

Stoic Naturalism vs. Stoic Religion

Notes from Sellars' *Stoicism*

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p. 91: PNEUMA has 3 Levels of tension within the material forms of nature:

1. Cohesion (*Hexis*) a force that gives unity to an object
2. Nature (*Phusis*) a principle of life in biological organisms
3. Soul (*Psuchē*) in animals with powers of perception (impressions), movement (impulse), and reproduction

Naturalism

The Stoic naturalism account is an evolutionary account of life in nature with increasing complexity

Religion

To the above pneuma levels of tension we add Consciousness and Providence

p. 92: The Stoic God is a philosophical god based upon arguments NOT myths, stories (Judaism) or faith

DIFF between

- **Stoic naturalism:** unconscious physical processes that shape nature and Stoic religious god
- **Stoic religious god** is conscious with providential purpose (teleology, one of the definitions of a religion)

Which do you believe?

p. 93:

The STOIC GOD is

- IN Nature, and
- IS Nature, and the cosmos is
- A LIVING BEING

BUT, you can still be a Modern Stoic or atheist and believe the cosmos is a living being—just as a tree is a living being—but not conscious and providential

Religious Stoicism add conscious and providential to the living part

p. 94:

ZENO'S ARGUMENT

- That which employs reason is better than that which does not.
- Nothing is superior to the cosmos.
- Therefore, the cosmos uses reason

The same argument can be used for wise, blessed, eternal, and conscious. If you accept the premises you must accept the conclusion.

CHRYSIPPUS' DOCTRINE (from his book *On Providence*):

“The cosmos is a living being, rational, animate and intelligent.”

AGREED (according to DL 7.143):

- Apollodorus of Athens, a Greek scholar, historian, and grammarian. He was a pupil of Diogenes of Babylon & Panaetius the Stoic
- Posidonius in *Physical Discourses*

p. 95:

ORTHODOX STOIC DOCTRINE

- God is conscious
- Movement and order of the cosmos does not depend on any entity *outside* of the cosmos
- God is a living being that is spherical and surrounded by an infinite void

[BUT, on a personal observation: 93% of this living being is Dark Energy Matter]

WHOLE = finite cosmos

ALL = cosmos plus infinite void

p. 100: MORE DOCTRINE:

- Fate is a continuous string of causes—almost a mechanical clock in concept
- BUT, the Divine Providence doctrine says that
 - God pervades the cosmos and
 - Forms the cosmos into a harmonious whole, and
 - orders events in a providential manner
- The cosmos is “administered by Mind and Providence”

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