

# THE STOICS

## 2. The Early and Middle Stoa



# AGENDA

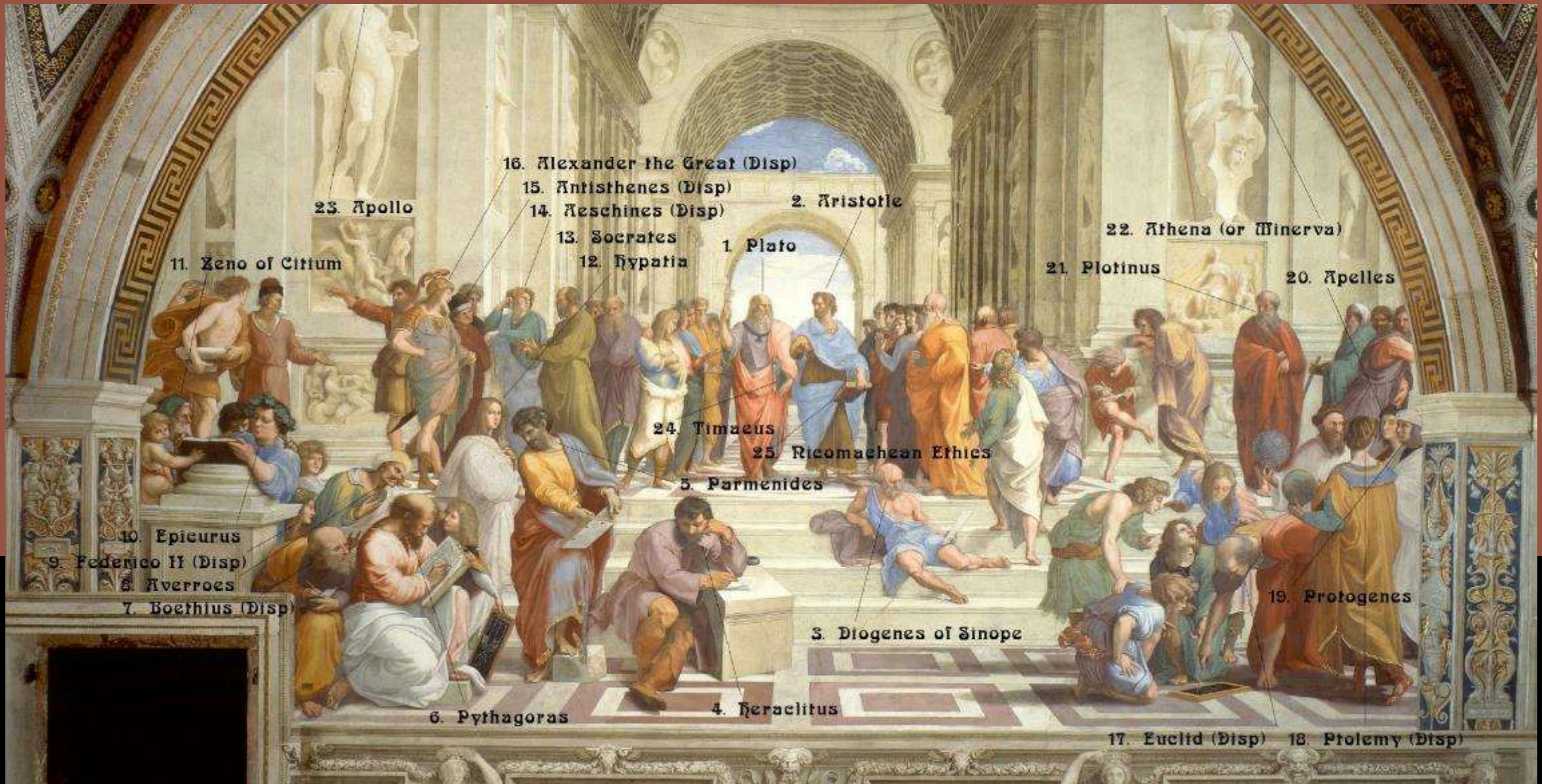
1. The School
2. The Cosmos
3. Agreement with nature
4. The Good
5. The Passions
6. To Rome...











16. Alexander the Great (Disp)

15. Antisthenes (Disp)

14. Aeschines (Disp)

13. Socrates

12. Hypatia

2. Aristotle

1. Plato

22. Athena (or Minerva)

21. Plotinus

20. Apelles

24. Timaeus

25. Nicomachean Ethics

5. Parmenides

10. Epicurus

9. Federico II (Disp)

8. Averroes

7. Boethius (Disp)

19. Protagoras

3. Diogenes of Sinope

6. Pythagoras

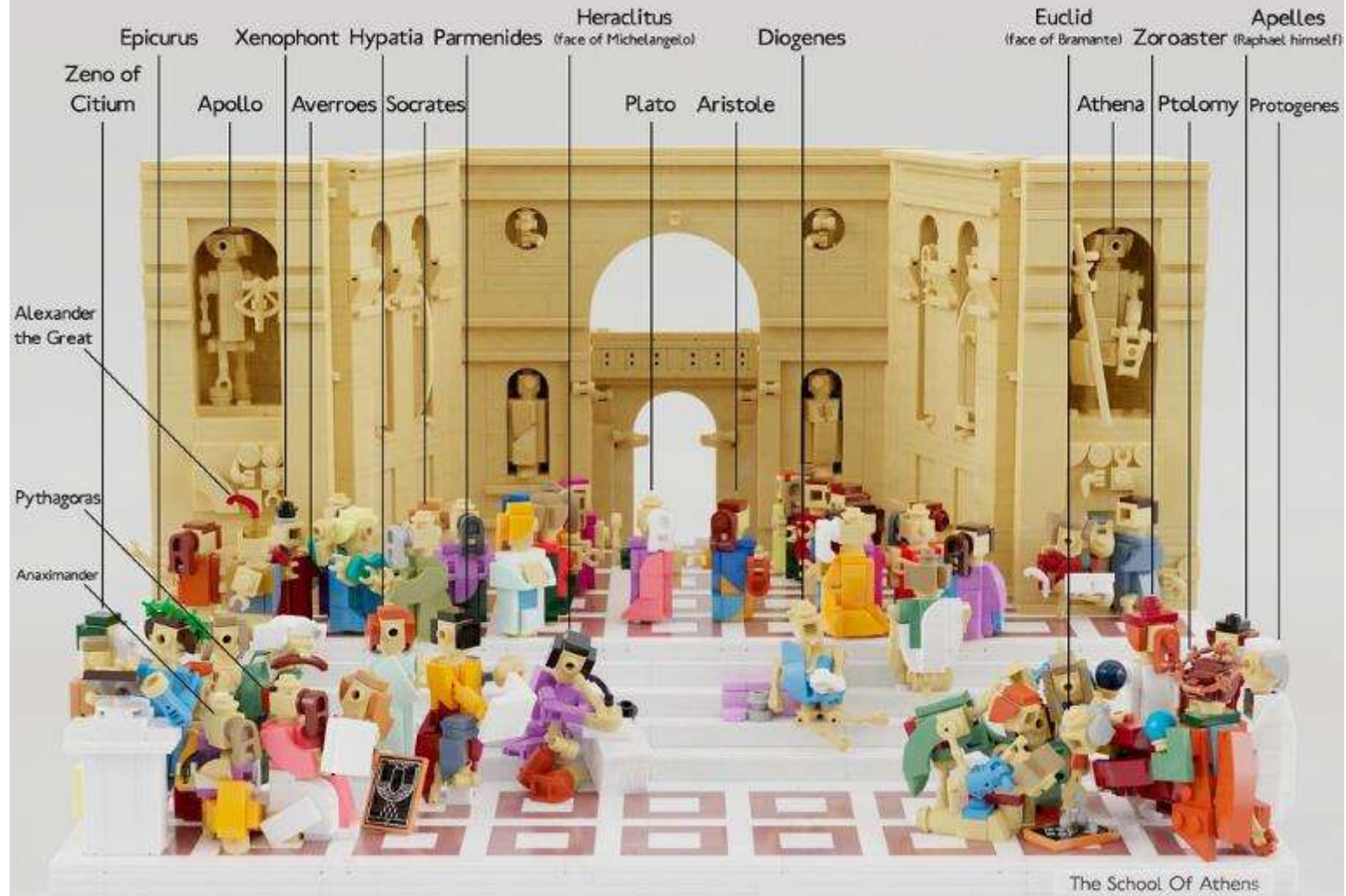
4. Heraclitus

17. Euclid (Disp)

18. Ptolemy (Disp)



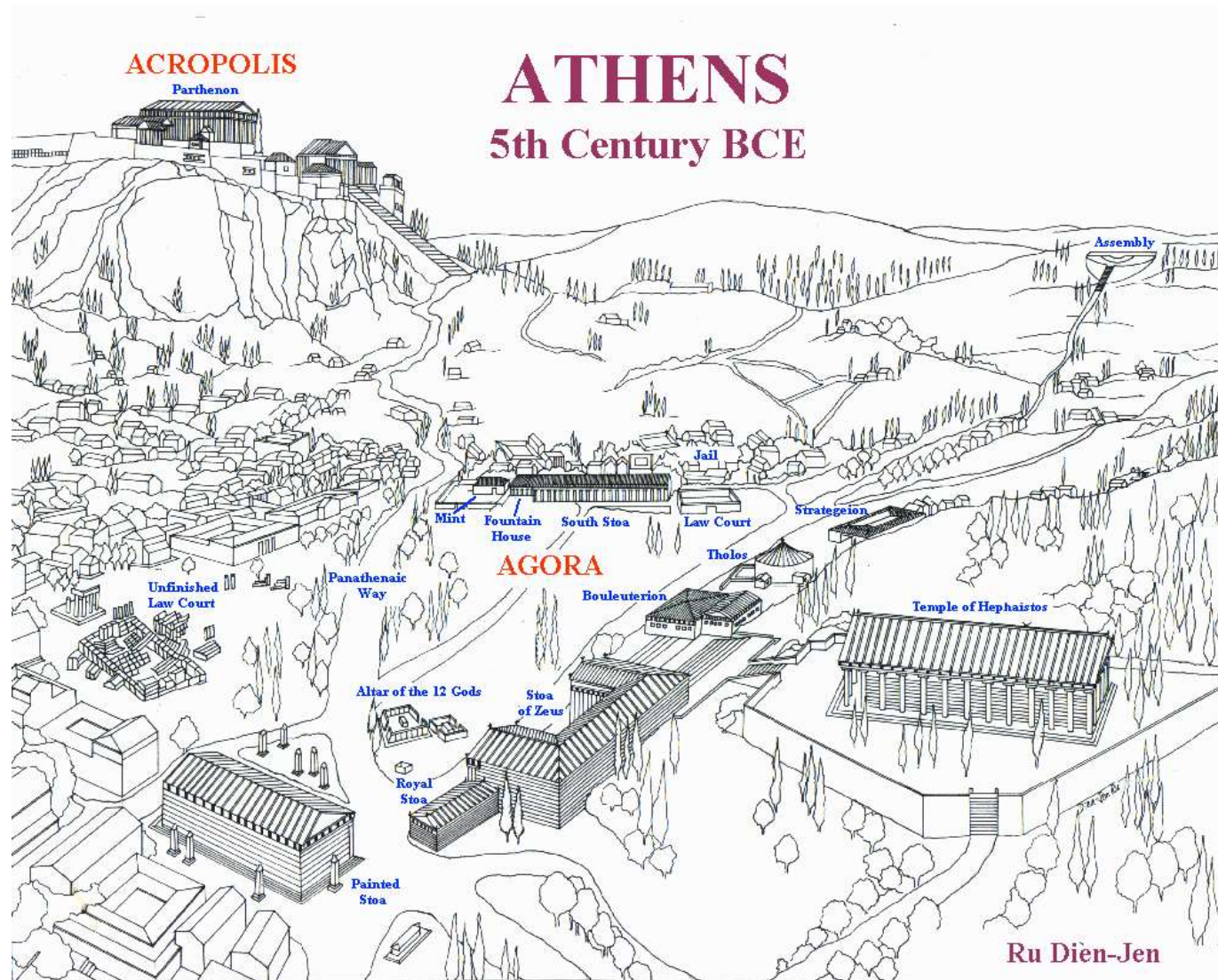
## THE SCHOOL OF ATHENS: Who is who?



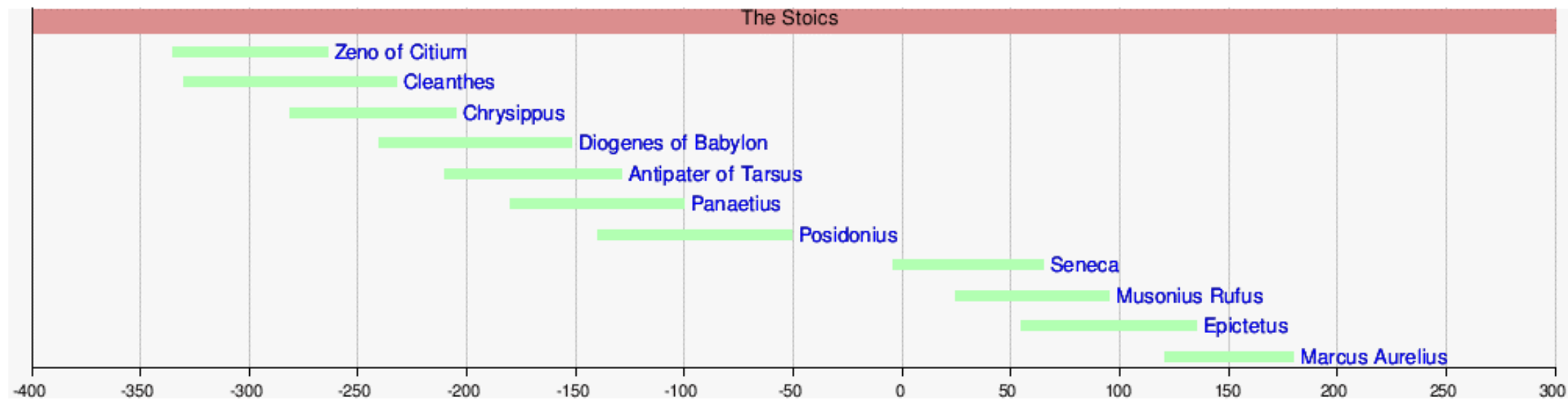














# THE EARLY STOA

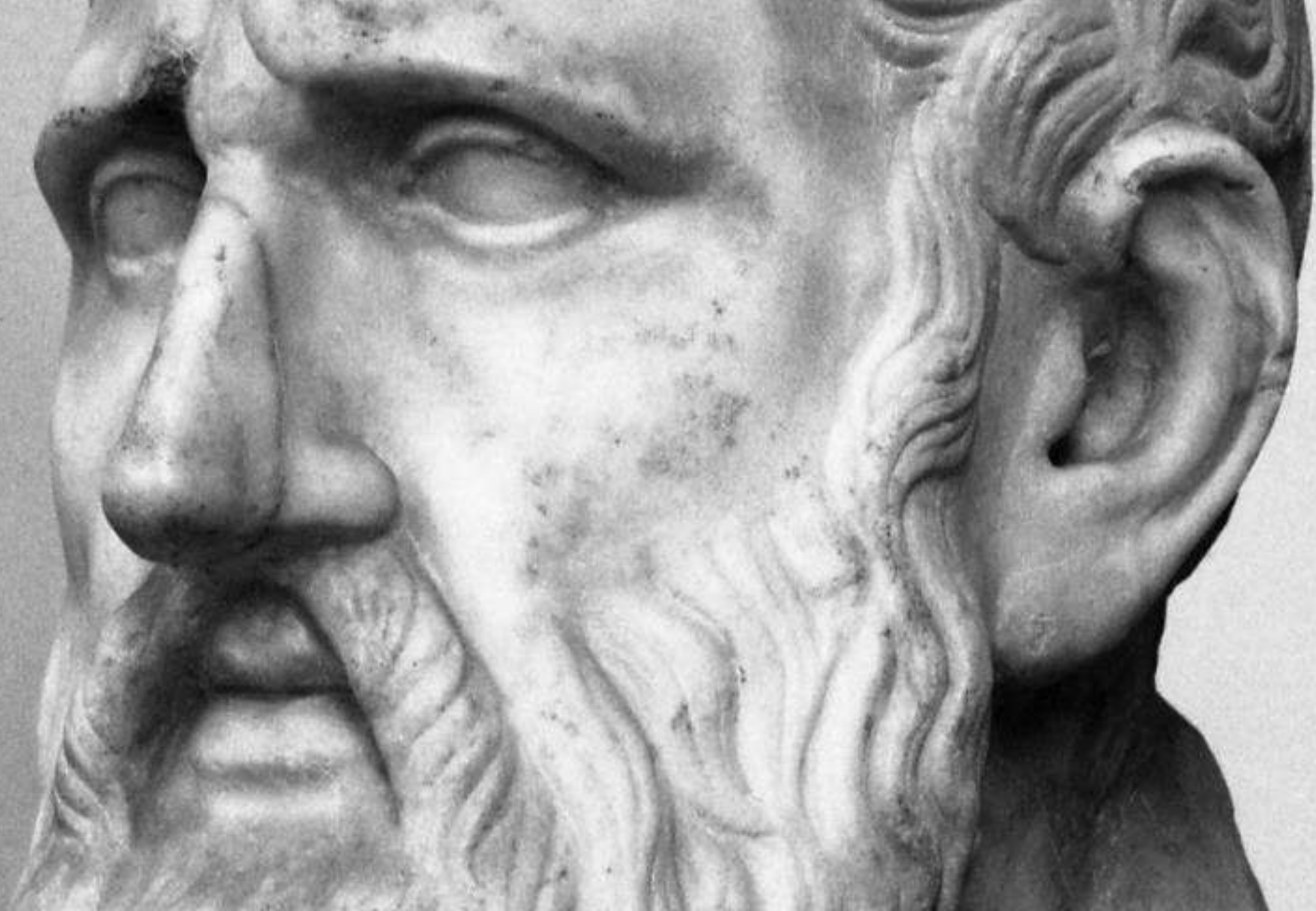
3<sup>rd</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE

Zeno (344–262 BCE), Cleanthes (d. 232 BCE), Chrysippus (d. 206 BCE)

Met at the Painted Colonnade, by the Agora

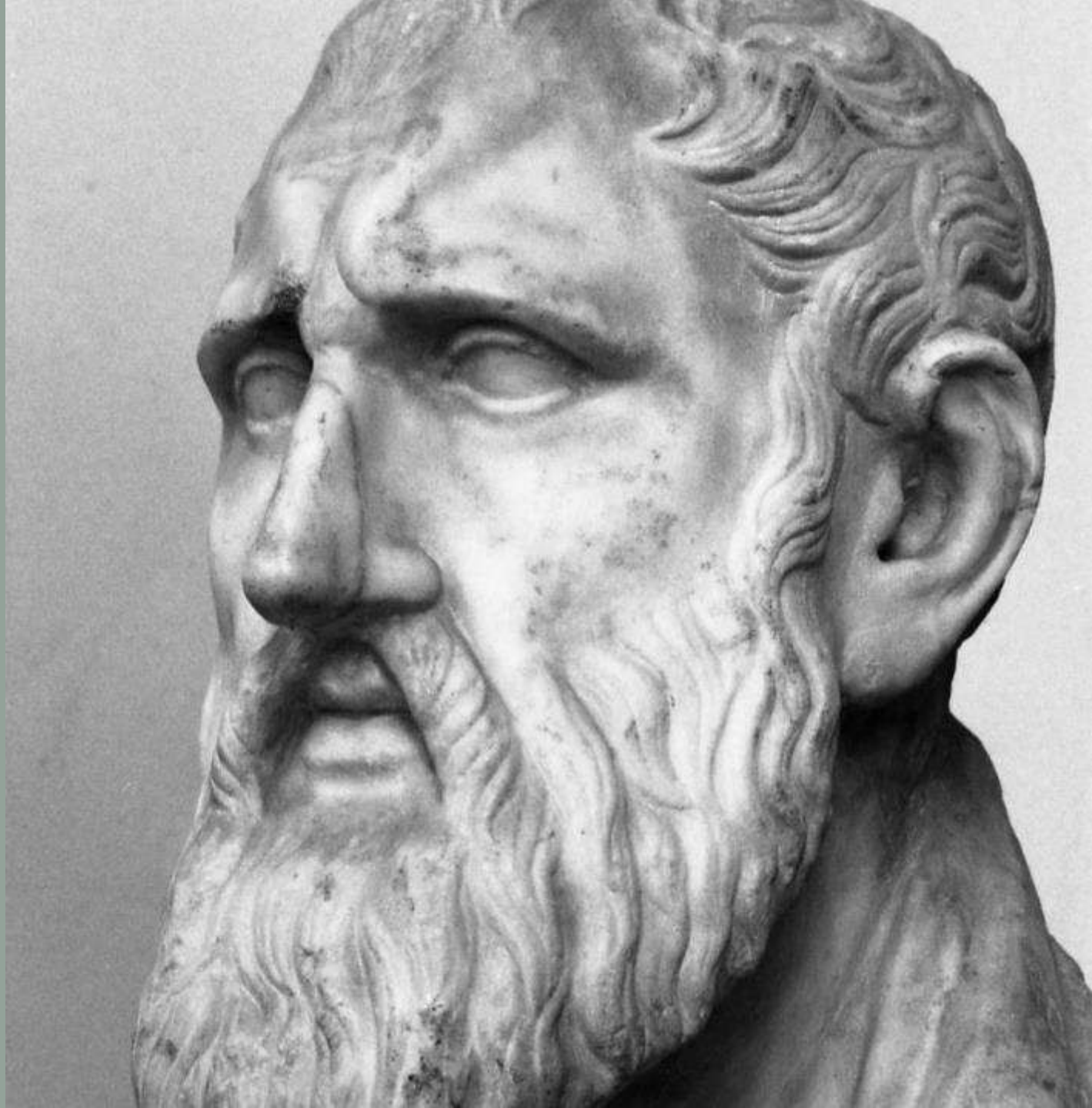
The “Middle Stoa”: Antipater of Tarsus (d. 130 BCE), Panaetius (d. 110 BCE), and Posidonius (d. 45 BCE)







‘Whereas Zeno of Citium, son of Mnaseas, has for many years been devoted to philosophy in the city and has continued to be a man of worth in all other respects, exhorting to virtue and temperance those of the youth who came to him to be taught, directing them to what is best, affording to all in his own conduct a pattern for imitation in perfect consistency with his teaching’ – Diogenes Laertius.







DIOGENES LAERTIUS.

THE  
**LIVES,**  
OPINIONS,  
AND REMARKABLE  
**SAYINGS**  
Of the Most Famous  
Ancient Philosophers.

Written in *GREEK*, by  
DIOGENES LAERTIUS.

Made *English* by Several Hands.

*The First Volume.*

LONDON,  
Printed for Edward Brewster, at the Crane  
in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1628.



# THE EARLY STOA

‘This is how he died: on leaving his school he stumbled and broke his toe; he struck the earth with his hand and uttered the line from the Niobe: “I am coming. Why do you call me?” and immediately died by suffocating himself. .

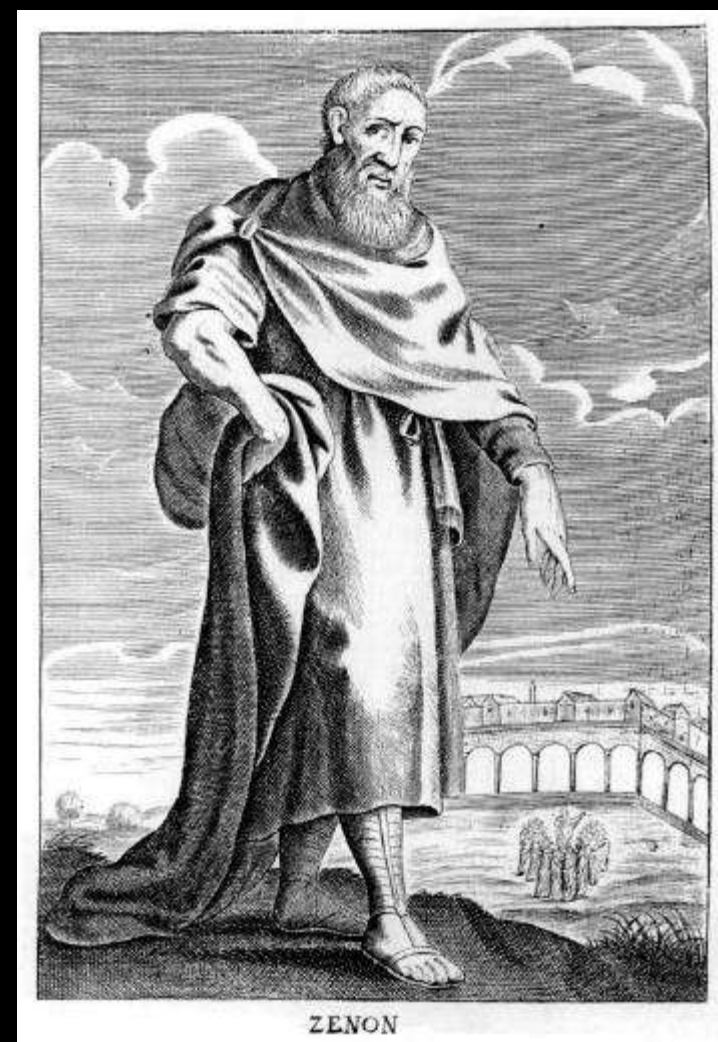
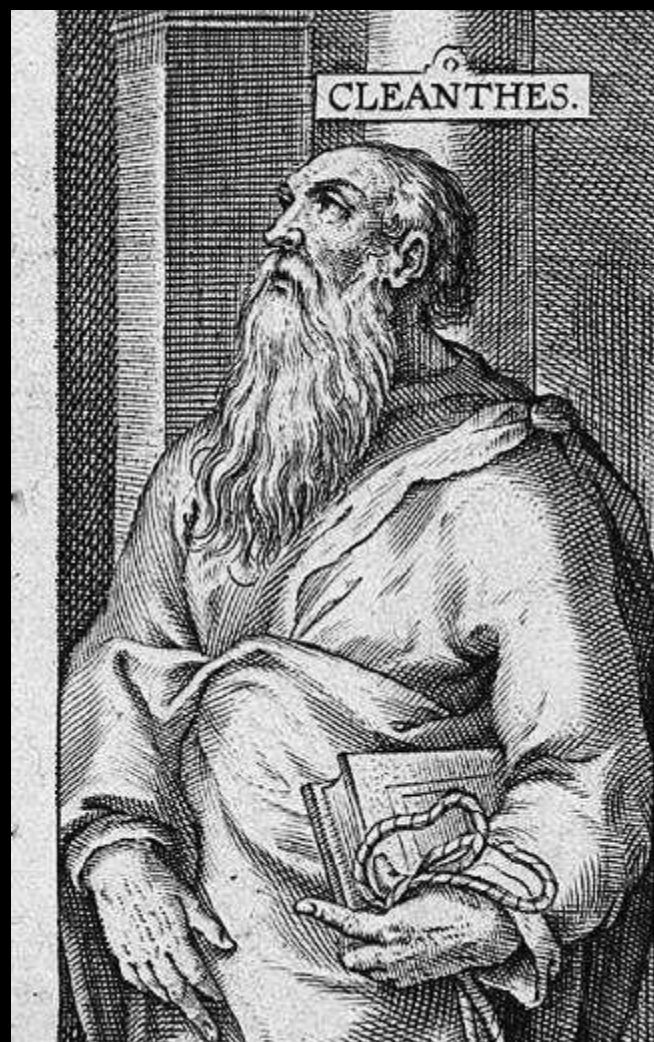
Ariston of Chios, “the bald” – the wise man is like an actor who takes on whatever role fittingly, be it ‘Thersites or Agamemnon’.

Cleanthes of Assos – a poor man, a ‘boxer at first’. Arrives with just 4 drachmas

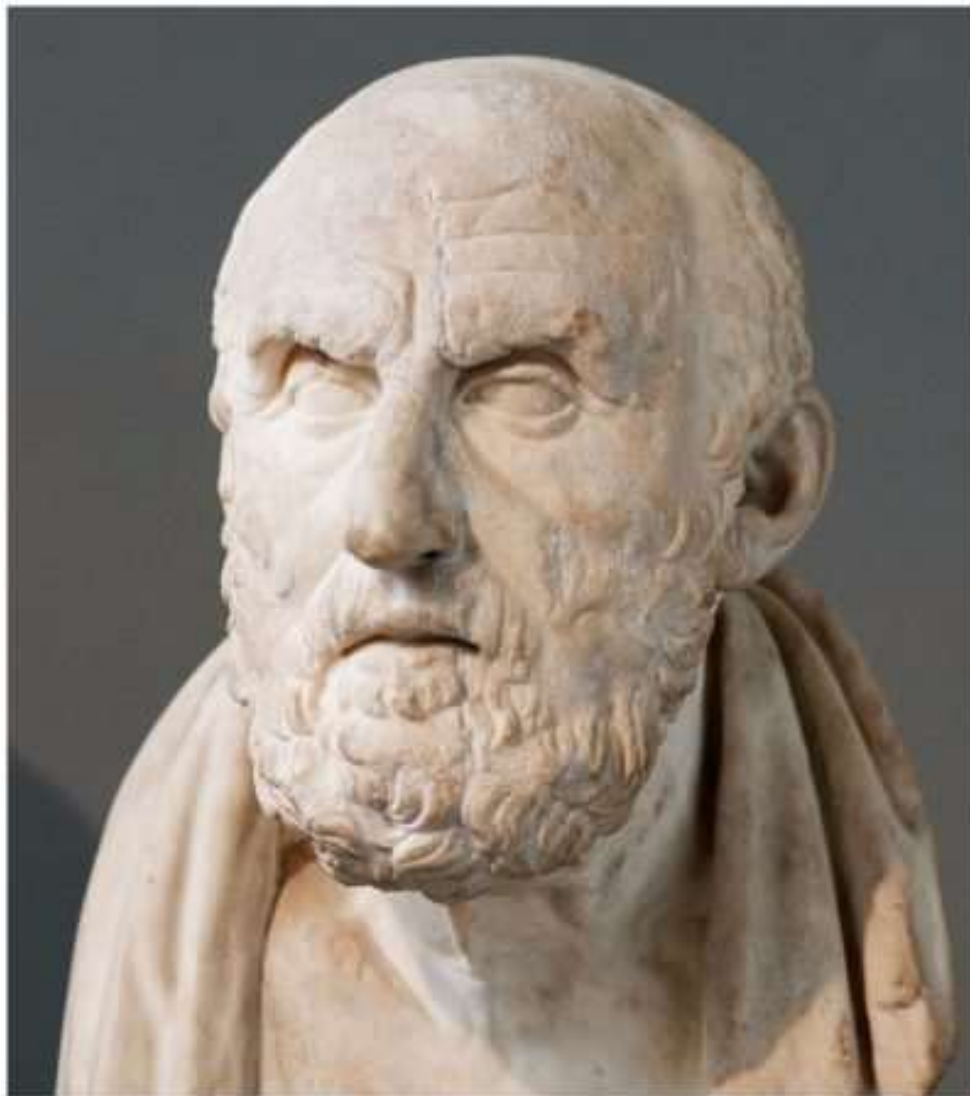
He ‘undertook to work for wages’ ...

‘by night he laboured at watering gardens, whereas by day he exercised himself in arguments’. He dies by starving himself after getting inflamed gums...











# CHRYSIPPUS

Chrysippus of Soli – a ‘long-distance runner’, author of 705 works, arrogant but ‘worked harder than anyone else’.

Died either while drunk or while laughing...

‘There he drank sweet, unmixed wine, and losing his head left the realm of men on the fifth day at the age of seventy-three in the 143rd Olympiad

But some say that he died after being seized with a fit of laughter; for when an ass had eaten his figs, he said to the old woman, “So give the ass some unmixed wine to swill,” at which he cackled so heartily that he died’



## 2. THE COSMOS

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84. They divide the ethical part of philosophy into these topics: on impulse, on good and bad things, on passions, on virtue, on the goal, on primary value, on actions, on appropriate actions, and on encouragements and discouragements to actions. This is the subdivision given by the followers of Chrysippus, Archedemus, Zeno of Tarsus, Apollodorus, Diogenes, Antipater, and Posidonius. For Zeno of Citium and Cleanthes, as might be expected from earlier thinkers, made less elaborate distinctions in their subject matter. But they did divide both logic and ph

85. They say that an animal's first because nature gave it an affinity to i says in book 1 of *On Goals*, stating i affinity is to its own constitution and not likely that nature would make an made the animal, to give it neither af Therefore, the remaining possibility i mal she gave it an affinity to itself. For and pursues that to which it has an af

The Stoics claim that what some mary [or first] impulse of animals is sure is, if anything, a byproduct whi own, seeks out and acquires what is s is like the condition of thriving ani nature, they say, did not operate diffi mals; for it directs the life of plants t perception, and even in us some proc animals, impulse is added (which th they have an affinity), then for them according to impulse. When reason more perfect governor [of life], ther properly becomes what is natural for as a craftsman.

87. Thus Zeno first, in his book C

nius and Hecaton in their books *On*

Again, "to live according to virtu experience of events which occur by his *On Goals*. 88. For our natures Therefore, the goal becomes "to live to one's own nature and that of the den by the common law, which is r the same as Zeus, who is the leader itself is the virtue of the happy mar things are done according to the hari will of the administrator of the univ goal is reasonable behavior in the sel Archedemus [says it is] to live carryi

89. By nature, in consistency wit stands both the common and, spe includes only the common nature, not the individual. And virtue is a c choosing for its own sake, not becau consideration. And happiness lies i made [as to produce] the agreement

And the rational animal is corrup ness of external activities and somet ions. For the starting points provided by nature are uncorrupted.

90. Virtue in one sense is generally a sort of completion [or: perfection] for each thing, for example, of a statue. And there is also non-intellectual virtue, for example, health; and intellectual virtue, for example, prudence. For in book 1 of his *On Virtues*, Hecaton says that those virtues which are constituted out of theorems are knowledge-based and intellectual, for example, prudence and justice; but those which are understood by extension from those which are constituted out of theorems are non-intellectual, for example, health and strength. For it turns out that health follows on and is extended from temperance, which is intellectual, just as strength supervenes on the building of an arch. 91. They are called non-intellectual because they do not involve assent, but they supervene even in base people, as health and courage do.

92. Panaetius, anyway, says that there are two [kinds of] virtues, theoretical and practical; others [divide virtue into] logical, physical, and ethical. Posidonius' followers [say there are] four, and those of Cleanthes and Chrysippus and Antipater [say there are even] more. But Apollophanes says there is one virtue, namely, prudence.

Of virtues, some are primary and some are subordinate to these. The primary are these: prudence, courage, justice, and temperance. Forms of these are magnanimity, self-control, endurance, quick-wittedness, and deliberative excellence. And prudence is the knowledge of which things are good and bad and neither; courage is knowledge of which things are to be chosen and avoided and neither; and . . . [There is a lacuna here.]

93. Magnanimity is knowledge or a condition which makes one superior to those things which happen alike to base and unsurpassable disposition [concerned with] w a condition which cannot be defeated by pleas or a condition [concerned with] what one is to not to stand firmly by and what is neither; c which instantly finds out what the appropri excellence is a knowledge of how to consider which we must perform in order to act advant

Correspondingly, of vices, too, some are pri For example, imprudence, cowardice, injustice and lack of self-control, slow-wittedness, and nate. Those vices whose [counterpart] virtu forms of ignorance.

94. Good is in general that from which d particular it is either the same as or not differ itself and the good, which participates in it, at [1] the good is that *from which* being benefite is that *according to which* [being benefited] is pple, action according to virtue; [3] it is he *by i* acteristic result]; and 'by whom' means, for c participates in virtue.

They give another particular definition of i

The external are having a virtuous fatherland and a virtuous friend and their happiness. Those which are neither external nor in the soul are for someone, in and for himself, to be virtuous and to be happy. 96. Conversely, some bad things are in the soul, i.e., vices and vicious actions. The external ones are having an imprudent fatherland and an imprudent friend and their unhappiness. Those which are neither external nor in the soul are for someone, in and for himself, to be base and to be unhappy.

Again, of goods some are final and some are instrumental and some are both final and instrumental. So, a friend and the benefits derived from him are instrumental; but confidence and prudence and freedom and enjoyment and good spirits and freedom from pain and every virtuous action are final. 97. <The virtues> are both instrumental and final goods. For in that they produce happiness they are instrumental goods, and in that they fulfill it, such that they are parts of it, they are final goods. Similarly, of bad things some are final and some are instrumental and some are both. For an enemy and the harm derived from him are instrumental; but feelings of shock and lowliness and servitude and lack of enjoyment and low spirits and pain and every vicious action are final. <The vices> are both, since in that they produce unhappiness they are instrumental, and in that they fulfill it, such that they are parts of it, they are final.

98. Again of goods in the soul some are conditions and some are dispositions and some are neither conditions nor dispositions. The virtues are dispositions, practices are conditions, and activities are neither conditions nor dispositions. Generally, having good children and a good old age are mixed goods, whereas knowledge is a simple good. And the virtues are constant [goods], but there are ones that are not constant, such as joy and walking.

Every good is advantageous and binding and profitable and useful and well used and honorable and beneficial and worth choosing and just. 99. [A good is] advantageous because it brings such things as we are benefited by when they occur; binding because it holds together in cases where this is needed; profitable because it pays back what is expended on it, so that it exceeds in benefit a mere repayment of the effort; useful because it makes available the use of a benefit; well used because it renders the use [of it] praiseworthy; honorable because it is symmetrical with its own use; beneficial because it is such as to benefit; worth choosing because it is such that it is reasonable to choose it; just because it is consonant with law and instrumental to a [sense of] community.

















# THE STOIC WORLDVIEW

Zeno: General culture is 'useless'; only the wise and virtuous can be friends; in *Republic*, there are no temples, law courts or gymnasia; wives in common; no money; also wrote *The Art of Sexual Love*.

Materialism

Three parts of philosophical theory (*topoi*):

Physics, Logic, Ethics

Logic – the study of how to reason about the world; physics, the study of that world

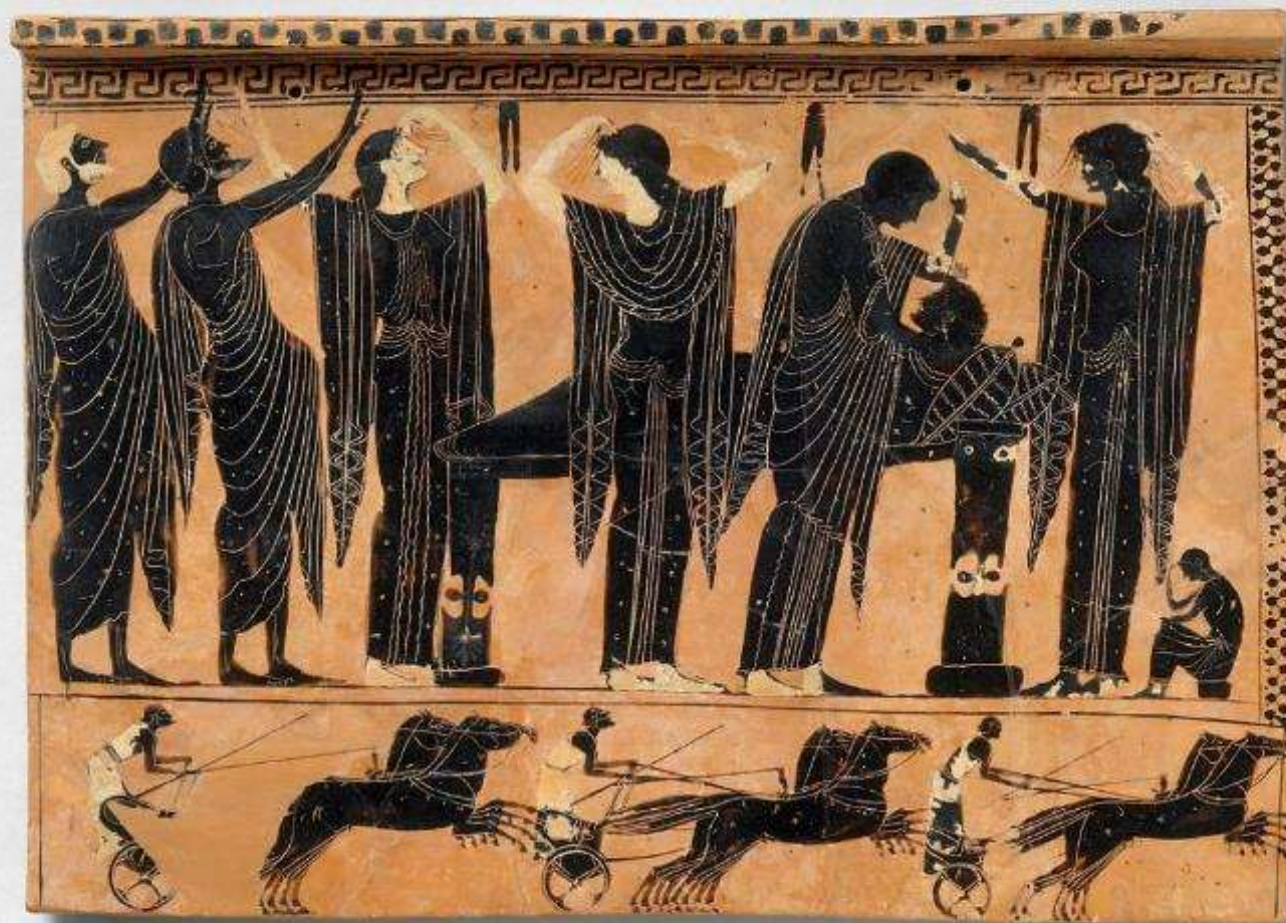












# THE COSMOS

The cosmos is ‘like a city or state shared by gods and humans’ (Cicero, 64).

‘each and every one of us is a part of this cosmos’.

Everything that exists is corporeal or material – including God and the soul

The universe undergoes an endless cycle of birth and destruction

God is immanent – and everywhere





# THE COSMOS

Vitalism – the cosmos is a living being

Nature permeated by two principles:

*Active* – ungenerated, indestructible. Its active principle is *pneuma*.

Referred to as reason, God, the *Logos*

*Passive* – substance, matter

God is to the universe what an animal's life-force is to its body

A biological and not mechanical view of the universe, vs Aristotle and the Epicureans



### 3. AGREEMENT WITH NATURE







# AGREEMENT

‘Zeno’s answer was “a good flow of life” (Arius Didymus) or ‘living in agreement’

Cleanthes: ‘living in agreement with nature’

Chrysippus: ‘living in accordance with experience of what happens by nature’





# IMPULSE

1. All animals share an impulse to preserve themselves

‘for every animal its first affinity is to its own constitution and reflective awareness of this’ (Chrysippus, paraphrased)

2. We do not seek pleasure itself, but what will aid our constitution

‘by-product which supervenes when nature itself, on its own, seeks out and acquires what is suitable to [the animal’s] constitution’





# OIKEIÔSIS

3. We share a common nature with plants and animals

“And nature, they say, did not operate differently in the cases of plants and of animals; for it directs the life of plants too, though without impulse [oikeiôsis] and sense-perception, and even in us some processes are plant-like’

Cicero...

‘The school whose views I follow [a Stoic speaks] holds that every animal, as soon as it is born (for this should be our starting point), has an affinity to itself and is inclined to preserve itself and its constitution and to like those things which preserve that constitution; but it is alienated from its own death and those things which seem to threaten it.’





Zeno, *On Human Nature* (87), 'the goal was to live in agreement with nature, which is to live according to virtue. For nature leads to virtue.'

*But what even is virtue?*

Cicero: 'babies seek what is salutary and spurn what is not'

Pleasure isn't classed 'among the primary natural things' because then 'many shameful consequences would follow'.

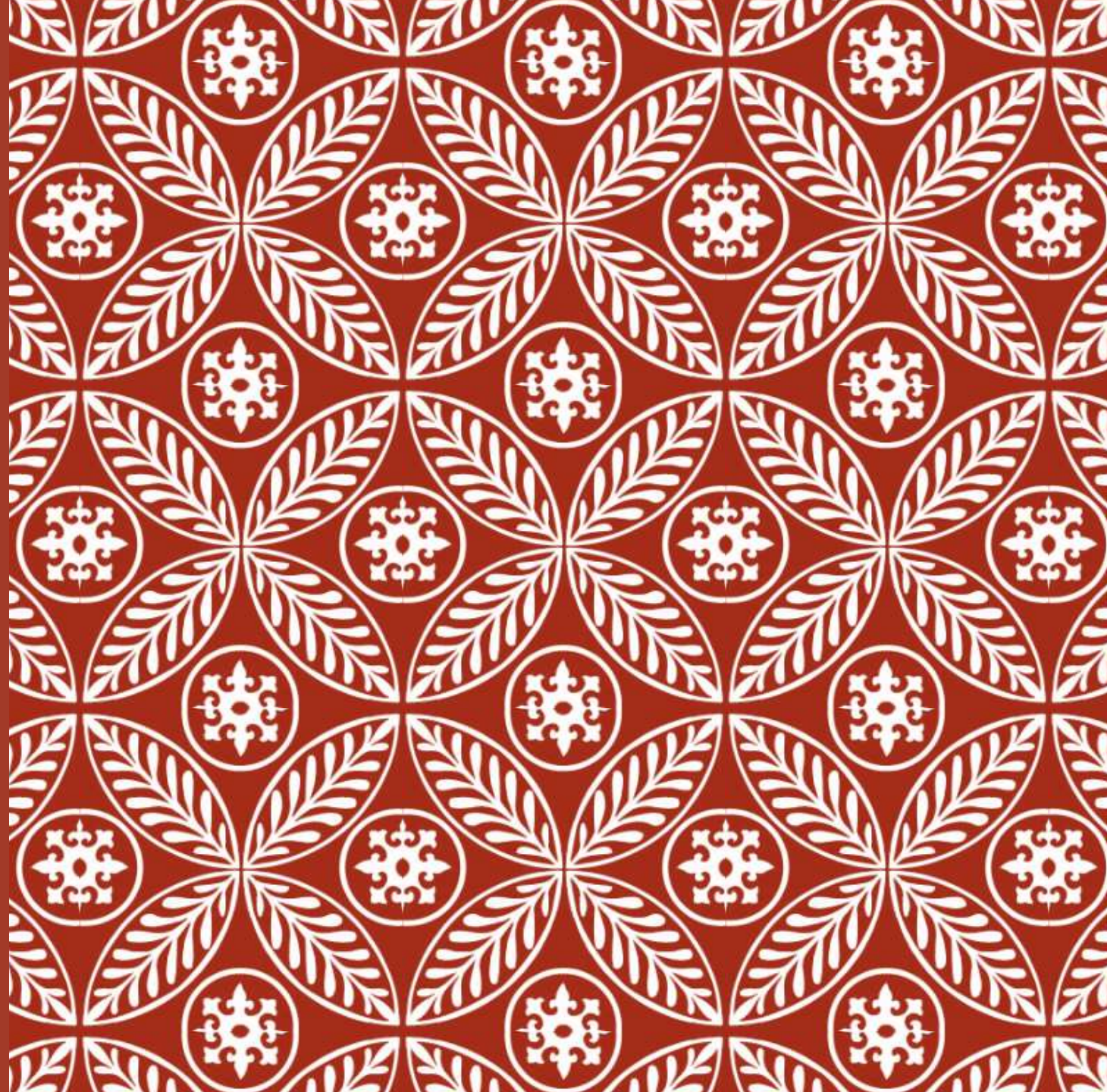
We can accept that not all pleasures are inherently good for our nature, or others.

But: What we need to pinpoint is what pleasure is replaced with – coldness, or a kind of philosophical serenity, joy?

# IMPULSE



# 4. THE GOOD



# EUDAIMONIA

After Aristotle – human flourishing involves knowledge of its end

Stoics: the good involves agreement with nature

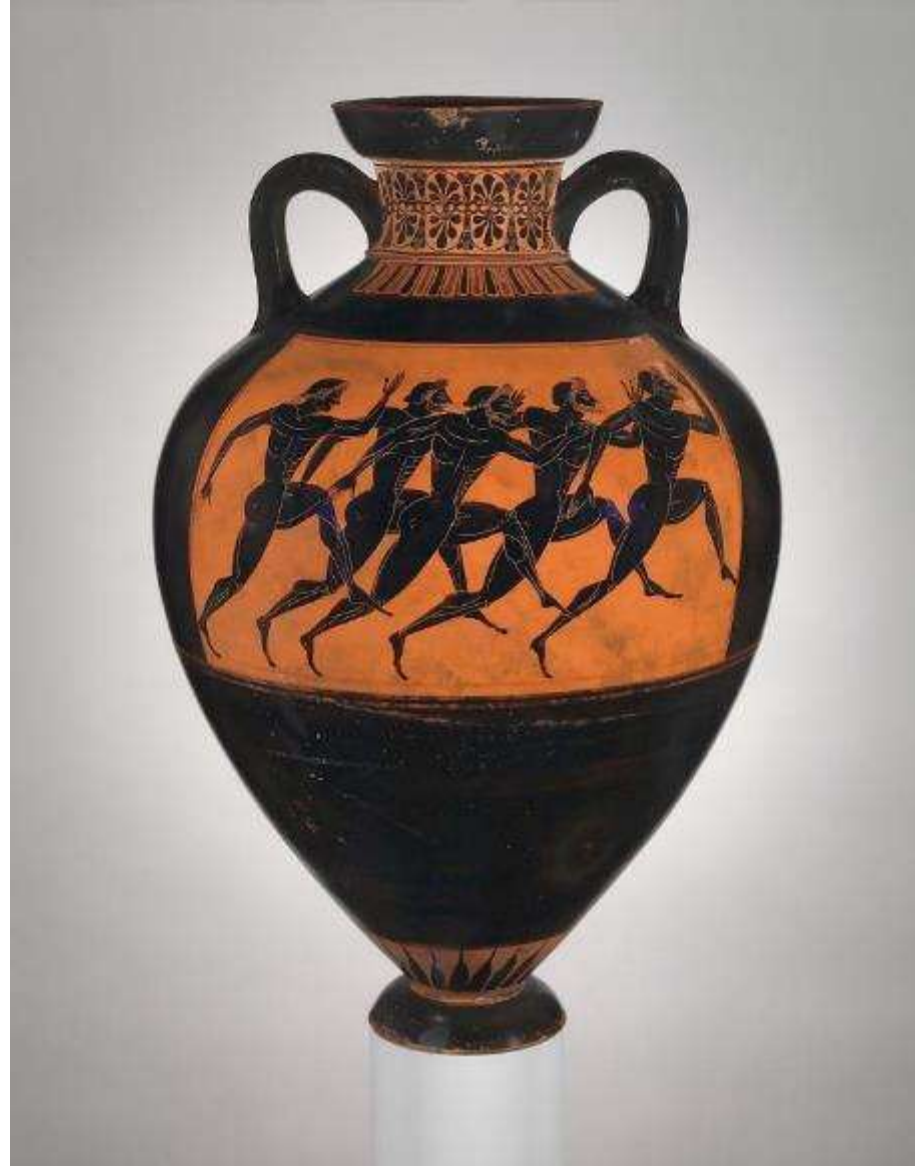
The good must be intrinsically beneficial, and of benefit in all circumstances

‘that which is perfectly in accord with nature for a rational being, qua rational’ (DL)

Reason is the key

‘When reason has been given to rational animals as a more perfect governor [of life], then for them the life according to reason properly becomes what is natural for them. For reason supervenes on impulse as a craftsman’ (DL)





# THE USE OF REASON

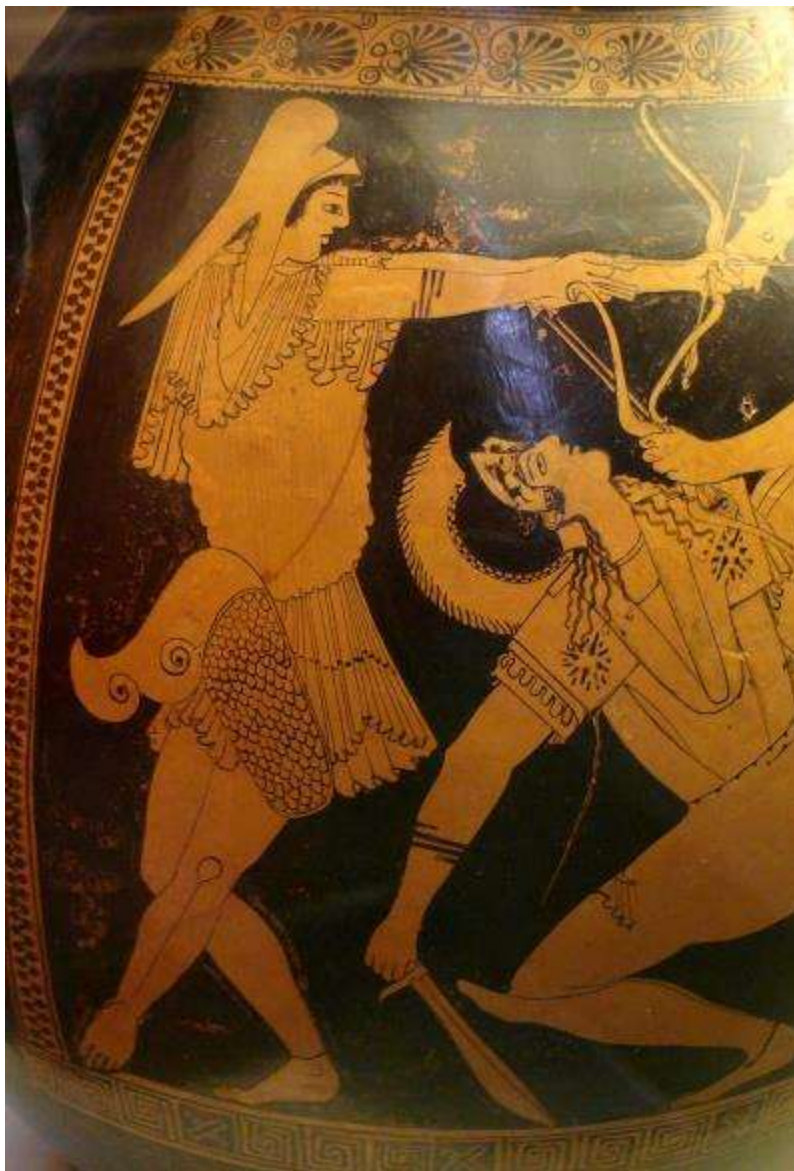
The 'rational animal'

Our soul has an impulse towards 'a certain kind of living; and similarly for reason and perfected reason' (Cicero)

'Diogenes says explicitly that the goal is reasonable behavior in the selection of things according to nature'

*Askesis* — philosophy as an exercise concerning what is beneficial









# AN END IN ITSELF

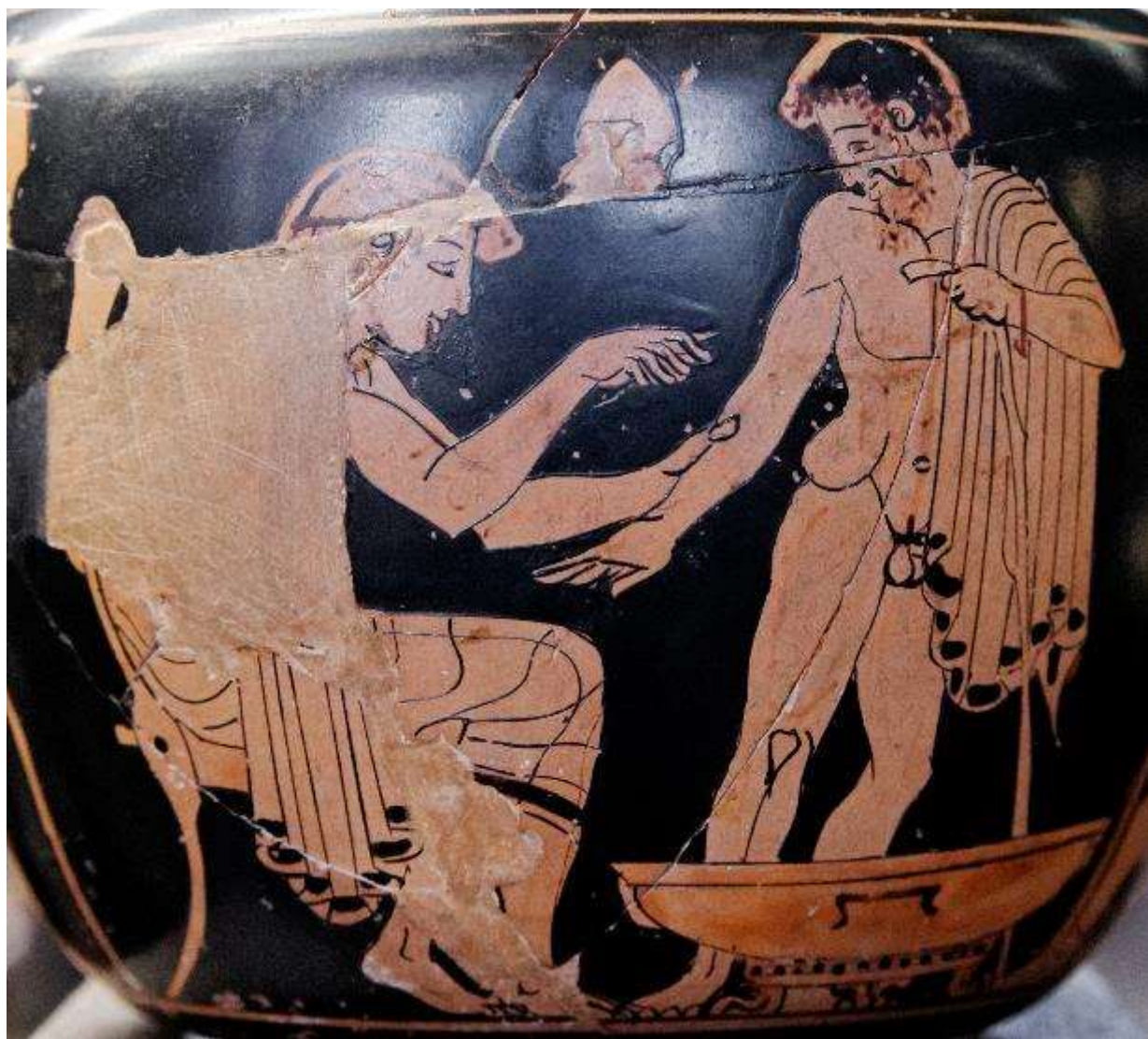
Instrumental and final goods

The Archer (Antipatus) will miss a target for reasons beyond their control

They strive not to hit the target, but for excellence in their performance

The dancer and the actor carefully train and perform in a consistent style

‘And we do not think that wisdom is like navigation or medicine, but rather like the craft of acting or dancing that I just mentioned; thus its goal, i.e., the [proper] execution of the craft, depends on it itself and is not sought outside itself.’ (Cicero)





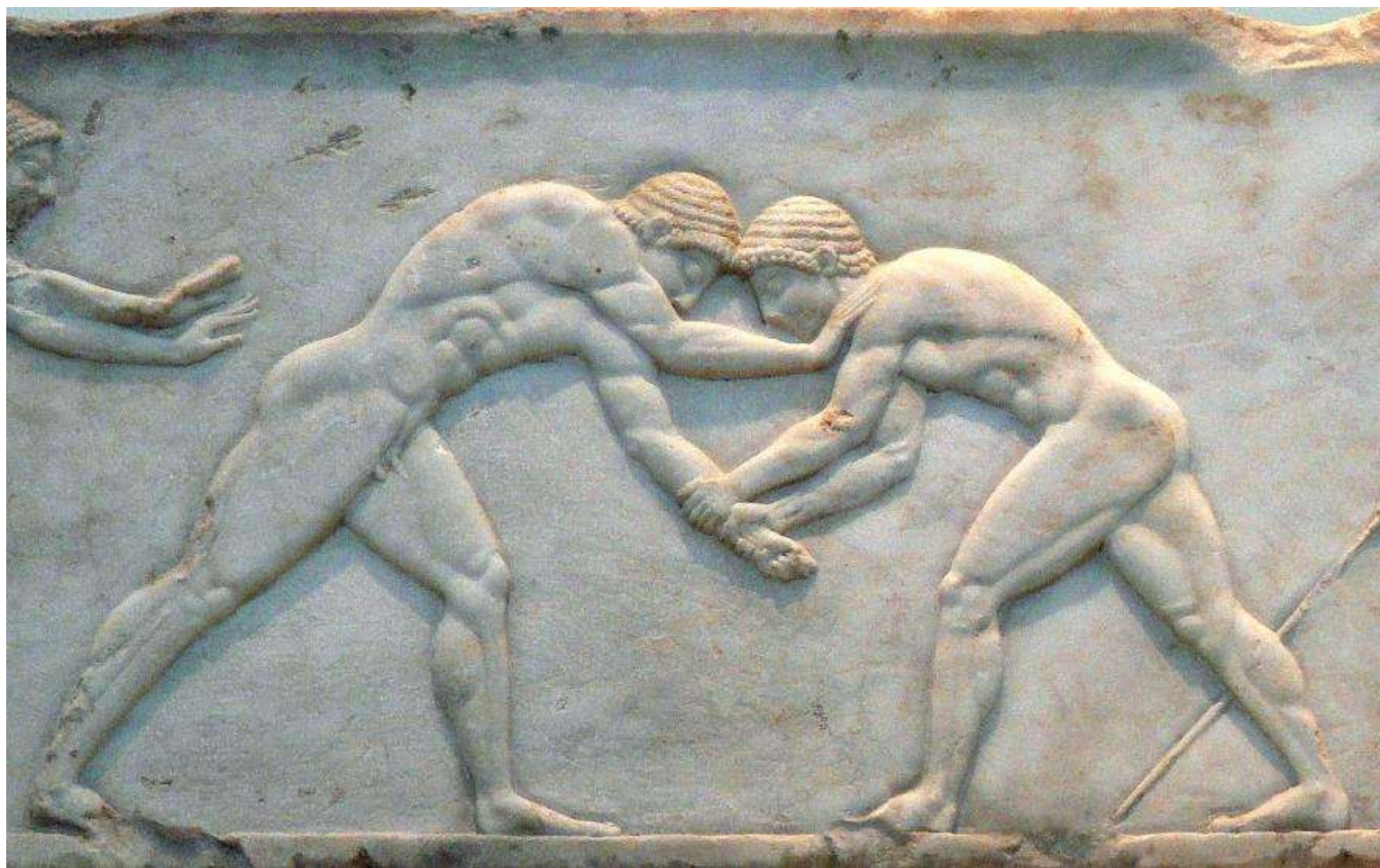
# LIVING THE GOOD

‘the highest good is to live by making use of a knowledge of what happens naturally, selecting what is according to nature and rejecting what is contrary to nature, i.e., to live consistently and in agreement with nature.’

The Four Virtues

Prudence, courage, wisdom and temperance

Sub-forms: ‘magnanimity, self-control, endurance, quick-wittedness, and deliberative excellence’





# TRAINING THE RATIONAL ANIMAL

*Katalepsis* – acts of cognition

*Kathekon* – the appropriate

‘the first appropriate action ... is that it should preserve itself in its natural constitution and then it should retain what is according to nature and reject what is contrary to nature’ (Cicero)

Distinguishing internal goods (virtue) from external goods (friends, society)

Becoming indifferent to ‘indifferents’



‘neither good nor bad are those things which neither benefit nor harm, such as life, health, pleasure, beauty, strength, wealth, good reputation, noble birth, and their opposites death, disease, pain, ugliness, weakness, poverty, bad reputation, low birth, and such things’ (DL)

Wealth and health are things that can be used ‘well and badly’ – hence indifferent...



## 5. THE PASSIONS





# THE PASSIONS

*Irrational responses* – falsehoods within the intellect, from which passions arise

‘irrational and unnatural movement of a soul’ (Zeno).

*Entail evaluations...*

Chrysippus, *On Passions*, paraphrased, ‘for greed is a supposition that money is honorable, and similarly for drunkenness and wantonness and the others’.

A passion is a mistake – it assents to what is false, usually in terms of its value





*Pain* is an irrational contraction; its forms are pity, grudging, envy, resentment, heavyheartedness, congestion, sorrow, anguish, confusion

*Fear* is the expectation of something bad. These are brought under fear: dread, hesitation, shame, shock, panic, agony

*Desire* is an irrational striving, and these [forms] are ranged under it: want, hatred, quarrelsomeness, anger, sexual love, wrath, spiritedness

*Pleasure* is an irrational elation over what seems to be worth choosing; under it are ranged enchantment, mean-spirited satisfaction, enjoyment, rapture (DL)

Rapture: 'a breakdown of virtue'; enjoyment 'a kind of incitement of the soul to slackness'





# JOY

Good states of the soul: joy, caution, wish

Bad states by contrast: pleasure, fear, desire.

Why? Joy is a 'reasonable elation', caution a 'reasonable avoidance' – the mind stays in control. Wish is a 'reasonable striving'.

*But what is reason? What is reasonable?*

Some of the sub-forms of joy tell us more about the Stoic outlook: tranquility, contentment, goodwill, kindness, acceptance, respect.

'for they have in themselves a kind of god'





# THE WISE MAN

Free of passions, austere, 'not phony', never drunk...

Does not fear death, or pain

'magnanimous and strong-hearted men are able to despise and ignore everything which fortune can bring to bear against man' (Cicero)

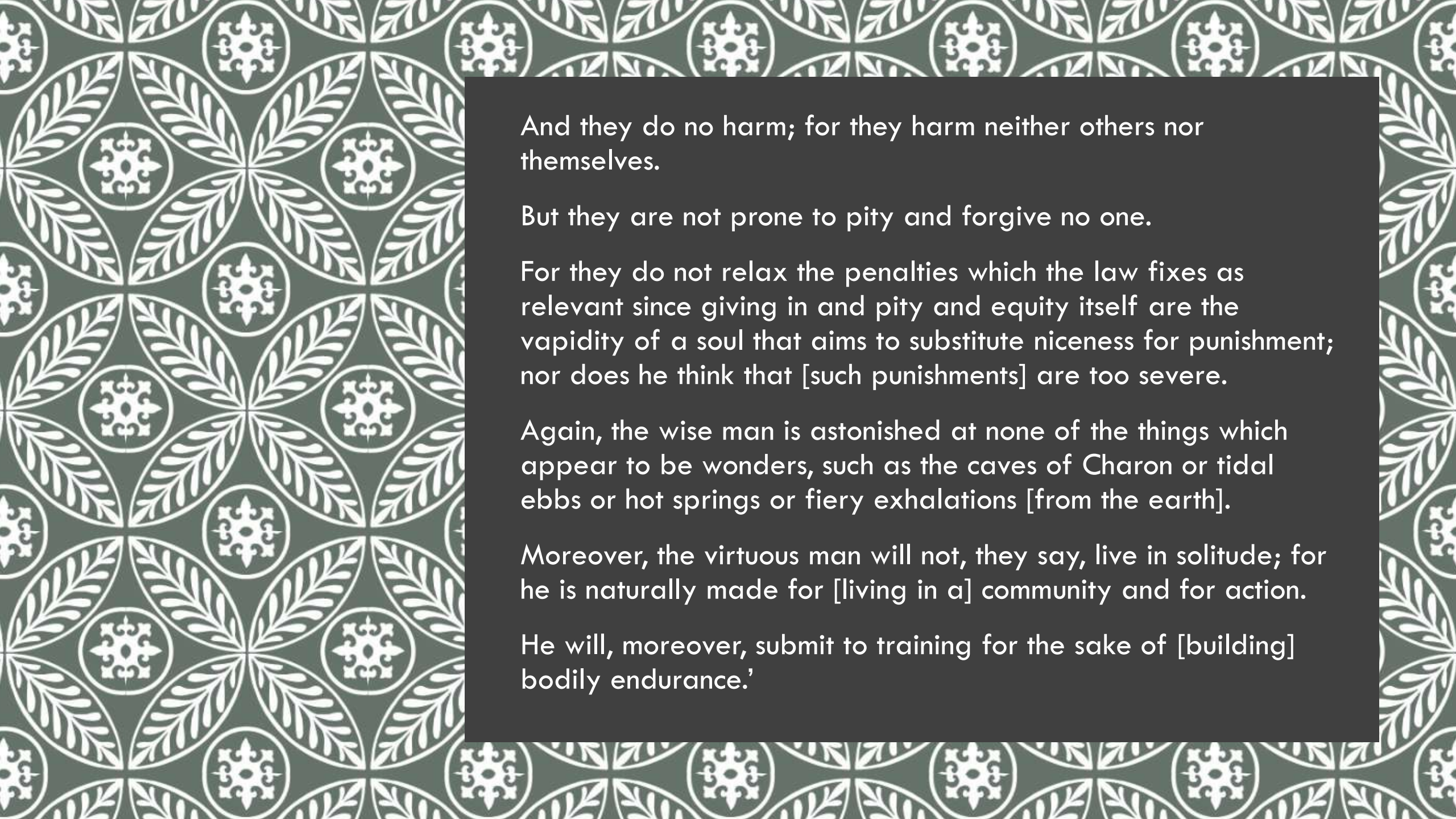
'lofty and superior, magnanimous, truly brave, looks down on all merely human concerns;

the man, I say, whom we wish to produce, whom we are looking for, should certainly have faith in himself and his life, both past and future, and should think well of himself, believing that nothing bad can happen to a wise man'. (Cicero)

Truly free – the rest are all slaves...







And they do no harm; for they harm neither others nor themselves.

But they are not prone to pity and forgive no one.

For they do not relax the penalties which the law fixes as relevant since giving in and pity and equity itself are the vapidness of a soul that aims to substitute niceness for punishment; nor does he think that [such punishments] are too severe.

Again, the wise man is astonished at none of the things which appear to be wonders, such as the caves of Charon or tidal ebbs or hot springs or fiery exhalations [from the earth].

Moreover, the virtuous man will not, they say, live in solitude; for he is naturally made for [living in a] community and for action.

He will, moreover, submit to training for the sake of [building] bodily endurance.'

# THE POLITICS OF WISDOM

The wise are only fit to be kings, priests, hold public office, serve on a jury

Value friendship and civic loyalty highly

‘They say that it is a sharing [or: community] of things needed for one’s life since we treat our friends as ourselves’ (DL)

Values marriage, children and sexual love

Parental love: “from this starting point we can follow the development of the shared society which unites the human race’

‘among human beings a common and natural affinity of people to each other, with the result that it is right for them to feel that other humans, just because they are humans, are not alien to them. ... So, we are naturally suited to gatherings, groups, and states’.





# THE WISE STATE

‘among human beings a common and natural affinity of people to each other, with the result that it is right for them to feel that other humans, just because they are humans, are not alien to them.

... So, we are naturally suited to gatherings, groups, and states’.

From which it naturally follows that we put the common advantage ahead of our own. For just as the laws put the well-being of all ahead of the well-being of individuals, so too the good and wise man, who is obedient to the laws and not unaware of his civic duty, looks out for the advantage of all more than for that of any one person or his own.’ (Cicero)



## 6. TO ROME...





# ADVICE

Antigonid Dynasty (ruled Greece and Macedon after Alexander's death) – Antigonus allegedly a pupil of Zeno

Zeno sends his pupil, Persaeus, to tutor his son

Cleomenes of Sparta advised by Sphaerus

Reforms included redistribution of land, and citizenship to foreigners







# THE ATHENIAN DELEGATION

155 BCE: Athens sends delegates representing the Stoic, Peripatetic and Academics

Carneades the Skeptic argues one day that justice is an inherent good, then that it was equal to being merely convincing

Diogenes the Babylon persuades others...

Cato the Younger and Brutus - Stoicism

Middle Stoa: Antipater of Tarsus, Panaetius, Posidonius

Posidonius met with Pompey in Rhodes, and was a friend of Cicero's

Emperor Augustus (Gaius Octavian) had a Stoic tutor...





# STOIC

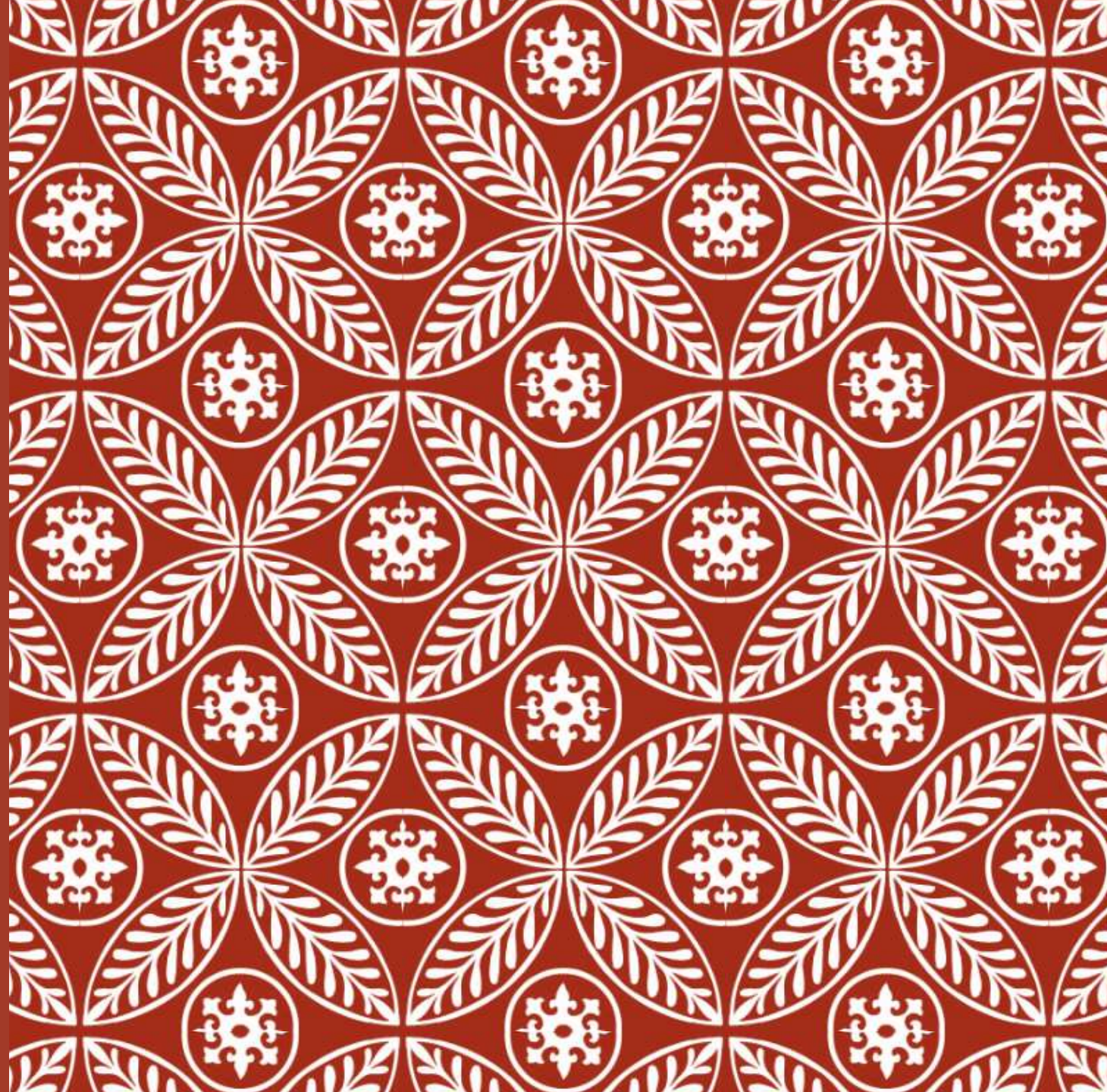
Self-Knowledge

Compassion

Living with Nature

Virtues and strengths of the mind

Departing from old forms of  
knowing





# FOR DISCUSSION ON MONDAY

1. What are the important features of Stoic ethics?
2. What would it mean to be a Stoic, according to Diogenes L and Cicero?
3. What constitutes the good for the Stoics, and how attainable is it?
4. Does Stoic thinking tend too much towards detachment and self-withdrawal, or is there a viable politics here?

*Discussion: 1pm-3pm. You can use the same Zoom link from last week. It's also up on Moodle*





## WEEK 3: SENECA

We turn to the Late Stoa – and some of the finest Stoic writing...

Seneca, “On the Shortness of Life”

It will be up on Moodle by Monday

For anything, email [Dan.Taylor@marywardcentre.ac.uk](mailto:Dan.Taylor@marywardcentre.ac.uk)