Outlines of Pyrrhonism

SEXTUS EMPIRICUS
c. AD 160–210

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Πυρρώνειοι ὑποτυπώσεις

Translated from the Greek with AI (Claude) and edited

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INTRODUCTION

Sextus Empiricus was a Greek doctor of the "Empiric" school who lived around AD 200; almost nothing else is known about him. His *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* is the fullest account to survive of ancient skepticism: the way of thinking traced back to Pyrrho of Elis, who went to India with Alexander the Great, and revived by Aenesidemus in the first century BC.

Book I explains what the skeptic does. Faced with any question, he sets the arguments on each side against one another, finds them equally strong, and suspends judgment; and suspension, he finds, is followed "like a shadow" by tranquillity. Sextus sets out the famous Ten Modes, which show how the same thing appears differently to different animals, people, senses and circumstances, and the Five Modes of Agrippa, which show that every attempt at proof runs into disagreement, infinite regress, relativity, arbitrary assumption or circular reasoning. He explains what skeptics mean by their slogans ("no more this than that", "I determine nothing"), and how they live: by appearances, nature, custom and the ordinary practice of the arts, without holding beliefs.

Books II and III turn these tools on the dogmatic philosophers, especially the Stoics, part by part: logic (the criterion of truth, signs, proof, definition), physics (god, cause, body, motion, place, time, number) and ethics (whether anything is good or bad by nature, and whether there is an art of living). Rediscovered in the Renaissance, the book shaped Montaigne, Descartes, Bayle and Hume, and with them the problem of knowledge in modern philosophy.

Book I

What skepticism is
Suspension of judgment, tranquillity, the Ten Modes and the Five, and how the skeptic differs from his neighbors.

CHAPTER 1: ΠΕΡῚ ΤΗ̃Σ ἈΝΩΤΑΤΩ ΔΙΑΦΟΡᾶΣ ΤΩ̃Ν ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΩ̃Ν

1.1 When people investigate any subject, the likely outcome is one of three: they find it; or they deny that it can be found and admit that it is inapprehensible; or they keep on investigating.

1.2 That is perhaps why, with the things investigated in philosophy too, some have said that they have found the truth, others have declared that it cannot be apprehended, and others are still investigating.

1.3 Those who think they have found it are the dogmatists in the proper sense: Aristotle and his followers, for example, Epicurus and his, the Stoics, and certain others. Clitomachus, Carneades and other Academics have declared that things are inapprehensible. And the skeptics are still investigating.[1]

1.4 So it seems reasonable to hold that there are three most basic kinds of philosophy: the dogmatic, the Academic and the skeptical. It will be for others to discuss the first two. For now, we will speak in outline about the skeptical way. But first we should say this: on none of the things we are about to say do we firmly maintain that it is absolutely as we say. We simply report

1 Carneades (214–129 BC) and his pupil Clitomachus led the Academy, Plato's school, in its skeptical phase.

on each item as a chronicler would, according to how it appears to us at the moment.

CHAPTER 2: ON THE ACCOUNTS OF SKEPTICISM

Sextus distinguishes the general account of skepticism from the specific account that argues against each part of philosophy.

1.5 There are two kinds of account of skeptical philosophy, a general one and a specific one. In the general account we set out the character of skepticism. We say what its concept is, what its principles and its arguments are, what its criterion is and what its goal, what the modes of suspension of judgment are, how we take the skeptical statements, and how skepticism is distinguished from the philosophies closest to it.

1.6 In the specific account we argue against each part of what is called philosophy. Let us first deal with the general account, and begin our exposition with the names of the skeptical way.

CHAPTER 3: ON THE NAMES OF SKEPTICISM

The skeptical way is called investigative, suspensive, aporetic and Pyrrhonian, and Sextus explains why.

1.7 The skeptical way is called *investigative*, from its activity of investigating and inquiring. It is called *suspensive*, from the feeling that comes about in the inquirer after the investigation. It is called *aporetic*, either, as some say, from its being at a loss and investigating about everything, or from its being unable to choose between assent and denial. And it is called *Pyrrhonian*, because Pyrrho appears to us to have applied himself to skepticism more fully and more conspicuously than anyone before him.[2]

2 The three Greek names come from verbs meaning "to investigate," "to hold back (judgment)" and "to be at a loss" (*aporein*); *skepsis* itself means "inquiry." Pyrrho of Elis (c. 360–270 BC) was regarded as the founder of the movement.

CHAPTER 4: WHAT SKEPTICISM IS

Skepticism is an ability to set out oppositions, leading through equipollence to suspension of judgment and then tranquility.

1.8 Skepticism is an ability to set out oppositions between what appears and what is thought, in any way whatever. Starting from it, because of the equipollence of the opposed objects and arguments, we come first to suspension of judgment, and after that to tranquility.

1.9 We call it an "ability" not in any elaborate sense, but simply in the sense of being able to. By "what appears" we here mean objects of perception, which is why we contrast them with objects of thought. "In any way whatever" can be attached to "ability," so that we take the word "ability" in its simple sense, as we said. It can also be attached to "set out oppositions between what appears and what is thought." For since we oppose these in various ways—what appears to what appears, what is thought to what is thought, or the one to the other—we say "in any way whatever" so that all the oppositions are included. Or it can be attached to "what appears and what is thought," so that we don't investigate how what appears appears or how what is thought is thought, but simply take them as they come.

1.10 By "opposed" arguments we don't necessarily mean a denial and an affirmation, but simply arguments that conflict. By "equipollence" we mean equality with respect to being convincing or unconvincing, so that none of the conflicting arguments takes precedence over any other as more convincing. "Suspension of judgment" is a standstill of the intellect, owing to which we neither reject nor posit anything. "Tranquility" is freedom from disturbance and calmness of soul. How tranquility comes along with suspension of judgment we will point out when we discuss the goal.

CHAPTER 5: ON THE SKEPTIC

The Pyrrhonian philosopher is simply the one who has this ability.

1.11 The Pyrrhonian philosopher, too, has implicitly been accounted for in the concept of the skeptical way: he is the one who possesses this ability.

CHAPTER 6: ON THE PRINCIPLES OF SKEPTICISM

Skepticism began in the hope of tranquility; its chief principle is that every argument has an equal argument opposed.

1.12 We say that the causal principle of skepticism is the hope of becoming tranquil. People of talent were disturbed by the anomaly in things and at a loss as to which of them they should rather assent to. So they set out to investigate what in things is true and what is false, thinking that by deciding these questions they would become tranquil. The chief principle of the skeptical system is that to every argument an equal argument is opposed. For it is from this, we think, that we end up holding no beliefs.

CHAPTER 7: WHETHER THE SKEPTIC HOLDS BELIEFS

The skeptic assents to how he is affected, but not to anything non-evident; his phrases cancel themselves.

1.13 When we say that the skeptic does not hold beliefs, we don't mean "belief" in the more general sense in which some say that belief is simply acquiescing in something. (For the skeptic does assent to the feelings forced on him by an impression: when he is warmed or chilled, for example, he would not say "I think I am not being warmed" or "chilled.") Rather, we say that he does not hold beliefs in the sense in which some say that belief is assent to some non-evident matter of the kind investigated by the sciences. (For the Pyrrhonian assents to nothing non-evident.)

1.14 Nor does he hold beliefs when he utters the skeptical phrases about non-evident matters—"no more (this than that),"

for example, or "I determine nothing," or any of the others we will discuss later. For someone who holds a belief posits as real the thing he is said to hold the belief about. The skeptic, by contrast, does not posit these phrases as absolutely real. He supposes that the phrase "everything is false" says that it too, along with everything else, is false, and similarly with "nothing is true." In just the same way, "no more" says that it too, along with everything else, is no more so than not, and so it cancels itself along with the others. And we say the same about the other skeptical phrases.

1.15 Besides, if the person who holds beliefs posits as real what he holds a belief about, while the skeptic utters his phrases on the understanding that they are implicitly cancelled by themselves, then he could not be said to hold beliefs in uttering them. Most important of all, in uttering these phrases he says what appears to himself and reports his own feeling without holding opinions, making no firm claim about the external objects.

CHAPTER 8: WHETHER THE SKEPTIC HAS A SCHOOL

In one sense the skeptic has no school; in another he follows a way of life according to appearances.

1.16 We take a similar line when we are asked whether the skeptic has a school. ⟨For⟩ if someone says that a school is an adherence to many beliefs that are consistent both with one another and with ⟨the⟩ appearances, and says that a belief is assent to something non-evident, then we will say that the skeptic has no school.

1.17 But suppose someone says that a school is a way of life that follows a certain line of reasoning in accordance with what appears—reasoning that shows how it is possible to seem to live correctly ("correctly" taken not only with reference to excellence, but in a looser sense) and that leads to being able to suspend judgment. Then we say that he has a school. For we follow a line of reasoning that, in accordance with what appears, points

us to a life in conformity with our ancestral customs, our laws, our ways of life and our own feelings.

CHAPTER 9: WHETHER THE SKEPTIC DOES NATURAL SCIENCE

The skeptic studies nature only to oppose arguments and for the sake of tranquility, not to hold beliefs.

1.18 We say much the same when it is asked whether the skeptic should do natural science. We do not do natural science in order to make statements with firm conviction about any of the matters on which natural science holds beliefs. But we do take up natural science in order to be able to oppose to every argument an equal argument, and for the sake of tranquility. We approach the logical and the ethical parts of what is called philosophy in the same way.

CHAPTER 10: WHETHER THE SKEPTICS DO AWAY WITH APPEARANCES

Skeptics grant that honey appears sweet; they question only what is said about appearances.

1.19 Those who say that the skeptics do away with appearances seem to me not to have listened to what we say. As we said before, we do not overturn the things that lead us, against our will, to assent in accordance with an impression we are passively affected by; and these are the appearances. When we investigate whether the underlying thing is such as it appears, we grant that it appears. What we investigate is not what appears, but what is said about what appears—and that is different from investigating what appears itself.

1.20 For example, honey appears to us to be sweet. This we concede, since we perceive the sweetness. But whether it is also sweet, as far as the argument goes, we investigate; and that is not what appears but ⟨what is⟩ said about what appears. And if we do propound arguments directly against appearances, we set them out not because we want to do away with appearances, but

to expose the rashness of the dogmatists. For if reason is such a trickster that it all but snatches even appearances from under our eyes, surely we should be wary of it in non-evident matters, so as not to follow it and be rash?

CHAPTER 11: ON THE CRITERION OF SKEPTICISM

The skeptic's criterion of action is what appears: nature, feelings, laws and customs, and the arts.

1.21 That we attend to appearances is clear from what we say about the criterion of the skeptical way. "Criterion" has two senses. One is the criterion adopted to give conviction about whether something is real or not; we will discuss it in our counter-arguments. The other is the criterion of action: by attending to it in everyday life we do some things and not others. It is this one we are now discussing.

1.22 We say, then, that the criterion of the skeptical way is what appears—implicitly meaning by this the impression. For since the impression lies in our being affected and in involuntary feeling, it is not open to investigation. That is why no one, presumably, will dispute that the underlying thing appears this way or that. What is investigated is whether it is such as it appears.

1.23 So we attend to appearances and live without holding opinions, in accordance with the observances of everyday life, since we cannot be wholly inactive. These observances of everyday life seem to fall into four parts. One lies in the guidance of nature, one in the necessity of feelings, one in the handing down of laws and customs, and one in the teaching of arts. The guidance of nature is

1.24 that by which we are naturally capable of perceiving and thinking. The necessity of feelings is that by which hunger leads us to food and thirst to drink. The handing down of customs and laws is that by which, in everyday life, we accept piety as good and impiety as bad. The teaching of arts is that by which we are not inactive in the arts we take up. But we say all this without holding opinions.

CHAPTER 12: WHAT THE GOAL OF SKEPTICISM IS

The goal is tranquility in matters of opinion; suspension brought it, as Apelles' sponge painted the foam.

1.25 The next thing would be to go through the goal of the skeptical way. A goal is that for the sake of which everything is done or considered, while it is not itself for the sake of anything else; or, the final object of desire. We say, so far, that the goal of the skeptic is tranquility in matters of opinion and moderate feeling in matters forced upon us.

1.26 The skeptic began to do philosophy in order to decide among impressions and apprehend which are true and which false, so as to become tranquil. But he ran into equipollent disagreement, and since he could not decide it, he suspended judgment. And once he had suspended judgment, tranquility in matters of opinion followed, as it happened.

1.27 For anyone who holds the opinion that something is by nature good or bad is constantly disturbed. When he lacks the things that seem to him good, he thinks he is being hounded by things that are by nature bad, and he chases after what he supposes to be good. Then, once he has acquired these, he falls into still more disturbances. He is elated beyond reason and without measure, and because he fears change he does everything he can so as not to lose the things that seem to him good.

1.28 But someone who does not determine anything about what is good or bad by nature neither avoids nor pursues anything intensely, and so he is tranquil. What happened to the skeptic, then, is just what is told of Apelles the painter. They say that he was painting a horse and wanted to depict the horse's foam. He failed so badly that he gave up and threw at the picture the sponge he used to wipe the paint off his brush—and the sponge, striking the picture, produced a likeness of the horse's foam.[3]

1.29 So too the skeptics were hoping to achieve tranquility by deciding the anomaly in what appears and what is thought.

Unable to do this, they suspended judgment. And once they had suspended judgment, tranquility followed, as if by chance, as a shadow follows a body. We do not, however, think that the skeptic is wholly undisturbed. We say that he is disturbed by things forced upon him: we do agree that he is sometimes cold and thirsty, and has various feelings of that sort.

1.30 But even here ordinary people are afflicted twice over: by the feelings themselves, and no less by thinking that these conditions are by nature bad. The skeptic, by doing away with the additional opinion that each of them is bad by nature, gets off more moderately even here. That is why we say that the goal of the skeptic is tranquility in matters of opinion and moderate feeling in matters forced upon us. Some eminent skeptics have added to these suspension of judgment in investigations.

CHAPTER 13: ON THE GENERAL MODES OF SUSPENSION

Suspension comes from opposing appearances and thoughts to one another, and present arguments to future ones.

1.31 Since we have said that tranquility follows suspension of judgment about everything, the next thing would be to say how we come to suspend judgment. To put it in rather general terms, it comes about through the opposition of things. We oppose what appears to what appears, or what is thought to what is thought, or the one to the other. We oppose what appears to what appears, for example,

1.32 when we say, "The same tower appears round from a distance but square from close up." We oppose what is thought to what is thought when, against someone who establishes from the order of the heavenly bodies that there is providence, we set the fact that the good often fare badly and the bad fare well, and conclude from this that there is no providence.

1.33 We oppose what is thought to what appears, as Anaxagoras did in reply to ⟨someone who argued⟩ that snow is white: snow

3 Apelles (fourth century BC), court painter to Alexander the Great, was the most celebrated painter of antiquity.

is frozen water, and water is black; so snow too is black. On another way of looking at it, we sometimes oppose present things to present things, as in the cases just mentioned, and sometimes present things to past or future ones. For instance, when someone propounds an argument to us that we cannot refute, we say to him:[4]

1.34 "Before the founder of the school you follow was born, the argument for it did not yet appear sound, though in nature it was already there. In the same way, it is possible that the argument opposed to the one you have just propounded is there in nature but does not yet appear to us. So we should not yet assent to the argument that now seems strong."

1.35 But so that we may grasp these oppositions more precisely, I will also set out the modes through which suspension of judgment is brought about. I make no firm claims about their number or their force: they may be unsound, and there may be more of them than the ones I am about to describe.

CHAPTER 14: ON THE TEN MODES

Sextus lists the ten modes of suspension handed down by the older skeptics and groups them under relativity.

1.36 The older skeptics usually hand down modes through which suspension of judgment seems to be brought about, ten in number; they also call them, interchangeably, "arguments" and "patterns." They are these: first, the mode depending on the variety of animals; second, the one depending on the differences among human beings; third, the one depending on the different constitutions of the sense organs; fourth, the one depending on circumstances; fifth, the one depending on positions, distances and places; sixth, the one depending on admixtures;[5]

1.37 seventh, the one depending on the quantities and preparations of the underlying things; eighth, the one from relativity;

4 Anaxagoras of Clazomenae was a fifth-century BC natural philosopher.
5 The Ten Modes are usually attributed to Aenesidemus (first century BC), who revived Pyrrhonism.

ninth, the one depending on constant or rare encounters; tenth, the one depending on ways of life, customs, laws, mythical beliefs and dogmatic suppositions.

1.38 We use this order by stipulation. Over these there are three higher modes: the one from the judge, the one from what is judged, and the one from both. Under the mode from the judge fall the first four, since the judge is either an animal, or a human being, or a sense, or in some circumstance. The seventh and the tenth ⟨are referred⟩ to the mode from what is judged; and the fifth, sixth, eighth and ninth to the mode composed of both.

1.39 These three in turn are referred to the mode of relativity. So relativity is the most generic, the three are specific, and the ten are subordinate. This is what we say about their number, as is plausible. About their force, the following.

THE FIRST MODE: ANIMALS

Animals differ in birth and bodily make-up, so the same things produce different impressions in them.

1.40 The first argument, we said, is the one according to which, ⟨owing to⟩ the differences among animals, the same things do not produce the same impressions. We infer this both from the differences in the ways animals come into being and from the variation in the composition of their bodies.

1.41 First, the ways they come into being. Some animals are generated without sexual union, others from intercourse. Of those generated without union, some come from fire, like the tiny creatures that appear in furnaces; some from stagnant water, like gnats; some from wine turning sour, like midges; some from earth, ⟨like ...⟩; some from slime, like frogs; some from mud, like worms; some from donkeys, like beetles; some from vegetables, like caterpillars; some from fruit, like the gall-insects that come from wild figs; and some from rotting animals, like bees from bulls and wasps from horses.

1.42 Of those generated from intercourse, most come from parents of the same kind, but some from parents of different kinds,

like mules. Again, in general, some animals are born live, like human beings; some are born as eggs, like birds; and some are born as lumps of flesh, like bears.[6]

1.43 It is likely, then, that these dissimilarities and differences in the way they come into being produce great differences in how they are affected, and that from this source they derive their incompatibility, their lack of harmony and their conflict.

1.44 Moreover, differences in the most important parts of the body, especially those whose nature is to judge and to perceive, can produce a very great conflict among impressions [owing to the variation among animals]. People with jaundice, at any rate, say that things which appear white to us are yellow, and people with a bloodshot eye say they are blood-red. Now, some animals have yellow eyes, others bloodshot, others whitish, others some other color. So it is likely, I think, that they perceive colors differently.

1.45 Again, if we stare at the sun for a long time and then bend over a book, the letters seem to us golden and moving around. Now, some animals naturally have a brightness in their eyes and send out from them a fine and mobile light, so that they can even see at night. So we would be right to think that external things do not strike them and us in the same way.

1.46 Conjurers, too, by smearing lamp-wicks with copper rust or cuttlefish ink, make the people present look copper-colored at one moment and black at another, just by sprinkling in a little of the mixture. Surely, then, it is far more reasonable that, since different humors are blended into the vision of ⟨animals⟩, different

1.47 impressions should arise for them. When we press the side of an eye, the outlines, shapes and sizes of visible things appear elongated and narrow. So it is likely that animals whose pupils are slanting and elongated—goats, cats and the like—have impressions of the underlying things as different, and do not suppose them to be such as animals with round pupils do.

6 It was widely believed in antiquity that bear cubs are born as shapeless lumps of flesh that the mother licks into shape.

1.48 Mirrors, too, because of their different construction, sometimes show external objects as very small, as concave mirrors do, and sometimes as elongated and narrow, as convex ones do. Some show the head of the person looking into them at the bottom and the feet at the top.

1.49 Now, of the organs of sight, some bulge right out because of their convexity, some are more concave, and some lie flat. So it is likely that for this reason too impressions are altered, and that dogs, fish, lions and human beings do not see the same things as equal in size or alike in shape, but each according to the imprint made by the vision that receives the appearance.

1.50 The same argument holds for the other senses too. How could one say that creatures with shells, creatures with bare flesh, creatures covered in spines and creatures covered in feathers or scales are all moved in the same way by touch? How could creatures with a very narrow auditory passage and those with a very wide one perceive in the same way by hearing, or creatures with hairy ears and those with smooth ones? After all, even we are affected one way in hearing when we have stopped up our ears, and another way when we simply use them.

1.51 Smell, too, would differ with the variety of animals. We ourselves are affected one way when we have a chill and there is an excess of phlegm in us, and another way when the parts around our head take in an excess of blood: then we turn away from what seems fragrant to others and think we are, as it were, being struck by it. Now, some animals are by nature flabby and phlegmatic, others very full of blood, and in others yellow or black bile predominates and is in excess. So it is reasonable that for this reason too objects of smell should appear different to each of them.

1.52 So too with objects of taste, since some animals have a rough, dry tongue and others a very moist one. When our own tongue becomes drier in fevers, we think what we are given is earthy and bad-tasting, or bitter; and we experience this because of the different predominance of the humors said to be in us. Since, then, animals too have different organs of taste,

with different humors in excess, they would also get different impressions of the underlying things by taste.

1.53 Consider the same food: when distributed through the body, it becomes a vein in one place, an artery in another, a bone in another, a sinew in another, and so on with each of the rest, displaying a different power according to the difference of the parts that receive it. Consider water, one and uniform: when distributed into trees, it becomes bark in one place, a branch in another, fruit in another—a fig, indeed, or a pomegranate, and so on with each of the rest.

1.54 Consider the musician's breath, one and the same: blown into the pipe, it becomes high in one place and low in another; and the same pressure of the hand on the lyre produces a low note in one place and a high one in another. In just the same way, it is likely that external objects are observed as different according to the different constitutions of the animals that receive the impressions.

1.55 One can learn this more clearly from what animals choose and avoid. Perfume, for instance, appears very pleasant to human beings but unbearable to beetles and bees. Olive oil is beneficial to human beings, but when sprinkled on wasps and bees it kills them. Seawater is unpleasant and poisonous for human beings to drink, but very pleasant and drinkable for fish.

1.56 Pigs would rather wash in the foulest-smelling mud than in clear, clean water. Some animals eat grass, some shrubs, some woodland growth, some seeds, some flesh, some milk. Some enjoy stale food, others fresh; some raw food, others food prepared by cooking. And in general, what is pleasant to some is to others unpleasant, to be avoided, and deadly.

1.57 Hemlock, for instance, fattens quails, and henbane fattens pigs—and pigs also enjoy eating salamanders, just as deer enjoy venomous creatures and swallows blister beetles. Ants and midges, when swallowed, give human beings nausea and colic; but a bear, if she falls ill, licks them up and gets her strength back.

1.58 A viper is stupefied if merely touched by an oak branch, and so is a bat by a plane leaf. The elephant runs from the ram, the lion from the cockerel, whales from the crackle of beans being crushed, and the tiger from the sound of a drum. One could say more than this; but so as not to seem to dwell on it longer than we should: if the same things are unpleasant to some and pleasant to others, and pleasant and unpleasant lie in impressions, then animals get different impressions from the underlying things.

1.59 And if the same things appear dissimilar owing to the variety of animals, we will be able to say how the underlying thing is observed by us, but we will suspend judgment about how it is in its nature. For we will not be able to decide between our own impressions and those of the other animals ourselves. We are part of the disagreement, and so we will need someone to decide it rather than being able to judge it ourselves.

1.60 Besides, we cannot give our own impressions preference over those that arise in non-rational animals, either without proof or with proof. Quite apart from the fact that there is perhaps no such thing as proof, as we will point out, the so-called proof itself will either appear to us or not appear to us. If it does not appear, we will not put it forward with any confidence. If it does appear to us, then—since what is under investigation is what appears to animals, and the proof appears to us, who are animals—the proof itself will be under investigation as to whether it is true, insofar as it appears.

1.61 But it is absurd to try to establish what is under investigation by means of what is under investigation. The same thing would then be both convincing and unconvincing, which is impossible: convincing insofar as it purports to prove, unconvincing insofar as it is being proved. So we will have no proof by which to give our own impressions preference over those arising in the so-called non-rational animals. If, then, impressions differ owing to the variety of animals, and it is impossible to decide among them, we must suspend judgment about external objects.

THE REASONING DOG

For good measure, Sextus argues that a dog has reason, excellence and even Stoic logic.

1.62 For good measure, we also compare the so-called non-rational animals with human beings with respect to impressions. After our serious arguments, we don't refuse to have some fun at the expense of the dogmatists, puffed up and self-praising as they are. Our own people usually compare the non-rational animals as a whole with human beings.

1.63 But the dogmatists quibble and say the comparison is unfair. So, with plenty to spare and to make the joke even better, we will rest the argument on a single animal—the dog, say, if you like, which is thought to be the lowliest of all. For we will find that even so the animals we are discussing are not inferior to us as regards the credibility of what appears to them.

1.64 Now, the dogmatists agree that this animal surpasses us in perception. It perceives by smell better than we do, using it to track down wild animals it cannot see; it sees them with its eyes more quickly than we do; and its hearing is keen.

1.65 So let us come to reason. One kind of reason is internal, the other expressed in speech. Let us look first at internal reason. According to the dogmatists who at present most oppose us, the Stoics, internal reason seems to turn on these things: choosing what is one's own and avoiding what is alien; knowing the arts that contribute to this; and grasping the excellences that belong to one's own nature ⟨and⟩ those concerned with feelings.[7]

1.66 Now, the dog—the animal we decided to rest the argument on, for the sake of example—chooses what is its own and avoids what is harmful: it goes after food and backs away when the whip is raised. It also has an art for procuring what is its own—namely, hunting.

7 "Reason" translates *logos*, which also means "speech": the Stoics distinguished reason as inner thought from reason uttered in speech.

1.67 Nor is it without excellence. Justice, at any rate, is giving each their due. And since the dog fawns on and guards those who are its own and treat it well, and wards off those who are not its own and do wrong, it could hardly be said to lack justice.

1.68 But if it has justice, then, since the excellences entail one another, it also has the other excellences—the ones the wise say most human beings do not have. We see, too, that it is brave in warding people off, and intelligent. Homer testified to this as well: he portrayed Odysseus as unrecognized by all the people of his household and recognized by Argus alone. The dog was neither deceived by the change in the man's body nor did it lose hold of its apprehensive impression—which it evidently had to a greater degree than the human beings.[8]

1.69 According to Chrysippus, who is especially hostile to non-rational animals, the dog even shares in their celebrated dialectic. At any rate, the man just mentioned says that the dog applies the fifth indemonstrable with more than two alternatives. This happens when it comes to a place where three roads meet, sniffs at the two roads its quarry did not take, and rushes straight off down the third without even sniffing it. For, says the venerable man, the dog is implicitly reasoning like this: "The animal went either this way, or this way, or this way; but not this way, and not this way;[9]

1.70 therefore this way." What is more, the dog is aware of its own feelings and able to relieve them. When a thorn has stuck in it, it sets about removing it by rubbing its foot on the ground and with its teeth. And if it has a wound somewhere, then, since dirty wounds are hard to cure while clean ones heal easily, it gently wipes away the pus that forms.

1.71 It also observes Hippocrates' rule very well. Since rest is the cure for a foot, if it ever gets a wound in its foot it holds the

8 The "apprehensive impression" is the Stoic criterion of truth: an impression so clear that it could only come from the thing it represents. Argus is Odysseus' old dog in *Odyssey* 17.

9 The indemonstrables are the five basic argument forms of Stoic logic, from which all others were derived; the fifth runs "Either A or B; not A; therefore B." Chrysippus (c. 280–207 BC) was the third head of the Stoic school.

foot up and keeps it as undisturbed as it can. And when it is troubled by humors that don't agree with it, it eats grass, vomits up what disagrees with it along with the grass, and gets well.

1.72 The animal we rested our argument on for the sake of example has, then, evidently chosen what is its own and avoided what is troublesome; it has an art for procuring what is its own; it is aware of its own feelings and able to relieve them; and it is not without excellence. Since the perfection of internal reason lies in these things, the dog would to that extent be perfect. That, I think, is why some philosophers have dignified themselves with the name of this animal.[10]

1.73 As for reason expressed in speech, there is no need to investigate it for the present. Even some of the dogmatists have rejected it as a hindrance to acquiring excellence, which is why they practiced silence during the period of their instruction. Besides, if a human being were mute, say, no one would call him non-rational. But let us pass over these points too. We do in fact see the animals we are discussing uttering even human sounds —jays, for instance, and some others.[11]

1.74 Let us set that aside as well. Even if we do not understand the sounds of the so-called non-rational animals, it is not at all unlikely that they converse and we simply fail to understand. After all, when we hear the speech of foreigners, we don't understand it, and it seems to us to be all one sound.

1.75 And we hear dogs utter one sound when they are warding someone off, another when they howl, another when they are beaten, and a different one when they fawn. In general, anyone who looked closely into this would find great variation in the voice of this and the other animals in different circumstances. So for these reasons it might reasonably be said that the so-called non-rational animals also share in reason expressed in speech.

1.76 And if they are inferior to human beings neither in the precision of their senses, nor in internal reason, nor—to say it

10 The Cynics, whose name comes from the Greek *kyōn*, "dog."
11 The Pythagoreans reportedly imposed a long period of silence on their pupils.

for good measure—in reason expressed in speech, then they would be no less credible than we are as regards their impressions.

1.77 Perhaps we could show this by resting the argument on each of the non-rational animals in turn. Who, for instance, would deny that birds excel in shrewdness and use reason expressed in speech? They know not only the present but also the future, and they reveal it in advance to those who can understand them, both through other signs and by announcing it with their voices.

1.78 As I indicated before, I made this comparison for good measure, having already shown sufficiently, I think, [earlier] that we cannot give our own impressions preference over those arising in non-rational animals. But if the non-rational animals are no less credible than we are in judging impressions, and different impressions arise owing to the variation among animals, then I will be able to say how each of the underlying things appears to me; but because of what has been said, I will be forced to suspend judgment about how it is in its nature.

THE SECOND MODE: HUMAN BEINGS

Human beings differ in body and soul, so they too receive different impressions from the same things.

1.79 Such, then, is the first mode of suspension. The second, we said, is the one from the differences among human beings. For even if one were to grant, for the sake of argument, that human beings are more credible than non-rational animals, we will find that suspension of judgment is brought in as far as our own differences go. A human being is said to be composed of two things, soul and body, and we differ from one another in both. In body, for example, we differ in our shapes and in our idiosyncrasies.

1.80 The body of a Scythian differs in shape from the body of an Indian, and the variation is produced, so they say, by a different predominance of humors. And impressions too differ with the

different predominance of humors, as we established in the first argument. This, indeed, is why there is a great difference among peoples in what external things they choose and avoid: Indians enjoy some things and people in our part of the world others. And enjoying different things is an indication of receiving varying impressions from the underlying things.

1.81 We differ in idiosyncrasies in that some people digest beef more easily than little rock-fish, and are given a violent stomach upset by a drop of weak Lesbian wine. There was, they say, an old woman in Attica who took thirty drachms of hemlock without danger, and Lysis took four drachms of opium without ill effect.

1.82 Demophon, Alexander's table-servant, shivered in the sun or in a bath and felt warm in the shade. Athenagoras of Argos could be stung by scorpions and venomous spiders without ill effect. The people called the Psylli are not harmed even when bitten by snakes or asps,[12]

1.83 and the Tentyrites in Egypt are not harmed by crocodiles. Again, those Ethiopians who live across from Meroë along the river Astapus eat scorpions, snakes and the like without danger. And Rufinus of Chalcis drank hellebore without vomiting or being purged at all: he took and digested it like something he was used to.[13]

1.84 Chrysermus the Herophilean, whenever he took pepper, was in danger of a heart attack. Soterichus the surgeon was seized with a violent stomach upset whenever he smelled catfish cooking. Andron of Argos was so free from thirst that he even traveled through waterless Libya without needing a drink. Tiberius Caesar could see in the dark. Aristotle tells of a man from Thasos who thought that the image of a man was always walking ahead of him.[14]

1.85 Since there is so much variation among human beings in their bodies—to be content with mentioning a few of the many

12 The Psylli were a North African people famed as snake-charmers immune to snakebite.

13 Hellebore was the standard ancient emetic and purgative.

cases recorded by the dogmatists—it is likely that human beings also differ from one another in the soul itself. For the body is a kind of imprint of the soul, as the wisdom of physiognomy shows. But the greatest indication of the great, indeed endless, difference in human intellect is the disagreement in what the dogmatists say, both about other things and about what one should choose and what one should avoid.

1.86 The poets, then, have aptly expressed themselves on these matters. Pindar says: "One man is gladdened by storm-footed horses,
their honors ⟨and⟩ crowns;
others by a life in chambers rich with gold;
and someone delights in crossing the swell of the sea
in a swift ship." And the poet says: "Different men delight in different deeds." Tragedy too is full of such remarks. It says, for instance: "If the same thing were fine and wise for everyone by nature,
there would be no disputed strife among mankind"; and again: "Strange, that the same thing should please some mortals
and be hateful to others." Since, then, choice and avoidance lie in pleasure[15]

1.87 and displeasure, and pleasure and displeasure lie in perception and impression, then when some people choose the very things others avoid, it follows that we should infer that they are not moved alike by the same things either; otherwise they would have chosen or avoided the same things alike. And if ⟨the same⟩ things move people differently owing to the differences among them, suspension of judgment would reasonably be brought in on this ground too. We can perhaps say how each of the underlying things appears relative to each difference, but we cannot declare what it is [potentially] in its nature.

14 A Herophilean was a follower of Herophilus, the great Alexandrian physician of the third century BC.

15 "The poet" is Homer (*Odyssey* 14.228); the first tragic passage is from Euripides, *Phoenician Women* 499–500, the second from an unidentified play.

1.88 For we will believe either all human beings or some. If all, we will be attempting the impossible and accepting opposites. If some, let them tell us which ones we should assent to. The Platonist will say Plato, the Epicurean Epicurus, and the rest likewise. And so, by quarreling without any way of deciding between them, they will bring us round once again to suspension of judgment.

1.89 Anyone who says we should assent to the majority will be making a childish suggestion. No one can go round all human beings and work out what the majority think. It is possible that among some peoples we know nothing of, things that are rare among us are true of most, while things that happen to most of us are rare there. Most of them, say, feel no pain when bitten by spiders, while a few occasionally do; and analogously with the other idiosyncrasies mentioned earlier. So suspension of judgment is necessarily brought in by the differences among human beings too.

1.90 The dogmatists, being rather in love with themselves, say that they should be given preference over other human beings in judging things. We know that their claim is absurd. (They are themselves part of the disagreement; and if they give themselves preference and judge appearances on that basis, they take for granted the point under investigation before they have even begun to judge, by entrusting the judgment to themselves.)

THE THIRD MODE: THE SENSES

The senses disagree about the same object, so we cannot say what an apple is in its nature.

1.91 Nevertheless, so that we may arrive at suspension of judgment even when we rest the argument on a single human being —for instance, the wise man of their dreams—we take up the mode that is third in order. This, we said, is the one from the differences among the senses. That the senses differ from one another is evident.

1.92 Paintings, at any rate, seem to the eye to have recesses and projections, but not to touch. Honey appears pleasant to the tongue for some people, but unpleasant to the eyes; so it is impossible to say whether it is purely pleasant or unpleasant. Likewise with perfume: it delights the sense of smell but is unpleasant to the taste.

1.93 Again, spurge juice is painful to the eyes but painless to all the rest of the body; so we will not be able to say whether, as far as its own nature goes, it is purely painless to bodies or painful. Rainwater is beneficial to the eyes but roughens the windpipe and lungs—as olive oil does too, although it soothes the skin. And the electric ray, placed on the extremities, makes them numb, but can be placed on the rest of the body without harm. So we will not be able to say what each of these things is like in its nature, but it is possible to say what it appears like on each occasion.

1.94 One could say more than this; but so as not to linger, given the plan [of the mode] of this treatise, this is what needs to be said. Each of the perceptible things that appear to us seems to strike us as many-sided—an apple, for example, as smooth, fragrant, sweet and yellow. So it is non-evident whether it really has only these qualities; or whether it has just one quality but appears different because of the different constitutions of the sense organs; or whether it has more qualities than appear, some of which do not strike us.

1.95 That it has just one quality can be inferred from what we said earlier about food being distributed into bodies, about water being distributed into trees, and about breath ⟨blown⟩ into pipes, panpipes and similar instruments. For the apple, too, may be uniform and yet be observed as different according to the difference of the sense organs through which it is perceived.

1.96 That the apple may have more qualities than the ones that appear to us we infer as follows. Let us imagine someone who from birth has touch, smell and taste, but can neither hear nor see. He will suppose that there is nothing visible or audible at

all, and that only those three kinds of quality exist that he is able to perceive.

1.97 So it is possible that we too, having only the five senses, perceive only those of the apple's qualities that we are capable of perceiving. Other qualities may exist, striking other sense organs that we have no share in; and that is why we do not perceive the perceptible things that correspond to them either.

1.98 "But nature," someone will say, "made the senses commensurate with their objects." What nature? There is so much undecidable disagreement among the dogmatists about whether nature even exists. Whoever is to decide this very question—whether nature exists—will, if he is an ordinary person, be unconvincing by their standards; and if he is a philosopher, he will be part of the disagreement, and himself under judgment rather than a judge.

1.99 Now, ⟨if⟩ it is possible that the apple has only the qualities we seem to perceive, or more than these, or again not even those that strike us, then what the apple is like will be non-evident to us. The same argument holds for the other objects of perception. And if the senses do not apprehend external things, neither can the intellect apprehend them, ⟨since its guides lead it astray⟩. So on this argument too, suspension of judgment about external objects will seem to follow.

THE FOURTH MODE: CIRCUMSTANCES

Health, sleep, age, motion, love, hunger, drink and emotion change how things appear.

1.100 So that we may also end up in suspension of judgment when we rest the argument on each single sense, or even set the senses aside altogether, we adopt the fourth mode of suspension as well. This is the one said to depend on circumstances, by "circumstances" meaning conditions. We say it is observed in being in a natural or an unnatural ⟨state⟩, in being awake or asleep, in age, in moving or being at rest, in hating or loving, in being in

need or sated, in being drunk or sober, in prior conditions, in being confident or afraid, [or] in being distressed or glad.

1.101 For instance, things strike people as dissimilar according as they are in a natural or an unnatural state. People who are delirious or possessed by a god think they hear spirits, while we do not. Likewise they often say they perceive a waft of storax or frankincense or something of the sort, and many other things, while we perceive nothing. The same water poured on inflamed areas seems to them scalding, but to us lukewarm. The same cloak appears orange to people with bloodshot eyes, but not to me. The same honey appears sweet to me but bitter to people with jaundice.

1.102 Someone may say that it is an intermixture of certain humors that produces unsuitable impressions from the underlying things in people who are in an unnatural state. We must reply that healthy people too have humors mixed in them; so these humors could be making external objects—which in their nature are such as they appear to those said to be in an unnatural state—appear otherwise to the healthy.

1.103 To grant those humors the power to alter the underlying things, but not these, is a fabrication. For just as the healthy are in a state natural to the healthy but unnatural to the sick, so too the sick are in a state unnatural to the healthy but natural to the sick. So the sick too should be believed, since they too are in a natural state—relative to something.

1.104 Different impressions arise according as we are asleep or awake. The way we have impressions in sleep is not the way we have them awake, and the way we have them awake is not the way we have them in sleep. So their existence or non-existence is not absolute but relative—relative to sleeping or to waking. It is reasonable, then, that in sleep we see things which do not exist in the waking state, though they are not absolutely non-existent: they exist in sleep, just as the things of waking life exist even though they do not exist in sleep.

1.105 According to age: the same air seems cold to the old but mild to those in their prime; the same color appears faint to

older people but vivid to those in their prime; and likewise the same sound seems faint to some but clearly audible to others.

1.106 People who differ in age are also moved dissimilarly in what they choose and avoid. Children, for instance, take balls and hoops very seriously; people in their prime choose other things, and the old still others. From this we conclude that the same underlying things produce different impressions according to differences of age too.

1.107 Things appear dissimilar according as we are moving or at rest. Things we see as motionless when we are standing still seem to be moving when we sail past them.

1.108 According to loving or hating: some people are utterly revolted by pork, while others eat it with the greatest pleasure. That is why Menander said: "And what does he look like, even in his face,
since he became like this? Like a wild beast!
Doing no wrong makes us beautiful as well." And many men whose beloveds are ugly think them extremely beautiful.

1.109 According to being hungry or sated: the same dish seems very pleasant to the hungry but unpleasant to the sated. According to being drunk or sober: things we think shameful when sober don't appear shameful to us when we're drunk.

1.110 According to prior conditions: the same wine appears sour to people who have just eaten dates or dried figs, but seems sweet to people who have had nuts or chickpeas. And the vestibule of the bathhouse warms those coming in from outside but chills those going out, if they linger in it.

1.111 According to being afraid or confident: the same thing seems fearful and terrible to the coward, but not at all to someone bolder. According to being distressed or glad: the same things are burdensome to the distressed but pleasant to the glad.

1.112 There is this much variation depending on conditions, and people are in different conditions at different times. So it is perhaps easy to say what each underlying object appears like to each person, but not what it is like, since the variation is also

undecidable. For whoever decides it is either in some of the conditions just mentioned or in no condition at all. Now, to say that he is in no condition whatsoever—that he is neither healthy nor ill, neither moving nor at rest, of no particular age, and free of the other conditions as well—is utterly absurd. But if he judges the impressions while he is in some condition, he will be a party to the disagreement,

1.113 and besides, he will not be an impartial judge of external objects, because he is muddied by the conditions he is in. So the waking person cannot compare the impressions of sleepers with those of people awake, nor the healthy person the impressions of the sick with those of the healthy. For we assent to what is present and affecting us at present rather than to what is not present.

1.114 The variation in such impressions is undecidable for another reason too. Whoever prefers one impression to another, and one circumstance to another, does so either without judging and without proof, or by judging and proving. But he can do it neither without these (for then he will not be credible) nor with them. For if he judges the impressions, he will certainly judge them by a criterion.

1.115 Now he will say that this criterion is either true or false. If false, he will not be credible. If he says it is true, he will say that the criterion is true either without proof or with proof. If without proof, he will not be credible. If with proof, the proof too will certainly have to be true, or else he will not be credible. So when he says that the proof he has adopted to confirm the criterion is true, will he have judged it or not?

1.116 If he has not judged it, he will not be credible. If he has, he will obviously say that he judged it by a criterion—and for that criterion we will ask for a proof, and for that proof a criterion. For a proof always needs a criterion in order to be confirmed, and a criterion always needs a proof in order to be shown true. A proof cannot be sound unless a true criterion is already there, and a criterion cannot be true unless the proof has already been confirmed.

1.117 And so the criterion and the proof fall into the mode of reciprocity, in which both are found to lack credibility: each waits on the other for its credibility, and so is just as uncredible as the other. If, then, no one can prefer one impression to another either without proof ⟨and criterion⟩ or with them, the different impressions that arise from different conditions will be undecidable. So, as far as this mode goes too, suspension of judgment about the nature of external objects is brought in.[16]

THE FIFTH MODE: POSITIONS, DISTANCES, PLACES

A colonnade, a tower and an oar in water look different depending on where they are seen from.

1.118 The fifth argument is the one depending on positions, distances and places. For depending on each of these, the same things appear different. The same colonnade, for example, seen from one end, appears to taper, but seen from the middle it appears symmetrical on all sides. The same ship appears small and stationary from far off, but large and moving close up. And the same tower appears round from far off but square close up.

1.119 These depend on distances. Depending on places: lamplight appears dim in the sunlight but bright in the dark; the same oar appears bent in the water but straight out of it; an egg is soft inside the bird but hard in the air; lyngurium is liquid inside the lynx but hard in the air; coral is soft in the sea but hard in the air; and a sound appears one way when it is made in a panpipe, another in a reed pipe, and another simply in the air.[17]

1.120 Depending on positions: the same painting appears smooth when tilted back, but tilted forward to a certain degree it seems to have recesses and projections. And the necks of

16 The mode of reciprocity is circular reasoning: A is established by B, and B in turn by A. It returns as the fifth of the Five Modes (1.169).

17 Lyngurium ("lynx-stone") was believed to be the lynx's urine, which hardened into a gem on contact with the air.

doves appear different in color depending on the different angles at which they are turned.

1.121 Since, then, everything that appears is observed in some place, from some distance and in some position, and each of these produces great variation in the impressions, as we have pointed out, we will be forced by this mode too to arrive at suspension of judgment. For anyone who wants to prefer some of these impressions to others will be attempting the impossible.

1.122 If he makes his pronouncement simply and without proof, he will not be credible. If he wants to use a proof, then if he says the proof is false, he will refute himself; and if he says the proof is true, he will be asked for a proof that it is true, and for another proof of that one (since it too must be true), and so on to infinity. But it is impossible to produce infinitely many proofs;

1.123 so he will not be able to prefer one impression to another with a proof either. And if no one can decide between the impressions just mentioned either without proof or with proof, suspension of judgment follows. We can perhaps say what each thing appears like in this position, or at this distance, or in this place; but for the reasons given we cannot declare what it is like in its nature.

THE SIXTH MODE: ADMIXTURES

Nothing reaches us pure, but always mixed with air, water, or the fluids of our own organs.

1.124 The sixth mode is the one depending on admixtures. By it we conclude that, since none of the underlying objects strikes us by itself but always together with something, we can perhaps say what the mixture of the external object and the thing it is observed together with is like, but we could not say what the external object is like in its pure state. That none of the external objects strikes us by itself, but always together with something, and that it is observed as different because of this, is evident, I think.

1.125 Our complexion, at any rate, is seen as one color in warm air and another in cold, and we could not say what our complexion is like by nature, only what it is like as observed together with each of these. The same sound appears one way in thin air and another in dense air. Perfumes are more pungent in the bathhouse and in the sun than in chilly air. And a body surrounded by water is light, but surrounded by air it is heavy.

1.126 To set aside admixture from outside as well: our eyes contain within themselves both membranes and fluids. So, since visible things are not observed without these, they will not be apprehended accurately; for what we perceive is the mixture. That is why people with jaundice see everything yellow, and those with bloodshot eyes see everything reddish. And since the same sound appears one way in open places and another in narrow, winding ones, one way in clear air and another in murky air, it is likely that we do not perceive sound in its pure state either. For the ears have winding, narrow passages, and they are muddied by vaporous effluvia, which are said to be carried up from the regions around the head.

1.127 Again, since there are substances present in the nostrils and in the organs of taste, we perceive tastes and smells together with them, and not in a pure state. So, because of admixtures, the senses do not perceive what external objects are accurately like.

1.128 Nor does the intellect—chiefly because the senses, which are its guides, go wrong; but perhaps it too adds some admixture of its own to what the senses report. For in each of the places where the dogmatists think the ruling part is located, we observe certain humors present—whether one wants to place it in the brain, or in the heart, or in any other part of the animal whatever. So by this mode too we see that, having nothing to say about the nature of external objects, we are forced to suspend judgment.[18]

18 The "ruling part" (*hēgemonikon*) is the Stoic term for the soul's command center, which some placed in the heart and others in the brain.

THE SEVENTH MODE: QUANTITIES AND PREPARATIONS

Goat's horn, sand, wine and drugs have different effects depending on amount and composition.

1.129 The seventh mode, we said, is the one depending on the quantities and preparations of underlying objects—by "preparations" we mean compositions in general. That by this mode too we are forced to suspend judgment about the nature of things is clear. Shavings of goat's horn, for example, appear white when observed simply, without being put together; but put together in the actual horn they are seen as black. And silver filings appear black on their own, but together with the whole mass they strike us as white.

1.130 Pieces of Taenarian marble look white when they are polished, but together with the whole block they appear yellow. Grains of sand scattered apart appear rough, but put together in a heap they affect our senses softly. And hellebore taken fine and powdery causes choking, but not when it is coarse-ground.

1.131 Wine drunk in moderation strengthens us, but taken in larger quantity it enfeebles the body. Food likewise shows different effects depending on quantity: often, at any rate, when too much is eaten it purges the body through indigestion and bilious attacks.

1.132 Here too, then, we will be able to say what a fine shaving of horn is like and what a horn composed of many fine shavings is like; what silver in small particles is like and what silver composed of many is like; what a tiny piece of Taenarian marble is like and what the stone composed of many small pieces is like; and, in the case of sand, hellebore, wine and food, what they are like relatively. But we will not be able to say what the nature of things is in itself, because of the variation among impressions that depends on compositions.

1.133 In general, it seems, even beneficial things become harmful when they are used in immoderate quantities, and things that seem harmful do no harm when taken in extremely small

amounts. The strongest evidence for this argument is what we observe in the effects of medicines. There, an exact mixture of the simple drugs makes the compound beneficial; but sometimes, when the slightest weight is overlooked, it is not only not beneficial but extremely harmful, and often poisonous.

1.134 So the argument from quantities and preparations throws the reality of external objects into confusion. That is why this mode too would reasonably bring us round to suspension of judgment, since we cannot make any pure pronouncement about the nature of external objects.

THE EIGHTH MODE: RELATIVITY

Everything appears relative to the judge and to what accompanies it, so we suspend judgment on its nature.

1.135 The eighth mode is the one from relativity, by which we conclude that, since everything is relative, we will suspend judgment about what things are absolutely and in their nature. But we must realize that here, as elsewhere, we use "is" loosely in place of "appears," saying in effect "everything appears relative." This is said in two ways: first, relative to what judges (for the external object being judged appears relative to what judges it); and second, relative to the things observed along with it, as right is relative to left.

1.136 That everything is relative we have already reasoned earlier: with respect to what judges, in that each thing appears relative to this animal, this human being and this sense, and relative to this kind of circumstance; and with respect to the things observed along with it, in that each thing appears relative to this admixture, this manner, this composition and quantity, and this position.

1.137 It is also possible to conclude in a separate way that everything is relative, as follows. Do things that are "by difference" differ from relatives or not? If they do not differ, then they too are relative. If they do differ, then, since everything that dif-

fers is relative (for it is spoken of relative to what it differs from), things that are by difference are relative.[19]

1.138 Again, of the things that exist, according to the dogmatists, some are highest genera, some lowest species, and some both genera and species; but all of these are relative; therefore everything is relative. Further, of the things that exist some are evident and some non-evident, as they themselves say; the things that appear are signifiers, and the non-evident things are signified by the things that appear—for according to them the things that appear are a glimpse of the non-evident. But signifier and signified are relative; therefore everything is relative.

1.139 In addition, of the things that exist some are similar and some dissimilar, some equal and some unequal; but these are relative; therefore everything is relative. And whoever says that not everything is relative confirms that everything is relative. For by the very arguments with which he opposes us, he shows that "everything is relative" is itself relative to us, and not universal.

1.140 At any rate, once we have established in this way that everything is relative, it is clear from then on that we will not be able to say what each of the underlying objects is like in its own nature and in its pure state, but only what it appears like in relation to something. ⟨From this⟩ it follows that we must suspend judgment about the nature of things.

THE NINTH MODE: CONSTANT OR RARE ENCOUNTERS

A comet astonishes and the sun does not, only because one is rare and the other constant.

1.141 About the mode depending on constant or rare encounters, which we said was ninth in order, we set out something like the following. The sun is surely far more astonishing than a comet. But since we see the sun constantly and a comet rarely, we are so astonished at the comet that we even take it for a divine

19 Things "by difference" is a technical term for things with an intrinsic, non-relational character, as opposed to relatives.

portent, while we are not astonished at the sun at all. Yet if we imagine the sun appearing rarely and setting rarely, lighting up everything all at once and suddenly plunging everything into shadow, we will see much to be astonished at in the matter.

1.142 An earthquake, too, does not alarm those who experience it for the first time and those who have grown used to it in the same way. How astonished a person is by the sea when seeing it for the first time! Again, the beauty of a human body, seen suddenly and for the first time, moves us more than if seeing it became a habit. And rare things seem precious, while things that are familiar to us and easy to come by do not seem so at all.

1.143 At any rate, if we imagine water being scarce, how much more precious it would appear to us than everything that seems precious! Or if we picture gold simply strewn about on the ground in large amounts, like stones, to whom do we think it will be precious, or worth locking up as it is now?

1.144 Since, then, the same things seem at one time astonishing or precious and at another time not, depending on whether they are encountered constantly or rarely, we conclude that we will perhaps be able to say what each of these appears like when encountered constantly or rarely, but we cannot state what each external object is like in itself. So by this mode too we suspend judgment about them.

THE TENTH MODE: CUSTOMS AND LAWS

Ways of life, customs, laws, myths and dogmatic beliefs conflict from people to people.

1.145 The tenth mode, which bears most of all on ethics, is the one depending on ways of life, customs, laws, beliefs in myth and dogmatic suppositions. A way of life is a choice of a life, or of some course of conduct, adopted by one person or by many—for example, by Diogenes or by the Spartans.[20]

1.146 A law is a written contract among citizens, and whoever transgresses it is punished. A custom or habit (there is no differ-

ence) is the common acceptance of some practice by many people, and whoever transgresses it is not necessarily punished. For example, it is a law not to commit adultery, and a custom among us not to have sex with a woman in public.

1.147 A mythical belief is the acceptance of things that never happened and were made up, such as, among others, the stories told about Cronus; for these lead many people to believe them. A dogmatic supposition is the acceptance of something that seems to be established by reasoning by analogy or by some proof—for example, that the elements of existing things are atoms, or homoeomeries, ⟨or⟩ minimal parts, or something else.[21]

1.148 We oppose each of these sometimes to itself and sometimes to each of the others. Custom to custom, for example, like this: some Ethiopians tattoo their babies, while we do not; the Persians think it seemly to wear brightly dyed, ankle-length clothing, while we think it unseemly; and the Indians have sex with their women in public, while most other peoples consider this shameful.

1.149 Law to law, like this: among the Romans, a man who renounces his father's estate does not pay his father's debts, but among the Rhodians he pays them in any case; and among the Tauri in Scythia it was the law that strangers be sacrificed to Artemis, while among us it is forbidden for a human being to be killed at a sacred place.[22]

1.150 Way of life to way of life, when we oppose the way of life of Diogenes to that of Aristippus, or that of the Spartans to that of the Italians. Mythical belief to mythical belief, when ⟨we say⟩ that in one place Zeus is said in myth to be "father of men and gods," and in another Ocean, as when people say "Ocean, origin

20 Diogenes of Sinope (fourth century BC), the founding figure of the Cynics, was famous for living in poverty and flouting convention.

21 Atoms were the elements of Democritus and Epicurus; "homoeomeries" (stuffs whose every part is like the whole) those of Anaxagoras; "minimal parts" those of Diodorus Cronus.

22 The Tauri lived in the Crimea; their sacrifice of strangers is the background of Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians*.

of the gods, and mother Tethys." We oppose dogmatic suppositions to one another[23]

1.151 when we say that some declare there is one element and others infinitely many; that some declare the soul mortal and others immortal; and that some say our affairs are governed by the providence of the gods, and others that they are governed without providence.

1.152 We oppose custom to the others: to law, for example, when we say that among the Persians it is the custom to engage in sex between men, while among the Romans it is forbidden by law to do so; that among us adultery is forbidden, while among the Massagetae it is handed down by custom as a matter of indifference, as Eudoxus of Cnidus reports in the first book of his *Circuit of the Earth*; and that among us it is forbidden to have sex with one's mother, while among the Persians it is very much the custom to marry in this way. The Egyptians, too, marry their sisters, which among us is forbidden by law.[24]

1.153 Custom is opposed to way of life when most people withdraw in private to have sex with their wives, while Crates did so with Hipparchia in public; and when Diogenes went about in a tunic that left one shoulder bare, while we dress as we are accustomed to.[25]

1.154 To mythical belief, when the myths say that Cronus ate his own children, while it is our custom to look after our children; and when among us it is the habit to revere the gods as good and untouched by evils, while the poets portray them being wounded and envying one another.

1.155 To dogmatic supposition, when it is our custom to ask the gods for good things, while Epicurus says that the divine pays no attention to us; and when Aristippus considers it a matter of

23 Aristippus of Cyrene, a follower of Socrates, was known for a life of comfort and pleasure—the opposite of Diogenes' austerity.

24 The Massagetae were nomads east of the Caspian Sea; Eudoxus of Cnidus was a fourth-century BC mathematician and geographer.

25 Crates of Thebes, a pupil of Diogenes, and his wife Hipparchia were both Cynic philosophers.

indifference to wear women's clothing, while we consider it shameful.

1.156 We oppose way of life to law when, though there is a law against striking a free and well-born man, pancratiasts strike one another because of the way of life they lead; and when, though killing a person is forbidden, gladiators kill one another for the same reason.[26]

1.157 We oppose mythical belief to way of life when we say that the myths tell of Heracles at Omphale's house carding wool, putting up with slavery, and doing things that no one with even moderately high principles would have done, while Heracles' way of life was noble.[27]

1.158 To dogmatic supposition, when athletes, striving for glory as ⟨something⟩ good, take up a toilsome way of life for its sake, while many philosophers hold the belief that glory is worthless.

1.159 We oppose law to mythical belief when the poets portray the gods committing adultery and engaging in sex between males, while the law among us forbids doing these things; and to dogmatic

1.160 supposition, when Chrysippus and his followers say that having sex with one's mother or sister is a matter of indifference, while the law forbids these things.

1.161 We oppose mythical belief to dogmatic supposition when the poets say that Zeus came down and had sex with mortal women, while the dogmatists consider this impossible; and when the poet says

1.162 that Zeus, out of grief for Sarpedon, "shed drops of blood upon the earth," while it ⟨is⟩ a belief of philosophers that the divine is free of feeling; and when ⟨.....⟩ do away with the myth of the hippocentaurs, offering us the hippocentaur as an example of something that does not exist.[28]

1.163 Many other examples could be taken for each of the oppositions mentioned, but for a brief account these will be

26 The pancration was a Greek combat sport combining boxing and wrestling.
27 Omphale was a queen of Lydia to whom Heracles was sold as a slave.

enough. At any rate, since this mode too shows so much variation in things, we will not be able to say what the underlying object is like in its nature, only what it appears like relative to this way of life, or this law, or this custom, and so on for each of the others. So by this mode too we must suspend judgment about the nature of external objects. In this way, then, through the Ten Modes, we end up in suspension of judgment.

CHAPTER 15: ON THE FIVE MODES

The later skeptics' five modes: disagreement, infinite regress, relativity, hypothesis and reciprocity.

1.164 The more recent skeptics hand down the following five modes of suspension: first, the one from disagreement; second, the one that throws us into infinite regress; third, the one from relativity; fourth, the one from hypothesis; and fifth, the one from reciprocity.[29]

1.165 The mode from disagreement is the one by which we find that undecidable dissension about the matter proposed has arisen both in ordinary life and among philosophers. Because of it we are unable either to choose or to reject anything, and we end up in suspension of judgment.

1.166 The mode from infinite regress is the one in which we say that what is offered to confirm the matter proposed needs another confirmation, and that one another, and so on to infinity; so that, since we have no point from which to begin establishing anything, suspension of judgment follows.

1.167 The mode from relativity, as we said before, is the one in which the underlying object appears such-and-such relative to what judges and to the things observed along with it, while we suspend judgment about what it is like in its nature.

1.168 The mode from hypothesis occurs when the dogmatists, being driven into an infinite regress, start from something

28 Sarpedon, a son of Zeus, was killed at Troy; the bloody rain is from Homer, *Iliad* 16.459.

which they do not establish, but which they claim to assume simply and without proof, as a concession.

1.169 The mode of reciprocity arises when what ought to confirm the matter under investigation itself needs to be made credible by the matter under investigation. Then, being unable to take either in order to establish the other, we suspend judgment about both. That every matter under investigation can be brought under these modes we will show briefly, as follows.

1.170 What is proposed is either perceptible or thinkable, and whichever it is, there is disagreement about it. Some say that only perceptible things are true, others only thinkable things, and others that some perceptible and some thinkable things are. Will they say, then, that the disagreement is decidable or undecidable? If undecidable, we say that we must suspend judgment; for one cannot make assertions about matters on which there is undecidable disagreement. If decidable, we ask how it is to be decided.

1.171 Take the perceptible, for example (we will base the argument on this first): is it to be decided by something perceptible or by something thinkable? If by something perceptible, then, since it is perceptible things we are investigating, that too will need something else to make it credible. And if that is also perceptible, it in turn will need something else to make it credible, and so on to infinity.

1.172 If the perceptible is to be decided by something thinkable, then, since there is disagreement about thinkable things too, this, being thinkable, will also need to be judged and made credible. So how will it be made credible? If by something thinkable, it will fall into infinite regress in the same way. If by something perceptible, then, since something thinkable was adopted to make the perceptible credible, and something perceptible to make the thinkable credible, the mode of reciprocity is brought in.

1.173 If, to escape this, the person arguing with us should claim to assume something by concession and without proof in order

to prove what follows, the mode from hypothesis will be brought in, and it leads nowhere. For if the person who makes the hypothesis is credible, we will be no less credible if we always hypothesize the opposite. And if what he hypothesizes is true, he makes it suspect by taking it as a hypothesis rather than establishing it; if it is false, the foundation of what is being established will be rotten.

1.174 Again, if hypothesizing achieves anything toward credibility, let him hypothesize the very thing under investigation, and not something else through which he will supposedly establish the matter under discussion. But if it is absurd to hypothesize what is under investigation, it will also be absurd to hypothesize what lies above it.

1.175 That all perceptible things are relative is also clear: they are relative to those who perceive them. It is evident, then, that whatever perceptible thing is proposed to us, it is easy to bring it under the Five Modes. We reason in the same way about the thinkable. If it is said that there is undecidable disagreement about it, it will be granted to us that we must suspend judgment about it.

1.176 If the disagreement is to be decided, then if through something thinkable, we will drive it into infinite regress; if by something perceptible, into reciprocity. For the perceptible, being in turn disputed and unable to be decided through itself because of the infinite regress, will need the thinkable, just as the thinkable needs the perceptible.

1.177 For these reasons, anyone who assumes something by hypothesis will again be acting absurdly. Thinkable things, moreover, are relative too: they are called thinkable relative to the mind, and if they were by nature such as they are said to be, there would be no disagreement about them. So the thinkable too has been brought under the Five Modes, and therefore we must in every case suspend judgment about the matter proposed. Such, then, are the Five Modes handed down by the more

29 Diogenes Laertius attributes the Five Modes to Agrippa, a skeptic probably of the first century AD.

recent skeptics. They set them out not to throw out the Ten Modes, but to expose the rashness of the dogmatists in a more varied way, using these together with those.

CHAPTER 16: WHAT THE TWO MODES ARE

Nothing is apprehended either through itself or through something else.

1.178 They also hand down two other modes of suspension. Since everything that is apprehended seems to be apprehended either through itself or through something else, they think that, ⟨by pointing out that nothing is apprehended either through itself or through something else⟩, they bring in perplexity about everything. That nothing is apprehended through itself, they say, is clear from the disagreement that has arisen among the natural philosophers about all perceptible and thinkable things, I think—a disagreement which is undecidable, since we cannot use either a perceptible or a thinkable criterion, because anything we adopt is disputed and therefore not credible.

1.179 And for this reason they do not concede that anything is apprehended through something else either. For if that through which something is apprehended must always itself be apprehended through something else, they throw us into the mode of reciprocity or the mode of infinite regress. And if someone wants to take something apprehended through itself as that through which something else is apprehended, he runs up against the fact that nothing is apprehended through itself, for the reasons already given. How what is in dispute could be apprehended ⟨either⟩ from itself or from something else, we are at a loss to say, since the criterion of truth or of apprehension does not appear, and signs, even apart from proof, are overturned, as we will see in what follows. That will be enough to have said about the modes of suspension for now.

CHAPTER 17: WHAT MODES THERE ARE FOR OVERTURNING CAUSAL EXPLANATIONS

Aenesidemus' eight modes against causal explanations, and how the Five Modes also apply to causes.

1.180 Just as we hand down the modes of suspension, so some set out modes by which, raising difficulties about particular causal explanations, we bring the dogmatists up short, since it is these above all that they pride themselves on. Aenesidemus, for instance, hands down eight modes by which he thinks he can test every dogmatic causal explanation and show it to be faulty.

1.181 The first of these, he says, is the one by which the kind of causal explanation that deals with unseen things has no agreed testimony from what appears. The second is the one by which, often, although there is ample scope for explaining the matter under investigation in many ways, some people explain it in one way only.

1.182 The third, the one by which they give causes for things that happen in an orderly way which display no order. The fourth, the one by which, having grasped how things that appear come about, they think they have apprehended how things that do not appear come about—when perhaps unseen things are brought about in the same way as things that appear, and perhaps not in the same way but in a way peculiar to themselves.

1.183 The fifth, the one by which practically all of them give causal explanations according to their own hypotheses about the elements, and not according to any common and agreed methods. The sixth, the one by which they often admit what fits their own hypotheses, but dismiss what conflicts with them, even though it has equal plausibility.

1.184 The seventh, the one by which they often give causes that conflict not only with what appears but even with their own hypotheses. The eighth, the one by which, often, when the things that seem to appear and the things being investigated are

equally puzzling, they base their teaching about things equally puzzling on things equally puzzling.

1.185 He says it is not impossible, either, that some people go wrong in their causal explanations by certain mixed modes, which depend on those just mentioned. But perhaps the Five Modes of suspension would also be enough against causal explanations. For a person will propose a cause that either agrees with all the philosophical schools, with skepticism and with what appears, or does not. And it is perhaps not possible for it to agree; for there is disagreement about everything, both what appears and what is non-evident.

1.186 If it does not agree, he will be asked for the cause of this cause too. If he adopts an apparent cause for an apparent one, or a non-evident cause for a non-evident one, he will fall into infinite regress; if he explains them alternately, into reciprocity. And if he comes to a stop somewhere, either he will say that the cause holds as far as what has been said goes, and so bring in relativity, abolishing its being so in its nature; or he will assume something by hypothesis and be stopped short. So it is perhaps possible to expose the rashness of the dogmatists in causal explanations by these modes as well.

CHAPTER 18: ON THE SKEPTICAL PHRASES

Sextus turns to the phrases skeptics use to express how they are affected.

1.187 When we use each of these modes and the modes of suspension, we utter certain phrases that reveal the skeptical disposition and the way we are affected—saying, for example, "no more," "nothing is to be determined," and others. So it would be fitting to discuss these next. Let us begin with the phrase "no more."

CHAPTER 19: ON THE PHRASE "NO MORE"

"No more" is elliptical for "no more this than that" and expresses equipoise, not a claim.

1.188 We utter this phrase sometimes in the form I gave, and sometimes as "in no way more." For it is not the case, as some suppose, that we use "no more" in specific investigations and "in no way more" in general ones: we utter "no more" and "in no way more" indifferently, and we will now discuss them as one. This phrase, then, is elliptical. Just as when we say "a double" we mean in effect "a double house," and when we say "a broad" we mean in effect "a broad road," so when we say "no more" we mean in effect "no more this than that,[30]

1.189 up or down." Some skeptics, however, take the "no" as a question—⟨in place of⟩ "what more this than that?", taking the "what" here as asking for a cause—so that what is said is "why this more than that?" It is common to use questions in place of statements, as in "Who among mortals does not know the one who shared Zeus' bed?", and statements in place of questions, as in "I am looking for where Dion lives" and "I am asking why one should admire a poet." And "what" is used in place of "on account of ⟨what⟩" in Menander: "What was I left behind for?" The phrase "no more this than that" also reveals the way we are affected,[31]

1.190 in which, because of the equipollence of the opposed things, we end up in equipoise. By "equipollence" we mean ⟨equality⟩ in what appears plausible to us; by "opposed" we mean, in general, conflicting; and by "equipoise" we mean assent to neither side.

1.191 Even if the phrase "in no way more" displays the character of assent or of denial, we do not use it in that way. We adopt

30 The Greek text is defective here; editors restore "a double hearth," that is, a house with two rooms.

31 The verse opens Euripides' *Heracles*; the one who "shared Zeus' bed" is Amphitryon, husband of Alcmena, whom Zeus also slept with.

it indifferently and loosely, either in place of a question or in place of saying "I do not know which of these I should assent to and which [to assent to] not." ⟨For⟩ our aim is to make clear what appears to us, and we are indifferent about the phrase by which we make it clear. We must realize this too: we utter the phrase "in no way more" without affirming that it is certainly true and firm; we say this about it too only as it appears to us.

CHAPTER 20: ON NON-ASSERTION

Non-assertion means neither affirming nor denying anything non-evident.

1.192 About non-assertion we say the following. "Assertion" has two senses, a general and a specific one. In the general sense it is an utterance that posits or denies something—for example, "It is day," "It is not day"; in the specific sense it is one that only posits, and in this sense negative statements are not called assertions. Non-assertion, then, is refraining from assertion in the general sense, under which, we say, both affirmation and negation fall. So non-assertion is a way we are affected in which we say we neither posit nor reject anything.

1.193 From this it is clear that we adopt non-assertion too, not on the assumption that things are by nature such as to produce non-assertion necessarily, but to indicate that we, now, when we utter it, are affected in this way about these matters under investigation. And we must remember this too: what we say we neither posit nor reject is anything said dogmatically about what is non-evident. For we yield to whatever affects us passively and drives us by necessity to assent.

CHAPTER 21: ON "PERHAPS," "POSSIBLY" AND "MAYBE"

These words indicate non-assertion, implying their opposites as well.

1.194 We adopt "perhaps" and "not perhaps," "possibly" and "not possibly," "maybe" and "not maybe" in place of "perhaps it is and perhaps it is not," "possibly it is and possibly it is not," and "maybe it is and maybe it is not." So for brevity's sake we adopt

"not possibly" in place of "possibly it is not," "not maybe" in place of "maybe it is not," and "not perhaps" in place of "perhaps it is not."

1.195 Here again we do not fight about words, nor do we investigate whether the phrases mean these things by nature; we adopt them indifferently, as I said. That these phrases indicate non-assertion is evident, I think. Anyone who says "perhaps it is," at any rate, in effect also posits what seems to conflict with it, "perhaps it is not," by not affirming that it is. And the same holds for the rest.

CHAPTER 22: ON "I SUSPEND JUDGMENT"

The phrase means the skeptic cannot say which of the opposed views to believe.

1.196 We adopt "I suspend judgment" in place of "I cannot say which of the things proposed I should believe and which I should disbelieve," indicating that the things appear to us equal as regards credibility and lack of credibility. Whether they are equal we do not affirm; we say what appears to us about them when it strikes us. And suspension of judgment gets its name from the intellect's being held back so that it neither posits nor rejects anything, because of the equipollence of the matters under investigation.

CHAPTER 23: ON "I DETERMINE NOTHING"

The phrase reports how the skeptic is affected, not a dogmatic claim, and applies even to itself.

1.197 About "I determine nothing" we say this. We take determining to be not simply saying something, but putting forward something non-evident with assent. In this sense the skeptic will perhaps be found to determine nothing—not even "I determine nothing" itself. For this is not a dogmatic supposition, that is, assent to something non-evident, but a phrase that indicates the way we are affected. So when the skeptic says "I determine nothing," what he is saying is: "I am now affected in

such a way as neither to posit nor to reject dogmatically any of the things that fall under this investigation." And in saying this he is reporting what appears to him about the matters proposed —not making a confident, dogmatic declaration, but describing how he is affected.

CHAPTER 24: ON "EVERYTHING IS UNDETERMINED"

"Everything" means the non-evident matters examined, and "is" means "appears to me."

1.198 Indeterminacy, too, is a way the intellect is affected, in which we neither reject nor posit any of the things investigated dogmatically, that is, of the non-evident things. So when the skeptic says "everything is undetermined," he takes "is" in place of "appears to him"; by "everything" he means not all existing things, but those of the non-evident things investigated by the dogmatists that he has gone through; and by "undetermined" he means not surpassing their opposites, or the things that conflict with them in general, in credibility or lack of credibility.

1.199 And just as someone who says "I walk" is in effect saying "I myself walk," so someone who says "everything is undetermined" also implies "in our view," or "as far as I am concerned," or "as it appears to me." So what he says amounts to this: "All the things investigated ⟨by the⟩ dogmatists that I have examined appear to me such that none of them seems to me to surpass what conflicts with it in credibility or lack of credibility."

CHAPTER 25: ON "EVERYTHING IS INAPPREHENSIBLE"

The phrase reports that the matters examined so far appear inapprehensible to the speaker.

1.200 We take the same line when we say "everything is inapprehensible." We interpret "everything" in the same way, and we supply "to me," so that what is said amounts to this: "All the non-evident things investigated dogmatically that I have examined appear to me inapprehensible." This is not the statement of someone affirming that the things investigated by the dogmat-

ists are of such a nature as to be inapprehensible, but of someone reporting his own feeling—a feeling in which, he says, "I suppose that up to now I have apprehended none of them, because of the equipollence of the opposites." Hence all the arguments brought forward to show that the phrase refutes itself seem to me out of tune with what we are reporting.

CHAPTER 26: ON "I AM NON-APPREHENSIVE" AND "I DO NOT APPREHEND"

These phrases too express a feeling of one's own, not a belief.

1.201 The phrases "I am non-apprehensive" and "I do not apprehend" also indicate a feeling of one's own, in which the skeptic refrains, for the present, from positing or rejecting any of the non-evident matters under investigation—as is clear from what we have said about the other phrases.

CHAPTER 27: ON "TO EVERY ARGUMENT AN EQUAL ARGUMENT IS OPPOSED"

Sextus explains each word of the phrase, which some skeptics take as an instruction.

1.202 When we say "to every argument an equal argument is opposed," by "every" we mean every one we have examined. By "argument" we mean not argument in general, but argument that establishes something dogmatically, that is, about something non-evident—and not necessarily one made up of premises and a conclusion, but one that establishes in any way whatever. By "equal" we mean equal in credibility or lack of credibility; we take "is opposed" in the general sense of "conflicts"; and we supply "as it appears to me."

1.203 So when I say "to every argument an equal argument is opposed," I am in effect saying: "To every argument investigated by me which establishes something dogmatically, there appears to me to be opposed another argument, establishing something dogmatically, equal to it in credibility and lack of credibility." So

uttering the phrase is not dogmatic; it is the report of a human feeling, which is apparent to the person who feels it.

1.204 Some also utter the phrase in this form: "to every argument an equal argument is to be opposed," meaning it as an instruction: "To every argument that establishes something dogmatically, let us oppose an argument that investigates dogmatically, equal in credibility and lack of credibility, and conflicting with it." For them the formula is addressed to the skeptic, and they use the infinitive in place of the imperative—"to be opposed" in place of "let us oppose."

1.205 They give this instruction to the skeptic in case he is somehow tricked by the dogmatist into giving up the investigation of it, and through rashness misses the tranquility that appears to them—the tranquility they think follows on suspension of judgment about everything, as we pointed out earlier.

CHAPTER 28: SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS ON THE SKEPTICAL PHRASES

The phrases cancel themselves along with what they are about, as purgatives flush themselves out.

1.206 It will be enough to have gone through this many of the phrases, as befits an outline, especially since what we have now said makes it possible to speak about those we have left out as well. About all the skeptical phrases we must grasp in advance that we do not affirm that they are definitely true—after all, we say that they can be done away with by themselves, being cancelled along with the things they are said about, just as purgative drugs not only drive the humors out of the body but flush themselves out along with the humors.

1.207 We also say that we use them not as indicating strictly the things they are applied to, but indifferently, and loosely if people like. For it does not suit the skeptic to fight about words; and besides, it works in our favor that not even these phrases are said to signify purely, but relatively—relative, that is, to the skeptics.

1.208 In addition, we must remember that we do not say them about all things universally, but about what is non-evident and investigated dogmatically; and that we say what appears to us, and make no affirmative declarations about the nature of external objects. For on these grounds, I think, every sophism brought against a skeptical phrase can be overturned.

1.209 We have now made clear the character of skepticism by going through its concept, its parts, its criterion and its goal, and also the modes of suspension, and by discussing the skeptical phrases. So we think it fitting to go briefly through the distinction between skepticism and the philosophies close to it, so that we may understand the suspensive way more clearly. Let us begin with the philosophy of Heraclitus.

CHAPTER 29: THAT THE SKEPTICAL WAY DIFFERS FROM THE PHILOSOPHY OF HERACLITUS

Skepticism is no road to Heraclitus, who makes dogmatic claims about opposites.

1.210 That this philosophy differs from our way is evident: Heraclitus makes dogmatic declarations about many non-evident things, and we do not, as has been said. But Aenesidemus and his followers said that the skeptical way is a road to the Heraclitean philosophy. Their reason was that opposites' appearing to hold of the same thing comes before their actually holding of it; and the skeptics say that opposites appear to hold of the same thing, while the Heracliteans move on from this to their actually holding. Against them we say that opposites' appearing to hold of the same thing is not a belief of the skeptics but a fact that strikes not only the skeptics but other philosophers and all human beings too.[32]

1.211 No one, at any rate, would dare to say that honey does not taste sweet to the healthy, or that it does not taste bitter to people with jaundice. So the Heracliteans start from a precon-

32 Heraclitus of Ephesus (c. 500 BC) taught that opposites coexist in the same thing: "the way up and the way down are one and the same."

ception common to all human beings, just as we do—and perhaps the other philosophies do too. If, then, they took the claim that opposites hold of the same thing from one of the things skeptics say, such as "everything is inapprehensible" or "I determine nothing" or something similar, perhaps they would draw the conclusion they claim. But since their starting points strike not only us but other philosophers and ordinary life as well, why should anyone say that our way, rather than each of the other philosophies, or ordinary life itself, is a road to the Heraclitean philosophy, since we all make use of common material?

1.212 Perhaps the skeptical way not only does not help toward knowing the Heraclitean philosophy but actually hinders it. For the skeptic disparages all of Heraclitus' beliefs as rashly stated: he opposes the conflagration, he opposes the claim that opposites hold of the same thing, and in the case of every belief of Heraclitus he mocks the dogmatic rashness and says "I do not apprehend" and "I determine nothing," as I said earlier—which conflicts with the Heracliteans. But it is absurd to say that a conflicting way is a road to the very school it conflicts with. It is therefore absurd to say that the skeptical way is a road to the Heraclitean philosophy.[33]

CHAPTER 30: HOW THE SKEPTICAL WAY DIFFERS FROM THE PHILOSOPHY OF DEMOCRITUS

Democritus uses "no more" differently and asserts that atoms and void are real.

1.213 The philosophy of Democritus, too, is said to have something in common with skepticism, since it seems to use the same material as we do. For from the fact that honey appears sweet to some and bitter to others, Democritus, they say, reasons that it is neither sweet nor bitter, and for this reason utters the phrase "no more," which is a skeptical phrase. But the skeptics and the

33 The "conflagration" is the periodic destruction of the cosmos by fire, which the Stoics attributed to Heraclitus.

Democriteans use the phrase "no more" differently. The Democriteans apply it to neither alternative being the case; we apply it to our not knowing whether both, or neither, of the things that appear is the case.

1.214 So we differ in this respect too; but the distinction becomes most evident when Democritus says "in reality, atoms and void." By "in reality" he means "in truth"; and since he says that the atoms and the void exist in truth, it is superfluous, I think, to say that he differs from us, even if he starts from the variation in what appears.

CHAPTER 31: HOW SKEPTICISM DIFFERS FROM THE CYRENAIC WAY

The Cyrenaics make pleasure the goal and declare external things inapprehensible.

1.215 Some say that the Cyrenaic way is the same as skepticism, since it too says that only feelings are apprehended. But it differs from skepticism. It says that the goal is pleasure and the smooth motion of the flesh, whereas we say it is tranquility, to which their goal is opposed: for whether pleasure is present or not, anyone who affirms that pleasure is the goal suffers disturbances, as I argued in the section on the goal. Then, too, we suspend judgment about external objects, as far as the argument goes, whereas the Cyrenaics declare that they have an inapprehensible nature.

CHAPTER 32: HOW SKEPTICISM DIFFERS FROM THE WAY OF PROTAGORAS

Protagoras makes the human being the measure, but holds beliefs about flowing matter.

1.216 Protagoras, too, holds that a human being is the measure of all things—of things that are, that they are, and of things that are not, that they are not. By "measure" he means the criterion, and by "things" he means objects; so that in effect he is saying that a human being is the criterion of all objects—of things that are,

that they are, and of things that are not, that they are not. And for this reason he posits only what appears to each person, and in this way introduces relativity.[34]

1.217 That is why he seems to have something in common with the Pyrrhonians. But he differs from them, and we will see the difference once we have set out, at moderate length, what Protagoras thought. He says that matter is in flux, and that as it flows, additions continually arise to replace what is given off; and that the senses are rearranged and altered depending on ⟨their⟩ ages and on the other constitutions of bodies.

1.218 He also says that the principles of everything that appears are present in matter, so that matter, as far as it itself goes, can be everything that appears to everyone. Human beings, he says, perceive different things at different times depending on their different conditions: someone in a natural state apprehends those things in matter which can appear to people in a natural state, and someone in an unnatural state those which can appear to people in an unnatural state.

1.219 And again, the same account holds depending on ages, on being asleep or awake, and on every kind of condition. So according to him the human being becomes the criterion of what exists: for everything that appears to human beings also is, and what appears to no human being is not. We see, then, that he holds beliefs both about matter being in flux and about the principles of everything that appears being present in it—things that are non-evident, and on which we suspend judgment.

CHAPTER 33: HOW SKEPTICISM DIFFERS FROM THE ACADEMIC PHILOSOPHY

Plato, the New Academy, Arcesilaus and the later Academics are compared with skepticism.

1.220 Some people, however, say that the Academic philosophy is the same as skepticism, so it would be fitting to go through this

34 Protagoras of Abdera was a fifth-century BC sophist; his "a human being is the measure" opened his book *Truth*.

question too. According to ⟨most⟩ accounts there have been three Academies. The first and most ancient is that of Plato and his circle. The second, or Middle, Academy is that of Arcesilaus, the pupil of Polemo. The third, or New, Academy is that of Carneades and Clitomachus. Some add a fourth as well, that of Philo and Charmidas, and some even count a fifth, that of Antiochus.[35]

1.221 Let us begin with the ancient one, then, and see how the philosophies just mentioned differ ⟨from us⟩. Some have said that Plato was dogmatic, others that he was aporetic, and others that he was aporetic in some respects and dogmatic in others. In his exercise dialogues [they say], where Socrates is brought on either playing with certain people or contending against sophists, his character is exercising and aporetic. But it is dogmatic where he speaks seriously and makes pronouncements, whether through Socrates or Timaeus or someone of that kind.

1.222 Now, about those who say he is dogmatic, or dogmatic in some respects and aporetic in others, it would be superfluous to speak at present, for they themselves admit that he differs from us. Whether he is purely skeptical we discuss more fully in our commentaries. For now, as in an outline, we say, following ⟨the circle of⟩ Menodotus and Aenesidemus (they were the chief champions of this position), that when Plato makes pronouncements about forms, or about there being providence, or about the life of excellence being more choiceworthy than the life of vice, there are two possibilities. If he assents to these things as real, he holds beliefs. If he accepts them as more persuasive, then, since he prefers one thing to another on grounds of credibility or lack of credibility, he has abandoned the skeptical character. That this too is foreign to us is evident from what we said earlier.[36]

35 Arcesilaus (third century BC) first turned the Academy skeptical; Philo of Larissa and Antiochus of Ascalon (first century BC), its last heads, moved it back toward doctrine.

36 Menodotus of Nicomedia (second century AD) was a doctor of the Empiric school and a leading skeptic.

1.223 Even if he puts forward some things in a skeptical way when, as they say, he is exercising, that will not make him a skeptic. For someone who holds a belief about even one thing, or who prefers one impression to another at all on grounds of credibility or lack of credibility, ⟨or makes assertions⟩ about anything non-evident, takes on the dogmatic character. Timon too shows this by what he says about Xenophanes.

1.224 Timon praised him [Xenophanes] in many respects, so far as even to dedicate his *Lampoons* to him, and he made him lament and say: "If only I too had met with a shrewd mind,
one that looks both ways! But I was cheated by a treacherous road,
old as I already was, and heedless of all
skepticism. For wherever I turned my mind,
everything resolved into one and the same; and all that is, forever
drawn back every way, settled into a single, uniform nature." That, at any rate, is why he calls him "half free of conceit," and not perfectly free of conceit, in the lines: "Xenophanes, half free of conceit, mocker of Homer's deceit,
who fashioned a god far from human beings, equal on every side,
⟨unshaken⟩, unharmed, more mind-like than thought." He called him "half free of conceit" because he was free of conceit in some respect, and "mocker of Homer's deceit" because he ridiculed the deceit in Homer.[37]

1.225 Xenophanes held the belief, against the preconceptions of other people, that the universe is one, and that god is grown together with all things and is spherical, impassive, unchangeable and rational. So it is easy to show how Xenophanes differs from us. In any case, it is evident from what has been said that

37 Timon of Phlius (third century BC), Pyrrho's disciple, wrote satirical poems called *Silloi* ("Lampoons"). Xenophanes of Colophon (sixth century BC) was a poet-philosopher who mocked Homer's gods.

even if Plato raises puzzles about some things, he would not be a skeptic. For in some places he appears either to make pronouncements about the reality of non-evident things or to prefer some non-evident things to others on grounds of credibility.

1.226 The members of the New Academy say that everything is inapprehensible. Even so, they differ from the skeptics, perhaps precisely in saying that everything is inapprehensible. They affirm this firmly, whereas the skeptic expects that it is possible for some things to be apprehended as well. But they evidently differ from us in their judgment of good and bad things. When the Academics say that something is good or bad, they do not say it as we do. They say it with the conviction that what they call good is more persuasively good than the opposite, and likewise with the bad. When we say that something is good or bad, we do not think that what we say is persuasive. We simply follow life without holding opinions, so as not to be inactive.

1.227 We say that impressions are equal in credibility or lack of credibility, as far as the argument goes. They say that some impressions are persuasive and others unpersuasive. They also distinguish among persuasive impressions. Some, they think, are merely persuasive. Others are persuasive and examined. Still others are persuasive, tested and undiverted. For instance, when a coiled rope is lying in a fairly dark room, someone who rushes in all at once gets a simply persuasive impression from it, as if it came from a snake.

1.228 But someone who has looked around carefully and examined the details may notice that it does not move, that its color is such-and-such, and each of the other points. To him it appears to be a rope, in virtue of the impression that is persuasive and tested. The undiverted impression is like this. Heracles is said to have brought Alcestis back up from Hades after she had died, and to have shown her to Admetus. Admetus received an impression of Alcestis that was persuasive and tested. But

since he knew that she had died, his mind was diverted from assent and inclined toward disbelief. ⟨....⟩[38]

1.229 So the members of the New Academy prefer the persuasive and tested impression to the simply persuasive one. To both of these they prefer the impression that is persuasive, tested and undiverted. And even if both the Academics and the skeptics say that they are persuaded by certain things, the difference between the philosophies is evident on this point too.

1.230 "Being persuaded" is said in different senses. In one sense it means not resisting but simply going along, without strong inclination or attachment, as a child is said to be persuaded by (that is, to obey) his attendant. In another sense it means assenting to something by choice and with a kind of sympathy, out of a strong desire, as a profligate is persuaded by someone who urges him to live extravagantly. Carneades, Clitomachus and their followers say, with strong inclination, that they are persuaded and that something is persuasive. We say so in the sense of simply yielding, without attachment. So we would differ from them on this point too.

1.231 We also differ from the New Academy in matters bearing on the goal of life. The men who say they order their lives by its rule make use of the persuasive in living. We live without holding opinions, following laws, customs and natural feelings. And we would have said more to draw the distinction if we were not aiming at brevity.

1.232 Arcesilaus, however, whom we called the head and founder of the Middle Academy, seems to me to share a great deal in the Pyrrhonian arguments, so that his way and ours are practically one. He is not found making pronouncements about the reality or unreality of anything, and he does not prefer one thing to another on grounds of credibility or lack of credibility. He suspends judgment about everything. He says that the goal is suspension of judgment, which, as we said, is accompanied by tranquility.

38 In the myth, dramatized in Euripides' *Alcestis*, Alcestis died in place of her husband Admetus, and Heracles won her back from Death.

1.233 He also says that particular suspensions of judgment are good and particular assents are bad. One might object that we say these things according to what appears to us and not affirmatively, whereas he says them as statements about the nature of things. On that view he would actually be saying that suspension of judgment is good and assent is bad.

1.234 If we are also to trust what is said about him, they say that on the surface he appeared to be a Pyrrhonian, but in truth he was a dogmatist. He used aporetic argument to test his companions, to see whether they had the natural gifts to take up Plato's beliefs. For this reason he was thought to be aporetic, though he would pass on Plato's doctrines to those companions who were gifted. That is why Ariston said of him: "Plato in front, Pyrrho behind, Diodorus in the middle." He made use of Diodorus' dialectic, but he was an out-and-out Platonist.[39]

1.235 Philo and his followers say that things are inapprehensible as far as the Stoic criterion goes, that is, the apprehensive impression. As far as the nature of the things themselves goes, however, they say things are apprehensible. Antiochus, for his part, transferred the Stoa into the Academy, so that it was even said of him that he did Stoic philosophy in the Academy. He tried to show that the Stoics' beliefs are already to be found in Plato. So the difference between the skeptical way and the so-called Fourth and Fifth Academies is evident.

CHAPTER 34: WHETHER EMPIRIC MEDICINE IS THE SAME AS SKEPTICISM

Empiric medicine asserts too much; the Methodist school of medicine is closer to skepticism.

1.236 Some people also say that the skeptical philosophy is the same as the Empiric school of medicine. It should be understood that if that Empiricism firmly affirms that non-evident

39 Ariston of Chios was a Stoic. His line parodies Homer's Chimaera ("lion in front, serpent behind, goat in the middle"), and Diodorus Cronus was a dialectician famous for logical puzzles.

things are inapprehensible, then it is not the same as skepticism, and it would not suit the skeptic to take up that school. It seems to me that he could rather follow the so-called Method.[40]

1.237 Of all the medical schools, this one alone seems not to be rash about non-evident things, presuming to say whether they are apprehensible or inapprehensible. It follows appearances and takes from them what seems beneficial, in keeping with the skeptics' practice. We said earlier that the common life, which the skeptic also makes use of, has four parts. One lies in the guidance of nature, one in the compulsion of feelings, one in the handing down of laws and customs, and one in the teaching of arts.

1.238 By the compulsion of feelings, the skeptic is led to drink by thirst, to food by hunger, and likewise to other things. In the same way, the Methodist doctor is led by the affections to what corresponds to them. Constriction leads him to relaxation, just as someone takes refuge in warmth from the contraction caused by intense cold. Flux leads him to stop it, just as people in a bathhouse who are dripping with sweat and growing faint come to stop it, and for that reason take refuge in the cool air. It is also evident that things alien to nature compel us to set about removing them, since even a dog, when a thorn has stuck in it, sets about getting it out.

1.239 I do not want to depart from the outline character of this treatise by speaking about each case. So I will say only that I think everything the Methodists say in this way can be brought under the compulsion of the affections, both those in accordance with nature ⟨and those contrary to nature⟩. Besides, both ways have in common an undogmatic and indifferent use of words.

1.240 The skeptic uses the phrases "I determine nothing" and "I apprehend nothing" ⟨without holding opinions⟩, as we have said. In the same way the Methodist speaks of "commonality"

40 Ancient medicine had rival schools. The Rationalists inferred hidden causes, the Empirics relied on experience, and the Methodists treated observable "commonalities" of disease.

and "pervading" and the like, without overelaboration. He also takes up the term "indication" without holding opinions, meaning by it the guidance from the apparent affections, both natural and unnatural, toward what seem to be the corresponding remedies. I mentioned this in the case of thirst, hunger and the rest.

1.241 Judging from these and similar points, then, we should say that the Methodists' way in medicine has a certain affinity with skepticism, more than the other medical schools have. Even so, this holds only in comparison with them, not without qualification. Having said this much about the approaches that seem to lie close to the skeptics' way, we here complete both the general account of skepticism and the first book of the *Outlines*.

Book II

Against the logicians
The criterion of truth, signs, proof, syllogism, induction and definition.

CHAPTER 1: Εἰ ΔΥΝΑΤΑΙ ΖΗΤΕῖΝ Ὁ ΣΚΕΠΤΙΚῸΣ ΠΕΡῚ ΤΩ̃Ν ΛΕΓΟΜΕΝΩΝ ΠΑΡᾸ ΤΟΪ̃Σ ΔΟΓΜΑΤΙΚΟΪ̃Σ

2.1 Since we have taken up the investigation against the dogmatists, let us go through each of the parts of what is called philosophy, concisely and in outline. First, though, we must reply to those who keep repeating that the skeptic cannot investigate, or even think at all, about the things they hold beliefs about.

2.2 They say that the skeptic either apprehends what the dogmatists say or does not apprehend it. If he apprehends it, how could he be puzzled about things he says he has apprehended? If he does not apprehend it, then he does not even know how to speak about things he has not apprehended.

2.3 Someone who does not know, say, what the "by subtraction" theorem or the "through two conditionals" theorem is cannot say anything about them either. In the same way, someone who does not know each of the things the dogmatists say cannot investigate against them about things he does not know. So the skeptic is in no way able to investigate what the dogmatists say.[1]

2.4 Let those who say this answer us: in what sense are they using the word "apprehending" here? Do they mean simply thinking, without also firmly affirming the reality of the things we are discussing? Or do they mean thinking together with pos-

1 Two theorems of Stoic logic; the Greek text of their names is uncertain.

iting the reality of the things we are discussing? Suppose they say that in their argument apprehending is assenting to an apprehensive impression. The apprehensive impression is one that comes from something real, imprinted and stamped in accordance with that real thing itself, of such a kind as could not come from something unreal. In that case perhaps not even they will want it to be impossible to investigate things they have not apprehended in this way.

2.5 For example, suppose the Stoic investigates against the Epicurean, who says that substance is divided, or that god does not exercise providence over things in the world, or that pleasure is good. Has the Stoic apprehended these claims or not? If he has apprehended them, then in saying they are real he does away with the Stoa altogether. If he has not, he cannot say anything against them.

2.6 The same must be said to the adherents of the other schools whenever they want to investigate the views of those who think differently. So they cannot investigate anything with one another. Or rather, if we are not to talk nonsense, practically their whole dogmatism will be thrown into confusion, and the skeptical philosophy will be firmly established, once it is granted that one cannot investigate what has not been apprehended in this way.

2.7 Take someone who makes assertions and holds beliefs about some non-evident matter. He will say that he makes assertions about it either having apprehended it or without having apprehended it. If he has not apprehended it, he will not be credible. If he has apprehended it, he will say that he apprehended it in one of two ways. Either it presented itself to him directly, of itself and clearly, or he reached it through some inquiry and investigation.

2.8 Suppose he says that the non-evident thing presented itself to him directly, of itself and clearly, through his encountering it, and was apprehended. Then it would not be non-evident at all. It would be apparent to everyone equally, agreed upon and undisputed. But about each non-evident thing an endless disagree-

ment has arisen among them. So the dogmatist who firmly affirms and makes assertions about the reality of a non-evident thing cannot have apprehended it by its presenting itself to him of itself and clearly.

2.9 If he reached it through some inquiry, how was he able to investigate it before he had precisely apprehended it, on the hypothesis before us? Investigation requires that what is to be investigated first be precisely apprehended, and only then investigated. Apprehension of the thing under investigation, in turn, requires that it has in every case been investigated beforehand. So by the mode of reciprocity it becomes impossible for them either to investigate non-evident things or to hold beliefs about them. If some of them want to start from apprehension, we bring them round to the point that they must have investigated the thing before apprehending it. If they want to start from investigation, we bring them round to the point that they must have apprehended what is to be investigated before investigating it. So for these reasons they can neither apprehend any non-evident thing nor make firm assertions about such things. From this it will follow directly, I think, that the dogmatists' clever inventions are done away with and the suspensive philosophy is brought in.

2.10 They may say instead that the kind of apprehension they think must precede investigation is not this kind but simply thinking. In that case it is not impossible for those who suspend judgment about the reality of non-evident things to investigate. The skeptic is not, I think, barred from thinking. Thinking arises from things that strike him passively ⟨and⟩ from arguments that appear to him, and it does not in every case bring with it the reality of what is thought. For we think not only of real things, as they say, but also of unreal ones. So the person who suspends judgment remains in the skeptical disposition both while investigating and while thinking. We have already shown that he assents to what strikes him by way of a passive impression, insofar as it appears to him.

2.11 Consider whether it is not rather the dogmatists who are barred from investigation even now. Going on investigating things is not inconsistent for those who admit that they do not know how things are in their nature. It is inconsistent for those who think they know them precisely. For the latter, investigation has already reached its end, as they suppose. For the former, the reason why any investigation is undertaken is still present: the thought that they have not found the answer.

2.12 So for the present we must investigate each part of what is called philosophy, concisely. There has been much disagreement among the dogmatists about the parts of philosophy: some say there is one, some two, some three. It would not be appropriate to go into this further. We will set out, even-handedly, the view of those who seem to have dealt with the matter more thoroughly, and conduct our argument in line with it.

CHAPTER 2: WHERE THE INVESTIGATION AGAINST THE DOGMATISTS SHOULD BEGIN

Following the Stoic division of philosophy, Sextus begins with logic and the criterion.

2.13 The Stoics, then, and some others say that there are three parts of philosophy: logic, physics and ethics. They begin their teaching with logic, although there has been much dispute about where one ought to begin. We will follow them, without holding opinions. What is said in the three parts requires judgment and a criterion, and the account of the criterion seems to be included in the logical part. So let us begin with the account of the criterion and with the logical part,

CHAPTER 3: ON THE CRITERION

The senses of "criterion," and the criterion "by which," "through which" and "according to which."

2.14 after first saying this. "Criterion" is used both of that by which, they say, reality and unreality are judged, and of that which we attend to in living. Our task now is to discuss what is

said to be the criterion of truth. We went through the criterion in the other sense in our account of skepticism.

2.15 The criterion under discussion, then, is spoken of in three ways: in a general, a special and a most special sense. In the general sense it is any standard of apprehension, and in this sense even natural things, like sight, are called criteria. In the special sense it is any technical standard of apprehension, like a ruler or a pair of compasses. In the most special sense it is any standard of apprehension of a non-evident matter. In this sense the things of everyday life are not called criteria. Only logical criteria are, the ones the dogmatists bring forward for judging truth.

2.16 So we propose to go through the logical criterion primarily. But the logical criterion too might be spoken of in three ways: the criterion "by which," "through which" and "according to which." For instance, the "by which" is a human being. The "through which" is either perception or the intellect. The "according to which" is the impact of the impression, according to which the human being sets about judging through one of the things just mentioned.

2.17 It was perhaps appropriate to say this first, so that we have a conception of what our argument is about. Now let us proceed to our rebuttal of those who rashly say they have apprehended the criterion of truth, beginning with the disagreement.

CHAPTER 4: WHETHER THERE IS A CRITERION OF TRUTH

The disagreement about the criterion cannot be settled without falling into regress or reciprocity.

2.18 Of those who have discussed the criterion, some have asserted that there is one, like the Stoics and some others. Others have asserted that there is not. Among them are Xeniades of Corinth and Xenophanes of Colophon, who says: "but opinion is fashioned over all things." We have suspended judgment as to whether there is one or not.

2.19 They will say, then, that this disagreement is either decidable or undecidable. If it is undecidable, they will grant at once that one must suspend judgment. If it is decidable, let them say what it will be judged by. We have no agreed criterion. We do not even know whether there is one at all; we are still investigating.

2.20 Again, for the disagreement about the criterion to be decided, we must have an agreed criterion by which we can judge it. And for us to have an agreed criterion, the disagreement about the criterion must first be decided. With the argument falling into the mode of reciprocity in this way, finding the criterion becomes impossible. We do not allow them to adopt a criterion by hypothesis, and if they want to judge the criterion by a criterion, we throw them into an infinite regress. Further, since a proof needs a proven criterion and a criterion needs a judged proof, they are thrown into the mode of reciprocity.

2.21 We think these points too are enough to show the rashness of the dogmatists in their account of the criterion. Still, so that we can refute them in various ways, it is not out of place to dwell on the topic. We do not propose to contend with each of the views about the criterion in detail. The disagreement has become unspeakably large, and that way we too would necessarily fall into an unmethodical argument. But the criterion we are investigating seems to be threefold: the "by which," the "through which" and the "according to which." So we will go through each of these in turn and establish its inapprehensibility, and in this way our argument will be both methodical and complete. Let us begin with the "by which," for the others seem somehow to become puzzling along with it.

CHAPTER 5: ON THE "BY WHICH"

The human being cannot be conceived or apprehended, and no one person, expert or majority can be trusted.

2.22 The human being, it seems to me, is not only inapprehensible but even inconceivable, as far as what the dogmatists say goes. At any rate, we hear Plato's Socrates explicitly admitting that he

does not know whether he is a human being or something else. And when they want to establish the concept of a human being, first they disagree, and then they say unintelligible things.[2]

2.23 Democritus says that a human being is what we all know. As far as this goes, we will not know the human being. We also know a dog, and on that ground the dog too will be a human being. And there are some human beings we do not know, so they will not be human beings. Or rather, as far as this concept goes, no one will be a human being. He says that a human being must be known by everyone, and no human being is known by all human beings, so on his view no one will be a human being.

2.24 That we are not arguing sophistically here is apparent from what follows from his position. The man says that only atoms and the void truly exist. He says that these belong not only to animals but to all compounds. So as far as these go, we will not conceive what is peculiar to the human being, since they are common to everything. But nothing else exists besides these. So we will have nothing by which we can distinguish the human being from the other animals and conceive him clearly.

2.25 Epicurus says that a human being is this sort of shape, endowed with soul. On his view too, since a human being is exhibited by pointing, anyone who is not pointed out is not a human being. If someone points out a woman, a man will not be a human being; if he points out a man, a woman will not be one. We will argue the same way from the difference of circumstances, which we know from the fourth mode of suspension.

2.26 Others have said that a human being is a rational mortal animal, receptive of mind and knowledge. But the first mode of suspension shows that no animal is non-rational, and that all animals are receptive of mind and knowledge, as far as their own statements go. So we will not know what in the world they mean.

2.27 Moreover, they mean the attributes included in the definition either in actuality or in potentiality. If in actuality, no one is

2 In Plato's *Phaedrus* (230a) Socrates says he is investigating whether he is a beast more complex than Typhon or a gentler, simpler creature.

a human being who has not already acquired complete knowledge, is perfect in reason, and is in the very act of dying, since that is what being mortal in actuality is. If in potentiality, then neither someone with perfect reason nor someone who has acquired mind and knowledge will be a human being, and this is more absurd than the first. So in this way too the conception of the human being has turned out to be incoherent.

2.28 Plato declares that a human being is a featherless, two-footed, flat-nailed animal, receptive of political knowledge. But not even he claims to set this out with firm affirmation. On his view the human being too is one of the things that come to be but never really are, and on his view it is impossible to make firm assertions about things that never are. So Plato will not want it to seem that he sets out the definition as a firm affirmation. He is speaking, as he usually does, in terms of what is persuasive.

2.29 Even if we were to grant, for the sake of argument, that the human being can be conceived, he will be found to be inapprehensible. He is composed of soul and body, and perhaps neither the body nor the soul is apprehended. So neither is the human being.

2.30 That the body is not apprehended is clear from this. The attributes of something are different from what they belong to. So when a color or something of the sort strikes us, it is likely that the attributes of the body strike us, not the body itself. They say, at any rate, that the body is extended in three dimensions. So to apprehend the body we ought to apprehend its length, breadth and depth. If that struck us, we would also recognize gilded silver coins for what they are. So the body is not apprehended either.

2.31 And even if we set aside the dispute about the body, the human being is again found to be inapprehensible, because the soul is inapprehensible. That the soul is inapprehensible is clear from this. Leaving aside the extensive and endless conflict, among those who have discussed the soul some said that there

is no soul, like Dicaearchus of Messene and his followers. Others said that there is one, and others suspended judgment.

2.32 If the dogmatists say that this disagreement is undecidable, they will grant at once that the soul is inapprehensible. If they say it is decidable, let them tell us what they will decide it by. They cannot decide it by perception, since they say the soul is an object of thought. Suppose they say they will decide it by the intellect. Then we will say that the intellect is the most nonevident part of the soul, as is shown by those who agree about the soul's existence but differ about the intellect. So if, by means of the

2.33 intellect, they want to apprehend the soul and decide the disagreement about it, they will be trying to decide and confirm what is less in question by what is more in question, and that is absurd. So the disagreement about the soul will not be decided by the intellect either. It will be decided by nothing, then. And if so, the soul is inapprehensible too. Hence the human being would not be apprehended either.

2.34 Even if we grant that the human being is apprehended, it may well be impossible to show that things ought to be judged by him. Anyone who says that things ought to be judged by a human being will say it either without proof or with proof. He cannot say it with proof, because the proof must be true and judged, and therefore judged by something. We cannot say in an agreed way what the proof itself can be judged by, since we are investigating the criterion "by which." So we will not be able to decide the proof, and therefore we will not be able to prove the criterion under discussion either.

2.35 If it is said without proof that things ought to be judged by the human being, it will not be credible. So we will not be able to affirm firmly that the criterion "by which" is the human being. And what will judge that the criterion "by which" is the human being? They surely won't be believed if they say this without judgment. If it is judged by a human being, the very point under investigation will be taken for granted.

2.36 If it is judged by another animal, how is that animal brought in to judge that the criterion is a human being? If without judgment, it will not be believed. If with judgment, it in turn must be judged by something. If it is judged by itself, the same absurdity remains, for what is under investigation will be judged by what is under investigation. If it is judged by a human being, the mode of reciprocity comes in. If it is judged by something else besides these, we will again demand the criterion "by which" for that, and so on to infinity. For this reason too, then, we will not be able to say that things ought to be judged by a human being.

2.37 But let it be so, and let it be taken on trust that things ought to be judged by the human being. Well then, since there is great difference among human beings, let the dogmatists first agree that this particular human being is the one we should attend to, and only then tell us to assent to him too. But if they are going to disagree about him "as long as water flows and tall trees flourish," as the saying goes, how can they press us to assent rashly to anyone?

2.38 If they say that one must trust the wise man, we will ask them which wise man. Epicurus' wise man, the Stoics', ⟨the Cyrenaic, or⟩ the Cynic? They will not be able to say.

2.39 Someone might ask us to give up the investigation about the wise man and simply trust the most intelligent of everyone alive. First, they will disagree about who is more intelligent than the rest. Then, even if it were granted that it could be agreed who is more intelligent than everyone who is and has been, not even so will he deserve to be trusted.

2.40 Intelligence varies a great deal, almost infinitely, in degree. So we say that someone more intelligent may come along than this man whom we call more intelligent than all who have been and are. We are asked to trust the man now said to be more sensible than all who are and have been, because of his intelligence. In the same way we ought rather to trust the man who comes after him and is more intelligent than he is. And when that one has come, we must expect yet another to come

who is more intelligent than he is, and after that one another, and so on to infinity.

2.41 And it is non-evident whether these people will agree with one another or say conflicting things. So suppose someone is agreed to be more intelligent than all who have been and are. We cannot affirm firmly that no one will be sharper than he is, since that is non-evident. So we will always have to wait for the judgment of the more intelligent person still to come, and never assent to the superior one.

2.42 And even if we grant, for the sake of argument, that no one is, was or will be more intelligent than the intelligent man we are supposing, it is still not appropriate to trust him. Intelligent people especially like, when they build up a case, to champion unsound positions and make them seem sound and true. So whenever this sharp-witted man says something, we will not know whether he is saying it as the matter is by nature, or presenting what is false as true and persuading us to think of it as true. After all, he is more intelligent than everyone, and for that reason we cannot refute him. So we will not assent to him either as someone who judges things truly. It is possible that he speaks the truth, but we would also suspect that his surpassing sharpness of wit leads him to say what he says because he wants to present falsehoods as true. For these reasons, then, we must not trust in judging things even the man who seems the sharpest of all.

2.43 If someone says that we must attend to the agreement of the many, we will say that this is futile. First, truth is perhaps rare, and for this reason one person may be more sensible than the many. Second, more people disagree with any criterion than agree on it. Those who adopt any criterion other than the one some people seem to agree on disagree with it, and they far outnumber those who agree on it.

2.44 Besides this, those who agree are either in different conditions or in one. As far as the point at issue goes, they are not in different conditions at all, for how would they then say the same things about it? If they are in one condition, the problem is this.

The single person who says something different has one condition, and all these who agree also have one. So as far as the conditions we attend to go, no difference is found even in number.

2.45 So we should not attend to the many rather than to the one. Besides, as we noted in the fourth mode of skepticism, the difference in judgments according to number is inapprehensible. Individual human beings are infinitely many, and we cannot survey the judgments of all of them and declare what the majority of all people assert and what the minority assert. On this ground too, then, preferring judges by their number is absurd.

2.46 And if we are not to attend to number either, we will not find anyone by whom things will be judged, even though we have granted so much for the sake of argument. So from all this the criterion by which things will be judged is found to be inapprehensible.

2.47 The other criteria are cancelled along with this one, since each of them is either a part, an affection or an activity of the human being. So it would perhaps be consistent to move our argument on to one of the next topics, on the grounds that enough has been said about those criteria as well in what we have said here. But so that we do not seem to be avoiding a specific rebuttal of each, we will say a little about them too, as a bonus. First we will discuss the so-called criterion "through which."

CHAPTER 6: ON THE "THROUGH WHICH"

Neither the senses, nor the intellect, nor both together can be shown to judge things.

2.48 There has been great and almost endless disagreement about this among the dogmatists. But again we take care to be methodical. On their view the human being is that by which things are judged. And he would have nothing through which he could judge except perception and the intellect, as they themselves also agree. So if we show that he can judge neither through per-

ception alone, nor through the intellect alone, nor through both together, we will have answered all the particular views concisely, for all of them seem to come down to these three positions.

2.49 Let us begin with the senses. Some say that the senses are affected emptily, since nothing real underlies what they seem to perceive. Others say that everything by which they think the senses are moved really exists. Still others say that some of these things exist and some do not. So we will have nothing to assent to. We will not decide the disagreement by perception, since it is perception we are investigating, whether it is affected emptily or truly apprehends. Nor will we decide it by anything else, since on the hypothesis before us there is no other criterion through which one must judge.

2.50 So it will be undecidable and inapprehensible whether perception is affected emptily or apprehends something. And with this comes the conclusion that we should not attend to perception alone in judging things, since we cannot say whether it apprehends anything in the first place.

2.51 But let it be granted, for the sake of argument, that the senses are capable of grasping things. Even so, they will be found no less untrustworthy for judging external real objects. At any rate, the senses are moved in contrary ways by external things. Taste, for instance, finds the same honey bitter at one time and sweet at another. To sight the same color ⟨seems⟩ blood-red at one time and white at another. Nor does smell agree with itself.

2.52 Someone with a headache says that perfume is unpleasant, while someone not in that state says it is pleasant. And people possessed by a god, and the delirious, think they hear certain people talking to them whom we do not hear. And the same water seems unpleasant to people with an inflammation because it is excessively hot, but lukewarm to others.

2.53 Should one say, then, that all impressions are true, or that these are true and those false, or that all are false? It is impossible to say. We have no agreed criterion through which to

judge what we are going to prefer, and we have no true and judged proof available either. The criterion of truth, through which even a true proof ought to be decided, is still under investigation.

2.54 For these reasons, anyone who asks us to trust those in a natural condition [in these matters] but not to trust at all those in an unnatural condition will be talking absurdly. If he says this without proof he will not be believed, and for the reasons already given he will not have a true and judged proof.

2.55 Even if someone were to concede that the impressions of those in a natural condition are trustworthy and those of people in an unnatural condition untrustworthy, judging external real objects through the senses alone will still be found impossible. Sight, even in its natural condition, says the ⟨same⟩ tower is round at one time and square at another. Taste says the same food is unpleasant to people who are full and pleasant to people who are hungry. Hearing likewise perceives the same sound as loud at night and faint by day,

2.56 and smell finds the same things foul to most people but not at all to tanners. The same touch is warmed by the entrance hall when we go into the bathhouse, but chilled by it when we come out. So the senses conflict with themselves even in their natural condition. The disagreement is undecidable, since we have no agreed ⟨criterion⟩ through which they can be judged. So the same puzzles must follow. Many other points can also be carried over from what we said earlier about the modes of suspension to establish this. So it would perhaps not be true that perception alone can judge external real objects.

2.57 Let our argument move on, then, to the intellect. Those who think we should attend to the intellect alone in judging things will not, first of all, be able to show that the existence of the intellect is apprehensible. Gorgias, in saying that nothing exists, says that the intellect does not exist either, while some assert that it does. How, then, will they decide the disagreement? Not by the intellect, since they would be taking the point at issue for granted. Nor by anything else, since on the hypo-

thesis now before us they say there is nothing else through which things are judged. So it will be undecidable and inapprehensible whether the intellect exists or not. And with this comes the conclusion that we should not attend to the intellect alone in judging things, since it has not yet been apprehended.[3]

2.58 But let the intellect be apprehended, and let it be agreed by hypothesis that it exists. I say that it cannot judge things. It does not even see itself precisely, and it disagrees about its own substance, the manner of its coming into being, and the place it is in. So how could it apprehend any of the other things precisely?

2.59 And even granting that the intellect is capable of judging things, we will not find out how to judge by it. Intellects differ a great deal. Gorgias' intellect, by which he says that nothing exists, is one thing. Heraclitus', by which he says that everything exists, is another. The intellect of those who say that some things exist and some do not is another again. So we will not be able to decide the difference between intellects, nor to say that we ought to follow this man's intellect but not that man's at all.

2.60 If we dare to judge by some particular intellect, we will be assenting to one side of the disagreement and taking the point at issue for granted. If we judge by something else, we will be lying when we say that things must be judged by the intellect alone.

2.61 Further, from what was said about the criterion "by which" [said], we will be able to show several things. We cannot find the intellect that is sharper than the others. And if we do find an intellect sharper than all those that have been and are, we should not attend to it, since it is non-evident whether yet another, sharper than this one, will come along.

2.62 And even if we posit an intellect than which there could be none more acute, we will not assent to the one who judges through it. We would be wary that he might put forward some false argument and, because he possesses the keenest intellect, be able to persuade us that it is true. So things should not be judged by the intellect alone either.

3 Gorgias of Leontini (fifth century BC), the famous orator, argued in his treatise *On What Is Not* that nothing exists.

2.63 It remains to say that things are judged through both. That again is impossible. Not only do the senses not guide the intellect toward apprehension; they even oppose it. At any rate, from the fact that honey appears bitter to some and sweet to others, Democritus said that it is neither sweet nor bitter, and Heraclitus that it is both. The same argument holds for the other senses and their objects. So the intellect, starting from the senses, is compelled to make different and conflicting assertions, and this is foreign to an apprehensive criterion. Then there is this to be said as well.

2.64 They will judge things either by all the senses and everyone's intellects, or by some. If someone says by all, he will be asking for the impossible, since so much conflict is apparent in the senses and the intellects. Besides, the verdict of Gorgias' intellect is that one should attend neither to perception nor to intellect, so the argument will turn itself around. If by some, how will they judge that one should attend to these senses and ⟨this⟩ intellect and not to those? They have no agreed criterion through which to decide between the different senses and intellects.

2.65 If they say that we will judge the senses and the intellects by the intellect and the senses, ⟨.....⟩ but not by some, they are taking the point at issue for granted. For what we are investigating is whether anyone can judge through these.

2.66 Then there is this to be said as well. They will judge in one of four ways. They will judge both the senses and the intellects by the senses. Or they will judge both the senses and the intellects by the intellects. Or they will judge the senses by the senses and the intellects by the intellects. Or they will judge the intellects by the senses and the senses by the intellect. If they want to judge both by the senses or both by the intellect, they will no longer be judging through perception and intellect, but through one of these, whichever they choose. And the puzzles stated earlier will dog them.

2.67 Suppose they decide the senses by the senses and the intellects by the intellect. Senses conflict with senses and intellects

with intellects. So whichever of the conflicting senses they adopt for judging the other senses, they will be taking the point at issue for granted. They will be treating one part of the disagreement as already credible in order to decide things that are just as much in question as it is.

2.68 The same argument holds for the intellects too. Suppose instead they decide the intellects by the senses and the senses by the intellect. Then we find the mode of reciprocity. For the senses to be decided, the intellects must have been judged first. For the intellects to be tested, the senses must have been thoroughly sorted out first.

2.69 Criteria of one kind cannot be decided by criteria of the same kind, nor both kinds by one kind, nor each kind by the other kind in turn. So we will not be able to prefer one intellect to another or one perception to another. For this reason we will have nothing through which to judge. We cannot judge by all the senses and intellects, and we will not know which ones we should judge by and which not. So we will have nothing through which to judge things. For these reasons too, then, the criterion "through which" would be unreal.

CHAPTER 7: ON THE "ACCORDING TO WHICH"

The impression cannot be conceived, apprehended or trusted as the standard for judging things.

2.70 Next, then, let us look at the criterion according to which they say things are judged. The first thing that can be said about it is that ⟨.....⟩ it is inconceivable. They say that an impression is an imprinting in the ruling part. Now the soul and the ruling part are breath, or something finer than breath, as they say. So no one will be able to conceive an imprinting in it either by depression and projection, as we see with seals, or by the fabled "alteration" kind. It would not retain the memory of the many

theorems that make up an art, since the earlier ones would be wiped out by each alteration that came after.[4]

2.71 Even if the impression could be conceived, it will be inapprehensible. It is an affection of the ruling part, and the ruling part is not apprehended, as we showed. So we will not apprehend its affection either.

2.72 Then, even if we were to grant that the impression is apprehended, things cannot be judged according to it. The intellect does not make contact with external things through itself, nor ⟨through itself⟩ receive impressions, as they say; it does so through the senses. The senses do not apprehend external real objects, but only, if anything, their own affections. So the impression too will be of the sense's affection, and that differs from the external real object. Honey is not the same as my tasting sweetness, nor wormwood the same as my tasting bitterness; they are different.

2.73 If this affection differs from the external real object, the impression will not be of the external real object but of something else, different from it. So if the intellect judges according to this impression, it judges badly and not according to the real object. So it is absurd to say that external things are judged according to the impression.

2.74 Nor can one say that the soul apprehends external real objects through the affections of the senses because those affections are similar to the external real objects. How will the intellect know whether the affections of the senses are similar to the objects of sense? It does not itself encounter external things. And the senses do not reveal those things' nature to it, only their own affections, as I argued from the modes of suspension.

2.75 Take someone who doesn't know Socrates but has looked at a picture of him. He doesn't know whether the picture resembles Socrates. In the same way the intellect observes how the senses are affected but does not see the external things, so it will not know whether the senses' affections resemble the

4 Cleanthes took the imprint literally, like a seal in wax, while Chrysippus called it an "alteration."

external objects either. So it will not be able to judge these things by the impression on the basis of resemblance either.

2.76 But let us concede, for the sake of argument, that besides being conceivable and apprehended, the impression is also the kind of thing by which objects can be judged, even though the argument has pointed to the very opposite. Then we will trust either every impression ⟨or some. But if every one, clearly we will also trust Xeniades' impression⟩, according to which he said that all impressions are untrustworthy. The argument will then turn itself around: not all impressions are such that objects can be judged by them.[5]

2.77 If some, how will we decide that it is right to trust these impressions and to distrust those? If we decide without an impression, they will be granting that the impression is superfluous for judging, since they will be saying that some objects can be judged without it. If with an impression, how will they get hold of the impression they bring in to judge the other impressions?

2.78 They will need yet another impression to judge that other impression, and another to judge that one, and so on to infinity. But it is impossible to decide infinitely many things. So it is impossible to find out which impressions we should use as criteria and which not at all. Even if we grant that objects should be judged by impressions, then, the argument turns itself around either way, both if we trust all of them and if we trust some as criteria and distrust others. It follows that impressions should not be adopted as criteria for judging objects.

2.79 For now it is enough to have said this much, in outline, against the criterion according to which objects were said to be judged. But you should be aware that it is not our purpose to declare that the criterion of truth is unreal; that would be dogmatic. The dogmatists seem to have established plausibly that there is a criterion of truth, so we have set against them arguments that seem plausible. We do not affirm that these are true,

5 Xeniades of Corinth (fifth century BC) held that every impression and opinion is false.

or that they are more plausible than their opposites. We conclude to suspension of judgment because of the apparent equal plausibility of these arguments and of those put forward by the dogmatists.

CHAPTER 8: ON WHAT IS TRUE AND ON TRUTH

The Stoics' distinction between what is true and truth, and why only the former need be attacked.

2.80 Even if we were to grant, by hypothesis, that there is some criterion of truth, it turns out to be useless and pointless once we point out that, as far as what the dogmatists say goes, truth is unreal and what is true has no real existence.

2.81 We point this out as follows. What is true is said to differ from truth in three ways: in essence, in composition and in power. In essence, because what is true is incorporeal (for it is a proposition and a sayable), whereas truth is a body. For truth is knowledge capable of asserting everything true, and knowledge is the ruling part in a certain state, just as a fist is the hand in a certain state; and the ruling part is a body, since according to them it is breath.[6]

2.82 In composition, because what is true is something simple, like "I am conversing," whereas truth is made up of many pieces of true knowledge.

2.83 In power, because truth involves knowledge, whereas what is true does not always do so. That is why they say that truth is found only in the good person, while what is true is found in the bad person too, since a bad person can say something true. So much for the dogmatists.

2.84 For our part, we will keep in view once again the aim of this treatise and direct our arguments for now against what is true alone. Truth, which is said to be a system of knowledge of true things, is cancelled along with it. Again, some of our arguments are more general: by these we challenge the very existence of what is true. Others are specific: by these we show that

6 Stoic term: a "sayable" (*lekton*) is the incorporeal content of what is said.

what is true is not in the utterance, or in the sayable, or in the motion of the intellect. We think it enough for the present to set out only the more general ones. When the foundation of a wall is brought down, everything built on top comes down with it. In the same way, when the existence of what is true is overturned, the dogmatists' ingenious arguments on particular points are cancelled along with it.

CHAPTER 9: WHETHER ANYTHING IS TRUE BY NATURE

Neither appearances nor non-evident things, nor some of each, can be shown to be true.

2.85 There is disagreement among the dogmatists about what is true: some say that something is true, others that nothing is. This disagreement cannot be decided. Whoever says that something is true will not be believed if he says it without proof, because of the disagreement. And if he wants to offer a proof as well, he will not be believed if he admits that the proof is false. If he says that the proof is true, he falls into the mode of reciprocity, and he will be asked for a proof ⟨of⟩ its being true, then another for that one, and so on to infinity. But it is impossible to prove infinitely many things. So it is impossible even to know that something is true.

2.86 Again, the "something," which they say is the most generic of all things, is either true or false, or neither false nor true, or both false and true. Now if they say it is false, they will be admitting that everything is false. Just as, since animal has a soul, all particular animals have souls too, so if the most generic of all things (the "something") is false, all the particulars will be false too, and nothing will be true. This brings with it the consequence that nothing is false either. For "everything is false" and "something is false" are themselves among all things, so they too will be false. If the "something" is true, everything will be true. This brings with it, again, the consequence that nothing is true, since this very thing (I mean "nothing is true") is a something, and so it is true.

2.87 If the "something" is both false and true, each particular will be both false and true. It follows that nothing is true by nature, since what has a nature such as to be true would certainly not be false. And if the "something" is neither false nor true, it is admitted that all the particulars too, said to be neither false nor true, will not be true. For these reasons, then, it will be non-evident to us whether there is anything true.

2.88 Further, true things are either only apparent, or only non-evident, or some true things are non-evident and some apparent. None of these is true, as we will show; so nothing is true. Now if true things are only apparent, they will say either that all apparent things are true or that some are. If all, the argument turns itself around, since it appears to some people that nothing is true. If some, no one can say without deciding the matter that these are true and those false. And if he uses a criterion, he will say that this criterion is either apparent or non-evident. It cannot possibly be non-evident, since the hypothesis now is that only apparent things are true.

2.89 If it is apparent, then, since the question is which apparent things are true and which false, the apparent thing adopted to judge apparent things will itself need another apparent criterion, and that one another, and so on to infinity. But it is impossible to decide infinitely many things. So it is impossible to apprehend whether only apparent things are true.

2.90 Similarly, someone who says that only non-evident things are true will not say that all of them are true; he will not say that the stars' being even in number is true and also their being odd. And if some, by what will we judge that these non-evident things are true and those false? Certainly not by something apparent. If by something non-evident, then, since we are asking which non-evident things are true and which false, this non-evident thing too will need another non-evident thing to decide it, and that one another, and so on to infinity. So true things are not only non-evident either.

2.91 It remains to say that some true things are apparent and some non-evident. But this too is absurd. Either all apparent and

non-evident things are true, or some apparent ones and some non-evident ones. If all, the argument will again turn itself around, since "nothing is true" is granted to be true. And both "the stars are even in number" and "they are odd" will be called true.

2.92 If some apparent and some non-evident things are true, how will we decide that, among apparent things, these are true and those false? ⟨For⟩ if by something apparent, the argument is thrown into infinite regress. If by something non-evident, then, since non-evident things too need to be judged, by what will this non-evident thing be judged in turn? ⟨For⟩ if by something apparent, the mode of reciprocity turns up; if by something non-evident, the mode that throws us into infinite regress.

2.93 The same must be said about non-evident things. Someone who tries to judge them by something non-evident is thrown into infinite regress. Someone who judges them by something apparent either keeps adding something apparent and goes on to infinity, or switches to something non-evident and falls into reciprocity. So it is false to say that some true things are apparent and some non-evident.

2.94 If, then, true things are not apparent things alone, nor non-evident things alone, nor some apparent and some non-evident, nothing is true. And if nothing is true, while the criterion is thought to serve for judging what is true, the criterion is useless and pointless, even if we grant, for the sake of argument, that it has some existence. And if we must suspend judgment about whether anything is true, it follows that those who say dialectic is the knowledge of what is true, what is false and what is neither are being rash.

2.95 Now that the criterion of truth has turned out to be problematic, it is no longer possible, as far as what the dogmatists say goes, to make firm assertions either about things that seem to be clear or about non-evident things. The dogmatists think they apprehend non-evident things on the basis of clear ones. So if we are forced to suspend judgment about the so-called clear

things, how could we dare to make declarations about non-evident ones?

2.96 Still, for good measure, we will also mount a separate challenge against non-evident things. Since these are thought to be apprehended and established by means of sign and proof, we will point out briefly that it is proper to suspend judgment about sign and proof as well. Let us begin with the sign, since proof too is thought to be, generically, a sign.

CHAPTER 10: ON THE SIGN

The dogmatists' classes of things, and recollective signs, which life relies on, versus indicative ones.

2.97 According to the dogmatists, some things are evident and others non-evident. Of the non-evident, some are non-evident once and for all, some non-evident for the moment, and some non-evident by nature. Evident, they say, are the things that come to our knowledge of themselves, such as its being day. Non-evident once and for all are the things that are not of a nature to fall within our apprehension, such as the stars' being even in number.

2.98 Non-evident for the moment are the things that are clear by nature but are made non-evident to us for the time being by certain external circumstances, as the city of Athens is now to me. Non-evident by nature are the things that are not of a nature to fall within our clear perception, like the intelligible pores. These never appear of themselves; if at all, they would be thought to be apprehended from other things, such as sweat or something of that sort.[7]

2.99 Evident things, they say, do not need a sign, since they are apprehended of themselves. Nor do things that are non-evident once and for all, since they are not apprehended at all. Things non-evident for the moment and things non-evident by nature are apprehended through signs, but not through the same ones:

7 "Intelligible pores" were invisible channels in the skin posited by some doctors and philosophers, detectable only by reasoning (for instance, from sweating).

things non-evident for the moment through recollective signs, and things non-evident by nature through indicative ones.

2.100 Of signs, then, according to them, some are recollective and some indicative. They call a sign recollective when it has been clearly observed together with the thing it signifies. When it strikes us while that thing is non-evident, it leads us to recall what was observed together with it and is not now clearly perceived. This is how it is with smoke and fire.

2.101 An indicative sign, they say, is one that has not been clearly observed together with the thing signified. It signifies what it is a sign of from its own nature and constitution, as the movements of the body are signs of the soul. Hence they define this sign as follows: "A sign is an indicative proposition that is the leading antecedent in a sound conditional and reveals the consequent."

2.102 There are two different kinds of signs, then, as we said. We do not argue against every sign but only against the indicative one, since it seems to have been invented by the dogmatists. The recollective sign is relied on by ordinary life: someone who sees smoke takes it as a sign of fire, and on seeing a scar says there has been a wound. So far from fighting against ordinary life, we even take its side. We assent, without holding beliefs, to what it relies on, while we resist what the dogmatists invent on their own account.

2.103 It was perhaps fitting to say this first, to make the subject of inquiry clear. Now let us move on to the counterargument. We are not at all eager to show that the indicative sign is unreal. We aim to point out the apparent equipollence of the arguments brought for its reality and for its unreality.

CHAPTER 11: WHETHER THERE IS ANY INDICATIVE SIGN

Arguments that the indicative sign is inconceivable, set against arguments that it exists.

2.104 As far as what the dogmatists say about it goes, the sign is inconceivable. To start with, the Stoics, who seem to have

defined it precisely, want to set out the concept of the sign and say that a sign is a proposition that is the leading antecedent in a sound conditional and reveals the consequent. A proposition, they say, is a complete sayable that is assertoric in itself. A sound conditional is one that does not begin with something true and end with something false.

2.105 For a conditional either begins with something true and ends with something true, like "if it is day, it is light." Or it begins with something false and ends with something false, like "if the earth flies, the earth has wings." Or it begins with something true and ends with something false, like "if the earth exists, the earth flies." Or it begins with something false and ends with something true, like "if the earth flies, the earth exists." Of these, they say only the one that begins with something true and ends with something false is unsound, and the rest are sound.

2.106 A leading antecedent, they say, is the antecedent in a conditional that begins with something true and ends with something true. And it reveals the consequent, since in the conditional "if she has milk, she has conceived," "she has milk" is thought to make clear "she has conceived."

2.107 So much for them. We say, first, that it is non-evident whether there is ⟨any⟩ sayable. Among the dogmatists, the Epicureans say that there is not ⟨any⟩ sayable and the Stoics that there is. So when the Stoics say that there is a sayable, they use either mere assertion or proof as well. If assertion, the Epicureans will set against them the assertion that there is no sayable. If they bring in a proof, then, since proof is composed of propositions, which are sayables, a proof composed of sayables cannot be adopted to confirm that there is a sayable (for how will someone who does not grant that there is a sayable concede that a system of sayables exists?)

2.108 —so whoever tries to establish that there is a sayable from the existence of a system of sayables wants to confirm what is in question through what is in question. If, then, it is possible to establish that there is a sayable neither simply nor by proof, it is

non-evident that there is a sayable. Likewise, it is non-evident whether there is a proposition,

2.109 since a proposition is a sayable. Perhaps, too, even if it were granted by hypothesis that there is a sayable, the proposition would turn out to be unreal, since it is composed of sayables that do not exist together with one another. Take "if it is day, it is light." When I say "it is day," "it is light" does not yet exist, and when I say "it is light," "it is day" no longer exists. Now things composed of parts cannot exist unless their parts exist together with one another, and the parts of which the proposition is composed do not exist together with one another. So the proposition will not exist.

2.110 But let us leave these points aside too: the sound conditional will turn out to be inapprehensible. Philo says that a sound conditional is one that does not begin with something true and end with something false. An example, when it is day and I am conversing, is "if it is day, I am conversing." Diodorus says it is one that neither could nor can begin with something true and end with something false. According to him the conditional just mentioned seems to be false: when it is day and I have fallen silent, it will begin with something true and end with something false.[8]

2.111 On the other hand this one is true: "if there are no partless elements of things, there are partless elements of things." For according to him it always begins with something false, "there are no partless elements of things," and will end with something true, "there are partless elements of things." Those who bring in connection say that a conditional is sound when the opposite of its consequent conflicts with its antecedent. According to them the conditionals just mentioned will be unsound, while this one is true: "if it is day, it is day."

2.112 Those who judge by implication say that a conditional is true when its consequent is potentially contained in its ante-

8 Philo the Dialectician was a logician of the late fourth century BC, a pupil of Diodorus Cronus.

cedent. According to them "if it is day, it is day," and every duplicated conditional [proposition], will perhaps be false,

2.113 since it is impossible for anything to be contained in itself. It will perhaps seem impossible, then, to decide this disagreement. We will not be credible if we prefer one of the positions just mentioned without proof, or with proof either. For a proof is thought to be sound when its conclusion follows from the conjunction of its premises as a consequent follows from an antecedent. For example: "If it is day, it is light; but it is day; therefore it is light"—"if it is day, it is light, and it is day, then it is light."

2.114 But when the question is how we are to judge the following of the consequent from the antecedent, the mode of reciprocity turns up. For the judgment of the conditional to be proved, the conclusion must follow from the premises of the proof, as we said before. And for this in turn to be believed, the conditional and the following must already have been decided. That is absurd.

2.115 So the sound conditional is inapprehensible. The leading antecedent is problematic too. For the leading antecedent, as they say, is the antecedent in a conditional of the kind that begins with something true and ends with something true.

2.116 And if the sign reveals the consequent, the consequent is either evident or non-evident. If evident, it will not even need anything to reveal it. It will be apprehended together with the sign and will not be signified by it, so the sign will not be a sign of it either. If non-evident, then, since there is undecidable disagreement about non-evident things—which of them are true and which false, and in general whether any of them is true—it will be non-evident whether the conditional ends in something true. And this brings with it the consequence that it is non-evident whether its antecedent is the leading antecedent.

2.117 But let us leave these points aside too. The sign cannot reveal the consequent, given that the thing signified is relative to the sign and for that reason is apprehended together with it. Relatives are apprehended together with one another. The right

cannot be apprehended as right of the left before the left, nor the reverse, and the same holds for the other relatives. In the same way it will not be possible for the sign to be apprehended as sign of the thing signified before the thing signified.

2.118 And if the sign is not apprehended before the thing signified, it cannot reveal it either, since that thing is apprehended at the same time as the sign and not after it. So the sign is inconceivable as far as what those of other persuasions say in more general terms goes, too. For they say that it is both relative and revelatory of the thing signified, to which they say it is relative.

2.119 Hence if it is relative, and relative to the thing signified, it must certainly be apprehended together with the thing signified, as left is with right, up with down, and so with the other relatives. But if it reveals the thing signified, it must certainly be apprehended before it, so that, being recognized first, it may lead us to a conception of the thing that becomes known from it.

2.120 But it is impossible to conceive of a thing that cannot be known before the thing it must be apprehended before. So it is impossible to conceive of something that is both relative and revelatory of the very thing in relation to which it is thought. But they say that the sign is both relative and revelatory of the thing signified. So it is impossible to conceive of the sign.

2.121 This too must be said. There has been disagreement among our predecessors: some say that there is an indicative sign, others assert that there is no indicative sign. So whoever says that there is an indicative sign will say so either simply and without proof, using bare assertion, or with proof. If he uses mere assertion, he will not be believed. If he wants to prove it, he will be taking for granted what is in question.

2.122 For proof is said to be, generically, a sign. So if it is disputed whether there is a sign or not, it will also be disputed whether there is proof at all. Suppose, for example, that we were investigating whether there is such a thing as an animal. We would also be investigating whether there is such a thing as a human being, since a human being is an animal. But it is absurd to prove what is in question through what is equally in question,

or through itself. So no one will be able to affirm by proof either that there is a sign.

2.123 And if it is possible to make a firm declaration about the sign neither simply nor with proof, it is impossible to make an apprehensive statement about it. And if the sign is not apprehended with precision, it will not be said to signify anything either, since there is no agreement even about the sign itself. For this reason it will not even be a sign. So by this reasoning too the sign will be unreal and inconceivable.

2.124 Further, this too must be said. Signs are either only apparent or only non-evident, or some signs are apparent and some non-evident. None of these is sound, so there is no sign. That not all signs are non-evident is shown as follows. The non-evident does not appear of itself, as the dogmatists say, but is perceived through something else. So the sign too, if it were non-evident, will need another non-evident sign, since on the hypothesis before us nothing apparent is a sign; and that sign will need another, and so on to infinity. But it is impossible to take in infinitely many signs. So it is impossible for the sign to be apprehended if it is non-evident. For this reason it will also be unreal: since it is not apprehended, it cannot signify anything or be a sign.

2.125 Suppose all signs are apparent. The sign is relative, and relative to the thing signified, and relatives are apprehended together with one another. So the things said to be signified, being apprehended together with apparent things, will be apparent. When right and left strike us at the same time, the right is said to appear no more than the left, and the left no more than the right. In the same way, when the sign and the thing signified are apprehended together, we must say that the sign appears no more than the thing signified.

2.126 And if the thing signified is apparent, it will not even be signified, since it does not need anything to signify and reveal it. When right is abolished, there is no left either; in the same way, when the thing signified is abolished, there can be no sign

either. So the sign turns out to be unreal if one says that signs are only apparent.

2.127 It remains to say that some signs are apparent and some non-evident. Even so the difficulties remain. The things said to be signified by the apparent signs will be apparent, as we said before. Since they do not need anything to signify them, they will not be signified at all. Hence those signs will not be signs either, since they signify nothing.

2.128 As for the non-evident signs, they need things to reveal them. If they are said to be signified by non-evident things, the argument falls into infinite regress and they turn out to be inapprehensible, and for that reason unreal, as we said before. If they are said to be signified by apparent things, they will be apparent, since they are apprehended together with their apparent signs; and for that reason they will be unreal too. For it is impossible for anything to be both non-evident by nature and apparent. Yet the signs under discussion, though assumed to be non-evident, have been found to be apparent as the argument turns itself around.

2.129 If, then, signs are neither all apparent nor all non-evident, nor some apparent and some non-evident, and there is nothing besides these, as they themselves say, the so-called signs will be unreal.

2.130 These few points out of many will suffice for now to suggest that there is no indicative sign. Next we will also set out the considerations suggesting that there is a sign, so as to show the equipollence of the opposing arguments. The utterances brought against the sign either signify something or signify nothing. If they signify nothing, how could they shake the existence of the sign?

2.131 If they signify something, there is a sign. Again, the arguments against the sign are either probative or not probative. If they are not probative, they do not prove that there is no sign. If they are probative, then, since proof is generically a sign, revealing its conclusion, there will be a sign. Hence an argument of this kind is propounded: if there is a sign, there is a

sign; and if there is not a sign, there is a sign, since that there is not a sign is shown by proof, which is a sign. Either there is a sign or there is not a sign; therefore there is a sign.

2.132 Alongside this argument is set one of this kind. If there is not any sign, there is not a sign; and if there is a sign, of the kind the dogmatists say there is, there is not a sign. For the sign under discussion is said, by its very concept, to be both relative and revelatory of the thing signified, and it turns out to be unreal, as we showed.

2.133 Either there is a sign or there is not a sign; therefore there is not a sign. And as for the utterances on behalf of the sign, let the dogmatists themselves answer whether they signify something or signify nothing. If they signify nothing, they do not confirm that there is a sign. If they signify something, the thing signified will follow from them. And that was that there is a sign; from which it follows that there is ⟨not⟩ one, as we pointed out, as the argument turns itself around. However, since such plausible arguments are brought both for there being a sign and for there not being one, we must say that there is "no more" a sign than not.

CHAPTER 12: ON PROOF

Proof, as a kind of sign, is equally in doubt; Sextus sets out the Stoic account of it.

2.134 It is plain from this that proof is not something agreed upon either. If we suspend judgment about the sign, and proof is a kind of sign, we must suspend judgment about proof as well. Indeed, we will find that the arguments propounded about the sign can be applied against proof too. Proof too is thought to be relative and revelatory of its conclusion, and almost everything we said against the sign followed from these features.

2.135 But if we must also speak about proof specifically, I will go through the argument about it concisely, first trying to make clear briefly what they say proof is. Proof, then, as they say, is an argument that, by means of agreed premises, reveals a non-

evident conclusion by way of deduction. What they mean will become clearer from what follows. An argument is a system made up of premises and a conclusion.

2.136 Its premises are said to be the propositions adopted by agreement for establishing the conclusion, and the conclusion [conclusion] is the proposition established from the premises. For instance, in this ⟨argument⟩, "If it is day, it is light; but it is day; therefore it is light," "therefore it is light" is the conclusion, and the rest are premises.

2.137 Of arguments, some are conclusive and some inconclusive. They are conclusive when the conditional that begins with the conjunction of the argument's premises and ends in its conclusion is sound. The argument just mentioned, for example, is conclusive, since "it is light" follows from the conjunction of its premises, "it is day" and "if it is day, it is light," in this conditional: "[if] it is day, and if it is day, it is light." Inconclusive arguments are those that are not like this.

2.138 Of conclusive arguments, some are true and some not true. They are true when not only the conditional formed from the conjunction of the premises and the conclusion is sound, as we said before, but also the conclusion is true, and so is the conjunction of its premises, which is the antecedent in the conditional. A true conjunction is one all of whose parts are true, like "it is day, and if it is day, it is light."

2.139 Not true are those that are not like this. Take an argument like "If it is night, it is dark; but it is night; therefore it is dark." It is conclusive, since this conditional is sound: "[if] it is night, and if it is night, it is dark, ⟨it is dark; therefore⟩ it is dark." It is not, however, true. The conjunction "it is night, and if it is night, it is dark" is false, because it contains the false "it is night"; for a conjunction that contains something false is false. Hence they also say that a true argument is one that deduces a true conclusion through true premises.

2.140 Again, of true arguments, some are probative and some not probative. Probative are those that deduce something nonevident through evident things; not probative are those that do

not. For example, an argument like "If it is day, it is light; but it is day; therefore it is light" is not probative, since its conclusion, that it is light, is evident. But an argument like "If sweat flows through the surface, there are intelligible pores; but sweat flows through the surface; therefore there are intelligible pores" is probative, since its conclusion, "therefore there are intelligible pores," is non-evident.

2.141 Of those that deduce something non-evident, some lead us through the premises to the conclusion merely by way of progression; others do so by way of progression and of revelation at once. Arguments by way of progression are those that seem to depend on trust and memory, such as this one: "If someone has told you that this man will be rich, this man will be rich; this god here (I point, for the sake of argument, to Zeus) has told you that this man will be rich; therefore this man will be rich." We assent to the conclusion not so much because of the necessity of the premises as because we trust the god's declaration.

2.142 Others lead us to the conclusion not only by way of progression but also by way of revelation, like this one: "If sweat flows through the surface, there are intelligible pores. But the first; therefore the second." Sweat's flowing reveals that there are pores, because it has been assumed beforehand that liquid cannot pass through a solid body.

2.143 Proof, then, must be an argument; it must be conclusive and true; and it must have a non-evident conclusion [and] one revealed by the power of the premises. That is why proof is said to be an argument that, by means of agreed premises, reveals a non-evident conclusion by way of deduction. This, then, is how they usually explain the concept of proof.

CHAPTER 13: WHETHER THERE IS PROOF

Arguments, conclusiveness and the Stoic indemonstrables are attacked, and proof is found to be unreal.

2.144 That proof is unreal can be inferred from what they themselves say, by overturning each of the elements included in its

concept. For instance, an argument is composed of propositions. But composite things cannot exist unless their components exist together with one another, as is evident from a bed and similar things; and the parts of an argument do not exist together with one another. When we state the first premise, neither the other premise nor the conclusion exists yet. When we state the second, the first premise no longer exists and the conclusion does not exist yet. When we pronounce the conclusion, its premises no longer exist. So the parts of an argument do not exist together with one another, and hence the argument itself will not seem to exist either.

2.145 Apart from this, the conclusive argument is inapprehensible. It is judged by the following in the conditional, and the following in the conditional is the subject of undecidable disagreement and is perhaps inapprehensible, as we pointed out in the discussion of the sign. So the conclusive argument will be inapprehensible too.

2.146 Now the dialecticians say that an argument comes out inconclusive through disconnection, or through deficiency, or through being propounded in an invalid form, or through redundancy. It is inconclusive through disconnection, for example, when the premises have no connection with one another and with the conclusion, as in this one: "If it is day, it is light; but wheat is being sold in the market;

2.147 therefore Dion is walking." It is inconclusive through redundancy when a premise is found to be redundant for the argument's deduction. For example: "If it is day, it is light; but it is day, and Dion is walking too; therefore it is light." It is inconclusive through being propounded in an invalid form when the form of the argument is not conclusive. For example, while these arguments, they say, are syllogistic—"If it is day, it is light; but it is day; therefore it is light," and "If it is day, ⟨it is light⟩; but it is not light; therefore it is not day"—this one is inconclusive: "If it is day, it is light; but it is light; therefore it is day."

2.148 For the conditional announces that, if its antecedent holds, the consequent holds too. So it is reasonable that when

the antecedent is added as a premise, the consequent is inferred as well, and when the consequent is denied, the antecedent is denied as well; for if the antecedent held, the consequent would hold too. But when the consequent is added, the antecedent is not necessarily posited. The conditional did not promise that the antecedent follows the consequent, only that the consequent follows the antecedent.

2.149 That is why an argument that deduces the consequent from a conditional and its antecedent is said to be syllogistic, as is one that deduces the opposite of the antecedent from a conditional and the opposite of the consequent. But an argument that deduces the antecedent from a conditional and its consequent is inconclusive, like the one just mentioned. That is why, even when its premises are true, it deduces something false, if it is stated at night by lamplight. The conditional "if it is day, it is light" is true, and so is the additional premise "but it is light," but the conclusion "therefore it is day" is false.

2.150 An argument is faulty through omission when something needed for deducing the conclusion is left out. For example, this argument, as they think, is sound: "Wealth is either good or bad or indifferent; but it is neither bad nor indifferent; therefore it is good." But this one is faulty through deficiency: "Wealth is either good or bad; but it is not bad; therefore it is good."

2.151 If, then, I show that, according to them, no kind of inconclusive argument can be distinguished from conclusive ones, I will have shown that the conclusive argument is inapprehensible. Their endless chatter about dialectic, current ⟨among⟩ them, will then be superfluous. I show it as follows.

2.152 The argument inconclusive through disconnection was said to be recognized by the fact that its premises have no connection with one another ⟨and⟩ with the conclusion. Judgment of the conditional must come before knowledge of this connection, and the conditional cannot be decided, as I have argued. So the argument inconclusive through disconnection will also be ⟨indistinguishable⟩.

2.153 Take someone who says that some argument is inconclusive through disconnection. If he offers mere assertion, he will find set against him the assertion opposed to his. If he proves it by an argument, he will be told that this argument must first be conclusive, and only then prove that the premises of the argument said to be disconnected are unconnected. But we will not know whether it is probative, since we have no agreed way of judging the conditional by which to judge whether the conclusion follows from the conjunction of the argument's premises. So on this count too we will be unable to distinguish the argument said to be invalid through disconnection from conclusive ones.

2.154 We will say the same to someone who says that an argument is invalid through being propounded in a bad form. Whoever argues that some form is invalid will not have an agreed conclusive argument through which he can deduce what he says.

2.155 With this we have also, in effect, answered those who try to show that arguments are inconclusive through deficiency. For if the complete ⟨and⟩ finished argument is non-evident, the deficient one will be non-evident too. Further, someone who wants to show by argument that some argument is deficient has no agreed way of judging the conditional, by which he could judge the following in the argument he states. So he will not be able to say, with sound judgment and correctly, that it is deficient.

THE INDEMONSTRABLES ARE REDUNDANT

Sextus argues that the five Stoic indemonstrables and categorical syllogisms all contain a superfluous premise.

2.156 Moreover, the argument said to be invalid through redundancy cannot be distinguished from probative ones. As far as redundancy goes, even the indemonstrables the Stoics talk so much about will turn out to be inconclusive. And if they are done away with, the whole of dialectic is overturned. For these

are the arguments that, they say, need no proof to establish themselves, but are probative ⟨by⟩ making the other arguments conclusive. That they are redundant will be clear once we have set out the indemonstrables and then inferred what we are claiming.

2.157 ⟨Now⟩ they dream up many indemonstrables, but they chiefly set out these five, to which all the rest seem to be reduced. First, ⟨the one⟩ that deduces the consequent from a conditional and its antecedent, for example "If it is day, it is light; but it is day; therefore it is light." Second, the one that deduces the opposite of the antecedent from a conditional and the opposite of the consequent, for example "If it is day, it is light; but it is not light;

2.158 therefore it is not day." Third, the one that deduces, from a negated conjunction and one of its conjuncts, the opposite of the other conjunct, for example "Not both: it is day and it is night; but it is day; therefore it is not night." Fourth, the one that deduces, from a disjunction and one of its disjuncts, the opposite of the other, for example "Either it is day or it is night; but it is day; therefore it is not night." Fifth, the one that deduces, from a disjunction and the opposite of one of its disjuncts, the other disjunct, for example "Either it is day or it is night; but it is not night; therefore it is day."

2.159 These, then, are the much-talked-about indemonstrables, and all of them seem to me to be inconclusive through redundancy. To start right away with the first: either it is agreed that "it is light" follows "it is day," its antecedent, in the conditional "if it is day, it is light," or this is non-evident. If it is non-evident, we will not grant the conditional as agreed. But if it is evident that if "it is day" holds, "it is light" will necessarily hold too, then once we have said that it is day, it is also deduced that it is light. So an argument like "It is day; therefore it is light" suffices, and the conditional "if it is day, it is light" is redundant.

2.160 We proceed in the same way with the second indemonstrable. Either it is possible for the antecedent to hold when the consequent does not, or it is not possible. If it is possible, the

conditional will not be sound. If it is not possible, then as soon as "not the consequent" is posited, "not the antecedent" is posited too. Once again the conditional is redundant, and the argument is propounded like this: "It is not light; therefore [that] it is not day."

2.161 The same reasoning applies to the third indemonstrable. Either it is evident that the parts of the conjunction cannot hold together, or it is non-evident. If non-evident, we will not grant the negated conjunction. If evident, then as soon as one is posited the other is eliminated, and the negated conjunction is redundant, since we propound the argument like this: "It is day; therefore it is not night."

2.162 We say much the same about the fourth and fifth indemonstrables. Either it is evident that in the disjunction one part is true and the other false, in complete conflict, which is what the disjunction announces, or it is non-evident. If non-evident, we will not grant the disjunction. If evident, then when one of them is posited it is plain that the other does not hold, and when one is eliminated it is evident that the other holds. So it suffices to propound the arguments like this: "It is day; therefore it is not night," "It is not day; therefore it is night"; and the disjunction is redundant.

2.163 Much the same can be said about the so-called categorical syllogisms too, which are used above all by the Peripatetics. Take this argument: "What is just is fine, ⟨and⟩ what is fine is good; therefore what is just is good." Either it is agreed and evident that what is fine is good, or it is disputed and non-evident. If it is non-evident, it will not be granted when the argument is propounded, and so the syllogism will not be conclusive. But if it is evident that whatever is fine is certainly also good, then as soon as it is said that this particular thing is fine, its being good comes in along with it. So an argument like "What is just is fine; therefore what is just is good" suffices, and the other premise, in which what is fine was said to be good, is redundant.

2.164 Likewise with an argument like "Socrates is a human being; every human being is an animal; therefore Socrates is an

animal." If it is not immediately evident that whatever is a human being is also an animal, the universal premise is not agreed, and we will not grant it in the

2.165 propounding of the argument. But if being an animal follows from being a human being, and for that reason the premise "every human being is an animal" is admittedly true, then as soon as it is said that Socrates is a human being, his being an animal comes in along with it. So an argument like "Socrates is a human being; therefore Socrates is an animal" suffices, and the premise "every human being is an animal" is redundant.

2.166 Similar methods can be used with the other primary categorical arguments too, but let us not dwell on them now. The dialecticians lay these arguments down as the foundation of syllogisms, and they are redundant. So, as far as redundancy goes, the whole of dialectic is overturned, since we cannot distinguish the redundant, and therefore inconclusive, arguments from the so-called conclusive syllogisms.

2.167 And if some people do not accept that there are single-premise arguments, they are no more trustworthy than Antipater, who does not reject such arguments either. For these reasons, then, what the dialecticians call a conclusive argument cannot be decided. Moreover, the true argument cannot be found, both for the reasons already given and because it must certainly end in something true. For the conclusion said to be true is either apparent or non-evident.[9]

2.168 It certainly cannot be apparent. If it were, it would not be revealed through the premises, since it would strike us of itself and would be no less apparent than its premises. If it is non-evident, then, since there is undecidable disagreement about non-evident things, as we pointed out earlier, and for that reason they are inapprehensible, the conclusion of the argument said to be true will be inapprehensible too. And if this is inapprehensible, we will not know whether what is deduced is true or false. So we will not know whether the argument is true or false, and the true argument will not be found.

9 Antipater of Tarsus was head of the Stoic school in the second century BC.

2.169 But let us pass over these points too. The argument that deduces something non-evident through evident things cannot be found. The conclusion follows from the conjunction of its premises; what follows, the consequent, is relative, relative to the antecedent; and relatives are apprehended together with one another, as we showed. So if the conclusion is non-evident, the premises will be non-evident too. And if the premises are evident, the conclusion will be evident too, since it is apprehended together with them, evident as they are. Then something non-evident is no longer deduced from evident things.

2.170 For these reasons the conclusion is not revealed by the premises either. Either it is non-evident and not apprehended, or it is evident and does not need anything to reveal it. Proof is said to be an argument that, by way of deduction (that is, conclusively), reveals a non-evident conclusion through things admittedly true. But we have pointed out that there is no argument, nor any conclusive one, nor any true one, nor any that deduces something non-evident through evident things, nor any that reveals its conclusion. So it is plain that proof has no real existence.

2.171 We will also find proof to be unreal, or even inconceivable, by the following approach. Whoever says that there is proof posits either generic proof or some specific proof. But it is possible to posit neither generic nor specific proof, as we will point out, and nothing besides these can be conceived. So no one can posit proof as existing.

2.172 Now, generic proof is unreal, for the following reasons. Either it has some premises and some conclusion, or it does not. If it does not, it is not even a proof. But if it has some premises and some conclusion, then, since everything that is proved and that proves in this way is particular, it will be a specific proof. So there is no generic proof. But there is no specific proof either.

2.173 For they will call a proof either the compound made up of the premises and the conclusion, or the compound of the premises alone. But neither of these is a proof, as I will establish. So there is no specific proof.

2.174 The compound made up of the premises and the conclusion is not a proof. First, since it has a part that is non-evident, namely the conclusion, it will itself be non-evident, which is absurd. For if the proof is non-evident, it will need something to prove it rather than being able to prove other things.

2.175 Next, they say that proof is relative, and relative to the conclusion. Relative things, as they themselves say, are thought of in relation to other things. So what is proved must be different from the proof. If, then, the conclusion is what is proved, the proof will not be thought of together with the conclusion. Indeed, either the conclusion contributes something to its own proof or it contributes nothing at all. If it contributes, it will reveal itself. If it does not contribute but is redundant, it will not even be part of the proof, since otherwise we would call the proof itself faulty by redundancy.

2.176 Nor would the compound of the premises alone be a proof. For who would say that something stated like this, "If it is day, it is light; but it is day" [it is light], is an argument, or even expresses a complete thought at all? So the compound of the premises alone is not a proof either. Therefore specific proof has no reality either. And if neither specific nor generic proof exists, and apart from these no proof can be conceived, proof is unreal.

2.177 Again, the unreality of proof can be pointed out from the following. If there is proof, it is either an apparent proof revealing something apparent, or a non-evident proof revealing something non-evident, or a non-evident proof revealing something apparent, or an apparent proof revealing something non-evident. But it cannot be conceived as any of these. So it is inconceivable.

2.178 If it is an apparent proof revealing something apparent, then what is revealed will be at once apparent and non-evident. It will be apparent because that is how it was assumed to be. It will be non-evident because it needs something to reveal it and does not present itself to us clearly of its own accord. If it is a non-evident proof of something non-evident, it will itself need

something to reveal it and will not reveal other things, which departs from the very concept of proof.

2.179 For these reasons there cannot be a non-evident proof of something evident either. Nor can there be an evident proof of something non-evident. Proof is relative, and relative things are apprehended together with one another. So what is said to be proved, being apprehended together with the evident proof, will be evident. The argument thus turns itself around, and the proof is not found to be an evident proof of something non-evident. So if proof is neither apparent of the apparent, nor non-evident of the non-evident, nor non-evident of the evident, nor evident of the non-evident, and they say there is nothing besides these, we must say that proof is nothing.

2.180 In addition to this, the following should also be said. There is disagreement about proof. Some say that it does not even exist, as do those who claim that nothing exists at all. Others say that it exists, as do most of the dogmatists. And we say that it "no more" exists than does not exist.

2.181 Besides, a proof always contains a belief, and there has been disagreement about every belief. So there must be disagreement about every proof. Suppose, for the sake of argument, that the proof that there is void is granted. Then the existence of void is granted along with it. Clearly, then, those who dispute whether there is void also dispute its proof. The same argument holds for the other beliefs that proofs are about. So every proof is disputed and in disagreement.

2.182 Since, then, proof is non-evident because of the disagreement about it (for things in dispute, insofar as they are disputed, are non-evident), it is not plain of itself but must be established for us by a proof. Now the proof by which proof is established will not be agreed upon and plain, since we are now investigating whether there is any proof at all. Being disputed and non-evident, it will need another proof, and that one another, and so on to infinity. But it is impossible to prove infinitely many things. So it is impossible to establish that there is proof.

2.183 Nor can it be revealed through a sign. It is under investigation whether there is a sign, and the sign needs a proof for its own reality. So we find the reciprocal mode: proof needs a sign, and the sign in turn needs proof, which is absurd. For these reasons it is not possible to decide the disagreement about proof either. Deciding needs a criterion. But there is an investigation into whether there is a criterion, as we have shown, and so the criterion needs a proof to show that there is some criterion. And so the difficulty of the reciprocal mode turns up again.

2.184 So it is not possible to point out by proof, or by sign, or by criterion that there is proof, and proof is not evident of itself either, as we have shown. Then whether there is proof will be inapprehensible. For this reason proof will also be unreal. It is conceived together with its proving, but it could not prove anything if it is not apprehended. Hence there will be no proof.

THE DOGMATISTS' REPLY: PROOF BY SELF-REFUTATION

The dogmatists argue that any argument against proof proves proof; skeptical arguments purge themselves along with the rest.

2.185 This much, said in outline, will be enough on proof as well. The dogmatists, arguing the opposite, say that the arguments propounded against proof are either demonstrative or not demonstrative. If they are not demonstrative, they cannot show that there is no proof. If they are demonstrative, they themselves bring in the reality of proof, by self-refutation.

2.186 Hence they also propound an argument like this: "If there is proof, there is proof; if there is no proof, there is proof; but either there is proof or there is no proof; therefore there is proof." With the same force they also propound this argument: "What follows from opposites is not only true but necessary. These are opposed to each other: 'There is proof'—'There is no proof'; and from each of them it follows that there is proof. Therefore there is proof."

2.187 Now, it is possible to reply to these. For instance, since we do not think that any argument is demonstrative, we do not say

outright that the arguments against proof are demonstrative either. We say only that they appear persuasive to us, and persuasive arguments are not necessarily demonstrative. But if they are in fact demonstrative (which we do not affirm), they are surely true as well. True arguments are those that conclude something true by way of true premises. So their conclusion is true. But their conclusion was "So there is no proof." Therefore "There is no proof" is ⟨true⟩, by self-refutation.

2.188 Purgative drugs flush themselves out along with the matter present in the body. In the same way these arguments can cancel themselves along with the other arguments said to be demonstrative. There is nothing incongruous in this. The phrase "Nothing is true" likewise turns around not only every other statement but itself along with them. Again, this argument can be shown to be inconclusive: "If there is proof, there is proof; if there is no proof, there is proof; but either there is or there is not; therefore there is." There are several ways of doing so, but for present purposes the following line of reasoning is enough.

2.189 If this conditional is sound, "If there is proof, there is proof," then the opposite of its consequent, that is, "There is no proof," must conflict with "There is proof," since that is the antecedent of the conditional. But according to them a conditional made up of conflicting propositions cannot be sound. A conditional announces that if its antecedent holds, its consequent holds too. Conflicting propositions announce the opposite: if either one of them holds, whichever it is, the other cannot. So if the conditional "If there is proof, there is proof" is sound, the conditional "If there is no proof, there is proof" cannot be sound.

2.190 Again, suppose we grant for the sake of hypothesis that the conditional "If there is no proof, there is proof" is sound. Then "There is proof" can hold together with "There is no proof." And if it can hold together with it, it does not conflict with it. So in the conditional "If there is proof, there is proof" the opposite of the consequent does not conflict with the antecedent. So this conditional, in its turn, will not be sound,

2.191 since the other one is laid down as sound by concession, and "There is no proof" does not conflict with "There is proof." Nor will the disjunction "Either there is proof or there is no proof" be sound. For a sound disjunction announces that one of its members is true and the other, or the others, false, with conflict. Or, if the disjunction is sound, the conditional "If there is no proof, there is proof" is once again found to be faulty, being made up of conflicting propositions. So the premises in the argument just stated are discordant and do away with one another. Hence the argument is not sound.

2.192 Nor can they show that anything follows from opposites, since they have no criterion of following, as we have argued. But we say all this as a bonus. For suppose the arguments in favor of proof are persuasive (let them be so), and the objections brought against proof are persuasive too. Then we must suspend judgment about proof as well, saying that there is "no more" proof than no proof.

CHAPTER 14: ON SYLLOGISMS

Standard syllogisms argue in a circle, since the universal premise rests on the particular cases it proves.

2.193 That is why it is perhaps superfluous to go through the much-talked-of syllogisms. For one thing, they are turned around along with the reality of proof, since clearly, if there is no proof, there is no room for a demonstrative argument either. For another, we have in effect already argued against them in what we said earlier. When we were discussing redundancy, we described a method by which it can be shown that all the demonstrative arguments of both the Stoics and the Peripatetics turn out to be inconclusive.

2.194 Still, as an extra, it is perhaps no bad thing to deal with them separately too, since they pride themselves on them above all. Much could be said in pointing out that they are unreal, but in an outline it is enough to use the following method against them. Here too I will speak about the indemonstrables. If these

are done away with, all the remaining arguments are overturned as well, since they derive from them the proof that they are conclusive.

2.195 Now, the premise "Every human is an animal" is confirmed by induction from the particular cases. Socrates, being human, is also an animal, and likewise Plato and Dion and each of the particular cases. From this it seems possible to affirm that every human is an animal. So if even one of the particular cases should appear to conflict with the others, the universal premise is not sound. For instance, most animals move the lower jaw, and the crocodile alone moves the upper. So the premise "Every animal moves its lower jaw" is not true.[10]

2.196 So when they say "Every human is an animal; Socrates is human; therefore Socrates is an animal," they want to deduce from the universal premise "Every human is an animal" the particular one "Therefore Socrates is an animal." But this particular premise is just what confirms the universal premise by way of induction, as we pointed out. So they fall into the reciprocal argument, confirming the universal premise by means of each of the particular ones ⟨.....⟩

2.197 from the universal by syllogism. Similarly with an argument like this: "Socrates is human; no human is four-footed; therefore Socrates is not four-footed." They want to confirm the premise "No human is four-footed" inductively from the particular cases, and they want to deduce each of the particular cases from "No human is four-footed." So they fall into the difficulty of reciprocity.

2.198 The rest of the indemonstrables spoken of among the Peripatetics should be examined in the same way. So should arguments like this one: "If it is day, it is light." For "If it is day, it is light" is, as they say, what concludes "It is light," and "It is light," together with "It is day," is what confirms "If it is day, it is light." The conditional just mentioned would not have been thought

10 Dion is the stock name for an arbitrary person in Stoic logic, something like "John Doe."

sound unless "It is light" had first been observed always to hold together with "It is day."

2.199 So, in order to frame the conditional "If it is day, it is light," one must have apprehended beforehand that whenever it is day there is certainly light too. Yet it is by means of this conditional that one concludes that when it is day it is light. As far as the indemonstrable in question goes, the conditional "If it is day, it is light" concludes that its being day and its being light hold together, while their holding together confirms the conditional. So here too the difficulty of the reciprocal mode overturns the reality of the argument.

2.200 Likewise with an argument of this kind: "If it is day, it is light; but it is not light; therefore it is not day." From the fact that day is not observed without light, the conditional "If it is day, it is light" might be thought sound. If, hypothetically, it should ever appear to be day and yet not light, the conditional would be called false. But as far as the indemonstrable just mentioned goes, the fact that it is not day when there is no light is concluded by means of "If it is day, it is light." So each of them, to be confirmed, needs the other to have been firmly grasped first, so that it may become credible through it, in the reciprocal mode.

2.201 Again, some things cannot hold together with one another, day and night for instance. From this fact the negated conjunction, "Not both: it is day and it is night," and the disjunction, "Either it is day or it is night," might be thought sound. But they think that the ⟨not⟩ holding together of these things is confirmed by the negated conjunction and by the disjunction. They say: "Not both: it is day and it is night; but it is night; therefore it is not day"; and "Either it is day or it is night; but it is night; therefore it is not day"; or "but it is not night; therefore it is day."

2.202 From this we in turn infer the following. To confirm the disjunction and the negated conjunction, we need to have apprehended beforehand that the propositions contained in them cannot hold together. Yet they think they conclude that these cannot hold together by means of the disjunction and the negated conjunction. So the reciprocal mode is brought in. We

cannot trust the leading premises just mentioned without apprehending that the propositions contained in them cannot hold together. Nor can we affirm that they cannot hold together before the syllogisms have been propounded by means of these leading premises.

2.203 Hence, since this circling back leaves us nowhere to begin our trust, we will say that neither the third, nor the fourth, nor the fifth indemonstrable has any reality, as far as these considerations go. This much will suffice on syllogisms too, for the present.

CHAPTER 15: ON INDUCTION

Induction must survey all particulars, which are infinite, or only some, which may be contradicted.

2.204 I think the method of induction too can easily be dismissed. By means of it they want to establish the universal from the particulars. So they will do this by surveying either all the particulars or some of them. If some, the induction will be insecure, since some of the particulars left out of the induction may conflict with the universal. If all, they will be toiling at the impossible, since the particulars are infinite and unbounded. So in this way, I think, induction turns out to be shaken from both sides.

CHAPTER 16: ON DEFINITIONS

Definitions are needed neither for apprehending things nor for teaching them, and can be ridiculous.

2.205 The dogmatists also pride themselves on their technical treatment of definitions, which they count as part of the logical branch of what they call philosophy. So let us say a few things about definitions too, for now. The dogmatists think definitions are useful for many things. But there are two topmost headings ⟨which⟩

2.206 they say comprise the whole of their necessity, as you will perhaps find. In every case they show definitions to be neces-

sary either for apprehension or for teaching. So if we point out that they are useful for neither of these, we will, I think, overturn all the futile labor the dogmatists have spent on them.

2.207 To begin with, then: someone who does not know the thing to be defined cannot define what he does not know. And someone who knows it and then defines it has not apprehended the thing defined from the definition. He has added the definition to something already apprehended. If so, definition is not necessary for the apprehension of things. Indeed, if we want to define everything, we will define nothing at all, because of the infinite regress. If we admit that some things are apprehended even without definitions, we show that definitions are not necessary for apprehension, since we could apprehend everything without definitions in the same way the undefined things were apprehended. So either we will define nothing at all

2.208 because of the [infinite regress], or we will show that definitions are not necessary. For these reasons we would not find them necessary for teaching either. The first person who came to know the thing knew it without a definition. In the same way, the one being taught it can be taught it without a definition.

2.209 Moreover, they judge definitions by the things defined. They say that definitions are faulty if they contain something that does not belong to the things defined, either to all of them or to some. So when someone says that a human is a rational immortal animal, or a rational mortal literate animal, they say the definition is faulty. In the first case no human is immortal, and in the second some are not literate.

2.210 But perhaps definitions cannot be judged at all, because the particulars by which they ought to be judged are infinite. And then they could not give us apprehension and teaching of the very things by which they are judged. Those things, clearly, have been recognized and apprehended beforehand, if at all. How would it not be ridiculous to say that definitions are useful for apprehension, or teaching, or clarity of any kind, when they wheel in so much unclarity on us?

2.211 For example—to have a little fun—suppose someone wanted to find out from somebody whether he had met a man riding a horse and leading a dog, and put the question like this: "Rational mortal animal, receptive of intellect and knowledge, have you encountered a laughter-capable, flat-nailed animal, receptive of political knowledge, with its hemispheres seated upon a mortal neighing animal, leading a four-footed barking animal?" How would he not be a laughing-stock, leaving the man speechless about so familiar a thing because of his definitions? So we must say that, as far as these considerations go, definition is useless,

2.212 whether it is said to be an account that leads us, by means of a brief reminder, to a conception of the things the words stand for—as is clear, isn't it, from what we said a little earlier—or an account that reveals what it is to be something, or whatever anyone likes. In trying to establish what a definition is, they fall into an endless disagreement. I pass over it now, in keeping with the plan of this work, since ⟨what we have been saying here about definition being useless⟩ seems to overturn definitions anyway. That is enough for me to have said about definitions for now.

CHAPTER 17: ON DIVISION

Dialectic claims a science of division; Sextus lists the four kinds of division to be examined.

2.213 Some of the dogmatists say that dialectic is a science of syllogizing, inducing, defining ⟨and dividing⟩. We have already discussed, after the arguments about the criterion, the sign and proof, syllogisms, induction and definitions. So we think it is not out of place to deal briefly with division too. They say, then, that division happens in four ways. A name is divided into its meanings, or a whole into parts, or a genus into species, or a species into individuals. That there is no science of division in any of these cases is perhaps easy to go through.

CHAPTER 18: ON THE DIVISION OF A NAME INTO ITS MEANINGS

Names signify by convention, so there can be no science of dividing them into meanings.

2.214 First, then, they say that sciences concern what is by nature and not at all what is by convention, and reasonably so. Science aims to be something firm and unchangeable, whereas what is by convention changes readily and easily, altering with changes of convention, which are up to us. Now, names signify by convention and not by nature. Otherwise everyone, Greeks and non-Greeks alike, would understand everything signified by words. Besides, it is up to us to indicate and signify the things signified by whatever names we like, ⟨and⟩ at any time. So how could there be a science that divides a name into its meanings? Or how could dialectic be, as some think, a science of things that signify and things signified?

CHAPTER 19: ON WHOLE AND PART

Ten cannot be divided into its supposed parts, which together would make fifty-five.

2.215 We will discuss whole and part in what are called the physical sections too. For now, the following must be said about the so-called division of a whole into its parts. When someone says that ten is divided into one, two, three and four, ten is not divided into these. For as soon as its first part is removed—to grant this for now by concession—the one, say, ten is no longer there, but nine, and in general something other than ten.

2.216 So the removal and division of the rest is made not from ten but from other numbers, which change with each removal. Perhaps, then, it is not possible to divide the whole into what are said to be its parts. For if the whole is divided into parts, the parts must be contained in the whole before the division. But perhaps they are not contained in it. For instance—to rest the argument on ten again—they say that nine is certainly a part of

ten, since ten is divided into one and nine. But so is eight, likewise, since ten is divided into eight and two. And likewise seven, six, five, four, three, two and one.

2.217 So if all these are contained in ten, and added together with it they make fifty-five, then fifty-five is contained in ten, which is absurd. So the things said to be its parts are not contained in ten. Nor can ten be divided into them as a whole into parts, since they are not observed in it at all.

2.218 The same will happen with magnitudes too, when someone wants to divide, say, a magnitude of ten cubits. So perhaps it is not possible to divide a whole into parts either.

CHAPTER 20: ON GENERA AND SPECIES

A single genus can be present in its species neither as a whole nor in part.

2.219 There remains the argument about genera and species. We will discuss it more fully elsewhere, but for now we will put it briefly. If they say that genera and species are concepts, the arguments against the ruling part and against impressions overturn them. But if they grant them a reality of their own, what will they say to this?

2.220 If there are genera, either they are as many as the species, or there is one [species, that is,] genus common to all the species said to belong to it. If the genera are as many as their species, there will no longer be a common genus to be divided into them. If one genus is said to be in all its species, then each of its species participates either in the whole of it or in a part of it. But not in the whole. It is impossible for something that is one to be contained in this thing and that in the same way, so as to be observed as a whole in each of the things it is said to be in. And if in a part, then, first, the whole genus will not follow on the species, as they suppose. A human will not be an animal but part of an animal—substance, for instance, but neither animate nor capable of perception.

2.221 Next, it would be said that all the species participate either in the same part of their genus or in different parts. But not in the same part, for the reasons just given. If in different parts, the species will not be similar to one another in genus, which they will not accept. And each genus will be infinite, being cut into infinitely many pieces—not only into the species but into the individuals too, in which it is observed along with its species. For Dion is said to be not only a human but an animal too. If these consequences are absurd, the species do not participate in a part of their genus either, if it is one.

2.222 If each species participates neither in the whole of the genus nor in a part of it, how could one genus be said to be in all its species, so as to be divided into them? Perhaps no one could say, short of inventing some phantoms. And those will be overturned by the dogmatists' own undecidable disagreements, following the skeptical methods.

2.223 In addition, the following must be said. Species are of this sort or of that sort. Their genera are either of both this sort and that sort, or of this sort but not that, or of neither this sort nor that. For instance, among somethings, some are bodies and others incorporeal, some true and others false, some white, say, and others black, some very large and others very small, and so on. Then the "something," to take an example, which some say is the most generic of all, will be either all of these, or one side only, or none.[11]

2.224 If the something is nothing at all, the genus is nothing either, and the inquiry is at an end. If it should be said to be all of them, then, besides the claim being impossible, each of the species and individuals it is in will have to be all of them too. Animal, as they say, is animate, perceiving substance, and so each of its species is said to be substance, animate and perceiving. In the same way, if the genus is both body and incorporeal, false and true, black, say, and white, smallest and largest, and

11 The Stoics made "something" (ti) their highest genus, covering both bodies and incorporeals.

everything else, then each of the species and individuals will be all of these, which is not observed. So this is false too.

2.225 If it is one side only, the genus of these will not be the genus of the rest. If the something is body, for instance, it will not be the genus of incorporeals; and if animal is rational, it will not be the genus of non-rational animals. Then there will be no incorporeal something and no non-rational animal, and likewise in other cases, which is absurd. So the genus can be neither of both this sort and that, nor of this sort but not that, nor indeed of neither this sort nor that [as a genus]. If so, there is no genus at all. If someone says that the genus is all things potentially, we will say that what is potentially something must also be something actually. For instance, no one can be potentially literate unless he is also something actually. So if the genus is all things potentially, we ask them what it is actually, and so the same difficulties remain. For it cannot be all the contraries actually.

2.226 Nor can it be some things actually and others only potentially—body actually, say, and incorporeal potentially. For what is potentially something is what can come to exist actually. But what is actually body cannot be incorporeal in actuality. So if, for the sake of argument, something is body, it is not incorporeal potentially, and vice versa. So the genus cannot be some things actually and others only potentially. And if it is nothing at all actually, it does not even exist. So the genus which they say they divide into species is nothing.

2.227 This too is worth considering. Alexander and Paris are the same person, so it cannot be that "Alexander is walking" is true while "Paris is walking" is false. In the same way, if being human is the same thing for Theon and for Dion, the name "human," brought into the structure of a proposition, will make the proposition either true for both or false for both. But this is not what we observe. When Dion is sitting and Theon walking, "A human is walking" is true said of one and false said of the

other. So the name "human" is not common to both, nor the same for both, but, if anything, peculiar to each.[12]

CHAPTER 21: ON COMMON ACCIDENTS

Sight or breathing cannot be one and the same in Dion and Theon.

2.228 Similar things are said about common accidents too. Suppose one and the same accident, seeing, belongs to both Dion and Theon. If, hypothetically, Dion dies while Theon survives and sees, they will say either that the sight of the dead Dion remains undestroyed, which is incongruous, ⟨or⟩ that the same sight has been destroyed and not destroyed, which is absurd. So Theon's sight is not the same as Dion's, but, if anything, each has his own. Again, if the same accident, breathing, belongs to both Dion and Theon, it cannot be that the breathing in Theon exists while the breathing in Dion does not. Yet it can, when one has died and the other survives. So it is not the same. That will do for now as a brief treatment of these matters.

CHAPTER 22: ON SOPHISMS

Dialectic cannot solve the useful sophisms; experts in each art and everyday experience do that.

2.229 Perhaps it is not out of place to dwell briefly on the subject of sophisms as well, since those who glorify dialectic say it is necessary for resolving these too. For if, they say, dialectic can tell true arguments from false ones, and sophisms are false arguments, it will also be able to discern these, which corrupt the truth with apparent plausibility. So the dialecticians, as though coming to the aid of a tottering life, earnestly try to teach us the concept of sophisms, their varieties, and their solutions. They say that a sophism is a persuasive argument, cunningly crafted so as to get one to accept a conclusion that is either false, or similar to a falsehood, or non-evident, or otherwise unacceptable.

12 Alexander is another name for Paris, the Trojan prince of the *Iliad*.

2.230 False, as in this case: "No one gives a predicate to drink; to drink wormwood is a predicate; therefore no one gives wormwood to drink." Similar to a falsehood, as in this case: "What neither was possible nor is possible is not absurd; it neither was possible nor is possible that the doctor, insofar as he is a doctor, commits murder; ⟨therefore it is not absurd that the doctor, insofar as he is a doctor, commits murder⟩."[13]

2.231 Non-evident, thus: "It is not the case both that I have asked you something first and that the stars are not even in number; but I have asked you something first; therefore the stars are even in number." Otherwise unacceptable, like the so-called solecistic arguments, for instance: "What you look at exists; you look at him raving; therefore him raving exists." Or: "What you see exists; you see an inflamed place; therefore exists an inflamed place."[14]

2.232 Next they try [to see, that is,] to set out their solutions. Of the first sophism they say that one thing has been granted in the premises and another inferred. What has been granted is that a predicate is not drunk, and that to drink wormwood, not wormwood itself, is a predicate. So the conclusion ought to have been "Therefore no one drinks to-drink-wormwood," which is true. Instead, what was inferred was "Therefore no one drinks wormwood," which is false and does not follow from the premises granted.

2.233 Of the second, they say that it seems to lead to a falsehood, so that it makes the unwary hesitate to assent to it, but that it concludes something true: "Therefore it is not absurd that the doctor, insofar as he is a doctor, commits murder." For no proposition is absurd, and "The doctor, insofar as he is a doctor, commits murder" is a proposition. So this is not absurd either. The argument that leads to something non-evident, they say,

2.234 belongs to the class of changing arguments. When nothing has been asked beforehand, as the hypothesis requires, the

13 In Stoic logic a predicate such as "to drink wormwood" is an incorporeal "sayable," not something one can drink; wormwood was a bitter medicinal drink.

negated conjunction is true. For the conjunction is false, since the falsehood "I have asked you something first" is part of it. But once the negated conjunction has been asked, the additional premise "But I have asked you something first" becomes true. Because the negated conjunction was asked before the additional premise, the negated conjunction becomes false, since the false member of the conjunction has become true. So the conclusion can never be drawn, since the negated conjunction never holds together with the additional premise.

2.235 As for the last kind, the solecistic arguments, some say that their conclusions are drawn absurdly, contrary to ordinary usage. That is the kind of thing some dialecticians say about sophisms (others say other things). This may perhaps tickle the ears of the more careless, but it is superfluous, and the effort spent on it is wasted. This can perhaps be seen even from what we have already said. We pointed out that the true and the false cannot be apprehended on the dialecticians' principles. We did so in various other ways, and also by overturning the witnesses to their syllogistic ability, namely proof and the indemonstrable arguments.

2.236 On the topic before us in particular, there is much else that could be said, but for now let us say this briefly. The sophisms that dialectic seems peculiarly able to refute are ones whose solution is useless. Those whose solution is useful the dialectician would not solve. They are solved by the people in each art who have a close acquaintance with the matters in question.

2.237 To mention one or two examples, suppose a sophism like this were put [to a doctor]: "In illnesses, a varied diet and wine should be approved during the abatements; in every type of illness an abatement certainly occurs before the first three-day period; therefore it is necessary, for the most part, to take a varied diet and wine before the first three-day period." The dialec-

14 In Greek these conclusions keep the object case from the premise and so are ungrammatical; the English imitates the error.

tician would have nothing to say toward solving the argument, useful though the solution is,[15]

2.238 but the doctor will solve the sophism. He knows that "abatement" is used in two senses: the abatement of the illness as a whole, and the turn for the better after the peak of each partial intensification. He knows that before the first three-day period it is mostly the abatement of a partial intensification that occurs, whereas we approve a varied diet not in that, but in the abatement of the illness as a whole. So he will say that the premises of the argument are disconnected. One abatement is taken in the first premise, namely that of the whole condition, and another in the second, namely the partial one.

2.239 Again, suppose that, in the case of someone feverish because of an intense condensation, an argument like this were put: "Opposites are cures of opposites; cold is opposite to the present heat; therefore cold is suited to the present heat." The dialectician will keep quiet. But the doctor,[16]

2.240 knowing which affections are primarily and directly relevant and which are their symptoms, will say that the argument applies not to the symptoms (and in fact, when cold water is poured on, the fever happens to get worse) but to the directly relevant affections. The constriction is the directly relevant affection, and it calls not for condensing but for the relaxing type of treatment. The heat that follows on it is not primarily relevant, and so neither is what seems suited to it.

2.241 So with the sophisms whose solution is usefully required, the dialectician will have nothing to say. Instead he puts to us arguments like these: "If it is not the case both that you have beautiful horns and that you have horns, you have horns; but it is not the case both that you have beautiful horns and that you have horns;

2.242 therefore you have horns." "If something moves, it moves either in the place where it is or in the place where it is not. But

15 The "three-day period" (diatritos) was a key interval in Methodist medicine, by which treatment was timed.

not in the place where it is (for it is at rest there), nor in the place where it is not (for how could anything act in a place where it is not at all?);

2.243 therefore nothing moves." "Either what is comes to be or what is not. What is does not come to be (for it is); nor does what is not (for what comes to be undergoes something, but what is not undergoes nothing); therefore nothing comes to be."

2.244 "Snow is frozen water; but water is black; therefore snow is black." Having collected rubbish of this sort, he knits his brows, brings out dialectic, and very solemnly tries to establish for us by syllogistic proofs that something comes to be, that something moves, that snow is white, and that we do not have horns. Yet perhaps it would be enough to set clarity against them, to shatter their confident position by the equipollent counter-testimony of appearances. That is why a ⟨certain⟩ philosopher, when an argument against motion was put to him, walked about in silence. And people in everyday life set out on journeys by land and sea, build ships and houses, and have children, paying no attention to the arguments against motion and coming-to-be.[17]

2.245 There is also a charming anecdote told of Herophilus the doctor. He was a contemporary of Diodorus, who indulged in dialectic in poor taste and used to go through sophistical arguments against motion, among many other things. Once Diodorus dislocated his shoulder and came to Herophilus to be treated. Herophilus teased him, saying: "Your shoulder slipped out either in the place where it was or in the place where it was not; but neither in the place where it was nor in the place where it was not; therefore it has not slipped out." And the sophist begged him to drop arguments like that and give him the appropriate medical treatment.

2.246 For it is enough, I think, to live by experience and without beliefs, in accordance with common observations and precon-

16 In Methodist theory every disease was a state of constriction or of relaxation, to be treated by its opposite.

ceptions, suspending judgment about what is said out of dogmatic over-subtlety and, above all, about what lies outside the needs of life. So dialectic could not solve the sophisms whose solution would be useful, and the solution of those sophisms one might perhaps grant it can solve is useless. If so, dialectic is useless when it comes to solving sophisms.

2.247 Starting from the very things the dialecticians say, one could also briefly point out, as follows, that their technical treatment of sophisms is superfluous. The dialecticians say that they took up the art of dialectic not simply in order to know what follows from what, but chiefly in order to know how to judge truths and falsehoods by means of demonstrative arguments. At any rate, they say that dialectic is the science of what is true, what is false, and what is neither.

2.248 Now, they themselves say that a true argument is one that concludes a true conclusion by means of true premises. So as soon as an argument with a false conclusion is put to us, we will know that it is false and will not assent to it. For the argument itself must either not be conclusive or not have true premises.

2.249 This is clear from the following. Either the false conclusion of the argument follows from the conjunction of its premises or it does not. If it does not follow, the argument will not even be conclusive; for they say an argument is conclusive when its conclusion follows from the conjunction of its premises. If it does follow, then the conjunction of the premises must also be false, by their own technical rules. For they say that what is false follows from what is false, but never from what is true.

2.250 And it is clear from what was said earlier that an argument that is not conclusive, or not true, is not demonstrative either, according to them. So when an argument with a false conclusion is put to us, we know at once, from the fact that its conclusion is false, that the argument is not true or not conclusive. Then we will not assent to it, even if we do not know where

17 The philosopher is traditionally Diogenes the Cynic, answering arguments against motion like those of Zeno of Elea.

its deceptiveness lies. We do not assent to the tricks of conjurors as true, but know that they are deceiving us, even if we do not know how they deceive us. In the same way we are not persuaded by arguments that are false but seem persuasive, even if we do not know how they mislead.

2.251 Or, since they say that a sophism leads not only to something false but also to other absurdities, the argument must be put more generally, as follows. The argument propounded leads us either to something unacceptable or to something we ought to accept. If the latter, we will assent to it without absurdity. But if it leads to something unacceptable, it is not we who must rashly assent to the absurdity because of its plausibility. Rather, they must abandon the argument that compels assent to absurdities—if, that is, they have chosen not to babble like children but to seek the truth, as they promise.

2.252 Suppose there were a road leading to a cliff. We would not throw ourselves over the cliff because there is a road leading to it; we would turn off the road because of the cliff. In the same way, if there is an argument leading us to something admittedly absurd, we will not assent to the absurdity because of the argument; we will abandon the argument because of the absurdity.

2.253 So when an argument is put to us in this way, we will suspend judgment on each premise, and then, when the whole argument has been put, we will add what seems right ⟨to us⟩. Chrysippus and the dogmatists of his school say that, when the sorites is being put, they must stop and suspend judgment as the argument proceeds, so as not to fall into absurdity. If so, it would surely be much more fitting for us, as skeptics who suspect absurdity, not to rush ahead as the premises are put, but to suspend judgment on each one until the whole argument has been put.[18]

2.254 And we, starting without beliefs from the observation of everyday life, avoid deceptive arguments in this way. The dogmatists, though, will be unable to tell a sophism apart from an

18 The sorites ("heap") asks, one grain at a time, when a heap begins; Chrysippus advised falling silent before the doubtful steps.

argument that seems properly put, if they must judge dogmatically that the form of the argument is conclusive and that the premises are true, or that this is not so.

2.255 For we pointed out earlier that they can neither apprehend conclusive arguments nor judge that anything is true, since they have no agreed criterion or proof; we pointed this out from what they themselves say. So, as far as these considerations go, the much-vaunted technical treatment of sophisms among the dialecticians is superfluous.

2.256 We say similar things about distinguishing ambiguities. An ambiguity is an expression that signifies two or more things, and expressions signify by convention. So the ambiguities that it is useful to resolve, namely those that arise within some field of expertise, will be resolved by people trained in each art. For they themselves are experienced in the conventional use they have made of names for the things signified. But the dialectician will not resolve them at all.

2.257 Take, for instance, this ambiguity: "In the abatements a varied diet and wine should be approved." And in everyday life we see even slave boys distinguishing ambiguities when distinguishing them seems useful to them. If someone who had slaves with the same name told a boy to call Manes, say, for him (let that be the name the slaves share), the boy will ask, "Which one?" And if someone who had several different wines said to the boy, "Pour me some of the wine to drink," the boy will likewise ask, "Which?"

2.258 So in each field it is experience of what is useful that brings in the distinguishing. But some ambiguities do not arise in any field of everyday experience. They lie in dogmatic opinions and are perhaps useless for living without beliefs. The dialectician, who is peculiarly concerned with these, will be forced to suspend judgment about them too, following the skeptical methods, insofar as they are bound up with things that are nonevident and inapprehensible, or perhaps even unreal.

2.259 But we will discuss these matters again later. And if some dogmatist tries to argue against any of this, he will strengthen

the skeptical argument. By the arguments on both sides and the undecidable disagreement, he will himself confirm suspension of judgment about the matters under investigation. Having said this much about ambiguities too, we bring the second book of the *Outlines* to a close here.

Book III

Against the physicists and the ethicists
God, cause, body, motion, place, time and number; good and bad, and whether there is an art of living.

3.1 So much, ⟨then⟩, may suffice as an account, in outline, of the logical part of what they call philosophy.

CHAPTER 1: ON THE PHYSICAL PART

Sextus turns to physics, attacking its most general claims rather than each doctrine.

Going through its physical part in the same manner of writing, we will not argue against each of their statements one by one. Instead we will try to unsettle the more general points, and the rest are canceled along with these. Let us begin with the account of principles.

CHAPTER 2: ON ACTIVE PRINCIPLES

Principles are material or active; the active ones come first.

Most thinkers agree that some principles are material and others active. So we will begin our account with the active ones, since they say these are also more important than the material ones.

CHAPTER 3: ON GOD

God cannot be conceived or proved, and providence over all, some or nothing each leads to impiety.

3.2 Since most have declared that god is the most active cause, let us first consider god. We should say beforehand that, following ordinary life without holding beliefs, we say that there are gods, we revere gods, and we say that they exercise providence. But against the rashness of the dogmatists we say the following. We ought to form a conception of the substance of the things we conceive of, for example whether they are bodies or incorporeal. We ought also to conceive of their shapes, since no one could conceive of a horse without first having learned the shape of a horse. And what is conceived of ought to be conceived of as being somewhere.

3.3 Among the dogmatists, some say that god is a body and others that he is incorporeal. Some say he is human in form, others not. Some say he is in a place, others not, and of those who put him in a place, some put him inside the cosmos and others outside it. How, then, shall we be able to form a concept of god, when we have no agreed account of his substance, or of his form, or of the place where he would be? Let them first come to an agreement and concur that god is of such-and-such a kind. Then, once they have sketched him out for us, let them require us to form a concept of god. As long as they disagree undecidably, we have nothing agreed upon from them about what we are to think.

3.4 "But think of something imperishable and blessed," they say, "and take that to be god." This is simple-minded. ⟨For⟩ someone who does not know Dion cannot think of the attributes Dion has as belonging to Dion either. In the same way, since we do not know the substance of god, we shall not be able to learn or conceive his attributes either.

3.5 Besides this, let them tell us what the blessed is. Is it what acts in accordance with excellence and exercises providence

over the things ranked beneath it? Or is it what is inactive, neither having trouble itself nor causing trouble for anyone else? They have disagreed undecidably about this too, and so they have made the blessed inconceivable to us, and for that reason god as well.

3.6 And even if god is conceived, it is necessary to suspend judgment about whether he exists or not, as far as the dogmatists are concerned. For it is not evident that god exists. If it struck us of itself, the dogmatists would have agreed about who he is, of what sort he is, and where he is. Instead, the undecidable disagreement has made him seem to us non-evident and in need of proof.

3.7 Now anyone ⟨proving⟩ that god exists proves it either through something evident or through something non-evident. Not through something evident, certainly. Suppose what proves that god exists were evident. What is proved is thought of relative to what proves it, and is therefore apprehended together with it, as we have established. So that god exists would also be evident, since it would be apprehended together with what proves it, which is evident. But it is not evident, as we pointed out; so it is not proved through something evident either. Nor is it proved through something non-evident.

3.8 For the non-evident thing that is supposed to prove that god exists needs proof itself. If it is said to be proved through something evident, it will no longer be non-evident but evident [that god exists]. So the non-evident thing that proves it is not proved through something evident. Nor through something non-evident: whoever says this will fall into infinite regress, since we shall always ask for a proof of the non-evident thing brought forward to prove the one before. Therefore it cannot be proved from something else that god exists.

3.9 But if it is neither evident of itself nor proved from something else, whether god exists will be inapprehensible. This too should be said. Whoever says that god exists says either that he exercises providence over the things in the cosmos or that he does not; and if he does, then either over all of them or over

some. But if he exercised providence over all things, there would be nothing bad and no vice in the cosmos; yet they say that everything is full of vice. So god will not be said to exercise providence over all things.

3.10 And if he exercises providence over some, why over these and not over those? For either he both wants to and is able to exercise providence over all things; or he wants to but is not able; or he is able but does not want to; or he neither wants to nor is able. If he both wanted to and was able, he would exercise providence over all things. But he does not exercise providence over all things, for the reasons just given. So it is not the case that he both wants to and is able to exercise providence over all things. And if he wants to but is not able, he is weaker than the cause that makes him unable to exercise providence over the things he does not;

3.11 but it goes against the concept of god for him to be weaker than anything. If he is able to exercise providence over all things but does not want to, he would be thought envious. And if he neither wants to nor is able, he is both envious and weak, which only impious people would say about god. So god does not exercise providence over the things in the cosmos. But if he exercises providence over nothing, and there is no work or effect of his, no one will be able to say how it is apprehended that god exists, since he neither appears of himself nor is apprehended through any effects. For these reasons too, then, whether god exists is inapprehensible.

3.12 From this we conclude that those who firmly assert that god exists are perhaps forced into impiety. If they say that he exercises providence over all things, they will be saying that god is the cause of bad things. If they say that he exercises providence over some things, or even over none, they will be forced to say that god is either envious or weak. To say these things is plainly impious.

CHAPTER 4: ON CAUSE

The dogmatists disagree on what a cause is and list containing, joint and auxiliary causes.

3.13 The dogmatists, at a loss for a way to argue against us on the substance of the matter, might try to revile us as impious too. To prevent this, we shall raise difficulties about the active cause in more general terms, after first trying to examine the concept of cause. As far as what the dogmatists say goes, no one could even conceive of cause. Besides ⟨giving⟩ conflicting and outlandish concepts of cause, they have also made its existence undiscoverable through their disagreement about it.

3.14 Some say that a cause is a body, others that it is incorporeal. In their view, a cause in the more general sense would seem to be that through whose activity the effect comes about. In this sense the sun, or the sun's heat, is the cause of the wax's being melted, or of the melting of the wax. For they have disagreed on this point too: some say that a cause is a cause of appellatives, such as "melting", others that it is a cause of predicates, such as "being melted". So, as I said, a cause in the more general sense would be that through whose activity the effect comes about.

3.15 Of these causes, most hold that some are containing causes, some joint causes, and some auxiliary causes. Containing causes are those whose presence brings the effect's presence, whose removal removes it, and whose diminution diminishes it (that is how they say the placing of a noose is the cause of strangling). A joint cause is one that contributes a power equal to another joint cause toward the effect's existing (⟨for⟩ that is how they say each of the oxen drawing a plow is a cause of the plow's being drawn). An auxiliary cause is one that contributes a slight power, and toward the effect's existing with ease: as when two people are carrying some weight with difficulty and a third comes along and helps lighten it.

3.16 Some, however, have also said that present things are causes of future things, as antecedent causes are; for example,

prolonged exposure to the sun is a cause of fever. Others have rejected these. Since a cause is relative, and relative to the effect, it cannot precede the effect as its cause. In raising difficulties about causes, we say the following.

CHAPTER 5: WHETHER ANYTHING IS A CAUSE OF ANYTHING

Arguments for and against causes are equally persuasive, so the skeptic suspends judgment.

3.17 It is plausible that there is cause. Without some cause, how could there be growth, diminution, generation, destruction, motion in general, each of the physical and psychic effects, the ordering of the whole cosmos, and everything else? Indeed, even if none of these is real in its nature, we shall say that it is surely because of some cause that they appear to us as what they are not.

3.18 What is more, if there were no cause, anything would come from anything, and at random. Horses, for instance, might be born from mice, and elephants from ants. Egyptian Thebes would get heavy rains and snow at times, and the southern regions would get no rain, if there were not some cause that makes the southern regions stormy and those toward the east dry.

3.19 Anyone who says that there is no cause refutes himself. If he says that he asserts this simply and without any cause, he will not be credible. But if he asserts it because of some cause, then in wanting to abolish cause he posits it. Let him give us the cause through which there is no cause! For these reasons, then, it is plausible that there is cause;

3.20 but it is also plausible to say that nothing is a cause of anything. This will be clear once we set out a few arguments out of many, for now, to bring the point to mind. For instance, it is impossible to conceive of a cause before apprehending its effect as its effect. We recognize that it is a cause of the effect only when we apprehend that as an effect.

3.21 But neither can we apprehend the effect of a cause as its effect unless we apprehend the cause of the effect as its cause. We think we know that it is its effect only when we apprehend its cause as its cause.

3.22 So, to conceive of the cause we must first recognize the effect, and to know the effect, ⟨as⟩ I said, we must first know the cause. If that is so, the mode of reciprocity shows both to be inconceivable: neither the cause can be conceived as a cause nor the effect as an effect. Since each of them needs the other to be made credible, we shall have no way of telling which of them to start from in forming the concept. Hence we shall not be able to state that anything is a cause of anything.

3.23 And even if someone grants that cause can be conceived, it would be thought inapprehensible because of the disagreement. For some say ⟨that something is a cause of something, others that it is not, others... For whoever says⟩ that ⟨something⟩ is a cause of something either says so simply, prompted by no reasonable cause, or will claim that he arrived at this assent because of certain causes. If he says so simply, he will be no more credible than someone who says simply that nothing is a cause of anything. If he states causes on account of which he thinks that ⟨something⟩ is a cause of something, he will be trying to establish what is in question by means of what is in question. For when we are investigating whether anything is a cause of anything, he says that there is a cause on the grounds that there is a cause of there being a cause.

3.24 Besides, since we are investigating whether cause exists, he will certainly have to provide a cause for the cause of there being a cause, and another for that one, and so on to infinity. But it is impossible to provide infinitely many causes; therefore it is impossible to state firmly that anything is a cause of anything.

3.25 Moreover, the cause produces the effect either when it already exists and is real as a cause, or when it is not a cause. When it is not, certainly not. If when it is, it must first be real and have come into being as a cause, and only then bring on the effect, which is said to be produced by it when it already is a

cause. But since a cause is relative, and relative to the effect, it clearly cannot be real as its cause before it. So not even when it is a cause can the cause produce that of which it is the cause.

3.26 But if it produces nothing either when it is not a cause or when it is, it does not produce anything at all; and so it will not be a cause either, since without producing something a cause cannot be thought of as a cause. Hence some also say this. The cause must either be real together with the effect, or be real before it, or ⟨exist⟩ after the ⟨effect⟩ comes about. Now to say that the cause is brought into existence after its effect has been generated may well be laughable. But neither can it be real before it. For it is said to be thought of relative to the effect, and relatives, as they themselves say,

3.27 exist together and are thought of together, insofar as they are relatives. Nor can it be real together with the effect. For if it produces the effect, and what comes about must come about through something that already exists, the cause must first become a cause and then produce the effect. So the cause is neither real before its effect nor together with it, and ⟨the effect⟩ does not come about before it either. Perhaps, then, it has no share in existence at all.

3.28 It is perhaps clear that through these arguments too the concept of cause turns itself around again. As a relative, the cause cannot be conceived before its effect. Yet in order to be conceived as the cause of its effect, it must be conceived before its effect. And it is impossible for a thing to be conceived before that before which [a thing] cannot be conceived. So it is impossible for the cause to be conceived.

3.29 From all this, then, we conclude as follows. ⟨Suppose⟩ the arguments by which we pointed out that one should say there is cause are plausible. Suppose the arguments establishing that it is not proper to state that there is any cause are plausible too. And suppose it is not possible to prefer any of them, since we have no agreed sign, criterion or proof, as we established earlier. Then it is necessary to suspend judgment about the

existence of cause as well, saying that there is "no more" a cause than not, as far as what the dogmatists say goes.

CHAPTER 6: ON MATERIAL PRINCIPLES

Philosophers disagree endlessly about the elements, from Thales' water to Democritus' atoms.

3.30 That much will be enough to have said for now about the active principle. But we should also speak briefly about the so-called material principles. That these are inapprehensible, ungraspable, is easy to see from the disagreement there has been about them among the dogmatists. Pherecydes of Syros said that earth is the principle of all things; Thales of Miletus, water; Anaximander, his pupil, the unlimited; Anaximenes and Diogenes of Apollonia, air; Hippasus of Metapontum, fire; Xenophanes of Colophon, earth and water; Oenopides of Chios, fire and air; Hippo of Rhegium, fire and water; Onomacritus in the *Orphica*, fire, water and earth;[1]

3.31 Empedocles and his school, and the Stoics, fire, air, water and earth. (As for the matter without qualities that some tell marvelous tales about, which not even they firmly claim to apprehend, why even mention it?) Aristotle the Peripatetic and his school said fire, air, water, earth and the body that moves in a circle;

3.32 Democritus and Epicurus, atoms; Anaxagoras of Clazomenae, homoeomeries; Diodorus, nicknamed Cronus, minimal and partless bodies; Heraclides of Pontus and Asclepiades of Bithynia, jointless masses; Pythagoras and his followers, numbers; the mathematicians, the limits of bodies; Strato the natural philosopher, qualities.[2]

3.33 So much disagreement has arisen among them about the material principles, and more besides. We shall therefore assent

1 Most of these are early Greek natural philosophers of the sixth and fifth centuries BC; Onomacritus was a sixth-century BC compiler of poems attributed to Orpheus.

2 Strato of Lampsacus headed Aristotle's school, the Peripatetics, in the third century BC.

either to all the positions mentioned, and the others too, or to some of them. But assenting to all is not possible. We surely cannot assent at once to Asclepiades and his followers, who say that the elements are breakable and have qualities; to Democritus and his followers, who claim that they are indivisible and without qualities; and to Anaxagoras and his followers, who leave every perceptible quality in the homoeomeries.

3.34 And if we prefer one position over the others, we shall prefer it either simply and without proof, or with proof. Without proof we shall not accept it. If with proof, the proof must be true. But a proof could not be granted to be true unless it had been judged by a true criterion, and a criterion is shown to be true by means of a judged proof.

3.35 So, for the proof that prefers some position to be shown true, its criterion must have been proved; and for the criterion to be proved, its proof must have been judged beforehand. If that is so, we find the mode of reciprocity, which will not let the argument advance, since the proof always needs a proved criterion and the criterion a judged proof.

3.36 And if someone wanted always to judge a criterion by a criterion and prove a proof by a proof, he will be thrown into infinite regress. So if we can neither assent to all the positions about elements nor to any one of them, it is proper to suspend judgment about them.

3.37 Perhaps it is possible to point out the non-apprehension of the elements and material principles through these considerations alone. But so that we can refute the dogmatists more comprehensively, let us spend a reasonable amount of time on the topic. As we pointed out, the opinions about elements are many, almost infinite. Because of the character of this treatise, we shall excuse ourselves for now from addressing each of them specifically, but in effect we shall argue against all of them. Whatever position anyone states about elements will come down either to bodies or to incorporeals. So we think it is enough to point out that bodies are inapprehensible and that incorporeals are inap-

prehensible. This will make it clear that the elements are inapprehensible too.

CHAPTER 7: WHETHER BODIES ARE APPREHENSIBLE

Neither body nor the incorporeal can be apprehended, so the elements cannot be either.

3.38 Some say that a body is what is capable of acting or being acted upon. But as far as this concept goes, body is inapprehensible. For cause is inapprehensible, as we pointed out. And since we cannot say whether there is any cause, we cannot say whether there is anything acted upon either, for what is acted upon is certainly acted upon by a cause. Since both cause and what is acted upon are inapprehensible, body too will be inapprehensible for these reasons.

3.39 Others say that a body is what has three dimensions together with resistance. A point, they say, is that which has no part; a line is length without breadth; a surface is length with breadth. When the surface also takes on depth and resistance, it is a body, made up of length, breadth, depth and resistance. Body is the subject of our present discussion.

3.40 The argument against these people is easy too. They will say either that body is nothing besides these things or that it is something other than the combination of them. Now apart from length, breadth, depth and resistance, body would be nothing. But if these things are body, then anyone who showed that they are unreal would abolish body too, for wholes are abolished along with all their parts. There are various ways of refuting these things, but for now it will be enough to say this: if the limits exist, they are either lines, or surfaces, or bodies.

3.41 Suppose someone says that there is a surface or a line. Then it will be said either that each of the things mentioned can be real on its own, or that they are only observed in connection with what are called bodies. But to dream up a line or a surface existing by itself is perhaps simple-minded. And suppose each of them were said to be observed only in connection with bod-

ies, and not to be real by itself. First, it will straightaway be granted that bodies have not come into being from them (for these ought, I suppose, first to have had existence by themselves, and then to have come together and made the bodies);

3.42 and then, they are not real even in so-called bodies. This can be pointed out in many ways, but for now it will be enough to state the difficulties raised by contact. If bodies placed side by side touch one another, they make contact by their limits, by their surfaces, for instance. Now the surfaces will not be wholly united with one another through and through when they are in contact, since then contact would be fusion, and separating things in contact would be tearing them apart. That is not what we observe.

3.43 Suppose the surface touches the surface of the body placed beside it with ⟨some⟩ of its parts, and is united by others with the body whose limit it is. ⟨Then it will not be without depth, since its parts are thought of as different in depth: one touching the adjacent body, the other being where it is united with the body whose limit it is.⟩ So no one can observe length and breadth without depth even in connection with a body, and hence no surface either. Similarly, suppose two surfaces are placed side by side along the limits in which they end, that is, along what is said to be their length: along lines. These lines, by which the surfaces are said to touch one another, will not be united with one another (for they would be fused). And if each of them touches the line placed beside it with some of its parts in breadth, and is united by others with the surface whose limit it is, it will not be without breadth, and hence it will not be a line. And if there is neither line nor surface in a body, there will be no length or breadth or depth in a body either.

3.44 If someone says that the limits are bodies, the answer to him will be short. If length is a body, it will have to be divided into its three dimensions. Each of these, being a body, will itself be divided in turn into three other dimensions, which will be bodies; and those likewise into others, and so on to infinity. The body would then become infinitely large, being divided into

infinitely many parts, which is absurd. So the dimensions mentioned are not bodies either. And if they are neither bodies nor lines nor surfaces, they will not be thought to exist at all.

3.45 Resistance, too, is inapprehensible. If it is apprehended, it would be apprehended by touch. So if we show that touch is inapprehensible, it will be clear that resistance cannot be apprehended. That touch is inapprehensible we infer as follows. Things that touch each other touch either part to part or whole to whole. Whole to whole, certainly not, for then they would be united and would not touch each other. Nor part to part. For their parts are parts in relation to the wholes, but wholes in relation to their own parts. So these wholes, ⟨which⟩ are parts of other things, will not touch whole to whole

3.46 for the reasons just given, nor part to part. For their parts too are wholes in relation to their own parts, and so will touch neither whole to whole nor part to part. And if we do not apprehend contact taking place either as a whole or by parts, touch will be inapprehensible. For this reason resistance will be too, and hence body too. For if body is nothing besides the three dimensions and resistance, and we have shown that each of these is inapprehensible, body too will be inapprehensible. Thus, as far as the concept of body goes, it is inapprehensible whether there is any body.

3.47 This too should be said on the topic at hand. Of the things that exist, they say, some are perceptible and some intelligible. Some are apprehended by thought and others by the senses. The senses, they say, are affected only in a simple way, while thought proceeds from the apprehension of perceptibles to the apprehension of intelligibles. If there is any body, then, it is either perceptible or intelligible. It is not perceptible. It seems to be apprehended through an aggregate of length, depth, breadth, resistance, color and certain other things, along with which it is observed; but they themselves say that the senses are affected only in a simple way.

3.48 ⟨....⟩ But if body is said to exist, there must certainly be something perceptible in the nature of things from which the

conception of bodies, intelligible as they are, will arise. But there is nothing besides body and the incorporeal. Of these, the incorporeal is intelligible from the start, and body is not perceptible, as we pointed out. So, since there is nothing perceptible in the nature of things from which the conception of body could arise, body will not be intelligible either. And if it is neither perceptible nor intelligible, and there is nothing besides these, we must say, as far as the argument goes, that body is nothing.

3.49 For these reasons, then, we set the arguments against body against the fact that body appears [to seem] real, and so we arrive at suspension of judgment about body. The non-apprehension of body brings with it the inapprehensibility of the incorporeal. For privations are thought of as privations of states: blindness of sight, deafness of hearing, and similarly in other cases. So in order to apprehend a privation, we must already have apprehended the state of which the privation is said to be a privation. Someone who had no concept of sight could not say that this person does not have sight, which is what being blind is.

3.50 So the incorporeal is a privation of body. Privations cannot be apprehended if the states are not apprehended, and it has been shown that body is inapprehensible. If all this holds, the incorporeal will be inapprehensible too. Moreover, it is either perceptible or intelligible. If it is perceptible, it is inapprehensible because of the differences among animals, among humans, among the senses and among circumstances, because of admixtures, and because of the rest of what we said in discussing the Ten Modes. If it is intelligible, there is a difficulty. The apprehension of perceptibles is not granted from the start, and it is from perceptibles that we seem to reach out to intelligibles. So the apprehension of intelligibles will not be granted from the start either, and hence neither will that of the incorporeal.

3.51 Anyone who claims to apprehend the incorporeal will make the case that he apprehends it either by perception or by argument. Not by perception, certainly. The senses seem to

grasp perceptibles by pressure and impact. Take sight, whether it happens by the stretching of a cone, or by images being emitted and received, or by outpourings of rays or colors. Or take hearing, whether it is the air that is struck or the particles of the sound that travel to the ears and strike the auditory breath, so as to produce the perception of the sound. Odors, again, strike the nose and flavors the tongue, and likewise the things that move touch strike touch.

3.52 But incorporeals cannot undergo pressure of this kind, so ⟨they⟩ could not be apprehended by perception. Nor by argument either. If argument is a sayable and incorporeal, as the Stoics say, whoever says that incorporeals are apprehended by argument is taking for granted the point at issue. For when we are investigating whether anything incorporeal can be apprehended, he simply takes something incorporeal and wants to use it to apprehend incorporeals. Yet argument itself, if it is incorporeal, is one of the things under investigation.

3.53 How, then, will anyone prove that this incorporeal (I mean argument) is apprehended in the first place? If through another incorporeal, we shall ask for the proof that that one is apprehended too, and so on to infinity. If through a body, the apprehension of bodies is also under investigation. So through what shall we show that the body is apprehended, the body we use to prove that incorporeal argument is apprehended? If through a body, we are thrown into infinite regress; if through an incorporeal, we fall into the mode of reciprocity. Since argument thus remains inapprehensible, if it is incorporeal, no one could say that the incorporeal is apprehended through it.

3.54 And suppose argument is a body. There is disagreement about bodies too, whether they are apprehended or not, because of what is called their continual flux. For this reason they do not even admit of being pointed out as “this”, and are not thought to exist; that is why Plato calls bodies things that come into being but never are. So I am at a loss how the disagreement about the incorporeal will be decided. I see that it can be decided neither by a body nor by an incorporeal, because of the absurdities

stated a little earlier. So it is not possible to apprehend incorporeals by argument either.

3.55 And if they neither fall under perception nor are apprehended through argument, they could not be apprehended at all. If, then, it is not possible to make firm assertions about the existence of body or of incorporeals, we must suspend judgment about the elements too. Perhaps we must also suspend judgment about the things that come after the elements, since some of them are bodies and others incorporeals, and both have been shown to be problematic. At any rate, since both the active and the material principles are subjects of suspension for these reasons, the account of principles ends in aporia.

CHAPTER 8: ON BLENDING

Mixture is inconceivable: a cup of hemlock blended through ten cups of water would equal them.

3.56 And even if one sets all this aside, how do they say that compounds come into being from the primary elements, when there is no touching or contact, and no blending or mixing at all? That contact is nothing I pointed out a little earlier, when I was discussing the existence of body. That the manner of blending is not possible either, as far as what they say goes, I shall indicate briefly. Much is said about blending, and the dogmatists hold almost endless positions on the question before us. So the inapprehensibility of the question might be concluded straightaway, along with the undecidable disagreement. But because of the aim of this treatise, we shall excuse ourselves for now from rebutting each of them, and we think it will be enough at present to say the following.

3.57 They say that things that are blended are composed of substance and qualities. So someone will say one of four things. Either their substances are mixed but their qualities are not at all; or their qualities are mixed but their substances are not; or neither is mixed with the other; or both are united with one another. But if neither the qualities nor the substances are

mixed with one another, blending will be inconceivable. For how will a single perception arise from the things blended, if they are mixed with one another in none of the ways mentioned?

3.58 If the qualities were said simply to lie side by side with one another while the substances are mixed, that too would be absurd. We do not perceive the qualities in blends as separate; we perceive them as a single quality produced from the things blended. And if someone says the qualities are mixed but the substances not at all, he will be saying something impossible. The qualities have their existence in the substances, so it would be ridiculous to say that the qualities, separated from the substances, [and] are mixed with one another somewhere on their own, while the substances are left behind separately, without qualities.

3.59 It remains to say that both the qualities and the substances of the things blended pass through one another and, by mixing, produce the blend. This is more absurd than the previous options, for such a blend is impossible. Suppose, for instance, that a cup of hemlock juice is mixed with ten cups of water. The hemlock would be said to be blended through all the water; at any rate, if you took even the tiniest part of the mixture, you would find it full of the hemlock's power.

3.60 Suppose, then, that the hemlock is mixed into every part of the water and extended along it, whole along whole, by the passage of their substances and qualities through one another, so that blending comes about in this way. And things extended along one another in every part occupy an equal space, and are therefore equal to one another. Then the one cup of hemlock will be equal to the ten cups of water, so that the mixture ought to be twenty cups, or only two, as far as this hypothesis about the manner of blending goes. And again, if a cup of water is added to the twenty cups, the measure ought to be forty cups, as far as the reasoning of the hypothesis goes, or again only two. For the one cup can be thought of as the twenty cups it is exten-

ded along, and the twenty cups as the one cup with which they are made equal.[3]

3.61 Adding one cup at a time in this way and reasoning similarly, one can conclude that the twenty cups of mixture we see ought to be twenty thousand cups and more, as far as the hypothesis about the manner of blending goes, and that the same cups are also only two. An incongruity could hardly go further than that. So this hypothesis about blending is absurd too.

3.62 So blending cannot come about when the substances alone are mixed with one another, nor when the qualities alone are, nor when both are, nor when neither is; and nothing besides these can be conceived. Therefore the manner of blending, and of mixing in general, is inconceivable. So the so-called elements can produce compounds neither by being placed side by side in contact nor by being blended or mixed. If that is so, the dogmatists' account of nature is inconceivable, as far as this argument goes too.

CHAPTER 9: ON MOTION

Since compounds arise through motion, the dogmatists' physics fails if motion is in doubt.

3.63 In addition to what has been said, one could consider the argument about motions, and how the dogmatists' account of nature would be thought impossible on that score too. For compounds must certainly come about through some motion of the elements and of the active principle. So if we point out that no kind of motion is agreed upon, it will be clear that, even if everything above is granted by hypothesis, the dogmatists have worked through their so-called physics in vain.

3 The cup here is the kotylē, a Greek liquid measure of roughly a quarter of a liter.

CHAPTER 10: ON MOTION FROM PLACE TO PLACE

Clear appearances favor motion, Diodorus' arguments deny it; the skeptic suspends judgment.

3.64 Those who seem to have treated motion most thoroughly say that it has six kinds: change of place, natural alteration, growth, diminution, generation and destruction. We shall consider each of these kinds of motion separately, beginning with change of place. According to the dogmatists, this is the motion by which the moving thing passes from place to place, either as a whole or by parts. As a whole is the case of people walking; by parts is the case of a sphere rotating around its center, for while the whole sphere stays in the same place, its parts exchange places.

3.65 There have been, I think, three main positions about motion. Ordinary life and some philosophers hold that there is motion. Parmenides, Melissus and certain others hold that there is not. And the skeptics have said that there is "no more" motion than not: as far as appearances go, there seems to be motion, but as far as philosophical argument goes, it is not real. So we shall set out the case on both sides, from those who hold that there is motion and from those who declare that there is none. If we find the disagreement equipollent, we shall be compelled to say that there is "no more" motion than not, as far as what is said goes.

3.66 Let us begin with those who say that it is real. These rely above all on clarity. If there is no motion, they say, how does the sun travel from east to west? How does it produce the seasons of the year, which come about as it approaches us and withdraws from us? How do ships put out from one harbor and come in to others very far from the first? And how does the man who abolishes motion go out of his house and come back again? These things, they say, are utterly undeniable. That is why one of the Cynics, when presented with the argument against motion, gave no answer but stood up and walked about, showing by his action and through clarity that motion is real. This, then, is how they try to shame those who hold the opposite position;

3.67 while those who abolish the existence of motion argue in ways like the following. If something moves, it is moved either by itself or by something else. But if by something else, ⟨.....⟩. For what is said to be moved by something else will be moved either without a cause or because of some cause. Nothing, they say, comes about without a cause. And if it is moved because of some cause, the cause because of which it is moved will be what moves it; and so there is a fall into infinite regress, following the line of thought stated a little earlier.

3.68 Besides, if what moves something is active, and what is active is in motion, it too will need another mover, and the second a third, and so on to infinity, so that the motion turns out to have no beginning, which is absurd. So not everything that moves is moved by something else. Nor is it moved by itself. ⟨For⟩ everything that moves something moves it by pushing it forward, or by pulling it, or by pushing it up, or by pressing it down. So what moves itself will have to move itself in one of these ways.

3.69 But if it moves itself by pushing, it will be behind itself; if by pulling, in front of itself; if by pushing up, beneath itself; if by pressing down, above itself. But it is impossible for anything to be above, in front of, beneath or behind itself; so it is impossible for anything to be moved by itself. And if nothing is moved either by itself or by something else, nothing is moved at all.

3.70 And if someone takes refuge in impulse and choice, we must remind him of the disagreement about what is up to us, and that it has remained undecidable, since we have not found a criterion of truth so far.

3.71 This too should be said. If something moves, it moves either in the place where it is or in the place where it is not. But not in the place where it is, for it stays in it, if it is in it. Nor in the place where it is not, for where a thing is not, it can neither act nor be acted upon. So nothing moves. This argument is Diodorus Cronus', and it has met with many rejoinders. Because of

the character of this treatise, we shall set out the more striking of them, along with the verdict on them that appears to us.

3.72 Some, then, say that a thing can move in the place where it is. At any rate, they say, spheres spinning around their centers move while staying in the same place. Against them we should transfer the argument to each of the sphere's parts. We point out that, as far as the argument goes, the sphere does not move even by parts, and so conclude that nothing moves in the place where it is either.

3.73 We shall do the same against those who say that what moves occupies two places, the one in which it is and the one into which it travels. We shall ask them when the moving thing travels from the place in which it is into the other. Is it when it is in the first place or when it is in the second? When it is in the first place, it is not passing into the second, for it is still in the first. And when it is not in the first, it is not passing from it.

3.74 Besides, the point at issue is being taken for granted. A thing cannot be active where it is not; and surely no one who does not grant outright that a thing moves will grant that it travels into some place.

3.75 Some, however, also say this. "Place" is used in two ways: broadly, as when my house is my place, and strictly, as for example the air that has molded itself around the surface of my body. What moves, then, is said to move in a place, not in the strict place but in the broad one. Against them we can subdivide the broad place. The body said to move is, strictly speaking, in one part of it, its strict place, and is not in the others, the remaining parts of the broad place. Then, having concluded that a thing can move neither in the place where it is nor in the place where it is not, we can infer that nothing can move in the broad place either, which is called a place only loosely. For the broad place is made up of the place where the thing strictly is and the place where it strictly is not, and it has been shown that a thing can move in neither.

3.76 One should also put forward the following argument. If something moves, it moves either step ⟨by step⟩ or over a divis-

ible interval all at once. But nothing can move either step by step or over a divisible interval all at once, as we shall show; so nothing moves. That nothing can move step by step is plain straight off. Suppose bodies, and the places and times in which bodies are said to move, are divided to infinity. Then there will be no motion, since among infinitely many things it is impossible to find a first one, from which the thing said to move will first move.

3.77 And suppose the things mentioned end in something partless, and each moving thing likewise passes through the first partless bit of place in the first partless bit of its time. Then all moving things are equally fast, the swiftest horse and the tortoise, for instance, which is even more absurd than the first alternative. So motion does not take place step by step. Nor does it take place over a divisible interval all at once.

3.78 As they say, non-evident things must be attested by appearances. Now anyone who is to cover the length of a stade must first cover the first part of the stade, then the second, and the others likewise. In the same way, everything that moves should move step by step. For suppose the moving thing were said to pass all at once through all the parts of the place in which it is said to move. Then it will be in all those parts at the same time. And if one part of the place it moves through were cold and another hot, or, say, one black and another white, so that they could color what came into contact with them, the moving thing would be hot and cold, black and white, all at once, which is absurd.

3.79 Next, let them tell us how much place the moving thing passes through all at once. If they say it is unlimited, they will be accepting that something moves through the whole earth all at once. If they shun this, let them define the size of the place for us. They might try to define precisely the place beyond which the moving thing cannot pass all at once, by even a hair's breadth. But that is arbitrary and rash, perhaps even laughable; and besides, it falls into the original difficulty. Everything will

be equally fast, if each of them likewise makes the transitions of its movements by precisely defined places.

3.80 And suppose they say that the moving thing moves all at once through a place that is small, but not precisely defined. Then we shall be able, in the manner of the sorites puzzle, always to add a minute extent of place to the size proposed. If they stop somewhere while we are putting this series of questions, they will fall back into precise definition and that piece of fantasy. If they admit the increase, we shall force them to grant that something can move all at once across the extent of the whole earth. So the things said to move do not move over a divisible interval all at once either.

3.81 And if nothing moves either over a divisible place all at once or step ⟨by step⟩, nothing moves at all. This, and more besides, is what those who abolish motion from place to place say. As for us, we are unable to overturn either these arguments or the appearance they follow when they introduce the existence of motion. So, as far as the opposition between appearances and arguments goes, we suspend judgment about whether there is motion or not.

CHAPTER 11: ON GROWTH AND DIMINUTION

Since substance is always flowing, nothing can properly be said to grow or diminish.

3.82 Using the same reasoning, we also suspend judgment about growth and diminution. Clarity seems to introduce their existence, and the arguments seem to overturn it. Just consider: what grows must exist and be real and increase in size, so that if someone said that one thing had grown when an addition was made to another, he will be speaking falsely. Now substance never stands still; it is always flowing, one substance coming in to replace another. So what is said to have grown does not have its earlier substance plus another added to it, but an entirely different one.

3.83 Suppose, for example, there is a piece of wood three cubits long, and someone brings another, ten cubits long, and says that he has made the three-cubit piece grow. He will be speaking falsely, because the one is entirely different from the other. So too in the case of everything said to grow: the earlier matter flows away and other matter comes in, and if what is said to be added is added, no one would call such a thing growth, but total alteration.

3.84 The same argument applies to diminution too. How could what is not real at all be said to have diminished? Besides, diminution comes about by subtraction and growth by addition. So if there is no such thing as subtraction or addition, then neither diminution nor growth is anything either.

CHAPTER 12: ON SUBTRACTION AND ADDITION

Nothing can be subtracted from or added to anything, as the case of numbers shows.

3.85 That subtraction is nothing they infer as follows. If something is subtracted from something, either the equal is subtracted from the equal, or the greater from the lesser, or the lesser from the greater. But subtraction takes place in none of these ways, as we shall establish; so subtraction is impossible. That it takes place in none of the ways mentioned is plain from what follows. What is subtracted from something must, before the subtraction, be contained in what it is subtracted from.

3.86 But the equal is not contained in the equal, six in six, for example. The container must be greater than what it contains, and what something is subtracted from must be greater than what is subtracted, so that something is left over after the subtraction; that seems to be what distinguishes subtraction from total removal. Nor is the greater contained in the lesser, six ⟨in⟩ five, for example; that is incongruous.

3.87 And for this reason the lesser is not contained in the greater either. If five is contained in six, as the lesser in the greater, four will be contained in five, three in four, two in three,

and one in two. So six will contain five, four, three, two and one. Added together these make the number fifteen, which, once it is granted that the lesser is contained in the greater, turns out to be contained in six. In the same way, the number thirty-five is contained in the fifteen that is contained in the six, and so on down, until there are infinitely many. But it is absurd to say that infinitely many numbers are contained in the number six; so it is also absurd to say that the lesser is contained in the greater.

3.88 So what is subtracted from something must be contained in what it is to be subtracted from. But the equal is not contained in the equal, the greater is not contained in the lesser, and the lesser is not contained in the greater. If all this holds, nothing is subtracted from anything. Again, if something is subtracted from something, either a whole is subtracted from a whole, or a part from a part, or a whole from a part, or a part from a whole.

3.89 To say that a whole is subtracted, whether from a whole or from a part, is plainly incoherent. So it remains to say that a part is subtracted, either from a whole or from a part, and this is absurd. Take an example, resting the argument on numbers for clarity's sake. Let there be a ten, and let a unit be said to be subtracted from it. This unit can be subtracted neither from the whole ten nor from the part of the ten that remains, that is, the nine, as I shall show. So it is not subtracted at all.

3.90 For suppose the unit is subtracted from the whole ten. The ten is neither something other than the ten units nor any one of the units, but the aggregate of all the units. So if the unit is to be subtracted from the whole ten, it has to be subtracted from each unit. In the first place, nothing can be subtracted from a unit at all, since units are indivisible. For this reason the unit will not be subtracted from the ten in this way.

3.91 But even if someone were to grant that the unit is subtracted from each of the units, the unit will have ten parts, and having ten parts it will be a ten. What is more, ten other parts are left over, from which the ten parts of the so-called unit were subtracted, so the ten will be twenty. But it is absurd to say that

one is ten and ten is twenty, and that what is indivisible by their own account is divided. So it is absurd to say that the unit is subtracted from the whole ten.

3.92 Nor is the unit subtracted from the nine that remains. For what something is subtracted from does not remain intact, but the nine remains intact after that unit has been subtracted. Besides, the nine is nothing apart from the nine units. So if the unit were said to be subtracted from the whole of it, there will be a subtraction of nine. If it is said to be subtracted from a part of the nine, then either it is subtracted from the eight, and the same absurdities will follow, or it is subtracted from the last unit, and they will be saying that the unit is divisible, which is absurd.

3.93 So the unit is not subtracted from the nine either. And if it is subtracted neither from the whole ten nor from a part of it, then a part cannot be subtracted from a whole or from a part. If, then, nothing is subtracted as a whole from a whole, or as a part from a whole, or as a whole from a part, or as a part from a part, then nothing is subtracted from anything.

3.94 Addition, too, has been taken by them to be one of the impossible things. For what is added, they say, is added either to itself, or to what was there before, or to the compound of both. None of these holds up, so nothing is added to anything. For instance, let there be a quantity of four cups, and let one cup be added. I ask what it is added to. It cannot be added to itself, since what is added is other than what it is added to, and nothing is other than itself.

3.95 Nor can it be added to the compound of both, the four cups and the cup, for how could anything be added to what does not yet exist? Besides, if the added cup is mixed with the four cups and the cup, there will be a quantity of six cups, made up of the four cups, the cup, and the added cup.

3.96 And suppose the cup is added to the four cups alone. What is extended alongside something is equal to what it is extended alongside, so the cup, extended alongside the quantity of four cups, will double the four cups, and the whole quantity will

come to eight cups. That is not what we observe. If, then, what is said to be added is added neither to itself, nor to what was there before, nor to the compound of these, and there is nothing besides these, then nothing is added to anything.

CHAPTER 13: ON TRANSPOSITION

Transposition is subtraction plus addition, so it falls along with them.

3.97 Along with the reality of addition, subtraction and local motion, transposition is canceled too (for it is subtraction from one thing and addition to another, by way of transfer),

CHAPTER 14: ON WHOLE AND PART

The whole is neither something besides its parts nor the parts themselves.

3.98 and so are whole and part. For a whole seems to come about through the coming together and addition of parts, and to stop being a whole through the subtraction of some part or parts. Besides, if there is a whole, either it is something other than its parts, or its parts themselves are ⟨the⟩ whole.

3.99 Now the whole does not appear to be anything other than the parts. At any rate, when the parts are removed, nothing is left over that would let us reckon the whole as something other than them. And if the parts themselves are the whole, the whole will be merely a name and an empty label, with no reality of its own. In the same way a distance is nothing apart from the things that stand apart, and a framework of beams is nothing apart from the beams laid on. So there is no whole.

3.100 Nor are there parts. For if there are parts, they are parts either of the whole, or of one another, or each of itself. They are not parts of the whole, since there is nothing besides the parts (and in any case, on that view the parts would be parts of themselves, since each of the parts is said to help make up the whole). Nor are they parts of one another, since a part seems to be contained in what it is a part of, and it is absurd to say that the hand, for example, is contained in the foot.

3.101 Nor will each be a part of itself, for because of the containing, something will be greater and smaller than itself. If, then, the things said to be parts are parts neither of the whole, nor of themselves, nor of one another, they are parts of nothing. And if they are parts of nothing, there are no parts, for relatives are abolished along with one another. Let this much be said in passing, as a digression, since we have happened to mention whole and part.

CHAPTER 15: ON NATURAL CHANGE

Neither body nor incorporeal, neither what is nor what is not, can change.

3.102 Some say that what is called natural change has no reality either, and they try arguments like these. If something changes, what changes is either a body or something incorporeal. But each of these has been called into question, so the account of change will be puzzling too.

3.103 If something changes, it changes by being acted upon, through certain activities of a cause. ⟨.....⟩ For the reality of the cause is overturned, and the thing acted upon is overturned along with it, since it has nothing to be acted upon by. So nothing changes either.

3.104 If something changes, either what is changes or what is not. Now what is not has no reality and can neither be acted upon nor act, so it does not admit of change either. And if what is changes, it changes either insofar as it is, or insofar as it is not.

3.105 Insofar as it is not, it does not change, for it is not something that is not. And if it changes insofar as it is, it will be other than being, that is, it will be what is not. But it is absurd to say that what is becomes what is not, so what is does not change either. And if neither what is changes nor what is not, and there is nothing besides these, it remains to say that nothing changes. Some also say the following.

3.106 What changes must change in some time. But nothing changes in past time or in future time, nor yet in present time, as we shall show. So nothing changes. Now nothing changes in past or future time, since neither of these is present, and it is impossible to act or be acted upon in a time that does not exist and is not present. Nor does anything change in present time.

3.107 For present time is perhaps non-existent as well. But to set that aside for now, it has no parts, and it is impossible to suppose that in a partless time iron, for example, changes from hard to soft, or that any of the other changes takes place, since these appear to need duration. If, then, nothing changes in past time, nor in future time, ⟨nor in present time, then we should not⟩ say that anything changes.

3.108 Furthermore, if there is such a thing as change, either ⟨.....⟩ the senses are affected in a simple way, whereas change seems to involve remembering together both what something changes from and what it is said to change into. And if it is an object of thought, then, since there has been undecidable disagreement among the ancients about the existence of objects of thought, as we have often pointed out already, we shall have nothing to say about the existence of change either.

CHAPTER 16: ON COMING INTO BEING AND PERISHING

Socrates could have been born neither when he was nor when he was not.

3.109 Coming into being and perishing are overturned along with addition, subtraction and natural change, since without these nothing would come into being or perish. For instance, when the ten perishes, as they say, a nine comes into being through the subtraction of a unit; the ten comes into being when the nine perishes, through the addition of a unit; and rust comes into being when bronze perishes, through change. So if the motions just mentioned are abolished, coming into being and perishing must perhaps be abolished too. Nonetheless, some also say the following.

3.110 If Socrates was born, ⟨either⟩ Socrates came into being when Socrates was not, or when Socrates already was. But if he were said to have been born when he already was, he would have been born twice. And if he was born when he was not, Socrates both was and was not at the same time: he was, by having come into being, and he was not, by hypothesis.

3.111 And if Socrates died, he died either while he was alive or after he had died. He did not die while he was alive, since then the same man would be both alive and dead. Nor did he die after he had died, since then he would have died twice. So Socrates did not die. By applying this argument to each of the things said to come into being or perish, one can abolish coming into being and perishing.

3.112 Some also put the argument this way. If something comes into being, either what is comes into being or what is not. What is not does not come into being, since nothing can happen to what is not, and so neither can coming into being. Nor does what is. For if what is comes into being, it comes into being either insofar as it is or insofar as it is not. Insofar as it is not, it does not come into being. And if it comes into being insofar as it is, then, since they say that what comes into being comes into being as one thing out of another, what comes into being will be other than what is, that is, it will be what is not. So what comes into being will be what is not, which is incoherent.

3.113 If, then, neither what is not nor what is comes into being, nothing comes into being. By the same reasoning nothing perishes either. For if something perishes, either what is perishes or what is not. What is not does not perish, since what perishes must be acted upon. Nor does what is. For it perishes either while remaining in being or while not remaining. And if it perishes while remaining in being, the same thing will at once be what is and what is not:

3.114 for since it perishes not insofar as it is not but insofar as it is, then insofar as it is said to have perished, it will be other than what is, and therefore what is not; but insofar as it is said to perish while remaining in being, it will be what is. But it is absurd

to say that the same thing both is and is not, so what is does not perish while remaining in being. And suppose what is perishes not while remaining in being, but first passes over into not being and only then perishes. Then it is no longer what is that perishes but what is not, and we have pointed out that this is impossible. If, then, neither what is nor what is not perishes, and there is nothing besides these, nothing perishes. This much, said as in an outline, will be enough about motions too. From it follows that the dogmatists' study of nature has no existence and cannot be conceived.

CHAPTER 17: ON REST

If all bodies are in flux, as Plato and Heraclitus say, nothing is at rest.

3.115 Following on from this, some have also raised puzzles about rest as it occurs in nature. They say that what is in motion is not at rest, and that on the dogmatists' assumptions every body is continually in motion. For the dogmatists say that substance is in flux and is always giving off effluences and receiving additions. That is why Plato says bodies are not even things that are, and prefers to call them things that come to be, and why Heraclitus likens the ready mobility of our matter to the swift current of a river. So no body is at rest.

3.116 Moreover, what is said to be at rest seems to be held together by what surrounds it, and what is held together is acted upon. But nothing is acted upon, since there is no cause either, as we pointed out. So nothing is at rest. Some also put forward this argument: what is at rest is acted upon, and what is acted upon is moved; so what is said to be at rest is moved; and if it is moved, it is not at rest.

3.117 From this it is clear that nothing incorporeal can be at rest either. For if what is at rest is acted upon, and being acted upon is peculiar to bodies, if to anything, and not to incorporeals, then nothing incorporeal can either be acted upon or be at rest. So nothing is at rest.

3.118 Let this much be said about rest too. But since none of the things discussed above is conceived without place or time, we must move on to examine these. For if one shows that these have no reality, each of those will have no reality on their account too. Let us begin with place.

CHAPTER 18: ON PLACE

Stoic and Peripatetic accounts of place collapse, though clarity favors it; the skeptic suspends judgment.

3.119 Place is spoken of in two ways, strictly and loosely. Loosely, [as] place in the broad sense, as the city is my place; strictly, the place that occupies something precisely, by which I am precisely contained. Our inquiry, then, is about ⟨the⟩ place in the precise sense. Some have posited it, some have abolished it, and some have suspended judgment about it.

3.120 Of these, those who say that it exists take refuge in clarity. For who, they say, would claim that there is no place when he sees the parts of place, such as right and left, up and down, front and back; when he is now here and now somewhere else; when he sees that where my teacher used to hold his discussions, I am holding mine now; when he apprehends that things light by nature have a different place from things heavy by nature;

3.121 and when, besides, he hears the ancients saying, "First of all Chaos came to be"? For they say that Chaos is place, from its being able to make room for the things that come to be in it. Moreover, if there is any body, they say, there is also place, for without place there would be no body. And if there is the "by which" and the "from which", there is also the "in which", and that is place. But the first part holds in each of the two cases; so the second part holds in both.[4]

3.122 Those who abolish place do not grant that the parts of place exist either. For place, they say, is nothing apart from its parts, and whoever tries to conclude that place exists by taking

4 The line is from Hesiod's *Theogony* (116); the Greek links *chaos* with *chōrein*, "to make room for".

its parts as existing is trying to establish what is in question by means of itself. Likewise, those who say that something comes to be or has come to be in some place are talking nonsense, when place is not granted at all. They are also helping themselves to the existence of body, which is not granted outright; and the "from which" and the "by which" are shown to be nonexistent in the same way as place.

3.123 And Hesiod is not a trustworthy judge of philosophical questions. Having fended off in this way the considerations brought forward to establish that there is place, they go on to establish, in more elaborate ways, that it does not exist. They make use of the dogmatists' positions on place that are thought to carry the most weight, those of the Stoics and the Peripatetics, in the following manner.

3.124 The Stoics say that void is what can be occupied by an existent but is not occupied, or an interval empty of body, or an interval not occupied by body. Place is an interval occupied by an existent and equal to what occupies it (here they are calling body "an existent"). Room is an interval occupied by body in one part and unoccupied in another. Some, however, have said that room is the place of a large body, so that the difference between place and room lies in size.

3.125 Now it is said in reply: since they say that place is an interval occupied by body, in what sense do they call it an interval? Is it the length of the body, or its breadth, or its depth alone, or the three dimensions? If it is one dimension, the place is not equal to what it is the place of. Besides, the container would then be part of the contained, which is utterly incoherent.

3.126 And if it is the three dimensions, then, since neither void nor any other body having dimension underlies what is called place, but only the body said to be in place, which is made up of the dimensions (for it is length, breadth, depth and resistance, and resistance is said to be an accident of the dimensions just mentioned), the body itself will be its own place, and the same thing will be container and contained, which is absurd. So there

is no dimension belonging to an underlying place. For this reason place is not anything either.

3.127 This argument is also put forward. In each of the things said to be in place we do not observe double dimensions, but one length, one breadth and one depth. Do these dimensions, then, belong to the body alone, or to the place alone, or to both? If they belong to the place alone, the body will have no length, breadth or depth of its own at all, so that the body will not even be a body, which is absurd.

3.128 If they belong to both, then, since the void has no reality apart from the dimensions, if the dimensions of the void underlie the body and constitute the body itself, what constitutes the void will also constitute the body. For about the existence of resistance it is not possible to make firm assertions, as we pointed out earlier. And since only the dimensions appear in what is called body, and these belong to the void and are the same as the void, the body will be void, which is absurd. And if the dimensions belong to the body alone, there will be no dimension of place, and therefore no place either. If, then, no dimension of place is found in any of the ways just described, place does not exist.

3.129 In addition, it is said that when body enters the void and place comes about, the void either stays, or withdraws, or perishes. If it stays, the same thing will be both full and void. If it withdraws, moving from one place to another, or perishes by changing, the void will be a body, since these are affections peculiar to body. But it is absurd to say that the same thing is void and full, or that the void is a body. So it is absurd to say that the void can be occupied by body and become place.

3.130 For these reasons the void too is found to have no reality, if it cannot be occupied by body and become place; for void was said to be what can be occupied by body. Room is overturned along with these. If room is the large place, it is canceled along with place; if it is the interval occupied by body in one part and empty in another, it is abolished along with both.

3.131 These things, and more besides, are said against the Stoics' position on place. The Peripatetics say that place is the limit of the container insofar as it contains, so that my place is the surface of the air that is molded around my body. But if this is place, the same thing will both be and not be. When a body is about to come to be in some place, then, insofar as nothing can come to be in what does not exist, the place must exist beforehand, so that the body may come to be in it; and for this reason the place will exist before the body that is in the place comes to be in it. But insofar as place is brought about when the surface of the container is molded around the contained, place cannot exist before the body comes to be in it; and for this reason it will not exist then. But it is absurd to say that the same thing both is and is not. So place is not the limit of the container insofar as it contains.

3.132 Further, if place is something, it is either generated or ungenerated. It is not ungenerated, since it is brought about, they say, by being molded around the body in it. Nor is it generated. For if it is generated, the place comes into being either when the body is in place (the place in which what is in place is already said to be), or when the body is not in it.

3.133 But it does not come into being when the body is in it, since the place already belongs to the body in it. Nor does it come into being when the body is not in it, if, as they say, the container is molded around the contained and so becomes place, and nothing can be molded around what is not in it. And if place comes into being neither when the body is in place nor when it is not in it, and nothing besides these can be conceived, then place is not generated. And if it is neither generated nor ungenerated, it does not exist.

3.134 These points can also be made more generally. If place is something, it is either body or incorporeal; but each of these is puzzling, as we pointed out; so place is puzzling too. Place is conceived in relation to the body it is the place of; but the account of the existence of body is puzzling; so the account of place is puzzling too. The place of each thing is not eternal; but

if it is said to come into being, it is found to have no reality, since there is no such thing as coming into being.

3.135 Many other things could be said. But so as not to drag out the discussion, we must add this: the skeptics are given pause by the arguments, but they are also abashed by the clarity. So we attach ourselves to neither side, as far as what the dogmatists say goes, but suspend judgment about place.

CHAPTER 19: ON TIME

Time seems real but is neither limited nor unlimited, divisible nor indivisible.

3.136 The same thing happens to us in the inquiry into time. As far as appearances go, time seems to be something; but as far as what is said about it goes, it appears to have no reality. For some say that time is the interval of the motion of the whole (by "the whole" I mean the cosmos), others that it is the motion of the cosmos itself. Aristotle (or, as some say, Plato) says it is the number of the before and after in motion. Strato (or, as some say, Aristotle) says it is

3.137 the measure of motion and rest. Epicurus, as Demetrius the Laconian reports, says it is an accident of accidents, attending on days and nights, on seasons, on feelings and absences of feeling, on motions and rests.[5]

3.138 As to its substance, some have said that it is a body, like Aenesidemus and his followers (for they say it does not differ from what is and from the primary body), and others that it is incorporeal. Either, then, all these positions are true, or all are false, or some are true and some false. They cannot all be true, since most of them conflict; nor will the dogmatists grant that they are all false.

3.139 Besides, if it were granted that it is false that time is a body, and false too that it is incorporeal, the non-existence of time would be granted outright, since there can be nothing besides these. Nor is it possible to apprehend which are true and

5 Demetrius of Laconia was an Epicurean philosopher of the second century BC.

which false, because of the equipollent disagreement and the impasse about the criterion and proof. So for these reasons we shall be unable to affirm anything firmly about time.

3.140 Then again, time does not seem to exist without motion, or rest too. So when motion is abolished, and rest likewise, time is abolished. Nonetheless, some also say the following against time. If there is ⟨any⟩

3.141 time, it is either limited or unlimited. If it is limited, it began from some time and will end at some time. For this reason there was once a time when there was no time (before it began), and there will one day be a time when there will be no time (after it ends), which is absurd. So time is not limited.

3.142 And if it is unlimited, then, since part of it is called past, part present and part future, the future and the past either exist or do not. If they do not exist, only the present is left, which is momentary, so time will be limited and the difficulties raised at the start will follow. And if the past exists and the future exists, each of them will be present. But it is absurd to call past and future time present. So time is not unlimited either. And if it is neither unlimited nor limited, time does not exist at all.

3.143 Further, if time exists, it is either divisible or indivisible. It is not indivisible, since it is divided into present, past and future, as they themselves say. Nor is it divisible. For every divisible thing is measured out by some part of itself, the measuring part being laid against each part of what is measured, as when we measure a cubit with a finger's breadth. But time cannot be measured out by any part of itself. For if the present, say, measures the past, it will be laid against the past and therefore be past; and in the same way, with the future, it will be future. And if the future were to measure the others, it will be present and past; and the past, similarly, will be future and present. That is incoherent. So time is not divisible either. And if it is neither indivisible nor divisible, it does not exist.

3.144 Again, time is said to have three parts: one past, one present and one future. Of these, past and future do not exist; for if past and future time existed now, each of them would be

present. Nor does the present exist. For if present time exists, it is either indivisible or divisible. It is not indivisible, since things that change are said to change in present time, but nothing changes in a partless time, as iron does when it becomes soft, or as each of the other things does. So present time is not indivisible.

3.145 Nor is it divisible. It could not be divided into presents, since, because of the swift flux of things in the cosmos, the present is said to change into the past faster than can be conceived. Nor could it be divided into past and future, for then it would have no existence, having one part of itself that no longer exists and another that does not yet exist.

3.146 Hence the present cannot be the end of the past and the beginning of the future either, since it will both be and not be: it will be, [then,] as present, but it will not be, since its parts do not exist. So it is not divisible. And if the present is neither indivisible nor divisible, it does not exist. And if neither the present nor the past nor the future exists, time is not anything either; for what is made up of non-existent things is non-existent.

3.147 This argument is also advanced against time. If there is time, it is either generated and perishable or ungenerated and imperishable. It is not ungenerated and imperishable, if part of it is said to be past and no longer to exist, and part to be future and not yet to exist.

3.148 Nor is it generated and perishable. For, according to the dogmatists' own hypotheses, what comes into being must come into being from something that exists, and what perishes must perish into something that exists. If, then, it perishes into the past, it perishes into what does not exist; and if it comes into being from the future, it comes into being from what does not exist, for neither of these exists. But it is absurd to say that anything comes into being from what does not exist or perishes into what does not exist. So time is not generated and perishable. And if it is neither ungenerated and imperishable nor generated and perishable, it does not exist at all.

3.149 Further, everything that comes into being seems to come into being in time. So if time comes into being, it comes into being in time. Either, then, it comes into being itself in itself, or one time in another. If it comes into being itself in itself, the same thing will both be and not be. For since that in which something comes into being must exist before what comes into being in it, the time that comes into being in itself does not yet exist insofar as it comes into being, but already exists insofar as it comes into being in itself. So it does not come into being in itself.

3.150 Nor does one time come into being in another. For if the present comes into being in the future, the present will be future; and if in the past, it will be past. The same must be said about the other times too. So one time does not come into being in another time either. And if time comes into being neither itself in itself nor one in another, time is not generated. But it was shown that it is not ungenerated either. Being neither generated nor ungenerated, then, it does not exist at all; for each existing thing must be either generated or ungenerated.

CHAPTER 20: ON NUMBER

The Pythagorean claim that numbers exist apart from counted things is refuted.

3.151 Since time seems not to be observed without number, it would not be out of place to go briefly through number as well. As far as everyday practice goes, we say, without holding beliefs, that we count things, and we hear that number is something. But the dogmatists' over-subtlety has stirred up the argument against this too.

3.152 The Pythagoreans, for example, say that numbers are actually the elements of the cosmos. They say that what appears is composed of something, and that elements must be simple; so the elements are non-evident. Of non-evident things, some are bodies, like atoms and masses, and others incorporeal, like shapes, forms and numbers. Of these, bodies are composite,

made up of length, breadth, depth and resistance, or weight as well. So the elements are not only non-evident but incorporeal too.

3.153 Moreover, each incorporeal thing, when considered, is seen to have number belonging to it, for it is one, or two, or more. From this they conclude that the elements of the things that exist are the numbers, which are non-evident and incorporeal and observed in everything. And not numbers in general, but the unit and the indefinite dyad, which comes about through the addition of the unit, and by participation in which the particular dyads are dyads.

3.154 For from these, they say, the other numbers come about, those observed in the things counted, and the cosmos is constructed. The point stands for the unit; the line for the dyad, since it is observed between two points; the surface for the triad, since they say it is a flowing of the line breadthwise toward another point lying to the side; and the body for the tetrad, since it comes about when the surface rises up toward a point lying above.

3.155 In this way they picture bodies and the whole cosmos, and they also say that the cosmos is governed according to harmonic ratios: the fourth, which is the ratio of four to three, as eight is to six; the fifth, which is the ratio of three to two, as nine is to six; and the octave, which is double, as twelve is to six.

3.156 These are their dreams. They also try to establish that number is something other than the things counted. If an animal, by its own definition, is one, say, then a plant, since it is not an animal, will not be one; but ⟨the⟩ plant is one too. So an animal is not one ⟨as an animal⟩, but by virtue of something else, observed outside it, in which each thing participates and through which it becomes one. And if number is the things counted, then, since the things counted are, say, people and cattle and horses, number will be people and cattle and horses; and number will be white and black and bearded, if the things measured happen to be like that.

3.157 But these consequences are absurd. So number is not the things counted, but has a reality of its own apart from them, by virtue of which it is observed in the things counted and is an element. When they had concluded in this way that number is not the things counted, the puzzle against number crept in. For it is said that if there is number, either number is the things counted themselves or something else outside them. But number is not the things counted themselves, as the Pythagoreans proved, nor something else besides them, as we shall point out. So number is nothing.

3.158 That number is not something outside, besides the things counted, we shall show by resting the argument on the unit, for clarity of exposition. If the unit is something by itself, by participating in which each of the things that participate in it becomes one, either this unit will be one, or there will be as many units as there are things that participate in it. If it is one, does each of the things said to participate in it participate in the whole of it or in a part of it? If, say, the one human being has the whole unit, there will no longer be a unit for the one horse or the one dog to participate in, or for each of the other things that we call one. It is just as if we supposed that there were many naked people

3.159 and only one cloak, and one of them put it on: the rest will remain naked and without a cloak. And if each participates in a part of it, then first, the unit will have some part, and indeed infinitely many parts into which it is divided, which is absurd. Next, just as a part of the ten, such as the two, is not a ten, so a part of the unit will not be a unit either; and for this reason nothing will participate in the unit. So the unit in which particular things are said to participate is not one.

3.160 Suppose instead that the units, by participation in which each particular thing is called one, are equal in number to the things counted that are called one. Then the units participated in will be infinite. And these units either participate in a higher unit, or in units equal in number to themselves (and that is why

they are units), or they do not participate but are units without any participation.

3.161 ⟨...⟩ For if they can be units without participation, each perceptible thing too will be able to be one without participation in a unit, and the unit said to be observed by itself is overturned outright. And if those units too are units by participation, either they all participate in one unit, or each participates in its own. If they all participate in one, each will be said to participate either in a part of it or in the whole of it, and the original absurdities remain.

3.162 And if each participates in its own, a unit must be observed over each of those units too, and others over those, and so on to infinity. To apprehend that there are some units by themselves, by participation in which each existing thing is one, we would have to have apprehended infinitely many infinities of intelligible units. But it is impossible to apprehend infinitely many infinities of intelligible units. So it is impossible to declare that there are intelligible units and that each existing thing is one by becoming one through participation in its own unit.

3.163 So it is absurd to say that there are as many units as there are things that participate in them. And if the unit said to exist by itself is neither one nor as many as the things that participate in it, there is no unit by itself at all. Likewise none of the other numbers will exist by itself either, since the argument just put forward about the unit, as an example, can be used for all the numbers. But if number neither exists by itself, as we have pointed out, nor is the things counted themselves, as the Pythagoreans showed, and there is nothing besides these, we must say that number does not exist either.

3.164 And how do those who think that number is something outside, besides the things counted, say that the dyad comes into being from the unit? When we put a unit together with another unit, either something is added to the units from outside, or something is subtracted from them, or nothing is either added or subtracted. If nothing is either added or subtracted, there will be no dyad. For the units, when apart from each other,

did not have the dyad observed in them by their own definition, and nothing has now been added to them from outside,

3.165 just as nothing has been subtracted either, by hypothesis. So the putting together of a unit with a unit will not be a dyad, if there is neither subtraction nor addition of anything from outside. If subtraction takes place, not only will there be no dyad, but the units will actually be diminished. And if the dyad is added to them from outside so that a dyad may come about from the units, what seem to be two will be four. For there is a unit and another unit to begin with, and if a dyad were added to them from outside, the number four would result.

3.166 The same argument applies to the other numbers that are said to be brought about by composition. If, then, the numbers said to be composite come about from the higher ones neither by subtraction nor by addition nor without subtraction and addition, the coming into being of a number said to exist on its own, apart from the things counted, does not hold together. That composite numbers are not ungenerated either, the dogmatists themselves make plain, since they say that these are composed and come into being from the higher ones, that is, the unit and the indefinite dyad.

3.167 So number does not exist on its own. And if number is neither observed on its own nor has its reality in the things counted, then number is not anything, as far as the over-subtleties introduced by the dogmatists go. Let this much be said about the so-called physical part of philosophy too, which is enough for an outline.

CHAPTER 21: ON THE ETHICAL PART OF PHILOSOPHY

Sextus turns to ethics: first the concepts of good, bad and indifferent.

3.168 There remains the ethical part, which seems to be concerned with distinguishing fine, bad and indifferent things. So, to treat this too in summary fashion, let us investigate the existence of good, bad and indifferent things, first setting out the concept of each.

CHAPTER 22: ON GOOD, BAD AND INDIFFERENT THINGS

Stoic and other definitions of the good state only its accidents, not what it is.

3.169 The Stoics say that good is benefit or not other than benefit. By benefit they mean excellence and excellent action; by what is not other than benefit, the excellent person and the friend. For excellence, being the ruling part in a certain condition, and excellent action, being an activity in accordance with excellence, are benefit outright, while the excellent person and the friend are not other than benefit.

3.170 For benefit is a part of the excellent person, being his ruling part. Wholes, they say, are neither the same as their parts (for a man is not a hand) nor other than their parts (for they do not exist without the parts). That is why they say wholes are not other than their parts. Hence they say that the excellent person, being a whole in relation to his own ruling part, which they called benefit, is not other than benefit. From this they go on to say that the good is spoken of in three ways.

3.171 In one way, they say, good is that by which one can be benefited, and this is the most fundamental good, namely excellence. In another, it is that according to which benefit comes about, such as excellence and actions in accordance with excellence. In a third way, it is what is able to benefit; and this is excellence, ⟨the⟩ action in accordance with excellence, the excellent person and the friend, and gods and excellent divinities. So the second sense of good includes the first, and the third includes the second and the first.

3.172 Some say that good is what is choiceworthy for its own sake; others, what contributes to happiness or helps make it up. Happiness, as the Stoics say, is a smooth flow of life. These, roughly, are the things said about the concept of the good.

3.173 But whether one says that good is what benefits, or what is choiceworthy for its own sake, or what contributes to happiness, one does not show what the good is, but states one of its acci-

dents. That is futile. For the properties just mentioned belong either to the good alone or to other things as well. If they belong to other things as well, they are not distinctive marks of the good, since they are shared. If they belong to the good alone, we cannot conceive the good from them.

3.174 Someone who has no concept of a horse does not know what neighing is, and cannot arrive at a concept of a horse through it, unless he has first come across a horse neighing. In the same way, someone who is inquiring what the good is because he does not know the good cannot recognize what belongs peculiarly to it alone, so as to be able to conceive the good itself through that. For one must first learn the nature of the good itself, and only then understand that it benefits, that it is choiceworthy for its own sake, and that it produces happiness.

3.175 That the accidents just mentioned are not enough to reveal the concept and nature of the good, the dogmatists show in practice. Everyone, perhaps, agrees that the good benefits, that it is choiceworthy (which is why it is called good, *agathon*, as if it were *agaston*, "admirable"), and that it produces happiness. But when they are asked what it is that these properties belong to, they fall into a war without truce: some say excellence, some pleasure, some freedom from pain, some something else. Yet if what the good itself is had been shown by the definitions given above, they would not be at odds, as though its nature were unknown.

3.176 This, then, is how those reputed to be the most eminent of the dogmatists differ about the concept of the good. They have differed in the same way about the bad, some saying that bad is harm or not other than harm, others that it is what is to be avoided for its own sake, others that it is what produces unhappiness. In saying these things they state not the essence of the bad but, perhaps, some of its accidents, and so they fall into the difficulty described above.

3.177 Indifferent, they say, is spoken of in three ways. In one way, it is that toward which there is neither impulse nor repulsion, such as the number of the stars, or of the hairs on one's

head, being even. In another, it is that toward which there is impulse or repulsion, but no more toward this than toward that, as with two indistinguishable four-drachma coins when one has to choose one of them: there is an impulse to choose one of them, but no more toward this one than toward that. In a third way, they say, indifferent is what contributes neither to happiness nor to unhappiness, such as health and wealth; for what can be used sometimes well and sometimes badly is, they say, indifferent, and it is mainly this sense, they say, that they discuss in ethics.

3.178 What one should think about this concept too is clear from what we have said about good and bad things. So it is plain that they have not brought us to the concept of each of the things mentioned. Nor is it surprising that this has happened to them, since they are stumbling over things that perhaps have no reality. For some reason as follows to the conclusion that nothing is by nature good or bad or indifferent.

CHAPTER 23: WHETHER ANYTHING IS BY NATURE GOOD, BAD OR INDIFFERENT

What is good by nature would affect everyone alike, but nothing called good does.

3.179 Fire, which heats by nature, appears heating to everyone; snow, which cools by nature, appears cooling to everyone; and everything that affects us by nature affects alike everyone who is, as they say, in a natural condition. But none of the so-called goods affects everyone as good, as we shall point out. So there is nothing good by nature. That none of the so-called goods affects everyone alike is clear, they say.

3.180 Let us pass over ordinary people, some of whom think that bodily fitness is good, others sexual indulgence, others gluttony, others heavy drinking, others gambling, others greed, and others things even worse than these. Among the philosophers themselves, some say that there are three kinds of goods, like the Peripatetics: some goods, they say, are in the soul, like the

excellences; some concern the body, like health and the like; and some are external, like friends, wealth

3.181 and the like. The Stoics too say that there is a threefold class of goods: some are in the soul, like the excellences; some are external, like the excellent person and ⟨the⟩ friend; and some are neither in the soul nor external, such as the excellent person in relation to himself. But the bodily things [or external], which the Peripatetics say are goods, they say are not goods. Some have embraced pleasure as good, while others say it is downright bad, so that one of the philosophers even cried out, "I would rather go mad than feel pleasure."[6]

3.182 If, then, the things that move us by nature move everyone in the same way, but we are not all moved in the same way by the so-called goods, nothing is good by nature. For it is not possible to trust all the positions set out above, because they conflict, nor any one of them. Whoever says that this position should be trusted and that one not at all has the arguments of those who hold the opposite view ranged against him. So he becomes part of the disagreement, and for this reason he will himself need someone to judge, along with the others, instead of judging others. Therefore, since there is no agreed criterion or proof, because of the undecidable disagreement about these too, he will end up in suspension of judgment, and for this reason he will not be able to affirm what is good by nature.

3.183 Again, some people also say this: the good is either choosing itself or what we choose. Now choosing is not good on its own account. Otherwise we would not hurry to get what we choose, for fear of losing the further choosing of it. For example, if seeking after drink were good, we would not hurry to get drink, since once we have enjoyed it we are rid of seeking it. Likewise with being hungry, being in love and the rest. So choosing is not choiceworthy for its own sake—not to say that it is actually a nuisance. For the hungry man hurries to get food so

6 The saying is usually attributed to Antisthenes, a follower of Socrates.

as to be rid of the nuisance of hunger, and likewise the lover and the thirsty man.

3.184 Nor is the good what is chosen. For this is either outside us or in us. If it is outside us, either it produces in us a pleasing motion, a welcome condition and an agreeable feeling, or it does not affect us at all. If it is not agreeable to us, it will not be good, nor will it draw us to choose it, nor will it be choiceworthy at all. But if a pleasant condition and a welcome feeling arises in us from the external thing, the external thing will not be choiceworthy for its own sake, but because of the state that comes about in us as a result of it;

3.185 so what is choiceworthy for its own sake cannot be external. But it cannot be in us either. For it is said to be either in the body alone, or in the soul alone, or in both. If it is in the body alone, it will escape our knowledge. For knowledge is said to belong to the soul, and the body, they say, is non-rational in itself. And if it were said to extend to the soul as well, it would seem to be choiceworthy by virtue of the soul's grasping it and the soul's agreeable feeling. For according to them, what is judged choiceworthy is judged by the intellect, not by the non-rational body.

3.186 It remains to say that the good is in the soul alone. But this too is impossible, given what the dogmatists say. For the soul perhaps does not even exist; and even if it does exist, it is not apprehended, as far as what they say goes, as I argued in my account of the criterion. How then could anyone be confident in saying that something comes about in a thing he does not apprehend?

3.187 But to leave this aside too: how exactly do they say the good comes about in the soul? Epicurus, for instance, places the end in pleasure and says that the soul, like everything else, is composed of atoms. If so, there is no way of saying how pleasure can arise in a heap of atoms, or assent, or the judgment that this is choiceworthy and good and that is to be avoided and bad.

CHAPTER 24: WHAT THE SO-CALLED ART OF LIVING IS

The Stoic excellences as arts in the soul are inconceivable, as is Plato's soul.

3.188 Again, the Stoics say that the goods in the soul are certain arts, namely the excellences. An art, they say, is a system of apprehensions exercised together, and apprehensions arise in the ruling part. But how a deposit of apprehensions, and an accumulation of enough of them to make an art, could come about in the ruling part—which according to them is breath—is impossible to conceive. For each new imprint would always wipe out the one before it, since breath is fluid and is said to move as a whole with each imprint.

3.189 As for saying that Plato's fantasy can be receptive of the good—I mean his blend of the indivisible and the divisible substance and of the nature of the different and the same—or the numbers, that is utter nonsense. So the good cannot be in the soul either.[7]

3.190 But if choosing itself is not good, and what is choiceworthy for its own sake neither exists outside us nor is in the body or in the soul, as I argued, then nothing at all is good by nature. And for the reasons already given, nothing is bad by nature either. For the things that seem bad to some people, others pursue as good—licentiousness, injustice, greed, lack of self-control and the like. So if what is natural is by nature such as to move everyone in the same way, but the things said to be bad do not move everyone in the same way, nothing is bad by nature.

3.191 Likewise, nothing is indifferent by nature either, because of the disagreement about indifferents. For instance, the Stoics say that of the indifferents some are preferred, some dispreferred, and some neither preferred nor dispreferred. Preferred are those that have considerable value, such as health and

7 Sextus alludes to Plato's *Timaeus* (35a), where the soul is mixed from indivisible and divisible being, sameness and difference; "the numbers" refers to later Platonists who defined the soul as a number.

wealth; dispreferred, those that do not have considerable value, such as poverty and illness; and neither preferred nor dispreferred, things like stretching out or bending your finger.

3.192 But some say that none of the indifferents is by nature preferred or dispreferred. For each of them, depending on the circumstances, appears now preferred and now dispreferred. If, they say, the rich were being plotted against by a tyrant while the poor were left in peace, everyone would choose to be poor rather than rich, so that wealth would become dispreferred.

3.193 So, since some say that each of the so-called indifferents is good and others that it is bad, whereas everyone would have considered it indifferent in the same way if it were indifferent by nature, nothing is indifferent by nature. In the same way, if someone said that courage is choiceworthy by nature because lions seem to be naturally bold and brave—and bulls too, say, and some men, and cocks—we reply that, as far as this goes, cowardice too is among the things choiceworthy by nature, since deer, hares and many other animals are naturally drawn to it. Most human beings, too, are seen to be cowards. Only rarely has someone given himself up to death for his country out of foolishness, or, puffed up in some other way, seemed to do something hot-headed; the great mass of humanity avoids all such things.

3.194 This is also how the Epicureans think they show that pleasure is choiceworthy by nature. Animals, they say, as soon as they are born, while they are still unperverted, are drawn to pleasure and avoid pains.

3.195 Against them too it can be said that what produces something bad could not be good by nature. But pleasure produces bad things, for pain is fastened to every pleasure, and pain, according to them, is bad by nature. For instance, the drunkard takes pleasure in filling himself with wine, the glutton with food, and the lecher in indulging in sex without measure; but these things produce poverty and illness, which are painful and bad, as they say. So pleasure is not good by nature.

3.196 Similarly, what produces something good is not bad by nature; and pains bring about pleasures. For we acquire knowledge through toil; this is also how someone gets possession of wealth or of a beloved; and pains secure health. So toil is not bad by nature. Indeed, if pleasure were good by nature and toil bad, everyone would be disposed in the same way toward them, as we were saying; but we see many philosophers choosing toil and endurance and despising pleasure.

3.197 In the same way, those who say that the life of excellence is good by nature could be turned around by the fact that some of the wise choose the life of pleasure. Thus the disagreement among those very people overturns the claim that anything is by nature of this kind or that.

LAWS AND CUSTOMS AROUND THE WORLD

A survey of sex, food, religion and burial shows that what is shameful varies everywhere.

3.198 It may perhaps not be out of place, in addition, to dwell briefly and more specifically on the views about what is shameful and not shameful, unlawful and not, and about laws and customs, piety toward the gods, reverence toward the dead and the like. For in this way too we shall find great variation about what should and should not be done.

3.199 For instance, among us sex between men is considered shameful, or rather actually illegal; but among the Germans, they say, it is not shameful but one of the ordinary things. It is said that among the Thebans too, in the old days, this was not thought shameful; and they say that Meriones the Cretan got his name as a hint at the Cretan custom; and some trace the ardent friendship of Achilles for Patroclus to this.[8]

3.200 And what is surprising in that, when the Cynic philosophers and the followers of Zeno of Citium, Cleanthes and Chrysippus say that it is indifferent? Again, having sex with a woman in

8 The name Meriones was punningly connected with mēros, "thigh," as an allusion to intercourse between the thighs.

public, though it seems shameful among us, is not thought shameful among some of the Indians. They have sex in public without concern, as we have also heard about the philosopher Crates.

3.201 Again, for women to work as prostitutes is shameful and disgraceful among us, but among many Egyptians it is a mark of honor. They say, at any rate, that those who have slept with the most men even wear an anklet, a token of their pride. And among some of them girls collect their dowries from prostitution before marriage and then marry. We see the Stoics too saying that it is not out of place to live with a prostitute or to make a living from a prostitute's earnings.

3.202 Again, being tattooed seems shameful and degrading among us, but many Egyptians and Sarmatians tattoo their newborn children.

3.203 For males to wear earrings is shameful among us, but among some foreign peoples, such as the Syrians, it is a token of noble birth. Some, taking this token of noble birth further, even pierce their children's noses and hang silver or gold rings from them—which no one among us would do,

3.204 just as no man here would dress in a flowered, ankle-length robe, although among the Persians this, which seems shameful among us, is thought most becoming. And when such a robe was offered at the court of Dionysius, the tyrant of Sicily, to the philosophers Plato and Aristippus, Plato sent it back, saying: "I could not put on a woman's robe,

when I was born a man." Aristippus accepted it, saying:

"For even amid Bacchic revels

the woman who is chaste will not be corrupted." So even among the wise, this seemed not shameful to one and shameful to the other.[9]

3.205 Among us it is unlawful to marry one's own mother or sister. But the Persians, and especially those of them reputed to

9 Both replies quote Euripides' *Bacchae* (836 and 317–318).

practice wisdom, the Magi, marry their mothers; the Egyptians take their sisters in marriage; and, as the poet says, "Zeus addressed Hera, his sister and wife." Zeno of Citium, too, says it is not out of place to rub one's mother's private part with one's own, just as no one would say it was bad to rub any other part of her body with one's hand. Chrysippus in his *Republic* holds the belief that a father should have children by his daughter, a mother by her son, and a brother by his sister. And Plato declared, more generally, that wives should be held in common.

3.206 And masturbation, which is detestable among us, Zeno does not disapprove of; and we hear that others too make use of this bad thing as if it were something good.

3.207 Again, tasting human flesh is unlawful among us, but among whole foreign nations it is indifferent. And why speak of foreigners, when even Tydeus is said to have eaten his enemy's brain, and the Stoics say it is not out of place for someone to eat the flesh of other people and of himself?[10]

3.208 To stain a god's altar with human blood is, among us, unlawful in most people's view; but the Spartans are flogged bitterly at the altar of Artemis Orthosia so that a great stream of blood may flow over the goddess's altar. Some, too, sacrifice a human being to Cronus, just as the Scythians sacrifice strangers to Artemis; whereas we think that holy places are defiled by the killing of a human being.

3.209 Among us the law punishes adulterers, but among some peoples it is indifferent to have sex with other men's wives; and some philosophers too say that having sex with another man's wife is indifferent.

3.210 Among us the law commands that fathers should receive care from their children; but the Scythians cut their throats once they are past sixty. And what is surprising in that, if Cronus cut off his father's genitals with a sickle, Zeus cast Cronus down into Tartarus, and Athena, with Hera and Poseidon, tried

10 Tydeus, one of the Seven against Thebes, was said to have eaten the brain of his enemy Melanippus as he lay dying.

to put her father in chains? Cronus, too, decided to do away with his own children,

3.211 and Solon gave the Athenians his law on acts not liable to trial, under which he allowed each man to kill his own child; whereas among us the laws forbid killing children. The Roman lawgivers order children to be subject to their fathers, and their slaves, and the children's property to be controlled not by the children but by the fathers, until the children obtain their freedom, as bought slaves do; but among others this has been rejected as tyrannical.

3.212 It is the law that murderers are punished; but gladiators who kill are often even honored. Again, the laws forbid striking free men; but athletes who strike free men, ⟨and⟩ often even kill them, are thought worthy of honors and crowns.

3.213 Among us the law orders each man to live with one wife, but among the Thracians and the Gaetulians (a Libyan people) each man lives with many.

3.214 Piracy is illegal and unjust among us, but among many foreign peoples it is not thought out of place. They say the Cilicians even considered it glorious, so that those who died while raiding were thought worthy of honor. And Nestor in the poet, after welcoming Telemachus and his companions warmly, says to them: "Or do you wander at random, / like pirates?" Yet if piracy were out of place, he would not have welcomed them so warmly while suspecting that they might be people of that kind.

3.215 Again, ⟨stealing⟩ is unjust and illegal among us; but those who say that Hermes is the most thieving of gods make it seem not unjust (for how could a god be bad?). And some say that the Spartans too punished thieves not for having stolen but for having been caught.

3.216 Again, in many places the law punishes the coward and the man who throws away his shield. That is why the Spartan woman, handing her son his shield as he set out for war, said, "Either with this, my child, or on this." But Archilochus, as if boasting to us about having thrown away his shield and run, says of himself in his poems:

"Some Saian delights in my shield, which beside a bush
I left—a blameless weapon—against my will;
but I myself escaped the end of death."[11]

3.217 The Amazons even lamed the male children they bore, so that they would be unable to do anything manly, while they themselves took charge of war—though among us the opposite is considered right. And the mother of the gods accepts her castrated priests; the goddess would not have judged so if not being manly were bad by nature.[12]

3.218 So too, views about what is just and unjust, and about what is fine in the matter of courage, show great variation. Matters of piety and the ⟨worship⟩ of the gods are also full of disagreement. Most people say that there are gods, but some say there are not, like Diagoras of Melos, Theodorus, and Critias of Athens. And of those who have declared that there are gods, some believe in their ancestral gods, others in the gods fashioned in the dogmatic schools. Aristotle, for instance, said that god is incorporeal and the limit of the heavens; the Stoics, that he is a breath pervading even ugly things; Epicurus, that he has human shape; Xenophanes, that he is an impassive sphere.

3.219 Some say that the gods provide for our affairs, others that they do not; for Epicurus says that what is blessed and indestructible neither has troubles itself nor causes them for others. Hence among ordinary people too, some say there is one god, others that there are many, of differing shapes—so much so that they even fall into the beliefs of the Egyptians, who think the

11 The Saians were a Thracian tribe against whom Archilochus (seventh century BC) fought.

12 The mother of the gods (Cybele) was served by the Galli, eunuch priests who dressed as women.

gods are dog-faced, hawk-shaped, cows, crocodiles and what not.

3.220 Hence matters of sacrifice, and the worship of the gods in general, also show great variation. What ⟨is considered⟩ holy in some temples is unholy in others. Yet if the holy and the unholy were so by nature, this would not have been believed. For instance, no one would sacrifice a pig to Sarapis, but people do sacrifice pigs to Heracles and Asclepius. To sacrifice a sheep to Isis is unlawful, but sheep are offered with good omens to the so-called mother of the gods and to other gods.

3.221 ⟨...⟩ sacrifice a human being to Cronus, which most people consider impious. In Alexandria they sacrifice a cat to Horus, and to Thetis a beetle—something no one among us would do. They offer a horse to Poseidon with good omens; but to Apollo, especially Apollo of Didyma, the animal is hateful. To sacrifice goats to Artemis is pious, but not to Asclepius.

3.222 I could cite a great many more examples like these, but I leave them aside, aiming at brevity. Yet if any sacrifice were holy or unholy by nature, it would be considered so by everyone alike. Similar things can also be found in people's religious observances about diet.

3.223 A Jew or an Egyptian priest would sooner die than eat pork; for a Libyan, tasting mutton seems among the most unlawful of things; for some Syrians, tasting dove, and for others, sacrificial victims. In some cults it is lawful to eat fish, in others impious. And among the Egyptians who are reputed to be wise, some think it unholy to eat an animal's head, others the shoulder blade, others the foot, others an onion.

3.224 No one consecrated to Zeus Casius at Pelusium would take an onion, just as a priest of Aphrodite in Libya would not taste garlic. In some temples they abstain from mint, in others from garden mint, in others from celery. Some say they would sooner eat their fathers' heads than beans. But among others these things are indifferent.

3.225 We think it unholy to taste dog meat, but some Thracians are reported to eat dogs. Perhaps this was customary among the

Greeks too; that is why Diocles, drawing on the Asclepiads' teachings, prescribes that puppy meat be given to certain patients. And some, as I said, eat human flesh without concern, which among us is considered unholy.[13]

3.226 Yet if matters of worship and of what is unlawful were so by nature, they would be considered the same by everyone. Similar things can be said about reverence toward the dead. Some wrap the dead completely and cover them with earth, thinking it impious to show them to the sun; but the Egyptians take out the entrails, embalm them, and keep them above ground with them.

3.227 The Fish-eaters of Ethiopia throw them into the lakes to be eaten by the fish; the Hyrcanians put them out as food for dogs, and some Indians for vultures. The Troglodytes, they say, take the dead person to a hill, tie his head to his feet, and pelt him with stones, laughing; then, when they have buried him under the stones they have thrown, they go away.

3.228 Some foreign peoples sacrifice and eat those who are over sixty, but bury in the earth those who die young. Some burn their dead; of these, some gather up the bones and give them burial, while others carelessly leave them lying scattered. The Persians, they say, impale their dead and embalm them with natron, and then wrap them in bandages. And we see how much grief others endure over the dead.

3.229 Death itself, too, some think terrible and to be avoided, others not. Euripides, for one, says: "Who knows whether living is being dead, / and being dead is counted living down below?" And Epicurus says: "Death is nothing to us; for what has been dissolved has no sensation, and what has no sensation is nothing to us." They also say that if we are composed of soul and body, and death is the dissolution of soul and body, then when we exist death does not exist (for we are not being dissolved), and when death exists we do not exist; for since the combination of soul and body no longer exists, neither do we.

13 Diocles of Carystus was a fourth-century BC physician; the Asclepiads were the medical guild that traced itself back to Asclepius.

3.230 Heraclitus says that both living and dying are present both in our living and in our being dead. For when we live, our souls are dead and buried in us; and when we die, our souls come back to life and live. Some even suppose that dying is better for us than living. Euripides, for one, says: "We ought to gather together
and mourn the newborn for all the ills he is entering,
but the one who has died and ceased from troubles
to send forth from the house with joy and words of blessing." And these lines too were spoken from the same view:

3.231 "Best of all for mortals is never to be born, / nor to see the rays of the piercing sun; but once born, to pass as quickly as may be through the gates of Hades, and lie with much earth heaped over one." And we know the story of Cleobis and Biton, which Herodotus tells in his account of the priestess of Argos.[14]

3.232 Some Thracians, too, are reported to sit around a newborn child and lament. So death would not be considered one of the things that are terrible by nature, just as living is not one of the things that are fine by nature. Nor, then, is any of the things mentioned above by nature of this kind or that; all are matters of convention and relative.

3.233 The same method of argument can be carried over to each of the other cases, which we have not set out now, to keep the account brief. And even if there are some matters about which we cannot point to variation straight away, we must say that it is possible that there is disagreement about these too among some peoples unknown to us.

3.234 If, say, we did not know the Egyptian custom of marrying sisters, we would be wrong to affirm that it is agreed by everyone that one should not marry one's sisters. In the same way, about those matters in which no variations come to our notice, it is not proper to affirm that there is no disagreement about

14 Herodotus (1.31): after the brothers drew their mother, a priestess of Hera, to the temple by cart, the goddess granted them the best gift for mortals—death in their sleep.

them, since it is possible, as I said, that among some of the peoples unknown to us there is disagreement about them.

THE SKEPTIC'S MODERATE FEELING

Without beliefs about natural good and bad, the skeptic suffers only moderately and avoids added turmoil.

3.235 The skeptic, then, seeing so much variation in things, suspends judgment about whether anything is by nature good or bad, or in general to be done, and in this he keeps clear of the dogmatists' rashness. He follows the observance of everyday life without holding beliefs, and for this reason he remains unaffected in matters of belief, while in matters forced upon him he has moderate feeling.

3.236 For as a human being with senses he is affected; but since he does not add the belief that what he is undergoing is bad by nature, his feeling is moderate. For adding a belief of that kind is worse than the actual undergoing: sometimes people who are being operated on, or undergoing something of the sort, bear it, while the bystanders faint because of their belief that what is happening is bad.

3.237 But the person who has posited that something is by nature good or bad, or in general to be done or not to be done, is troubled in all sorts of ways. When the things he thinks bad by nature are present to him, he thinks he is being hounded by avengers; and when he gets hold of what seem to him good things, he falls into no ordinary troubles, both from conceit and from fear of losing them, [and] being anxious that he may again find himself among the things he considers bad by nature.

3.238 As for those who say that goods cannot be lost, we shall bring them to a standstill with the impasse that arises from the disagreement. Hence we conclude that if what produces something bad is bad and to be avoided, and the conviction that these things are good by nature and those bad produces troubles, then positing and being convinced that anything is bad or good in its

nature is bad and to be avoided. That is enough, for now, about good, bad and indifferent things.

CHAPTER 25: WHETHER THERE IS AN ART OF LIVING

The art of living has no specific works, and the Stoics' own precepts are monstrous.

3.239 It is clear from what has been said that there could not be any art of living either. For if there is such an art, it is concerned with the study of good, bad and indifferent things; so, since these do not exist, the art of living does not exist either. Besides, since the dogmatists do not all agree in recognizing a single art of living, but different ones posit different arts, they fall under the disagreement and the argument from disagreement that I put forward in what we said about the good.

3.240 But even if, for the sake of hypothesis, they all said that the art of living is one—for instance, the celebrated practical wisdom that the Stoics dream about, which seems more impressive than the others—absurdities will follow just the same. For since practical wisdom is an excellence, and only the wise man had excellence, the Stoics, not being wise, will not

3.241 have the art of living. And in general, since according to them an art cannot exist, there will not be an art of living either, as far as what they say goes. For instance, they say that an art is a system of apprehensions, and that an apprehension is assent to an apprehensive impression. But the apprehensive impression cannot be found. For not every impression is apprehensive, nor can it be recognized which of the impressions is the apprehensive one, since we cannot simply judge by any impression whatever which is apprehensive and which is not. And since we need an apprehensive impression in order to recognize which is the apprehensive impression, we are thrown into an infinite regress, demanding another apprehensive impression to recognize the one taken to be apprehensive.

3.242 That is why the Stoics too go astray in setting out the concept of the apprehensive impression. They say that an appre-

hensive impression is one that comes from what is real, and that what is real is what is capable of producing an apprehensive impression; and so they fall into the mode of reciprocity. If, then, for there to be an art of living there must first be an art, and for an art to exist apprehension must already exist, and for apprehension to exist assent to an apprehensive impression must have been apprehended, but the apprehensive impression cannot be found, then the art of living cannot be found.

3.243 This too is said. Every art seems to be apprehended from the works it specifically produces; but there is no work specific to the art of living. For whatever one says is its work turns out to be common to ordinary people as well—honoring one's parents, for instance, returning deposits, and all the rest. So there is no art of living. Nor shall we recognize that something is a work of practical wisdom from the fact that it appears to be done or produced by the practically wise man from a wise disposition (as some say).

3.244 For the wise disposition itself is inapprehensible, since it appears neither from itself, simply and directly, nor from its works; for these are common to ordinary people too. And to say that we apprehend the person who has the art of living by the consistency of his actions is the talk of people who overrate human nature and are praying rather than telling the truth: "For such is the mind of men upon the earth / as the day the father of men and gods brings on them."

3.245 It remains to say that the art of living is apprehended from the works they record in their books. Since these are many and similar to one another, I shall set out a few by way of example. For instance, the founder of their school, Zeno, in his *Discourses*, says this, among other similar things, about the upbringing of boys: "Have intercourse between the thighs no more and no less with a beloved than with one who is not a beloved, nor with females than with males; for it makes no difference whether with beloveds or not, or with females or males, but the same things are fitting and suitable."

3.246 On piety toward parents, the same man says, with reference to the story of Jocasta and Oedipus, that there was nothing terrible in his rubbing his mother. "If, when she was ill, he had helped her by rubbing some other part of her body with his hands, there would be nothing shameful in it. Then if he gave her pleasure by rubbing other parts, putting an end to her distress, and begot noble children by his mother, was that shameful?" Chrysippus agrees with this. In his *Republic*, at any rate, he says: "It seems to me right to arrange these matters too in the way that is customary even now, and not wrongly, among many peoples: so that a mother has children by her son, a father by his daughter, and a brother by his sister born of the same mother."

3.247 And in the same treatises he ⟨repeatedly⟩ introduces ⟨even⟩ cannibalism to us. At any rate he says: "And if a part useful for food is cut off from the living, we should neither bury it nor throw it away in some other manner, but consume it, so that from our parts another part may come into being."

3.248 In his work *On What Is Appropriate*, on the burial of parents, he says explicitly: "When our parents have passed away, we should use the simplest burials, since the body, like nails or teeth or hair, is nothing to us, and we do not need to pay any such attention or care. So if the flesh is useful, they will use it for food, just as with one's own parts—for instance, if a foot is cut off, it would be fitting to use it and the like. But if it is useless, they will either bury it and leave it, or burn it and let the ashes go, or throw it far away and pay it no more attention than a nail or hair."

3.249 The philosophers say a great many things of this sort—things they would not dare to put into practice unless they lived as citizens among the Cyclopes or the Laestrygonians. And if they never act on these at all, while what they do is common to ordinary people too, there is no work specific to those suspected of having the art of living. So if arts must in every case be apprehended from their specific works, and no specific work is seen

for the so-called art of living, it is not apprehended. That is why no one can affirm about it that it is real.[15]

CHAPTER 26: WHETHER THE ART OF LIVING ARISES IN HUMAN BEINGS

The art of living cannot belong to humans by nature, since most are bad.

3.250 Moreover, if the art of living arises in human beings, it arises in them either by nature or through learning and teaching. If by nature, the art of living would arise in them either insofar as they are human beings or insofar as they are not human beings. Insofar as they are not human beings, not at all—for it is not the case that they are not human beings. If insofar as they are human beings, then practical wisdom would belong to all human beings, so that all would be practically wise, excellent and wise.

3.251 But they say that most people are bad. So the art of living would not belong to them insofar as they are human beings either; and so not by nature. Besides, since they hold that an art is a system of apprehensions exercised together, they suggest rather that the other arts, and the one under discussion too, are acquired through some experience and learning.

CHAPTER 27: WHETHER THE ART OF LIVING IS TEACHABLE

Teaching requires a subject taught, a teacher and learner, and a method.

3.252 But it is not acquired by teaching and learning either. For these to exist, three things must first be agreed: the thing taught, the teacher and the learner, and the method of learning. But none of these exists; so neither does teaching.

15 The Cyclopes and Laestrygonians are the man-eating giants of Homer's *Odyssey*.

CHAPTER 28: WHETHER ANYTHING IS TAUGHT

Neither the true nor the false, the apparent nor the non-evident, can be taught.

3.253 For instance, what is taught is either true or false. If it is false, it would not be taught; for they say the false does not exist, and there could be no teaching of what does not exist. Nor if it were said to be true; for we pointed out in our discussion of the criterion that the true does not exist. So if neither the false nor the true is taught, and apart from these nothing is teachable (for surely no one will say that, while these cannot be taught, people teach only the puzzling things), then nothing is taught.

3.254 Again, the thing taught is either apparent or non-evident. If it is apparent, it will not need teaching, for what appears appears to everyone alike. If it is non-evident, it will not be teachable, since non-evident things are inapprehensible because of the undecidable disagreement about them, as we have often pointed out; for how could anyone teach or learn what he does not apprehend? And if neither what appears nor what is non-evident is taught, nothing is taught.

3.255 Further, what is taught is either a body or incorporeal; and each of these, being either apparent or non-evident, cannot be taught, by the argument we gave a little earlier.

3.256 So nothing is taught. Moreover, either what is is taught or what is not. Now what is not is not taught. For if what is not is taught, then, since teachings are thought to be of truths, what is not will be true. And being true, it will also be real; for they say that the true is what is real and is opposed to something. But it is absurd to say that what is not is real. So what is not is not taught.

3.257 But neither is what is. For if what is is taught, it is taught either insofar as it is or in virtue of something else. If it is teachable insofar as it ⟨is⟩, it will be one of the things that are, and for that reason not teachable; for teaching must proceed from things that are agreed and need no teaching. So what is is not

teachable insofar as it is. Nor, indeed, in virtue of something else.

3.258 For what is has nothing else accidental to it that is not. So if what is is not taught insofar as it is, it will not be taught in virtue of anything else either; for whatever is accidental to it is. Besides, whether the being they will say is taught is apparent or non-evident, it falls under the puzzles already stated and will be unteachable. And if neither what is nor what is not is taught, there is nothing that is taught.

CHAPTER 29: WHETHER THERE IS A TEACHER AND A LEARNER

Neither expert nor non-expert can teach the other, so there is no teacher.

3.259 The teacher and the learner are overturned along with this; but they are no less puzzling taken on their own. For either the expert teaches the expert, or the non-expert the non-expert, or the non-expert the expert, or the expert the non-expert. Now the expert does not teach the expert; for neither of them, insofar as he is an expert, needs learning. Nor does the non-expert teach the non-expert, any more than the blind can lead the blind. Nor the non-expert the expert:

3.260 that would be ridiculous. It remains to say that the expert teaches the non-expert; but this too is impossible. For it is said to be altogether impossible for an expert to exist, since no one is seen to be an expert spontaneously, from birth, nor does anyone become an expert from being a non-expert. For either one theorem and a single apprehension can make the non-expert an expert, or not at all.

3.261 If a single apprehension makes the non-expert an expert, then, first, it will be possible to say that an art is not a system of apprehensions; for someone who knew nothing at all would, if taught one theorem of an art, be called an expert on that basis. Then too, suppose someone says that a person who has acquired some theorems of an art and needs one more, and is for that reason a non-expert, is made an expert from a non-expert by a

single apprehension if he acquires that one: he will be speaking arbitrarily.

3.262 For in particular cases he could not point to someone who is still a non-expert but will be an expert if he acquires some one theorem. Surely no one knows the count of the theorems of each art, so as to be able to tally the theorems already known and say how many are left to make up the full number of the art's theorems. So knowledge of one theorem does not make the non-expert an expert.

3.263 And if this is true, then, since no one acquires all the theorems of the arts at once, but, if at all, one at a time (to grant this too for the sake of hypothesis), the person said to acquire the theorems of the art one at a time would not become an expert; for we pointed out that knowledge of a single theorem cannot make a non-expert an expert. So no one becomes an expert from being a non-expert either. Therefore, for these reasons too, the expert appears not to exist; and for this reason neither does the teacher.

3.264 Nor can the person said to be learning, being a non-expert, learn and apprehend the theorems of the art in which he is a non-expert. Someone blind from birth, insofar as he is blind, could not get a perception of colors, nor likewise someone deaf from birth a perception of sound; just so, the non-expert could not apprehend the theorems of the art in which he is a non-expert. For in that case the same person would be both an expert and a non-expert in the same things: a non-expert, since that is the hypothesis, and an expert, since he has apprehension of the art's theorems.

3.265 So the expert does not teach the non-expert either. And if neither the expert teaches the expert, nor the non-expert the non-expert, nor the non-expert the expert, nor the expert the non-expert, and apart from these there is nothing, then there is neither a teacher nor a person taught.

CHAPTER 30: WHETHER THERE IS ANY METHOD OF LEARNING

Teaching works neither by clarity nor by speech, so there is no method of learning.

Since there is neither learner nor teacher, the method of teaching is superfluous as well.

3.266 But ⟨it⟩ is no less puzzling for the following reasons. The method of teaching works either by clarity or by speech; but it works neither by clarity nor by speech, as we shall show; so the method of learning is not easy to come by either. Teaching does not work by clarity, since clarity belongs to things that are shown. What is shown is apparent to everyone; what is apparent, insofar as it appears, can be grasped by everyone; and what can be grasped by everyone in common cannot be taught. So nothing is teachable by clarity. Nor, indeed, is anything taught by speech.

3.267 For speech either signifies something or signifies nothing. If it signifies nothing, it will not teach anything either. If it signifies something, it signifies either by nature or by convention. It does not signify by nature, because not everyone understands everyone when they hear them—Greeks do not understand non-Greeks, for instance, nor non-Greeks Greeks.

3.268 If it signifies by convention, it is clear that those who have already apprehended the things the words are assigned to will grasp them—not by being taught by the words what they did not know, but by recalling and renewing what they knew—whereas those who need to learn what they do not know, and do not know what the words are assigned to, will grasp nothing.

3.269 So the method of learning could not exist either. Moreover, the teacher must produce in the learner an apprehension of the theorems of the art being taught, so that the learner, by apprehending the system of them, may thus become an expert. But apprehension is nothing, as we pointed out earlier; so the method of teaching cannot exist either. And if neither the

thing taught exists, nor the teacher and the learner, nor the method of learning, then there is neither learning nor teaching.

3.270 These arguments have been made in fairly general terms about learning and teaching; but one can raise the same puzzles about the so-called art of living in particular. For instance, we showed earlier that the thing taught, namely practical wisdom, does not exist; and the teacher and the learner do not exist either. For either the wise man will teach the art of living to the wise man, or the fool to the fool, or the fool to the wise man, or the wise man to the fool; but none of these teaches any of the others. So the so-called art of living is not taught.

3.271 About the other cases it is perhaps superfluous even to speak. But suppose the wise man teaches the fool practical wisdom. Practical wisdom is knowledge of things good, bad and neither; so the fool, not having practical wisdom, is ignorant of things good, bad and neither. And being ignorant of these, when the wise man teaches him the good, the bad and the neither, he will certainly only hear what is said; he will not know these things. For if he grasped them while remaining in a state of folly, folly too would be capable of discerning things good, bad and neither.

3.272 But according to them folly is not capable of discerning these things, since then the fool would be wise. So the fool does not grasp what the wise man says or does in accordance with the principle of practical wisdom. And not grasping it, he could not be taught by him—especially since, as we said before, he cannot be taught either by clarity or through speech. So, then: if the so-called art of living arises in no one, either through learning and teaching or by nature, the art of living that the philosophers keep harping on cannot be found.

3.273 Yet even if one were to grant, most generously, that this dreamed-of art of living does arise in someone, it will appear harmful and a cause of turmoil to those who have it, rather than beneficial.

CHAPTER 31: WHETHER THE ART OF LIVING BENEFITS THE ONE WHO HAS IT

The self-controlled sage either has no bad impulses to master or is the most troubled of men.

For instance, to mention a few examples out of many, the art of living might seem to benefit the wise man by giving him self-control in his impulses toward the fine and his repulsions from the bad.

3.274 Now the wise man whom they call self-controlled is called self-controlled either in that he never has any impulse toward the bad or repulsion from the good, or in that he did have bad impulses and repulsions but mastered them by reason.

3.275 But in virtue of not having bad judgments he would not be self-controlled; for he will not control what he does not have. No one would call a eunuch self-controlled with regard to sex, or a man with a bad stomach self-controlled with regard to enjoying food (for they have no desire for such things at all, which they might rise above with self-control). In the same way, the wise man should not be called self-controlled either, since no feeling arises in him over which he could exercise control.

3.276 But if they claim that he is self-controlled in that he does have bad judgments but overcomes them by reason, then, first, they will be granting that practical wisdom has done him no good, since he is still in turmoil and in need of help; and second, he turns out to be more wretched than the people they call bad. For if he has an impulse toward something, he is certainly troubled; and if he masters it by reason, he holds the bad thing inside himself, and for this reason he is more troubled than the bad man, who no longer suffers this.

3.277 For the bad man, if he has an impulse, is troubled; but if he gets what he desires, he is rid of his trouble. So the wise man does not become self-controlled, as far as practical wisdom goes; or if he does, he is the most wretched of all human beings, so that the art of living has given him not benefit but the greatest turmoil. And we pointed out earlier that the person who

thinks he has the art of living, and through it has recognized what things are good in their nature and what bad, is intensely troubled both when the good things are present to him and when the bad ones are.

3.278 We must say, then, that if the reality of good, bad and indifferent things is not agreed, and the art of living perhaps does not even exist, and, even if it were granted by hypothesis to exist, brings no benefit to those who have it but on the contrary produces the greatest turmoil in them, then the dogmatists would seem to put on their lofty airs for nothing in the so-called ethical part of what they call philosophy as well.

3.279 Having gone through this much about the ethical part too, in due measure, as befits an outline, we here bring to a close both the third book and our whole work, the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, adding just this:

CHAPTER 32: WHY THE SKEPTIC SOMETIMES PROPOUNDS WEAK ARGUMENTS

Like a doctor, the skeptic suits stronger or milder arguments to the severity of dogmatic conceit.

3.280 Because he loves humankind, the skeptic wants to cure the conceit and rashness of the dogmatists by argument, as far as he can. Doctors of bodily ailments have remedies of different strength: to those who are severely affected they apply the strong ones, to those mildly affected the milder ones. In the same way the skeptic propounds arguments that differ [and] in strength:

3.281 against those who are badly afflicted with severe rashness he uses weighty arguments, capable of vigorously demolishing the dogmatists' affliction of conceit; and against those whose affliction of conceit is superficial and easily cured, and can be demolished by milder persuasive arguments, he uses milder ones. That is why someone whose starting point is skepticism does not hesitate to propound arguments that are sometimes weighty in their persuasiveness and sometimes apparently

rather feeble. He does so deliberately, since these are often enough for him to achieve his purpose.