – for instance, our language, mannerisms, early poetry, records of the views of wise forebears, or widely shared, enduring and spontaneous agreement about the issue – attest to the naturalness of the relevant concept.[72]

If this is correct, we should not confuse the Stoics' appeals to e.g. *consensus omnium* or 'ordinary experience' (*consuetudo*/*sunētheia*) to attest the naturalness of a concept, with the theory of common conceptions such evidence is supposed to support. Nor, on the other hand, should we infer from the deployment in tandem of both the latter and the former that our sources have necessarily conflated the two kinds of Stoic argument.[73] That the alternative resources were not taken to be evident or criterial is obvious in the case of 'ordinary experience', since Chrysippus wrote two books for and against it, and saw no difficulty in either rejecting it in the *paradoxa* or using it as a source of probable views elsewhere.[74] This is also clear in the case of his use of the import of certain expressions in ordinary language, as well as of poetry, mannerisms etc., to determine the location of the governing part of the soul, reported extensively in Galen's *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*. For Chrysippus explicitly distinguished these procedures from evident or criterial ones, which were unavailable in this case.[75] Thus I take it that appeals to a stable *consensus omnium* such as the ones in *De natura deorum* 2.4–5 and 12 fin. are theoretically quite distinct from the deployment of the common conceptions or preconceptions they are used to support.[76]

But it is not clear how much this defence can help the Stoics in the case of ordinary people. For on this account, the elements of our concepts that derive from our preconceptions are only identified by means of a set of beliefs which are likely to be confused with – or not easily distinguished from – the beliefs that underwrite our preconceptions themselves (the

[72] On the functions of Stoic allegory, see Long 1992; on etymology, see James Allen's essay in this volume.

[73] *Contra* Obbink 1992: 216–31.

[74] See D.L. 7.183, e.g., and Obbink 1992: 214 n. 72.

[75] See Galen, *PHP* 3.1.15 (*SVF* 2.885.11–16): οὕτω φαίνεται διαφεύγειν ὁ τόπος ἡμᾶς. οὔτ' αἰσθήσεως ἐκφανοῦς γενομένης, ὅπερ ἐπὶ τῶν λοιπῶν συντετύχηκεν οὔτε τῶν τεκμηρίων, δι' ὧν ἄν τις συλλογίσαιτο τοῦτο· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν ἀντιλογία ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον προῆλθεν καὶ ἐν ἰατροῖς καὶ ἐν φιλοσόφοις. Cf. Atherton 1993: 95–7 and Tieleman 1996 Part II, esp. 160–8 on *koinē phorē*. Obbink 1992: 216–23 (esp. 221 n. 76) conflates this 'probable' technique with the common conceptions, despite noting the distinction in the case of 'common experience' – see the previous note.

[76] This is also supported by the fact that the deliverances of *koinē phorē* and *sunētheia* often amount to claims about the *communis opinio* – see Tieleman 1996: 160–8.

aphormai or their products). Even if we can distinguish between the two kinds of true belief we have concerning a particular subject – for instance, on the basis of their distinct kinds of content – it is hard to see how we are going to be able to discriminate any of these from the relevant false beliefs we have, without a preconception to serve as a criterion.[77] Nor will it be adequate here to appeal to general teleological constraints on the nature of our minds: the Stoics can't claim that we just do make these discriminations, consciously or not, since most of us clearly do not in most of the controversial cases.

These difficulties suggest three conclusions. First, some of the common conceptions are not common to all rational beings (or, at least, are not available to all of them) – indeed, the more interesting philosophical ones are likely to be extremely rare.[78] But this isn't surprising, since we know that the Stoics think that most people are perverse. Nor need it wreck the Stoics' overall project, provided that most of us retain (or, at least, retain access to) most of our common conceptions – for instance, our preconceptions of colours, cows, etc. Secondly, it may often be difficult to identify consciously the elements of the content of our concepts that derive from preconceptions. This is clear in the controversial case of gods considered above or the case of mixtures reported by Alexander. But it also points to a more general third problem, even in simple, agreed cases, where we might allow that ordinary people retain their preconceptions. For even if one has no false beliefs about a thing, it is still unclear how the content of the preconception can be perfectly isolated, within the set of beliefs that are involved in possessing a concept, as a single proposition (or *lekton*).[79] If so, it looks as though there is some tension between the Stoic views about the immediate functions of concepts in perception, thought and speech, and their application as criteria for philosophical inquiry. For if we allow the ordinary concepts applied in thought and perception to be determinate and relatively simple, it is hard to see how they could constitute the preconceptions the Stoics need for philosophical research; and if we take them to be relatively indeterminate and complex, it is difficult to understand how our preconceptions can be isolated and used as criteria.

[77] Perhaps this just happens, for instance when we hear a Stoic setting out the preconception of god. But the history of interpretations of the *De natura deorum* doesn't encourage this line of thought.

[78] This is the principal thesis of Obbink 1992.

[79] Frede 1999: 319–21 argues persuasively that the original set of impressions must be cataleptic. But he points out that rational mastery of a concept involves certain 'assumptions' about the thing involved in addition to the merely perceptual knowledge (the 'experience' of Aëtius 4.11) that originally generated it. I take it that even the imperfect mastery of normal concepts by an ordinary *adult* will also involve at least some further 'assumptions'.

PART 2 STOIC DEFINITION

The precise connections between ordinary language, preconceptions or common conceptions, and definitions were no doubt explained in the formal theories of definition that Chrysippus and his followers elaborated. Given their general understanding of the process of inquiry, one might hope to find some evidence that the Stoics distinguished between something like *nominal* definitions capturing ordinary linguistic usage, *preliminary* definitions capturing the knowledge contained in our preconceptions, with which we start out (ideally), and *real* definitions presenting the articulated conceptions that are the results of successful inquiries. Yet, despite the large number of definitions contained in our sources for the Stoics, this hope appears to be frustrated by the texts we have.[80] The first section in this part reviews the inadequate evidence for the Stoic theory of provisional definition or 'delineation' (*hupographē*); the second contrasts the Stoic theory of common conceptions with a theory of 'ennoematic definition' found in Galen and Porphyry; and the third section draws some tentative conclusions about the relations between ordinary language, preconceptions, and real definitions in the Stoa. The idea is to devise a plausible Stoic model that connects these items in a way that is both consistent with the results of Part 1 and conducive to the development of later models of common sense.

Section one: Stoic theories of definition

The basic evidence for the Stoic theory of definition is given by Diogenes Laertius in an appendix to his report on the grammatical part of dialectic:

> According to Antipater in Book One of his *On Definitions*, a definition is a statement by analysis expressed commensurably; alternatively, as Chrysippus has it in his *On Definitions*, it is a rendering of a peculiar characteristic (*idion*). A delineation (*hupographē*) is an account introducing the things (*pragmata*) in outline, or a definition having the effect of a definition in a simpler fashion.[81] (D.L. 7.60, *FDS* 621, *SVF* 2.226)

[80] See Hülser *FDS* 621–31, Long and Sedley 1987: II, §32, and *SVF* 2.224–30. I have not been able to find much secondary literature. The most useful work I know of is Rieth 1933: 36–54, Long and Sedley 1987: I, 193–5 and Mansfeld 1992: 326–31.

[81] D.L. 7.60–2 (*FDS* 621; *SVF* 3.D.25, 3.A.23, 2.226): Ὅρος δέ ἐστιν, ὥς φησιν Ἀντίπατρος ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ Περὶ ὅρων, λόγος κατ' ἀνάλυσιν ἀπαρτιζόντως ἐκφερόμενος. ἤ, ὡς Χρύσιππος ἐν τῷ Περὶ ὅρων, ἰδίου ἀπόδοσις. ὑπογραφὴ δέ ἐστι λόγος τυπωδῶς εἰσάγων εἰς τὰ πράγματα, ἢ ὅρος [Sedley: ὅρου] ἁπλούστερον τὴν τοῦ ὅρου δύναμιν προσενηνεγμένος. The translation follows the MSS; Sedley's emendation of the genitive (*horou*) for the MSS nominative (*horos*) in the last clause (Long and Sedley 1987: II, 194) yields 'or <a statement> having the effect of a definition in a simpler fashion than a definition'. This implies that there are two kinds of delineation, or two different ways to characterise delineations; the received text instead disambiguates two senses of the word 'delineation' – i.e. roughly, between 'introductory book' and 'provisional definition'.

The precise interpretation of the two initial definitions of *strict* definition is controversial. For the purpose of this section, it will be enough, I hope, merely to assert four points about strict definition that are relevant for the interpretation of provisional definitions or 'delineations':

(a) Chrysippus' definition *may* require only that a strict definition specify a necessary property of the definiendum that is unique to it.[82]

(b) Antipater's definition *does* require only that a strict definition specify a necessary property of the definiendum that is unique to it.[83]

(c) In the case of strict definitions of 'natural kinds', the property the Stoics sought was in fact the 'common quality' – i.e. something like the 'essence' – in virtue of which it was a kind.[84]

(d) Chrysippus probably thought that a strict definition could be analysed as an indefinite conditional, for example: 'If something is a man, that thing is a rational mortal animal.'[85]

However, since (a) is uncertain, it seems safest to assume in the light of (c) and the common example in (d) that the two definitions yield two distinct conceptions of strict definition, both of which presumably yield *real* definitions: Chrysippus' definitions capturing something like the 'essences' of the definienda, and Antipater's capturing necessary properties unique to the definienda.

[82] Chrysippus' definition is also ascribed to him in a scholion to Dionysius Thrax (*FDS* 627, *SVF* 2.226), and probably alluded to by Alexander *in Top*. 42–3 (*FDS* 628, *SVF* 2.228). Rieth 1933: 513 and Long and Sedley 1987: 1, 194 take 'peculiar characteristic' (*idion*) as a Stoic term indicating the essential nature of the definiendum, rather than in its ordinary logical sense of 'property unique to x' (Aristotle mentions both senses in *Top*. 1.4). This is possible; but it seems more plausible to understand Antipater's definition as a version of Chrysippus' than a criticism of it. One reason for thinking that Chrysippus did not want to mention 'essential properties' in his definition may be that it is supposed to cover any definition, and hence definitions of things that don't have 'common' or 'peculiar qualities', like *lekta* or proofs.

[83] Antipater's definition is likewise ascribed to him in the scholion to Dionysius Thrax (*FDS* 627, *SVF* 2.226), and alluded to by Alexander, *in Top*. 42–3 (*FDS* 628, *SVF* 2.228); but it is also given with minor variants and without any ascription in [Galen] *Def. med*. (*FDS* 624, *SVF* 2.227) and twice in the *Suda* (under *horos* and *apartian, FDS* 625–6). Alexander spells out Antipater's definition as a statement containing 'an unfolding (*exaplōsis*) of the definiendum' (= 'by analysis') which 'neither exceeds nor falls short' (= 'commensurably'). The scholion replaces 'by analysis' with 'by necessity', and glosses the latter as 'reciprocal' (*kat' antistrophēn*) – and the second gloss is repeated in the second citation from the *Suda*. As far as I can see, none of these variants suggest that Antipater was concerned to capture the essential properties of definienda.

[84] Rieth 1933: 52 cites Diogenes of Babylon ap. D.L. 7.58 (cf. n. 8 above), and Simplicius *in Cat*. 222.30 (*SVF* 2.378), which notes that the Stoics identified common qualities by 'peculiarities' (*idiotēs*) – although this term may not be a Stoic one, given its use by Porphyry at e.g. *in Ptol. harm*. 8.7–11. The individuating functions of these qualities are explained in Sedley 1982 and Menn 1999.

[85] See S.E., *M*. 11.8, *SVF* 2.224, *FDS* 629 – cf. Cicero *Ac*. 2.21, and n. 30 above. Sextus' point seems to be that 'universals' and indefinite conditionals have the same truth conditions. But Chrysippus may have been trying to avoid the appearance of hypostasising a generic Man in his definitions – see e.g. Caston 1999: 192–9 and the alternative interpretation of Chrysippian 'conceptual objects' in Egli 1979: 266–7.

At first sight, one might think that the notion of a 'delineation' should be more straightforward. The two definitions Diogenes gives are:

(I) An account introducing (or leading to) the things (*pragmata*) in outline, or

(II) A definition having the effect of a definition in a simpler fashion.[86]

The first seems to identify a kind of manual, i.e. a book giving 'an outline' of a subject, or an 'introduction', rather than a kind of definition, and if so, is included in order to avoid ambiguity. (Galen e.g. sometimes uses 'delineation' (*hupographē*) in this sense, though rarely in his own voice.)[87] So we can ignore (I). It is perhaps natural to think that a delineating account in the second sense is one that identifies what something is, whether as a prelude to strict definition or for the purpose of discussion or teaching, without (usually) disclosing its 'essence'.[88] After all, the metaphors in these definitions are just formalisations of the ones regularly applied in this context by Aristotle. In *De anima* 2.1 fin., for instance, he deploys all the metaphors used in the Stoic definitions in tandem:

> This should be enough to define (*dihorizein*) and delineate an account (*hupographein*) of the soul in outline (*tupos*). (413a9–10)[89]

And, as Aristotle uses these metaphors, 'delineating an account' is synonymous with 'defining in outline', and both are provisional definitions. But, as this case – Aristotle's definition of the soul – shows, a provisional definition may be very close or even identical to the best formulation we find of a strict definition.[90] That is, it may be 'provisional' in the sense that we start out with it, and later confirm it, or a 'delineation' in the sense that it is a concise expression of a definition that might otherwise take pages to enunciate.

This case suggests that a more cautious approach to the second meaning of 'delineation' ((II) above) may be required. If delineations perform the function of a strict definition 'in a simpler fashion', it seems likely that there

[86] These definitions are repeated in the *Suda* under *horos* (*FDS* 625), which also gives the correct Stoic definitions of strict definition. [Galen] *Def. med.* 1.6 (*FDS* 624, *SVF* 2.227) seems to offer related definitions. Other possibly Stoic definitions are discussed in section two.

[87] See Galen, *Syn. puls.* 9.431.5 or *Lib. prop.* 19.11.7, which note the use of 'Delineation', 'Outline', 'Introduction', 'Synopsis' etc. as titles for books for beginners. A Stoic example of the first title is the work *Delineation of ethical reason* found in the catalogue of Chrysippus' books at D.L. 7.199. (I am indebted to Jonathan Barnes for pointing out the correct sense of definition (I).)

[88] Cf. e.g. Long and Sedley 1987: 1, 194 or Atherton 1993: 110.

[89] τύπῳ μὲν οὖν ταύτῃ διωρίσθω καὶ ὑπογεγράφθω περὶ ψυχῆς.

[90] I assume that this is Aristotle's strict definition of the soul, despite his demand for the second kind of definition he recognises – i.e. including the cause, *Pos. an.* 2.10 at 413a15, and despite the problems about such a general definition of 'soul' raised at 402b1–9 (which greatly exercised the commentators – see Eustratius, *in Ethic.* 41.12–15, Philoponus, *in Cat.* 167.12–17, *in An.* 38.11–17, Simplicius, *in An.* 13.1–21, and Themistius, *in An.* 13.16–14.11).

will be at least as many kinds of delineation as there are of strict definition. We may thus tentatively identify the following types:

(1) A concise or simplified formulation of a Chrysippian definition – i.e. something that captures the 'essence' of the definiendum.
(2) An abbreviated or simpler version of an Antipatrian definition – i.e. something that captures a necessary property of the definiendum that is unique to it. To these we may perhaps add two further possible candidates on the basis of the results of Part I and normal philosophical usage, respectively:
(3) A *preliminary* definition – i.e. a formulation of the content of a (Stoic) common conception, which will capture the essence of the definiendum as type (1) does, but in a way that requires further 'articulation' and research.
(4) Any short formulation that gives a characterisation of a thing – i.e. something that identifies a thing either in the way types (1)–(3) do, or through non-necessary or common properties, or by examples etc.

(The dominant technical sense of 'delineation' in later philosophical writers is something like type (2), though the same authors also use the term non-technically in the manner of type (4).)[91]

Although the evidence may be confused by interference from some of the sources, we can get some idea of the Stoics' use of delineations by looking at three examples contained in *SVF* 2–3.[92] A simple case is Stobaeus' remark about 'madness':

> They also say that every bad person is mad, because he is ignorant about himself and his circumstances, which is madness. Ignorance is the vice opposed to wisdom; when it is relatively disposed, and provides unstable and fluttering impulses, it is madness. Hence they delineate madness thus: fluttering ignorance. (*Ec.* 2.68, *SVF* 3.663)[93]

[91] Type (2): Alexander takes delineations to be accounts specifying *per se* properties that are inseparable and peculiar (*idia*) to the definiendum at *in Met.* 176.25 (cf. *in Top.* 421.28–31); his view is followed by most of the commentators – see e.g. Ammonius *in Isag.* 54.6–7. Porphyry ap. Simplicius, *in Cat.* 30.5–15 takes delineations to capture the 'peculiarity' (*idiotēs*) of the thing but not the essence (and hence to cover items that don't have an essence (*ousia*), such as the highest genera under discussion); see further section two below. Type (4): see e.g. Aristotle *Soph. elen.* 181a 2, Alexander, *in Top.* 25.15, Porphyry, *De abst.* 2.52, *in Ptol. harm.* 52.3–4, etc. The TLG version of the *CAG* and indices such as Bonitz's on Aristotle generate more examples than one can deal with; I am indebted to Jonathan Barnes for his lucid discussion of the way the term 'delineation' is used by Porphyry and other commentators (Barnes 2003: 56–62, *ad Isag.* 2.10–14).

[92] The cases I found were of *axiōma* (2.166), *sēmeion* (2.221), *apodeixis* (2.266), *pros ti* (2.404) – all from Sextus – *kakon* (3.74, Stobaeus), *agathon* (3.75, Sextus), *aretai* (3.263, Philo), *epitēdeuma* (3.294, Stobaeus), *pathos* (3.389, Stobaeus; 462, 479, Chrysippus ap. Galen), *hosiotēs* (3.660, Stobaeus) and *mania* (3.663, Stobaeus). Many of these cases are questionable, however, because they only employ the verb 'delineate', which more often has the vaguer, non-technical sense of my type (4).

[93] Ἔτι δὲ λέγουσι πάντα φαῦλον μαίνεσθαι, ἄγνοιαν ἔχοντα αὑτοῦ καὶ τῶν καθ' αὑτόν, ὅπερ ἐστὶ μανία. Τὴν δ' ἄγνοιαν εἶναι ἐναντίαν κακίαν τῇ φρονήσει· ταύτην δὲ πρός τί πως ἔχουσαν

This delineation gives the genus and differentia of the definiendum in an admirably concise form. If you knew the Stoic definitions of ignorance and fluttering, this would allow you to understand what madness is; if you knew only what 'ignorance' and 'fluttering' mean in ordinary Greek, it would not. This case perhaps fits type (1); at any rate, the 'delineating' element is simply concision. The second case is Sextus' remark about *axiōmata* ('propositions') in the course of his discussion of the Stoics' views about what is signified:

> . . . the signified thing or *lekton*, which can be true or false. But this isn't the case for all *lekta*, since some are incomplete, and others complete. Among the latter is what they call an *axiōma*, which they delineate as follows: an *axiōma* is what is true or false. (*M.* 8.12, *SVF* 2.166)[94]

This isn't an abbreviation of the definition of a 'proposition' found in other texts; and yet, taken with its context, it identifies all and only the relevant class (i.e. if and only if something is a complete *lekton* of the kind that is true or false, it is an *axiōma*).[95] Hence this case seems to fulfil the conditions of Antipater's definition of *strict* definition 'in a simpler fashion' – e.g. by omitting the kind of true or false thing it is – and thus is a delineation of type (2). A final example is from Stobaeus' and Chrysippus' commentaries on the 'definition' of emotion (*pathos*):

> [*Definition*:] They say that an emotion is an impulse that is excessive and disobedient to the demands of reason, or a motion of the soul that is <irrational> and contrary to nature . . . (*Ec.* 2.88.8–9, *SVF* 3.378)

> [*Stobaeus*:] 'Contrary to nature' is included in the delineation of emotion, because it comes about contrary to reason in its correct and natural state . . . (*Ec.* 2.89.14–16, *SVF* 3.389)

> [*Chrysippus*:] Given that the impulse outruns reason and is borne off in a rush against it, it is rightly said to be 'excessive' and on this account to come about 'contrary to nature' and to be 'irrational', as we delineated <it>. (*PHP* 4.5 p. 263, *SVF* 3.479)[96]

ἀκαταστάτους καὶ πτοιώδεις παρεχομένην τὰς ὁρμὰς μανίαν εἶναι· διὸ καὶ ὑπογράφουσι τὴν μανίαν οὕτως· ἄγνοιαν πτοιώδη.

[94] τὸ σημαινόμενον πρᾶγμα, καὶ λεκτόν, ὅπερ ἀληθές τε γίνεται ἢ ψεῦδος. καὶ τοῦτο οὐ κοινῶς πᾶν, ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν ἐλλιπὲς τὸ δὲ αὐτοτελές. καὶ τοῦ αὐτοτελοῦς τὸ καλούμενον ἀξίωμα, ὅπερ καὶ ὑπογράφοντές φασιν 'ἀξίωμά ἐστιν ὃ ἐστιν ἀληθὲς ἢ ψεῦδος'.

[95] So Frede 1974: 40–4; Mates 1961: 27–9, though he allows that it might have been considered a definition by some Stoics, on the strength of Cicero, *Ac.* 2.95; and Bobzien 1999: 92–5, who says that this gives an essential property of *axiōmata*.

[96] Stobaeus, *Ec.* 2.88.8–9 (*SVF* 3.378): Πάθος δ' εἶναί φασιν ὁρμὴν πλεονάζουσαν καὶ ἀπειθῆ τῷ αἱροῦντι λόγῳ ἢ κίνησιν ψυχῆς <ἄλογον> παρὰ φύσιν . . . Stobaeus, *Ec.* 2.89, 14–16, *SVF* 3.389: καὶ τὸ 'παρὰ φύσιν' δ' εἴληπται ἐν τῇ τοῦ πάθους ὑπογραφῇ, ὡς συμβαίνοντος παρὰ τὸν

This is the most interesting case in *SVF*, I think, because it describes what are often called the Stoic 'definitions' of emotion – for instance, by Chrysippus himself in *PHP* 4.2 (p. 240, *SVF* 3.462) – as 'delineations', and Stobaeus' use of that term is confirmed by a direct quotation from Chrysippus. The reason in this case seems to be that the two Zenonian 'definitions' need to be interpreted as if they were combined to produce the strict definition.[97] If so, this case is an abbreviation, and presumably a delineation of type (1). (The other cases listed in note 92 seem to me to fit either this model of simplification or the concision exemplified by 'madness' above.)

A survey of the attested Stoic *uses* of delineations thus confirms the second definition given by Diogenes ((11) above): a delineation is a statement having the effect of a definition in a simpler fashion than a definition – i.e. one that gives a concise or simplified formulation of a strict definition, usually (in the extant cases) of type (1), but sometimes of type (2). It is perhaps not very surprising that many of the 'definitions' we find in our sources are in fact delineations of type (1), since the texts we have are largely doxographical and pedagogical. Sextus reports that one of the principal purposes of defining was to aid teaching (*P.H.* 2.205–11, *FDS* 623), and one might think that this is best done by simplified or concise formulations of *real* definitions capturing the 'essence' (or at least necessary properties) of the things. This may also explain the curious fact that many of the 'definitions' we have are disjunctive or multiple; e.g. the delineation of *pathos* above, or Cicero's review of the multiple definitions of courage by both Sphaerus and Chrysippus at *Tusc.* 4.53. So much for the delineations we have.

Section two: Ennoematic definition

Part 1 section four argued that the process of inquiry ideally starts from the secure or known content of a preconception; and I suggested above that it is tempting to think that that content would be expressed in a *preliminary* definition that would amount to a delineation of type (3) – i.e. a statement of one's antecedent knowledge which captures the 'essence' of the definiendum without articulating it, and could be used as a criterion for a strict Chrysippian or real definition. The review of the evidence in section

ὀρθὸν καὶ κατὰ φύσιν λόγον. Galen, *PHP* 4.5 p. 263 (*SVF* 3.479): ὑπερβαίνουσα γὰρ τὸν λόγον ἡ ὁρμὴ καὶ παρὰ τοῦτον ἀθρόως φερομένη οἰκείως τ' ἂν πλεονάζειν ῥηθείη καὶ κατὰ τοῦτο παρὰ φύσιν γίγνεσθαι καὶ εἶναι ἄλογος, ὡς ὑπογράφομεν.

97 See Brennan 1998: 30–1 and n. 19, who argues persuasively that Chrysippus wanted to claim that Zeno got the definition right, but that it could be more easily understood in his own alternative formulation.

one above gave no sign that the Stoics recognised this kind of preliminary definition at all. Nevertheless, I think that there is *some* evidence for this; but since it is slight, I introduce it after looking at a false, yet potentially illuminating, trail laid by some of the fragment collectors.[98]

Von Arnim and Hülser offer bits of the following excerpt from Galen as part of the evidence for a Stoic theory of definition:

> . . . some of the younger doctors . . . think that they have given a *substantial* (*ousiōdēs*) definition of the pulse. But as well as being greatly mistaken in that, they also only gave that kind of definition, without first giving one in accordance with the conception (*ennoia*), which has been shown by our arguments about these matters to be the *criterion* of a definition in accordance with substance . . . . So let us start again from *ennoematic* (*ennoēmatikos*) definitions, which we said were those that induce *nothing more than what all men know*. But it looks like no such definition has been proposed even by the Empiricists, who are the ones particularly suited to use such definitions (which the sophisticators of names don't consider to be definitions, but rather call 'delineations' (*hupographē*) and 'sketches' (*hupotupōsis*)). (*Diff. puls*. book 4, pp. 708.16–709.5 K – cf. *FDS* 306, *SVF* 2.229)[99]

Von Arnim perhaps thought that an 'ennoematic' or conceptual definition was a Stoic delineation of type (3), i.e. a statement outlining the conception of the thing designated by a word; and Hülser may have thought that the

[98] A second false trail is from Galen, *Def. med*. 1.6 (*FDS* 624, LS 32D = S.E., *P.H.* 2.212): 'a definition is a statement leading us, by a short reminder, to a conception of the things underlying the words'. ἢ ὅρος ἐστὶ διὰ βραχείας ὑπομνήσεως εἰς ἔννοιαν ἡμᾶς ἄγων τῶν ὑποτεταγμένων ταῖς φωναῖς πραγμάτων. As Long and Sedley point out (11.194), the only reason to think that this may be another Stoic definition of 'delineation' (misclassified by Sextus and [Galen] as one of strict definition) is that it comes after Antipater's version of strict definition in [Galen]. But Galen elsewhere suggests that it isn't, by ascribing a very similar definition to Heracleides while explaining his delineation of 'pulse': 'We know, of course, that the Empiricists aren't at all eager to define things, but rather use "sketches" (*hupotupōsis*) and "delineations" (*hupographē*) – for that's what they call statements that induce, in a short compass, a conception of the thing whose name we utter.' Ὁ μὲν Ταραντῖνος Ἡρακλείδης ἐμπειρικῷ πρέπουσαν ὑπογραφὴν ποιούμενος τὸν σφυγμὸν εἶναί φησι κίνησιν ἀρτηριῶν καὶ καρδίας. ἴσμεν δ' ὅτι τὴν ἀρχὴν οὐδ' ὁρίζεσθαι σπουδάζουσιν οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς ἐμπειρικῆς αἱρεσέως, ἀλλ' ὑποτυπώσεσί τε καὶ ὑπογραφαῖς χρῶνται. καλοῦσι δ' οὕτως αὐτοὶ τοὺς λόγους, ὅσοι διὰ βραχέων ἑρμηνεύουσι τὴν ἔννοιαν τοῦ πράγματος, οὗ τὴν προσηγορίαν φθεγγόμεθα (*Diff. puls*. Book 4, p. 720.5–9 K = Deichgräber frr. 172). Given the Empiricists' use of 'hypomnestic signs' (Deichgräber frr. 80–1), it seems very likely that the two formulations are variants of a single Empiricist definition.

[99] Galen, *Diff. puls*. 708.9–9.5 (*SVF* 2.229+, *FDS* 306+): πρόσκειται δὲ τῷ λόγῳ τὸ ἀκριβῶς, ὅτι τῶν κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν ἄλλος ἄλλο προσθέντες ἔνιοι τῶν νεωτέρων ἰατρῶν οὐσιώδη νομίζουσιν ὅρον εἰρηκέναι τοῦ σφυγμοῦ, πρὸς τῷ κἀκεῖνο μέγιστον ἡμαρτηκέναι, τὸν μόνον εἰρηκέναι τὸ ὁριζόμενον ὑπ' αὐτῶν οὐσιώδη, μὴ προειρημένου τοῦ κατὰ τὴν ἔννοιαν, ὃς ἐν τοῖς περὶ τούτων λογισμοῖς ἡμῖν ἐπιδέδεικται κριτήριον γενόμενος τοῦ κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν. ἀλλ' οὐδὲ τοῦτ' αὐτὸ γινώσκοντες, εἰκότως ἀποφαίνονται τὸ δόξαν ἀλόγως ἑαυτοῖς. ἀρξώμεθα οὖν αὖθις ἀπὸ τῶν ἐννοηματικῶν ὅρων. οὓς οὐδὲν ἔφαμεν ἑρμηνεύειν πλέον ὧν ἅπαντες ἄνθρωποι γινώσκουσιν. ἔοικε δ' οὐδεὶς εἰρῆσθαι τοιοῦτος οὐδ' ὑπὸ τῶν ἐμπειρικῶν, οἷς ἔπρεπε μάλιστα πάντων ὅροις χρῆσθαι τοιούτοις, οὓς οἱ δεινοὶ περὶ τὰς προσηγορίας οὐδ' ὅρους ἀξιοῦσιν, ἀλλ' ὑπογραφάς τε καὶ ὑποτυπώσεις ὀνομάζειν.

conception must be a Stoic preconception or common conception, since it is supposed to serve as a *criterion* for a real definition. Their motives for thinking that this text is evidence for a *Stoic* view were probably two: first, Galen's dismissive comment in the final bracket above, identifying ennoematic definitions with delineations, and ascribing the latter to 'the sophisticators of names'; and secondly, the general context of the work, which is largely directed at Archigenes' practice of definition and division in his work *On Pulses*. (Archigenes was a 'Pneumatic' doctor, and hence indirectly linked to the Stoa via the school's founder Athenaeus, a student of Posidonius.[100])

But if this is evidence for a Stoic view, then that view is presumably the one Galen sets out in the pages surrounding this excerpt (pp. 704–11, Kühn), which distinguish *ennoematic* from *substantial* definitions.[101] The characteristics of the former kind can be summarised in four points:

(1) Ennoematic definitions are agreed by all or all users of the same language (708.17, 704.12);
(2) they are criteria for substantial definitions (708.14, cf. 704.7–11);
(3) they amount to what Aristotle called a *logos onomatōdēs* (*APo*. 2.10) or 'nominal definition' (704.11–13); and
(4) they don't grasp the essence of the thing, but only its accidents (704.17–5.7, 705.14–18).

Galen explains 'substantial' or real definitions by direct appeal to his commentary on Aristotle's discussion in the *Posterior Analytics* (705.13–6.3), and in particular to 2.10. (Galen notes that there are two kinds of real definition at 712.9–13.)

If there was a Stoic original of this theory of definition, it presumably distinguished between giving a delineation setting out the content of our preconception or common conception of the thing and giving a strict definition of its Chrysippian *idion*. Curiously, as Rieth pointed out (1933: 38), it looks as if there is further evidence to support this hypothesis in a fragment of Porphyry (replying to a criticism by Plotinus (*Enn*. 6.1.10.1) of Aristotle's explanation of 'quality' via 'qualified things' (*Cat*. 8b25)):

[100] See Posidonius, fr. 190 EK (Galen, *De causis contentivis* 2.1–2). The pneumatic doctors have not received much scholarly attention; see Wellman 1896, Kudlein 1968, and Wellman 1895 esp. 5–22 and 169–201 (a reconstruction of Archigenes' work on pulses). The Stoic elements of their theory appear to be entirely 'physical' and hence medical – e.g. the pneuma itself, the location of the 'mind' in the heart, the causal theories reported in Posidonius, fr. 190, etc. I have not found any evidence that Archigenes was interested in 'logic' or philosophy as such.

[101] Elsewhere Galen uses 'ennoematic' technical terminology rather sparingly; see *Thrasybulus* 5. 811.9–15 K, and *De tremore* 7.607.4 and 609.17 K. It doesn't seem to have been a usual part of his own Aristotelian theory of definition; see *Ars medica* 1.306.12–15 K.

The definition of quality is ennoematic, not substantial. An *ennoematic* definition is one taken from what is known to all and agreed by all in common, for instance: [i] 'The good is that from which one can be benefited.' [ii] 'The soul is that from which being alive results.' [iii] 'Utterance is the proper object of hearing.' *Substantial* definitions, however, are those which also teach the substance of the definienda, for instance: [i+] 'Good is virtue or what participates in virtue.' [ii+] 'Soul is a self-moving substance.' [iii+] 'Utterance is beaten air.' Further, *ennoematic* definitions are the same for all because they are agreed by all in common; whereas *substantial* definitions are contradicted by their promoters' opponents because they are adduced by distinct schools. So [iii-] the ancients don't agree with those who say that utterance is air, because they define it as an incorporeal activity and blow; and [ii-] those who extend the good through all <the alleged kinds of good> disagree with those who put it in virtue and fineness alone. So the right thing to do is to use the definitions agreed by all in introductory works, since they are more familiar and more suitable for a first reading, while the other kind of definition requires first philosophy, which examines beings *qua* beings. Hence Aristotle gave the substantial definition of quality in the *Metaphysics*, and the ennoematic definition here. (Porphyry ap. Simp. *in Cat.* 213.8– 28)[102]

Porphyry contributes three improvements. First, he generalises the ennoematic/substantial distinction – that is, he removes it from the specifically Aristotelian conception of real definition, by ascribing the ennoematic half to all the philosophical schools. Secondly, he offers three examples that are clearly Stoic, and also plausible candidates for the category of Stoic common conceptions.[103] And thirdly, though not in this passage, he routinely describes ennoematic definitions as 'delineations' (e.g. at Porphyry

[102] πρὸς ὅ φησιν ὁ Πορφύριος, ὅτι ὁ περὶ τῆς ποιότητος λόγος ἐννοηματικός ἐστιν, ἀλλ' οὐκ οὐσιώδης. ἔστιν δὲ ἐννοηματικὸς ὁ ἀπὸ τῶν γνωρίμων τοῖς πᾶσιν εἰλημμένος καὶ κοινῇ παρὰ πᾶσιν ὁμολογούμενος, οἷον ὅτι 'ἀγαθόν ἐστιν ἀφ' οὗ συμβαίνει ὠφελεῖσθαι, ψυχή ἐστιν ἀφ' ἧς ὑπάρχει τὸ ζῆν, φωνή ἐστιν τὸ ἴδιον αἰσθητὸν ἀκοῆς'. οὐσιώδεις δέ εἰσιν ὅροι οἱ καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν αὐτὴν τῶν ὁριζομένων διδάσκοντες, οἷον 'ἀγαθόν ἐστιν ἡ ἀρετὴ ἢ τὸ μετέχον ἀρετῆς, ψυχή ἐστιν οὐσία αὐτοκίνητος, φωνή ἐστιν ἀὴρ πεπληγμένος'. καὶ οἱ μὲν ἐννοηματικοὶ ὅροι ἅτε κοινῇ παρὰ πᾶσιν ὁμολογούμενοι οἱ αὐτοί εἰσιν, οἱ δὲ οὐσιώδεις κατὰ αἱρέσεις ἰδίας προαγόμενοι ἀντιλέγονται ὑπὸ τῶν ἑτεροδόξων· τοῖς γοῦν λέγουσιν ἀέρα τὴν φωνὴν καὶ σῶμα οὐχ ὁμογνωμονοῦσιν οἱ ἀρχαῖοι κατ' ἐνέργειαν αὐτὴν ἀσώματον ἀφοριζόμενοι καὶ πληγήν, καὶ τοῖς τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἐν ἀρετῇ καὶ μόνῳ τῷ καλῷ τιθεμένοις ἀμφισβητοῦσιν οἱ διὰ πάντων αὐτὸ διατείνοντες. δέδοκται οὖν ἐν ταῖς πρώταις εἰσαγωγαῖς τοῖς παρὰ πᾶσιν ὁμολογουμένοις ὅροις κεχρῆσθαι· αὐτοὶ γάρ εἰσιν γνωριμώτεροι καὶ πρὸς τὴν πρώτην ἀκρόασιν ἐπιτηδειότεροι, οἱ δὲ ἕτεροι τῆς πρώτης δέονται φιλοσοφίας, ἥτις τὰ ὄντα ᾗ ὄντα θεωρεῖ. διόπερ τὸν μὲν οὐσιώδη λόγον τῆς ποιότητος ἐν τοῖς Μετὰ τὰ φυσικὰ ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης ἀποδέδωκεν, τὸν δὲ ἐννοηματικὸν ἐνταῦθα.

[103] (iii) and (iii+) are apparently direct borrowings from Diogenes of Babylon (D.L. 7.55, *SVF* 3.D.17). (i) and (i+) identify the Stoic preconception of the good and its primary referent (S.E., *M.* 11 25, *SVF* 3.75 – cf. 74 and 76, from D.L. 7.94 and Stobaeus, *Ec.* 2.69). (ii+) uses '*ousia*' in an unusual sense for a Stoic, but adequately captures a Stoic view (*SVF* 2.777, 780).

in Cat. 73.22). Thus one might think that this begins to look like a more or less direct borrowing from the Stoa.[104]

Sadly, it isn't: the passage from Galen doesn't refer to the Stoics directly by the phrase 'the sophisticators of names' or indirectly in the earlier attack on Archigenes in *Diff. puls*. First, the 'sophisticators of names' in this passage are pretty clearly the Empiricists themselves, rather than the Stoics. For, although the insult seems like a typical Galenic slur on the Stoa, and the terminology looks Stoic, both appear to be used only on one other occasion in the relevant senses, and neither refers to the Stoics. The insult is applied to unspecified medical writers in contrast to Hippocrates (*in Hipp. prog.* 3, p. 255 K); and the combination of *hupographē* and *hupotupōsis* reappears later in the *Diff. puls*. (book 4, p. 720.5–9 K, cited in note 98 above), where they are explained as the Empiricists' own terms for their supposedly non-dogmatic definitions – which is presumably why Galen calls them 'sophisticators of names'.[105] Perhaps more telling, however, is the indirect context: the point of Galen's long excursus on ennoematic definition is precisely to explain to all previous writers on the pulse why their substantial definitions have gone wrong: they (and hence Archigenes) *didn't* use an ennoematic definition to secure their various conflicting candidates. As for Porphyry, it seems clear that he *has* specifically chosen Stoic philosophical doctrines for his +group, but that he did so in order to be able to show how philosophical doctrines can be mistaken, unlike the ennoematic definitions *all* philosophical schools rely on.[106]

This negative result is consistent with the view of the common conceptions sketched in Part 1. For on that view, the later theory of Galen and Porphyry is incompatible with the Stoic theory in three respects: it assumes that an ennoematic definition is (1) agreed by everyone, (3) equivalent to a nominal definition, and (4) restricted to grasping accidents of the thing (see p. 193). The rough relation between these points in the later theory is fairly clear, I think: the theory assumes that concept- and hence language-acquisition depends in the first instance on normal perception, and that normal perception delivers *accidental* features of the relevant kinds, but ones

[104] The ennoematic/substantial distinction was picked up from Porphyry by the Aristotelian commentators in connection with explaining the difference between delineations and real definitions (loc. cit. n. 91 above, and Barnes 2003: 56–62, *ad Isag.* 2.10–14), and applied to definitions of the Aristotelian 10 genera (*ad* Porphyry *Isag.* 3.19; see e.g. Ammonius *in Isag.* 56 and 69). As a result, there is a lot of 'evidence' of this kind in the *CAG*.

[105] Galen *does* frequently call Archigenes et al. 'sophists of names' in book 2, but the terms are different (*sophistai tōn onomatōn* in book 2; *deinoi peri tas prosēgorias* in book 4).

[106] The ennoematic definitions Porphyry cites are all familiar from arguments in Plato: e.g. something like (i) is found at *Prt.* 333d; (ii) at *Phd.* 105; and (iii) at *Tht.* 185a.

generally sufficient to single out ordinary individuals falling under those kinds.[107] The fundamental difference between this and the Stoic theory is the final point (4): since Stoic preconceptions yield secure, if only partial, knowledge of what the thing is, they don't yield 'conceptual' or linguistic knowledge *as opposed to* knowledge about the substance or essence of the things.[108] Hence, for the Stoics, the content of a preconception *isn't*, or may *not* be, equivalent to ordinary linguistic meaning – the word 'god' doesn't *mean* blessed and imperishable animal that is beneficent to men, in ordinary English.[109] But this is not to suggest that the word 'god' in the sentence 'There is a god' doesn't *signify* that there is something such that it is a blessed and imperishable animal that is beneficent to men, on the Stoic view. It is rather the claim that that isn't what everyone who speaks English understands, or even the majority of people, when they speak or hear that sentence.

Section three: Ordinary language, preconception and definition in the Stoa

The theories of 'ennoematic definition' in Galen and Porphyry are clearly not identical with the Stoic theory of the common conceptions or with any Stoic theory of preliminary definition the latter may have led to. Nor are these later views *theories* of 'common sense' if a common-sense theory is one that posits a general and immediate relation between ordinary thought or concepts and the essential nature of the world – for they claim that ordinary language and thought capture only accidental features of the world (or of the parts of it relevant to philosophical inquiry). Despite the serious differences between these later views and the Stoics', however, it is still tempting to think that the two are connected, since both groups start out with a 'common conception' of some sort, and both use it as a criterion for

[107] The motives Galen and Porphyry have for holding the later theory differ: Galen thinks that perception is or provides a fundamental criterion of truth (see e.g. Hankinson 1994), while Porphyry needed something like a Stoic theory of empirically generated conceptual genera in order to maintain his interpretation of the *Categories* as a logical work, rather than an exercise in metaphysics (see Rieth's brilliant Excursus 8, 1933: 177–80, and e.g. Lloyd 1990: ch. 2 or Ebbesen 1990).

[108] This is my principal disagreement with Rieth (e.g. 1933: 38). On Rieth's view the Stoics started off with (i) the content of their preconception, i.e. in his view, the ordinary meaning of the word, and transformed it into a technical conception by means of four further procedures: (ii) etymology; which led to (iii) a division of the senses of a word; (iv) a division (or partition) of the relevant thing; and (v) a definition, yielding understanding. As well as disagreeing with his interpretation of (i), I think that the purpose of (ii) was to try to guarantee that (i) was in fact a preconception; and I think that (iii) is posterior to the discovery of real definitions (his (v)).

[109] I assume that the Greek word '*theos*' probably meant something more like 'superhuman being to whom ritual honours are due' – i.e. that it singles out accidental features of god in line with the later theory's prediction.

some kind of strict definition. But it would be more tempting if there were some evidence to show, first, that the Stoics actually had something like a theory of preliminary definitions (see below), and secondly, that there was a discernible process of development between the Stoic theory and these later theories in Galen and Porphyry (see Part 3).

Unfortunately, although the evidence collected in Part 1 section four shows that the Stoics needed, or at least had an obvious space for, a theory of preliminary definition, *direct* evidence is hard to find. We are explicitly informed about a direct relation between the content of a common conception and a technical definition only in one controversial passage from Sextus:

> The Stoics, relying on the common conceptions, *define* (*horizein*) the good in this way: 'Good is benefit or not other than benefit.' They say that virtue and virtuous action are benefit, and the excellent man and the friend are not other than virtue . . . So every good is covered by the *definition* (*horos*), whether it happens to be benefit or not other than benefit. Hence, and as a consequence of this, they say that 'good' is said in three senses, and they go on to *delineate* (*hupographein*) each of its significations individually. In one way, they say, that by which or from which one is benefited . . . is said to be good [virtue]. In another way, that in accordance with which it results that one is benefited . . . [virtue and virtuous action]. In the third and final way, what is capable of benefiting is said to be good, and this *rendition* (*apodosis*) includes both the virtues and virtuous actions and friends and good daimons. (*M.* 11.22–7; *SVF* 3.75)[110]

On the face of it, this passage connects three distinct items – the common conceptions, a definition of the good, and delineations of three 'significations' apparently of the term 'good' – by two processes: the common conceptions yield a definition, and the definition yields three 'significations'. If we follow Sextus' directions here, the order of discovery in this case will be something like this. First, identify the *content* of the common conception of the good, which other sources suggest is 'something is good

[110] οἱ μὲν οὖν Στωϊκοὶ τῶν κοινῶν ὡς εἰπεῖν ἐννοιῶν ἐχόμενοι ὁρίζονται τἀγαθὸν τρόπῳ τῷδε 'ἀγαθόν ἐστιν ὠφέλεια ἢ οὐχ ἕτερον ὠφελείας· ὠφέλειαν μὲν λέγοντες τὴν ἀρετὴν καὶ τὴν σπουδαίαν πρᾶξιν, οὐχ ἕτερον δὲ ὠφελείας τὸν σπουδαῖον ἄνθρωπον καὶ τὸν φίλον· . . . ὥστε πᾶν ἀγαθὸν τῷ ὅρῳ ἐμπεριειλῆφθαι, ἐάν τε ἐξ εὐθείας ὠφελεια τυγχάνῃ, ἐάν τε μὴ ᾖ ἕτερον ὠφελείας.' Ἔνθεν καὶ κατ' ἀκολουθίαν τριχῶς εἰπόντες ἀγαθὸν προσαγορεύεσθαι, ἕκαστον τῶν σημαινομένων κατ' ἰδίαν πάλιν ἐπιβολὴν ὑπογράφουσιν. Λέγεται γὰρ ἀγαθόν, φασί, καθ' ἕνα μὲν τρόπον τὸ ὑφ' οὗ ἢ ἀφ' οὗ ἔστιν ὠφελεῖσθαι, ὃ δὴ ἀρχικώτατον ὑπῆρχε καὶ ἀρετή· ἀπὸ γὰρ ταύτης ὥσπερ τινὸς πηγῆς πᾶσα πέφυκεν ἀνίσχειν ὠφελεια. καθ' ἕτερον δὲ τὸ καθ' ὃ συμβαίνει ὠφελεῖσθαι· οὕτως οὐ μόνον αἱ ἀρεταὶ λεχθήσονται ἀγαθά, ἀλλὰ καὶ αἱ κατ' αὐτὰς πράξεις, εἴπερ καὶ κατὰ ταύτας συμβαίνει ὠφελεῖσθαι. κατὰ δὲ τὸν τρίτον καὶ τελευταῖον τρόπον λέγεται ἀγαθὸν τὸ οἷόν τε ὠφελεῖν, ἐμπεριλαμβανούσης τῆς ἀποδόσεως ταύτης τάς τε ἀρετὰς καὶ τὰς ἐναρέτους πράξεις καὶ τοὺς φίλους καὶ τοὺς σπουδαίους ἀνθρώπους, θεούς τε καὶ σπουδαίους δαίμονας.

if and only if it is beneficial'.[111] Next, using that and, presumably, the common conceptions of benefit and virtue (etc.), work out *what* is good: virtue, virtuous actions, virtuous people. Then, give a *real* definition of the good: 'benefit or not other than benefit'.[112] And finally work out the connections between these goods: all of them are capable of benefiting, but in different ways (i.e. the nested significations 1–3).

The final stage is controversial, partly because its semantic terminology seems to reflect a post-Chrysippian Stoic position, despite the close parallels to this passage in D.L. 7.94 and Stobaeus, 2.69 (*SVF* 3.74 and 76)[113] – but mainly because it is unclear what its precise function is here. The first and second significations of 'good' give the causes of benefit, construed narrowly and more broadly (respectively); and the third signification seems to restate the real definition in terms designed to point out why things 'not other than benefit' should also be considered good.[114] This looks to me something like a semantic version of the material distinctions between kinds of good as 'productive' or 'constitutive' or both (set out e.g. in Cicero, *Fin.* 3.55 and D.L. 7.96, *SVF* 3.107). But whatever exactly the authors of this triple distinction were doing, it seems clear that they weren't attempting to achieve a technical definition by means of lexical analysis of ordinary language or nominal definitions.[115] For there is no reason to doubt Sextus' explicit claim that this was an activity subsequent to the discovery of the real definition; and our other evidence shows that these patently Stoic and philosophical 'significations' cannot have been the content of 'the common conceptions' which Sextus says were used to make that definition.

Unfortunately, once the irrelevance of the final stage of the process is granted, Sextus reports only the final stage of real definition, merely noting that it rests on some preconceptions. His failure to elucidate the earlier stage explicitly, and his confused definitional terminology, make it impossible to take this passage as direct *evidence* that the Stoics used a preliminary

[111] This is derived from D.L. 7.94 init. (ἀγαθὸν δὲ κοινῶς μὲν τὸ τὶ ὄφελος . . . 'The good is generically something beneficial . . .') and Simplicius *in Ench.* 68.19–25 Dübner = p. 319 Hadot (αἱ κοιναὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων περὶ τῆς τῶν πραγμάτων φύσεως ἔννοιαι, καθ' ἃς οὐ διαφερόμεθα, ἀλλ' ὁμοδοξοῦμεν ἀλλήλοις οἱ ἄνθρωποι· οἷον, ὅτι τὸ ἀγαθὸν ὠφέλιμόν ἐστιν, καὶ τὸ ὠφέλιμον ἀγαθὸν . . . 'The common conceptions of men about the nature of the things are those in accordance with which we men don't differ but have the same beliefs as each other – for example, that the good is beneficial and the beneficial is good . . .'). Cf. Porphyry ap. Simp. *in Cat.* 213.8–28, cited in n. 102, and Epictetus, *Diss.* 1.22.1.

[112] *M.* 11.22–4 and D.L. 7.94 *idiōs*.

[113] See Atherton 1993: 105–6. On the relations between these three passages, see Mansfeld 1989.

[114] *M.* 11.27 and Stobaeus, 2.69.

[115] *Contra* Rieth 1933: 36–54. Sextus clearly suggests that distinguishing the significations of this term was posterior to discovering the general strict definition; see further Atherton 1993: 105–6.

definition or 'delineation' of type (3) as a 'criterion' with which to construct their real definition of the good. But it is, of course, further evidence that common conceptions were criterial for definitions in some sense. And one can reasonably claim on the basis of this passage, I think, that, if the real definition can be more or less correctly summarised in such a way that it adds only 'or not other than' to the formulation of the content of the common conception, then the common conception captures an essential property of goodness, rather than accidental features or the ordinary meaning of 'good'.

The terminological results of this Part can be summarised thus:

- the Stoics did not describe delineations or definitions as 'ennoematic' (Galen, *Diff. puls.* 4, pp. 708–9, *FDS* 306, *SVF* 2.229; Porphyry ap. Simp. *in Cat.* 213.8–28);
- they probably did not describe delineations as 'short reminders' (Galen, *Def. med.* 1.6, *FDS* 624, = S.E., *P.H.* 2.212);
- they did describe simplified or concise versions of strict definitions of 'essences' as 'delineations' (type (1) in section one, e.g. 'madness');
- they, or some of them, probably did describe accounts specifying necessary and unique properties as 'delineations' (type (2) in section one, e.g. 'proposition');
- they may have described preliminary definitions giving the content of common conceptions as 'delineations' (type (3) in section one), but the direct evidence does not confirm this.

If these conclusions are right, the hypotheses that the Stoics had an explicit theory of preliminary definition and that a theory of common sense developed from this will only be plausible if a more direct link between the Stoic and later theories can be identified.

PART 3 CICERO'S RHETORICAL THEORY OF DEFINITION

The Stoics thought that the common conceptions grasped essential features of a range of objects sufficient to generate 'wisdom' once the content of those conceptions had been 'articulated' and supplemented with empirical evidence. If they had a formal theory of preliminary definition, that theory claimed that the content of the common conceptions set out in preliminary definitions served as the criterion for the real definitions which articulated it. But preliminary definitions are not equivalent to nominal definitions specifying the ordinary linguistic 'meaning' of the definienda, since, while the common conceptions are in principle common to all rational beings *qua* rational, their content is often lost or at least obscured and distorted

by ordinary people. The later ennoematic theory of definition recorded in Galen and Porphyry, by contrast, claims that ordinary competence in a natural language presupposes the possession of 'common conceptions' which identify *accidental* features of the basic natural kinds that structure the world, and can thus be used as partial criteria for the real definitions that philosophers seek.

A theory of preliminary definition claiming that ordinary concepts accessible to all competent language users yield a partial grasp of *essential* properties, would constitute a theory of 'common sense', since it would imply that we can *understand* the basic structure of the world just in virtue of concepts generated by ordinary experience. Such a theory would also provide the direct historical link between the Stoic and later ennoematic theories, if it were found in a source directly informed by the Stoa, but also diverging from it, ideally under the influence of the late Academy (see notes 4–5 above). In this part, I argue that Cicero's late rhetorical works outline a theory of preliminary definition which is intermediate between the two theories discussed in Part 2. Section one briefly reviews three passages from the *Topica* which suggest that Cicero's theory of definition was conceived in a generally Stoic framework; and section two sketches a novel connection between common sense, preconception and definition in some of Cicero's rhetorical works which modifies the Stoic view in the direction of the later theory of ennoematic definition.

Section one: Cicero's formal theory of definition

Definition appears as a theoretical subject in Cicero's rhetorical works in three contexts: as the second *stasis* in his various theories of 'invention', as a device for organising a speech or systematising an art, and as an 'intrinsic topic' or general source of arguments for orators.[116] The sources of most of these passages are extremely controversial, and the details of his evolving theory of definition (and division and partition) in the later works are quite obscure.[117] But there is no reason to doubt Cicero's repeated claims that his mature rhetorical theory is an original synthesis of the technical rhetorical material he learned in his youth, his own extensive experience of

[116] The principal loci, in chronological order, are: *De inventione* 2.52–6, *De oratore* 1.189 and 3.115, *Orator* 116–17, *Partitiones oratoriae* 41, 62 and 123–4, and *Topica* 8–10, 26–34 and 81–3.

[117] Source questions usually revolve around whether Cicero took a theory from Antiochus, from Philo of Larissa, or made it up himself; for an example concerning *De or.* 3.115, see Brittain 2001: ch. 5. The most useful discussions I have found on the theory of the later works are Mansfeld 1992: 326–31, Nörr 1972 and Riposati 1947. The best commentaries on this material are still the *De difinitionibus* by Marius Victorinus (ascribed to Boethius in the *PL* (vol. 64, cols. 891–910); ed. in Hadot 1971) and the *Com. in Top. Ciceronis* of Boethius. But see now T. Reinhardt (ed.) *Cicero's Topica* (Oxford) 2004.

forensic oratory, and his philosophical interests in the Stoa and late Academy (under Philo and Antiochus). For our purposes, it is sufficient, I think, merely to note that the philosophers who influenced him were themselves interested in rhetorical theory, and, at least in the case of the Stoics and Philo, taught rhetoric as part of the philosophical education they offered Roman students in the first century BC. There is thus sufficient reason to see Cicero's rhetorical theory of definition as part of the philosophical debate on the connections between language and the world, whether it is his own creation or a direct borrowing from the Stoa or an Academic adaptation of a Stoic original.

Cicero's closest approach to a formal theory of definition, and his most clearly Stoicising treatment of the subject, is set out in the *Topica*, his last rhetorical work (written in 44 BC). His definition of definition is given there in the form of a practical rule:

> There are also other kinds of definition [beyond those from divisions and partitions], but they aren't relevant to the purpose of this book. All that remains is to give the method by which one makes a definition. The ancients gave the following rule: when you have got hold of the properties common to the thing you want to define and to other things, carry on until a unique property (*proprium*) is produced, i.e. one which can't be transferred onto anything else. (*Top*. 28–9)[118]

This rule for discovering a definition is compatible with Antipater's definition of strict definition, since it requires only a *proprium* of the definiendum. But the context makes it relatively clear that Cicero at least sometimes intended this to meet Chrysippus' conditions for strict definition, since he takes it to supply 'differentiations' of species of a genus – i.e. definitions by genus and differentia (see *Top*. 31, cited below).

The *Topica* thus works with a notion of strict definition that is at least compatible with the Stoic definitions we have. Despite the obscurity of Cicero's theory of definition in *Top*. 26–34, two further passages provide some reason to think that it was in fact conceived within a roughly Stoic framework.[119] The first is a notoriously perplexing distinction of definienda:

[118] *Top.* 28–9: *Sunt etiam alia genera definitionum, sed ad huius libri institutum illa nihil pertinent; tantum est dicendum qui sit definitionis modus.* [29] *Sic igitur veteres praecipiunt: cum sumpseris ea quae sint ei rei quam definire velis cum aliis communia, usque eo persequi, dum proprium efficiatur, quod nullam in aliam rem transferri possit.*

[119] One reason for the obscurity is that Cicero doesn't distinguish the topic of definition (*ex toto*, 8) from the topic of the enumeration of parts (*ex partibus*, 8) in this section of the work. Some of the problems in his three apparently inconsistent explanations of definition – distinguishing types of definienda (*Top*. 26–7), means of definition (division and partition, *Top*. 28), and the method (*Top*. 28–9) – may stem from this failure.

A definition is an account that explains what the definiendum is. There are two principal kinds of definition: one of things that exist, and the other of things that are understood (*intelleguntur*). By those that exist I mean things which can be perceived (*cerni*) or touched, like a farm or building . . . By those that don't exist I mean things which cannot be touched or pointed out, but can be perceived (*cerni*) or understood by the mind, like a property right by occupation, or guardianship or clan . . . things which no body underlies, but of which there is a delineation (*conformatio*) marked and impressed on the intellect, or what I call a 'concept'. The latter must often be explained by a definition during your argument. (*Top*. 26–7)[120]

At first sight, Cicero seems to be appealing to a Stoic distinction between existents (bodies) and non-existents (e.g. *lekta* and *ennoēmata*). But if so, he doesn't capture it very well, since his examples of the second category are Stoic relations, which are underlain and explained by bodies.[121] At a second glance, it looks like a pre-emption of the distinction between substantial and ennoematic definitions.[122] But it doesn't fit the later theory in Galen or Porphyry, since that theory depends on there being *two* kinds of definition for the *same* definiendum, and correlates ennoematic definition with perceptible properties and substantial definition with non-perceptible properties, while *Top*. 26–7 does the reverse. Furthermore, the passage doesn't fit Cicero's own theory, since it turns out that all definitions by division – which include definitions of both kinds of thing (*Top*. 29) – involve the explication of concepts. Thus it is hard not to agree with Boethius' comment that this distinction is a concession to the vain (i.e. materialist) opinions of his audience rather than something directed at the truth.[123] Still, one point in this passage seems clearly Stoic: the elucidation of a 'concept' (*notio*) as a 'delineation' (*conformatio*) marked and impressed on the intellect (*intellegentia*). For although '*conformatio*' occurs only here in this sense, it is a simple variant on '*informatio*', a term used

[120] *Top*. 26–7: *Definitio est oratio quae id quod definitur explicat quid sit. Definitionum autem duo genera prima: unum earum rerum quae sunt, alterum earum quae intelleguntur.* [27] *Esse ea dico quae cerni tangique possunt, ut fundum aedes, parietem stillicidium, mancipium pecudem, supellectilem penus et cetera; quo ex genere quaedam interdum vobis definienda sunt. Non esse rursus ea dico quae tangi demonstrarive non possunt, cerni tamen animo atque intellegi possunt, ut si usus capionem, si tutelam, si gentem, si agnationem definias, quarum rerum nullum subest corpus, est tamen quaedam conformatio insignita et impressa intellegentia [Di Maria: intellegentiae], quam notionem voco. ea saepe in argumentando definitione explicanda est.*

[121] Boethius points out that there are bodies that underlie property-rights, guardianships and clans (*in Top. Ciceronis* 1092b–1093b). Cf. Riposati 1947: 60–1, who is rightly sceptical of Wallies 1878: 30–1.

[122] So Wallies 1878: 30–1.

[123] Boethius, *in Top. Ciceronis* 1092d. Marius Victorinus also assumed that Cicero did not intend a Stoic distinction here (he gives 'virtue' as an example of something that doesn't exist on Cicero's view); his reaction is to point out that, unlike Cicero, *we* follow Aristotle's categories (*De dif.* 899a–b).

to describe Stoic and Epicurean preconceptions (*ND* 1.44 and 2.13); and, given the examples he uses, it seems unlikely that Cicero means these to be *innate* concepts of Platonic forms, as opposed to ones generated by an empirical process.[124]

If this is correct, it may help to explain the second obscure passage:

> They [the Greeks] define genus and species in this way. A genus is a concept pertaining to several differentiations; a species is a concept whose differentiation can be referred to the head or as it were source that is the genus. I call a 'concept' what the Greeks call an '*ennoia*' or a '*prolēpsis*'. It is an engrafted understanding [some eds. and Boethius read: of the form] of each thing, known by the mind, which requires explication. [Some MSS: It is an engrafted and previously grasped understanding of each thing, which requires explication.] Thus species are what a genus can be divided into without any omission, for instance, if one divides right (*ius*) into positive law, custom and equity. (*Top*. 31)[125]

The central points here are, first, that species are determinate sub-sets of genera and are characterised by the properties of the genus, and, secondly, that both genera and species are 'concepts'. The second point seems odd. Boethius tried to remedy it by making a Ciceronian concept the concept *of* a form (whether Platonic or Aristotelian); but this makes the definition of the 'forms' – i.e. of genus and species – incoherent. But the key to this passage is to recognise that Cicero systematically conflates 'concepts' with 'conceptual objects': this seems to be a metaphysical distinction he never observed, and which perhaps escaped him. Given this, we can see that his aim here is to sketch a Stoicising 'conceptualist' theory of genera (cf. D.L. 7.60–1, *SVF* 3.D.25, *FDS* 621).[126] For our purpose, however, Cicero's gloss of '*notio*' by both '*ennoia*' and '*prolēpsis*' is perhaps more significant than his elusive forays into (Stoicising) metaphysics. For while this remark is consistent with his usual practice of conflating these Greek terms (cf. *Ac*. 2.30), it seems out of place here, unless he wants to intimate that either kind of 'concept' may constitute a 'form'. If that is right, his purpose may be to claim that genera and species are ways of classifying things

[124] They might still be Antiochian forms, however, as *Ac*. 1.30–2 shows. On Cicero's translations of these 'conceptual' terms, see Hartung 1970: 78–101.

[125] *Top*. 31: *Genus et formam definiunt hoc modo: Genus est notio ad pluris differentias pertinens; forma est notio cuius differentia ad caput generis et quasi fontem referri potest. Notionem appello quod Graeci tum ἔννοιαν tum πρόληψιν. Ea est insita et ante percepta* [or: *animo praecepta*] *cuiusque* [some MSS and Boethius add: *formae*] *cognitio enodationis indigens. Formae sunt igitur eae in quas genus sine ullius praetermissione dividitur; ut si quis ius in legem, morem, aequitatem dividat.*

[126] See e.g. Egli 1979: 266–7, Sedley 1985, and n. 85 above. On the lacuna at the end of D.L. 7.60–1, see Brunschwig 1994: 108–10 (*contra* Von Arnim, Long and Sedley 1987: 1, 179–83 and 11, 182, and Marcovich ad loc., who adopt the emendation suggested in the margin of one manuscript).

that result partly from a natural process of concept formation from perceptual experience ('preconception'), and partly from subsequent thought or attention ('conception'). This interpretation leaves it open whether Cicero's direct source was Academic, Antiochian or Stoic. But it does yield an additional point which is authentically Stoic: our preconceptions grasp essential features of things, though they do so in a way that requires further 'articulation'.[127]

These passages are not, of course, conclusive evidence that Cicero was working within a Stoic framework. But his theory of definition is relevantly similar in three significant respects: its definition and method of definition are compatible with the two Stoic definitions; it is fiercely (if naïvely) 'conceptualist' about genera and species; and it assumes that real definition is a matter of the articulation of concepts.

Section two: Cicero's commonsense theory of definition

The basic evolution in Cicero's treatments of definition, and his increasing interest in the topic, can be seen in two passages which preceded the more formal theory of the *Topica*. The first is the most detailed discussion of the *stasis* of definition in the early *De inventione* (from the 80s BC). When a legal case turns on a disagreement about the nature of the action:

> The first task for the prosecution is a brief and obvious definition following ordinary thought (*ex opinione hominum*) of the word whose meaning (*vis*) is in question . . . Once this has been given, it should be supported by further words and arguments and shown to be as you have described it. (*Inv.* 2.53)[128]

This doesn't present or imply a theory of definition; it merely prescribes for a series of wrangles about whether e.g. stealing sacred objects from a private house is a case of 'theft' or of 'sacrilege'. The kind of definition involved here looks entirely 'rhetorical', as Marius Victorinus noted dismissively in *De*

[127] Boethius thinks that the genus needs articulation into species (*in Top. Ciceronis* 1106c–1107a); but, unlike our concept of it, a genus isn't the kind of thing that needs articulation. (It is possible that the articulation of one's concept of a genus is what Cicero means by his strange suggestion in *Orator* 116–17 that one should start with a definition identifying the genus of the thing, and, if necessary, thereafter specify its species or parts (cf. Montefusco 1987: 69–70). On the other hand, he may have just been misdescribing the difference between defining something by its differentia and the genus *it* falls under, with defining the *species* that fall under it.)

[128] *Primus ergo accusatoris locus est eius nominis cuius de vi quaeritur brevis et aperta et ex opinione hominum definitio . . . hoc sic breviter expositum pluribus verbis est et rationibus confirmandum et ita esse ut descripseris ostendendum . . .*

difinitionibus 893b–c. The second passage is Cicero's influential definition of definition from the *De oratore* (written in 55 BC):

A definition is a brief and outline (*circumscripte*) explanation (*explicatio*) of the properties belonging to (*propriae*) the thing which one wishes to define. (*De or*. 1.189)[129]

The context is a discussion of how to organise an art of civil law: first define the goal of the art, then classify its genera and their 'parts', and finally define each of those. This is clearly intended to introduce a rigorous system of classification and definition, but the context still gives reason to doubt that it amounted to a formal theory of *strict* definition.[130] We can infer from these passages, I think, that Cicero's discussions of definition prior to the *Topica* do not usually, and certainly do not always, involve *strict* definition.

A first approach to something like the theory of *preliminary* definition we are interested in is found in Cicero's first philosophically influenced reworking of the *stasis* of definition from *Inv*. 2.53 (cited above) into a source for arguments in the *De oratore*:

Arguments from definitions occur in four ways. When [1] one investigates what is as it were *impressed on the common mind* – for instance, in discussing whether justice is the interest of the stronger. Or [2] when one investigates what the unique property (*proprium*) of each thing is – for instance, whether elegant speech is the unique property of orators or other people can also achieve this. Or [3] when a thing is partitioned into parts – for instance, in investigating the classes of ends, e.g. asking whether they are three (goods of the body, of the soul, and of external things). Or [4] when one describes the form and as if it were natural characteristic of each thing – for instance, in investigating the type of an avaricious or seditious or vainglorious person. (*De or*. 3.115 – cf. *Part. or*. 61–2 and *Top*. 81–3)[131]

[129] *Est enim definitio rerum earum, quae sunt eius rei propriae, quam definire volumus, brevis et circumscripta quaedam explicatio.*

[130] One reason is the casual substitution of 'part' for 'species' in the preceding lines, which is characterised as a 'dumb' error in *Topica* 31 ('*non satis acute*'), indicative of someone who cannot properly distinguish division from partition. A second reason is the similarity between *De or*. 1.189 and the rather baffling description of definition in *Orator* 116–17 (see n. 127 above). The kind of classificatory system Crassus is suggesting for jurisprudence is exemplified by the standard rhetorical handbooks themselves; but the study of classification doesn't seem to have been regarded as a part of the content of rhetoric.

[131] *Definitionis autem sunt disceptationes aut, cum quaeritur, quid in communi mente quasi impressum sit, ut si disseratur, idne sit ius, quod maximae parti sit utile; aut, cum quid cuiusque sit proprium exquiritur, ut ornate dicere propriumne sit oratoris an id etiam aliquis praeterea facere possit, aut, cum res distribuitur in partis, ut si quaeratur, quot sint genera rerum expetendarum, ut sintne tria, corporis, animi externarumque rerum, aut, cum, quae forma et quasi naturalis nota cuiusque sit, describitur, ut si quaeratur avari species, seditiosi, gloriosi.*

The four kinds of 'definitional' arguments set out in this passage depend on a theory of definition something like the one Cicero was later to offer in the *Topica*. Arguments of kinds (2) and (3) are the products of division into species and partition, which are themselves the means by which the definitions that generate arguments of type (1) ideally come about. In the later theory of the *Topica*, the vaguer topic of *descriptio*, the source of arguments of type (4), is relegated to a subsidiary role. But the parallel passage in the earlier *Part. or*. 41 explains that *descriptio* is useful because establishing the *propria* that lead to a definition is often controversial (cf. *Inv*. 2.53 fin. above). Thus, since '*descriptio*' is glossed by the Latin commentators as *hupographikē* – 'delineation' – it seems clear that, despite the relative sophistication of this passage in comparison with *Inv*. 2.53, the kind of definitions Cicero is interested in in *De or*. 3.115 are still provisional definitions.

What matters in *De or*. 3.115 for our purpose, however, is the way it identifies the origins of the provisional definitions of type (1). In *Inv*. 2.53 the meaning of the term to be defined was gleaned from ordinary thought (*ex opinione hominum*); here it derives from what is impressed on the common mind (*communis mens*). The significance of this change is spelled out in the elaboration of this philosophically revised topic in the *Partitiones oratoriae* (from 46/5 BC):

> In this topic [definition] the rules for the prosecution and defence are the same. For the one who penetrates further into the sense (*sensum*) or thought (*opinionem*) of the judge by defining or describing a word, and the one who comes closest to the common meaning (*vim*) of the word and to the *preconception* (*praeceptionem*) which his listeners have in outline (*incohatam*) in their minds, will necessarily be the winner. (*Part. or*. 123)[132]

The meaning of the disputed word is ultimately determined by the *preconception* the audience have of the thing it names. The competing definitions the lawyers give are thus attempts to approximate the content of this preconception; the closer one gets to it, the more likely one is to win. Although Cicero doesn't say explicitly that there is *one* 'preconception' shared by everyone pretty much universally, this is the obvious implication of the phrase '*communis mens*' in *De or*. 3.115. And this is confirmed when *communis mens*

[132] *Communia dantur in isto genere accusatori defensorique praecepta. Uter enim definiendo describendoque verbo magis ad sensum iudicis opinionemque penetrarit, et uter ad communem verbi vim et ad eam praeceptionem quam incohatam habebunt in animis ei qui audient magis et propius accesserit, is vincat necesse est.*

is replaced by *communis sensus*, the phrase Cicero uses most often to characterise 'common sense' (*Part. or.* 126).[133]

The connection between meaning and preconception posited by Cicero here is also found in the later rhetorical tradition, where the range of the rhetorical *thesis* – the subject under discussion in *De or.* 3.109–19 – is usually determined to be exhausted by 'practical' theses on 'civic' or 'political' questions, i.e. *subjects that fall under the* '*common conceptions*'.[134] The point in these later texts is the straightforward one that there are some subjects which anyone can discuss, because everyone has some *understanding* of e.g. moral matters, whereas other subjects require technical expertise.[135] It doesn't follow that there is universal agreement on all such questions; if there was, there would be no point in presenting a *thesis* on them. But Cicero's assumption is clearly that the content of preconceptions will gain general assent if it is correctly formulated. This assumption is also evident in the use of appeals to 'common sense' in his own speeches, where it is consistently tied to the 'commendation of human nature' (*Pro Cluentio* 17, *De domo suo* 97, and *Pro Plancio* 31 and 34).

The rhetorical 'preconceptions' of *Part. or.* 123 are, I think, direct analogues of the Stoic common conceptions, and were no doubt modelled on Cicero's own Stoicising exposition of the natural and empirical origin of reason in *De legibus* 1.30. We are informed there about common conceptions that:

(1) they are 'inchoate', i.e. incomplete sketches, representing partial knowledge of the object;
(2) their content is properly subject to universal agreement, since they are imprinted on the mind by nature, though our agreement can be obscured by differing formulations; and
(3) they constitute the basis of reason, i.e. if properly formulated, their content amounts to a 'preliminary definition'.

[133] Cf. e.g. *De or.* 1.12, 2.68, 3.195 (?). I presume the English phrase 'common sense' derives directly from Cicero. (Philosophical Greek doesn't permit this sense of *aisthēsis*, but Plutarch uses *koinos nous* at *Com. not.* 1077E.)

[134] See Hermogenes, *Progymnasmata* p. 17 (Spengel 1853–6: vol. 1), along with the parallels in Aphthonius (vol. II, p. 49), Nicholaos (vol. III, p. 493) and the disagreement of Theon (vol. II, p. 121). Hermogenes' – or Cicero's – view is also maintained in the Latin tradition, e.g. in the full discussion in Augustine, *Rhet.* 4 (pp. 138–9 in Halm 1863: *sunt autem civiles quaestiones quarum perspectio in communem animi conceptionem potest cadere* . . .), and the briefer remarks of Fortunatianus, *Ars rhet.* 1.1 (p. 6 ed. Halm): *Quae sunt civiles quaestiones? quae in communem animi conceptionem possunt cadere, id est, quas unusquisque potest intellegere, ut cum quaeritur de aequo et bono.*

[135] Cf. the Stoic distinction between preconception and conception in Aëtius 4.11, *SVF* 2.83 (cited in n. 16 above).

(Whether or not Cicero's exposition in *Leg.* 1.30–4 is in fact a direct borrowing from a Stoic source – as I think – or mediated through a late Academic lens, is controversial. But since the general features (1)–(3) are attested for the Stoics elsewhere, and since we are anyhow looking for possibly Academic influenced developments from the Stoa, this question is not important here.[136])

The rhetorical preconceptions are also inchoate, subject to initial but not fundamental disagreement, and, I have argued, when articulated, amount only to delineations or provisional definitions. But the two theories are distinct for at least two significant reasons. The first is that the rhetorical theory doesn't allow for *De legibus* 1.31–4, where we are reminded that in the philosophical theory the common conceptions are in fact subsequently thoroughly obscured by the perversions or misconceptions of human reason (cf. note 66). In this respect, the rhetorical works offer a common sense theory of preliminary definition that points towards the ennoematic definition found in Galen and Porphyry: *everyone agrees*.

The second major difference between the rhetorical view and either philosophical theory, of course, is that rhetorical definitions are *rhetorical*, i.e. *pragmatic*: a definition approved by common sense is just whatever the crowd and hence the judge will accept. It is not clear that Cicero takes them to have any scientific or philosophical value at all (cf. *De or.* 1.12 and 44). But Cicero wasn't always sceptical about common sense (see note 3), and his formal theory of definition in the *Topica* seems to *define* genera as preconceptions (see section one). So Cicero's intermittent scepticism needn't stand in the way of the hypothesis that his writings attest a development from the Stoic theory of the common conceptions to one of 'common sense'.

Section one has argued that Cicero was working within a roughly Stoic framework; and this section has argued that he identifies fundamental word-meaning with the content of preconceptions, and preconceptions with 'common sense'. Since he also thinks that provisional definitions delineate the content of preconceptions, it is perhaps not implausible to think that his theory is a modification of an original Stoic theory of preliminary definition, and one that points towards the later ennoematic view. At any rate, irrespective of its place in a more general history of 'common conceptions', Cicero's theory of definition is, I think, a fragment of a theory of common sense, since – unlike the Stoic and later ennoematic theories – it implies

[136] For Stoic parallels to points (1) and (3) above, see Part 1 section four and Cicero, e.g. *Ac.* 1.42; for point (2), see Part 1 section three and Cicero, e.g. *Tusc.* 4.53.

a general and immediate relation between the ordinary thought and language captured in Ciceronian preconceptions and the essential nature of the world.[137]

[137] Some indirect evidence that something like this may be present in Cicero is found in Boethius' comment on *Top*. 28 fin.: 'There are many kinds of definition which are used in speeches but aren't proper definitions. The name they are all covered by is "descriptio" [= *hupographikē*]. Some of them come about by partition, some by division in the way discussed above. Others still include *substantial differentiae, but don't add the genus; this kind is call "ennoematic" by Victorinus*, i.e. *containing*, as it were, *some common conception*. An example is: "Man is what flourishes with rational thought and is subject to mortality." In this case the genus isn't given, but only the substantial differentiae.' (*Earum vero definitionum quae in oratione consistunt, neque tamen sunt propriae, multae sunt diversitates. Quarum est omnium nomen communis descriptio. Harum aliae fiunt partitione, aliae divisione, de quibus superius, ut dictum est. Aliae vero substantiales quidem differentias sumunt, sed genus non adjiciunt, atque haec quidem a Victorino* ἐννοηματική *dicitur, quasi quamdam communem continens notionem, veluti si quis dicat: Homo est quod rationali conceptione viget mortalitatique subjectum est. Hic igitur genus positum non est, sed differentiae substantiales* (Boethius, *in Topica Ciceronis* book 3, 1099a–b).) Unlike Porphyry or Galen, Marius Victorinus and Boethius perhaps thought that an 'ennoematic definition' *could* be a preliminary definition that captured the content of a common conception *and thereby* some of the essential properties of its object. (It is possible that Boethius' text of Victorinus was corrupt, however, since the relevant lines of *De dif*. don't mention 'common conceptions', but instead read '*Secunda dicitur ennoēmatikē, quam* "*notionem*" *non proprio sed communi possumus dicere*' (902b). (Hadot 1971: 171–4 is not helpful.))