

SCEPTICISM VERSUS DOGMATISM: AN INTERNAL ANALYSIS OF
SEXTUS EMPIRICUS' AGAINST MATHEMATICIANS, BOOK VII.

by

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ABSTRACT

Scepticism, as depicted by Sextus Empiricus, presents itself as a philosophy whose ultimate justification rests on the conviction that truth is unattainable and that consequently the only chance left to man is that of suspending judgement (epoché). From epoché derives that state of mental quietitude (ataraxia) which alone allows man to lead a happy life. Thus, Scepticism is inevitably a polemic against all those philosophers who assert truth to be apprehensible and to whom Sextus refers by the term "Dogmatists".

This study of Book VII of Against Mathematicians seeks to analyze the epistemological premises of Sextus' Scepticism as well as the Sextian arguments directed against the Dogmatists, and particularly those against the Stoics. Truth is unattainable because no such a thing as a criterion of truth exists. This is Sextus' conclusion to his criticism of the Dogmatists' doctrines.

Although Sextus' Scepticism is shaped against the background of the doctrines he intends to combat, I intend to isolate his methodology as well as the the theoretical aspects of his philosophy from the polemical ones. Chapter II outlines Sextus' philosophical background as well as his sceptical

terminology. Chapter III examines Sextus' methodology and explains why the criticism of the criterion of truth provides him with the necessary theoretical justification for his Scepticism.

Sextus' attack against the Dogmatists is preceded by a lengthy and fairly accurate account of his opponents' views. These views and particularly the Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataléptiké are examined in Chapters IV and V. In Chapters VI to VIII, I examine Sextus' response to the Dogmatists. In Chapter VI I argue that Sextus' criticism of man as criterion, and of the definition of man, are biased by his failure to understand some Dogmatic terms such as "universal concept" and "essence". Chapter VII investigates Sextus' criticism of senses and intellect as criteria of truth, and it is maintained that the arguments used by Sextus to deny the possibility of self-apprehension establish an epistemological principle whose value is dogmatically confined by Sextus to the particular instance he criticizes. Had Sextus been consistent in his use of such a principle, he ought to have declared himself a nihilist rather than a Sceptic.

Chapter VIII deals with Sextus' criticism of the notion of phantasia and particularly with his attack against the Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataléptiké as criterion of truth. Special attention is paid to the accusation of circular

reasoning made by Sextus against the Stoic criterion and in the discussion in Chapter IX. There I argue that Sextus and with him most students of ancient philosophy, misrepresent the meaning of the Stoic doctrine because they identify the term to hyparchon (a key element in the Stoic definition of phantasia kataléptiké) with the real (external) object. I oppose this view and offer a tentative re-interpretation of the Stoic criterion, which, if correct, may both free the Stoics from the Sextian accusation of circular reasoning and, at the same time, avoid some of the philological and philosophical difficulties involved in the Sextian and standard interpretation of the Stoic definition of phantasia kataléptiké.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- M. Sextus Empiricus, Against Mathematicians
- P.H. Sextus Empiricus, Pyrrhonian Sketches
- SVF Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta, ed. H. von Arnim.

INTRODUCTION

The name of Sextus Empiricus recurs frequently in studies of ancient philosophy, and particularly in those dealing with the post-Aristotelian thought. There is general agreement on the value and importance of his works as a precious and often unique source of information on Hellenistic philosophy. This is particularly true of Stoicism, a philosophical movement which spans a period of about six centuries and which was the most relevant and influential school of the Hellenistic period, but primary evidence for which is so scarce as to make the study of secondary reports, such as Sextus', a mandatory step in the analysis of its philosophy.

Yet, in addition to the primary importance of Sextus' opus as a source of much of our information on post-Aristotelian philosophy, Sextus has a place of his own in the history of ancient philosophy as the last major figure of Scepticism, one who gathered, criticized and elaborated a considerable body of his predecessors' doctrines. This fact creates a peculiar situation in dealing with this Sceptic philosopher, whose importance as an authentic thinker seems to have been overshadowed by the doxographic value of his writings.

At the same time, Sextus' own philosophical stand is the source of much suspicion as far as the reliability of his historical information is concerned, with the result that Sextus' position has turned out to be most unfortunate: on the one hand his place in the history of ancient Scepticism has not earned enough attention, but on the other hand his account of earlier doctrines is regarded as inevitably biased by his Sceptical creed.¹ In this sense, Sextus' philosophical orientation does not allow us to look at the wealth of his philosophical material with the confidence one might put in Diogenes Laertius, just to cite an example, whose philosophical neutrality seems to guarantee the objectivity of a purely doxographical work, although that very objectivity is often lacking in depth and accuracy.

A study of Sextus' sceptical method seems, therefore, justified, since it would serve the twofold purpose of throwing some light on a philosopher who has not himself been closely studied as well as of giving an evaluation of his polemic against the Dogmatists, and particularly the Stoics, a polemic which provides us with much valuable information about ancient philosophers. I think one could claim that the twofold purpose of such a study is also justified by the very nature of a philosophy such as Scepticism. One of the most distinctive features of Sextus' philosophy, and one common to the other Sceptics as well, is that of shaping its doctrine against the background of other philosophies which it attacks and criticizes. Although

this may be true to a degree of all philosophical systems, it seems to be particularly true of Scepticism, a philosophy which is to a large extent the product of polemic, in the sense that its theoretical postulates are shaped and nourished by those doctrines it intends to combat. Hence a study of Sextus necessarily requires an almost continuous reference to his opponents, a consequence which makes an analysis of Sextus' works as difficult as it is fascinating.

Given the breadth of the subject and the limits imposed by the nature of this study, I have centered my research on an internal analysis of Book VII of Against Mathematicians. The reason for this choice is the predominant role played by epistemology, both at a speculative and at a polemic level, in Sextus as well as in his chief opponents, the Stoics. This statement may seem to contradict the practical orientation of Scepticism whose professed goal is that of achieving a state of psychic quietude (ἀταραξία), which alone can produce happiness. In Sextus' words Scepticism is defined as "...an ability, or mental attitude, which opposes appearances (τὰ φαινόμενα) to judgements (τὰ νοούμενα) in any way whatsoever, with the result that, owing to the equipollence (ἰσοσθένεια) of the objects and reasons thus opposed, we are brought firstly to a state of mental suspense (εἰς ἐποχήν) and next to a state of unperturbedness (εἰς ἀταραξίαν) or quietude."² Yet, although the eudaemonistic character of Scepticism

remains its most striking feature throughout its history from Pyrrho to Sextus, we find an increasing interest in epistemology among the later Sceptics, and particularly in Sextus.

Let us consider the following passage from Sextus: "For the Sceptic, having set out to philosophize with the object of passing judgement on the sense-impressions (ὅπερ τοῦ τὰς φαντασίας ἐπικρίναι) and ascertaining which of them are true and which false, so as to attain quietude thereby, found himself involved in contradictions of equal weight, and being unable to decide between them suspended judgement; and as he was thus in suspense there followed, as it happened, the state of quietude in respect of matters of opinion."³ From Sextus' text we gather that epistemological criticism is not only complementary to the practical purpose of his philosophizing, but that the Sceptic's response to the problem of knowledge is indeed at the basis of the sceptical attitude toward life.

It seemed valuable therefore to focus attention on epistemology, a procedure justified both by Sextus' polemic against the Dogmatists, and by the fact that Sextus, as we shall see, basically endorses the Stoic concept of logic, of which epistemology is a branch. The latter consideration provided me with an additional reason for examining Sextus' work primarily in the light of his polemic against the Stoics. We know that ancient philosophers did not have a separate term to designate epistemology: yet, if we understand

epistemology as the theory that explains how the material of the science of reasoning (notably logic, according to the Stoic and Sextian definition) is acquired, it is easy to see why my attention was drawn to Book VII of Against Mathematicians.

The central theme of Book VII is represented by Sextus' exposition and criticism of the various criteria of truth on which, according to Sextus, the Dogmatists had founded their epistemology. Sextus' object is to show that all criteria of truth provide an inadequate answer to the problem of knowledge and that the Dogmatist's claim that he has discovered the truth is unfounded, for it is not truth but a mere semblance of it that man can apprehend. The acknowledgement of this reality is what defines the sceptic philosopher and frees him from disturbance and anxiety, thus allowing him to reach his ultimate goal, ataraxia.

Sextus' criticism is directed against all those who maintained that objective knowledge of the world is possible; yet, in his treatment of ancient epistemology not all philosophers are given the same degree of attention and the same amount of space. In general, one can say that Sextus' polemic is mainly directed against those theories of knowledge which seek to show that certain perceptual experiences can provide man with an accurate description of the real nature of the external world. This explains why no interest is shown by Sextus in, for instance, Plato and his idealism. What it does not explain though is why, among all the ancient philosophers whose theory of knowledge

is based on sense-perception, the Stoics are Sextus' prime target. Although most scholars are ready to acknowledge the primary role played by the Stoics in Sextus' anti-dogmatic criticism, I know of no historically founded explanation of this phenomenon. Sextus' overwhelming interest in Stoicism can be easily seen by looking at Janáček's index of Sextus' opus:⁴ the Stoics and the Stoa are referred to over ninety times; the name of Zeno recurs twenty-six times, Cleanthes is mentioned eleven times and Chrysippus twenty times, just to mention the major Stoic philosophers. If we compute these figures we have over one hundred and fifty references to Stoicism. No other philosopher or philosophical movement is mentioned nearly as frequently.

I do not think that an answer is readily available to the question why Sextus thought it was so important to center his attack on the Stoics and not, for instance, on the Peripatetics, or, more precisely, why Sextus seems to consider Stoic epistemology as the consummatio of all ancient epistemology, thus implying that a successful attack on Stoic epistemology would mean the defeat of all dogmatic epistemology. I can just attempt a few possible answers to this difficult question:

1. Sextus is an outspoken disciple of Pyrrho,⁵ and we know that chronologically the Stoics, together with the Epicureans, were the direct opponents of Pyrrho.

2. Sextus may not have had direct access to Aristotle's works.
3. Sextus might have found a common ground with the Stoics in that they both viewed the epistemological problem as detached from metaphysics. Both the Stoics and Sextus sought a criterion of truth concerning sense-experience. For Aristotle, on the other hand, the theory of knowledge was part of his philosophy of nature and it presupposed his theory of being to which the search for truth belonged. Aristotle's grounds for certainty were based on the first principles apprehended by the intellect,⁶ an inquiry which belonged to metaphysics, not to epistemology.

Of all these suggestions, only the last one will be analyzed to any degree in the course of this thesis, when we discuss Sextus' criticism of the Stoic criterion of truth. Whatever the reason for Sextus' predominant interest in the Stoics, there is clearly enough textual evidence to suggest that a study such as the present one, which seeks to give an internal analysis of Book VII of Against Mathematicians, cannot present Sextus' polemic against dogmatic epistemology without commenting at the same time on the Stoic doctrines that he criticizes. The very fact that the epistemological problem is formulated by Sextus in terms of criterion of truth is highly relevant, and it is an additional sign of the close relationship between Sextus and the Stoics.⁷

As far as my approach to the study of the aforesaid problems is concerned, I intend to follow the text of Sextus' Book VII of Against Mathematicians and to analyze Sextus' sceptical method and his criticism of dogmatic epistemology, paying particular attention to the arguments directed against the Stoics. This procedure will imply also an analysis of Stoic epistemology, but it must be stressed that this reconstruction and interpretation of Stoic ideas is only subsidiary to the exposition of Sextus' assimilation and criticism of such ideas. Thus the reader should not expect a systematic account of the Stoic theory of knowledge, or a defense of the Stoics against Sextus' criticism, but only an account of how Sextus viewed the Stoic criterion of truth, and of the reasons why he rejected it, together with all other criteria proposed by the Dogmatists.

An exception to this approach is provided by Chapter IX, where I will examine the accusation of circular reasoning forwarded by Sextus against the Stoic definition of the criterion of truth. In that chapter, besides giving an account of Sextus' criticism, I will attempt to offer an interpretation of the Stoic criterion which is in some respects new, and certainly different from Sextus' and that of most modern scholars. The reason for what may look like a methodological discrepancy in the course of this study is prompted by a conviction that, of all objections moved by Sextus against the Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataleptiké as criterion of

truth, the accusation of circular reasoning is preeminent for its logical strength and is, if true, indeed destructive of the Stoic criterion. It was also surprising to see that very little attention had been given by students of Stoicism to this Sextian argument, a fact which is even more noteworthy if one considers that Sextus' account of phantasia kataléptiké is the most elaborate account of the Stoic doctrine available to us. Whether or not my re-interpretation of the Stoic criterion is correct, I hope that it may at least be a contribution to the understanding of a fundamental problem in Stoic epistemology and, what is more immediately relevant, to a correct evaluation of Sextus and his anti-dogmatic criticisms.

FOOTNOTES

1. See the negative judgement on Sextus as historian of ancient philosophy pronounced by V. Brochard, Les sceptiques grecs, 2nd. ed., 321 and by M. Dal Pra, Lo scetticismo greco, 380-3 and La storiografia filosofica antica, 230-45.
2. P.H. I, 8. I will use unless otherwise indicated R. Bury's translation of Sextus Empiricus' writings.
3. P.H. I, 26.
4. K. Janáček, Sextus Empiricus. - Indices.
5. P.H. I, 1-4, 7, 10, 13, 25-7.
6. Anal. post., I, 2 and Met., III, 3 foll.
7. See G. Striker, "Κριτήριον τῆς ἀληθείας ", Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Gottingen (1974) 51-110.

CHAPTER I

SEXTUS EMPIRICUS' LIFE AND WORKS

1. Sextus' life

We know very little about Sextus Empiricus' life, country, intellectual formation and cultural liaisons. Our direct sources are few and they often contradict one another. The problem of Sextus' dating, in particular, has caused much disagreement among modern scholars. A detailed examination of the state of our evidence and of the different interpretations on this particular issue is to be found in the work of Dennis K. House.¹ In general the terms of the question can be summarized in the following way. Sextus Empiricus is mentioned by Diogenes Laertius,² whose acmé³ is usually ascribed to the first half of the third century A.D.; but the very same supposition that Diogenes Laertius lived in that period is, in turn, based on the fact that he mentions Sextus and his pupil Saturninus;³ and with a typical petitio principii, it is on the assumption that Sextus lived in the second half of the second century A.D. that Diogenes is supposed to have lived some years later, that is during the first half of the third century. Sextus is also mentioned in the pseudo-Galenic work entitled *Εἰσαγωγή ἡ τοῦ πατρὸς* where it is said that he contributed with Menodotus support to the empirical school; but the dating

of this work is also uncertain, and it has been dated as late as the second half of the second century, again on the assumption that Sextus' acmé¹ is in the second half of the second century.⁴

Sextus' name does not appear in any of the writings by Galen, whom we know with a good degree of certainty lived between 130 and 200 a.D. Although one should not attribute a decisive weight to an argumentum ex silentio, it is certainly strange that Sextus could have been unknown to a man like Galen, who mentions in his writings all the noteworthy physicians up to his time. Some scholars have tried to avoid this difficulty by saying that Sextus had probably gained no reputation as a physician or that he was not a physician at all; but, as we will see later on, this position is in conflict with several passages from Sextus' works. Also the fact that Sextus would have had as his teacher Herodotus of Tarsus, Menodotus' pupil, is not decisive; for Robin⁵ points out that the Herodotus whom Diogenes Laertius says was the teacher of Sextus should not be confused with another Herodotus, the pneumatic physician, who was well known in Rome and who is mentioned by Galen. On the other hand, Kudlien⁶ wonders why the master of Sextus should necessarily have been a philosopher and therefore have to be identified with a different person from the famous Roman physician.

In short, the two main lines of interpretation that

scholars seem to support are the following ones: on one side are those who attach primary importance and an overriding historical significance to the list of the heads of the sceptical school presented by Diogenes Laertius and are, therefore, inclined to shorten the space of time elapsing between Menodotus, Herodotus of Tarsus and Sextus Empiricus and, as in the case of Kudlien,⁷ go as far as to place Sextus in the age of the emperor Trajan, or at least, in the years around 100 a.D. On the other hand, there are those who attribute more importance to the silence of Galen about Sextus, a silence which would be particularly significant if one considers that Galen nevertheless mentions the physician Herodotus; consequently the acmé' of Sextus would, by this argument, be postponed to the years 220 or 230 a.D.

But there are a few more considerations to be borne in mind. The first is that Galen, particularly in his later works, often mentions the Herodotus who may be identified with Sextus' master, but he never mentions Sextus. Galen died around 200 a.D., but already between 220 and 230 a.D., as we learn from Zeller,⁸ the Christian writer Hyppolytus mentions Sextus in his Refutatio omnium haeresium and accuses the Sceptic philosopher of being one of the forerunners of heretical currents. We can therefore conclude that Sextus' acmé' fell between 200 and 220 a.D. This would be an additional reason for placing Sextus Empiricus no later than the very beginning of the third century a.D., and this reason has been

defended as a crucial one by several major scholars, among whom we may mention Dal Pra,⁹ Patrick,¹⁰ Pappenheim,¹¹ Russo¹² and Brochard;¹³ they maintain that on the basis of a passage from Sextus¹⁴ where it is said that his main opponents "at the time" (νῦν) were the Stoics, Sextus' dating must consequently fall toward the end of the second century, a time when Stoicism was still flourishing, whereas in the following decades its importance rapidly decreased and it soon became a movement of the past.¹⁵ That the Stoics were the chief opponents of Sextus is beyond doubt, but from this it does not necessarily follow that they were Sextus' contemporaries.

D.K. House¹⁶ criticizes this position in a very detailed and acute way; first, he argues that the Greek word νῦν used by Sextus in a context where it immediately precedes the word δογματικούς can be treated not only as an adverb of time meaning "at this time", "to the present day", but also, and more reasonably so, as an adjective modifying the noun "Dogmatists", meaning, therefore, "the Dogmatists we are dealing with in our present discussion". Secondly, House argues that, even if the former translation of the word were the right one "...this passage cannot be regarded as providing very strong evidence that Sextus was involved in the sort of polemic with the Stoics that would necessitate his having had to have lived at the time when Stoicism was flourishing. The fact that the Stoics are said to be presently the Sceptics' chief opponents does not tell us very much

about the state of Stoicism in Sextus' days. Sextus could reasonably have said that Chrysippus represented in the past and still represents at present the main opponent to the Sceptics. It is important to note that the Stoics who said that internal reason is occupied with what Sextus indicates in P.H. I, 65 were originally the Stoics from the Early Stoa. The Stoics of his day would have followed in their tradition and thus repeated these views. The Stoic Sextus specifies by name in the attack that follows is Chrysippus. He speaks of Chrysippus as though he were living in the present though he does refer to him as the old one (ὁ ἀρχαῖος) when he quotes him".¹⁷

We know nothing positive about Sextus' family and birthplace. Sextus shows a detailed knowledge of the laws and customs of Egypt, Athens, Lybia, Alexandria and Rome,¹⁸ but none of these references would justify our identifying one particular place as his homeland. He may have travelled or lived for some time in all these places, or he may just be revealing through these references a geographical and anthropological knowledge not uncommon for an educated man of his period. In the Suda¹⁹ there is a reference to a Sextus of Lybia who is identified with the author of the writings of Sextus Empiricus; but, as was already argued by Fabricius,²⁰ the compiler of the lexicon must have confused him with Sextus of Chaeronia, Plutarch's nephew. Sextus' nomen is Latin, but he calls "ours" the customs and the laws of the

Greeks;²¹ besides, his language, his style and his sales attici are typically Greek.

That Sextus was a physician can be argued by the fact that he refers to Asclepius as τὸν ἀρχηγὸν ἡμῶν τῆς ἐπιδημίας;²² he also informs us that he wrote a work of Medical Memoires (ΙΑΤΡΙΚΑ ΥΠΟΜΝΗΜΑΤΑ) and another of Empirical Memoires (ΕΜΠΕΙΡΙΚΑ ΥΠΟΜΝΗΜΑΤΑ).²³ Both works are lost. We learn from Diogenes Laertius²⁴ that Sextus was called empeirikos because he would have belonged to the Empirical school of medicine, and this information is confirmed by a passage of the Pseudo-Galen.²⁵ A difficulty arises from the fact that Sextus himself in a page of his Sketches²⁶ indicates that the Methodist medical school is closer to the spirit of Scepticism than the Empirical medical school, which he criticizes for being partially dogmatic. Yet, in the second book of Against Dogmatists,²⁷ Sextus maintains that the Methodists, the Empiricists and the Sceptic philosophers all agree in saying that obscure things cannot be known. This twofold contrast has been variously discussed;²⁸ I tend to agree with Del Pra's position²⁹ when he writes that a tentative solution of the problem may be achieved assuming that Sextus was initially inclined towards the Methodist sect, whereas later on he would have embraced a purely empiric position, of which his books Against Dogmatists would reflect the fundamental theses. Probably the iter of such an evolution of thought consisted in the increased value attributed to experience and, therefore, to the exclusion of any other

instrument of knowledge beside that one; but the whole question is closely related to the problem of Sextus' position regarding dogmatism, which will be discussed in more detail later on.

2. Sextus' works

We have the main writings of Sextus' opus. The only exceptions are the Medical Memoires and the Empirical Memoires which must have been practically unknown in antiquity since Sextus himself is the only one to mention them.³⁰ Another apparent exception is represented by a work de anima, mentioned again by Sextus alone;³¹ but, according to Robin,³² this is simply a reference to the many passages in which Sextus has dealt with this problem.

We have two works by Sextus: the Pyrrhonian Sketches (ΠΥΡΡΩΝΕΙΑΙ ΥΠΟΤΥΠΩΣΕΙΣ) in three books (Book I: meaning and limits of Scepticism, understood as a method of research; exposition of the Sceptical tropoi; Book II: meaning and limits of Dogmatic logic; Book III: critique of Dogmatic physics and ethics), and another work which represents the development of and a commentary on the Sketches. This is divided into two parts: the first is entitled Against Dogmatists (ΠΡΟΣ ΔΟΓΜΑΤΙΚΟΥΣ) and is divided into five books, two being a critique of logic, while two are directed against the physicists and one against the moralists; the second part Against Mathematicians (ΠΡΟΣ ΜΑΘΗΜΑΤΙΚΟΥΣ) (that is against those

who attribute an absolute value to knowledge, i.e. $\mu\acute{\alpha}\theta\eta\mu\alpha$) is dedicated to the masters of grammar, rhetoric, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music. Since in the codices the five books Against Dogmatists are placed after the six books Against Mathematicians, they are also referred to as Against Mathematicians VII - XI and this is how we shall refer to them hereafter.

As far as the chronological order of these works is concerned, all modern scholars agree on the two following points: 1) that P.H. is the earliest work of Sextus; 2) that the five books against the Dogmatists (M. VII-XI) are earlier than M. I-VI. This order reflects an important systematic consideration in that Sextus first dealt with problems of philosophical significance, to which questions bearing on the various sciences and arts could be considered as a corollary.

3. General character of Sextus' works

Although we will deal with this problem in more detail in the following chapters, we may start by saying that the predominant theme of Sextus' work is his criticism of Dogmatism. The main error of all Dogmatists is that of labelling as science their philosophical opinions, a position justified by the belief that absolute truth as such can be

discovered and that philosophical inquiry makes reality accessible to man. Sextus' aim is that of showing the impossibility of bridging the gap between the world of the subject and that of the object, so that man's cognitive power is bound to be limited to the sphere of opinion, and any claim at establishing the absolute foundations of scientific thought is consequently a mere illusion.

Sextus remains faithful to the division of philosophy already canonized by the Dogmatists in general and by the Stoics in particular, and focuses his attack on three areas: logic, physics and ethics.³³ In his work of systematic destruction, Sextus gives the place of honour to logic which had not enjoyed an autonomous role in Aristotle's epistemology, because of its metaphysical premises. Aristotle viewed logic as a "tool", an "instrument" (organon) of knowledge, not as a branch of knowledge, whereas the Hellenistic philosophers assigned an independent role to it. Sextus likes to repeat that logic is the fence of the garden of philosophy, the shell of the philosophical egg, the bone-system of an organism that the Dogmatists believe real and strong, but that to the Sceptic seems only to be a weak and deceiving appearance.³⁴ By denying a science of logic, Sextus also implicitly denies the possibility of a philosophy of nature - such was basically ancient physics - and of a philosophy of the spirit, that is of that kind of ethics that, particularly in the speculation of the Stoics and of the Epicureans, had marked a development

from the great philosophical systems of the Attic period.

Since we will basically be dealing with Sextus' critical review of "dogmatic" logic, with particular attention to the Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataleptiké, we will be mostly concerned with P.H. I-II and M. VII-VIII. These two works offer a different approach to similar and often identical questions; while we will be examining these differences in detail in the course of our textual analysis, it may be useful to indicate now that not only is P.H. an earlier work but that it is exclusively concerned with the defence of sceptical principles as a popular work or, perhaps, as Brochard puts it,³⁵ it is "un abrégé du scepticisme, écrit peut-être à l'usage des commençants", whereas in M. we find a more discursive treatment of the opinions of other philosophers or what Janáček calls a more accentuated "pedagogical tendency".³⁶

It may now be useful to give a short outline of the most important loci paralleli of P.H. and M. that deal with the specific problems that we intend to discuss. Other minor parallels will probably emerge and will be mentioned as they arise in the course of our study.

	<u>P.H.</u>	<u>M.</u>
Division of Philosophy	II, 12	VII, 1-26
Criterion of truth in general	II, 14-21	VII, 27-37
Agent in the criterion of truth	II, 22-47	VII, 268-286

	<u>P.H.</u>	<u>M.</u>
Mean in the criterion of truth	II, 48-69	VII, 287-369
Functionality of the criterion and criticism of <u>phantasia</u> <u>kataléptiké</u>	II, 70-79	VII, 370-446
The truth	II, 80-84	VII, 38-262

FOOTNOTES

1. D.K. House, Pyrrhonism as Depicted by Sextus Empiricus (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Liverpool, 1974). House overlooks F. Kudlien, "Die Datierung des Sextus Empiricus und des Diogenes Laertius", Rheinisches Museum (1963), 251-4.
2. Diogenes Laertius, IX, 87 and 115.
3. Diogenes Laertius refers to Saturninus as $\delta\ \kappa\upsilon\theta\eta\nu\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$. We do not know the meaning of this Greek word. V. Brochard, Les sceptiques grecs, 327, n. 1 reads $\delta\ \kappa\acute{\alpha}\theta'\eta\mu\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ instead of $\delta\ \kappa\upsilon\theta\eta\nu\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ and translates "our contemporary".
4. Cf. K. Deichgraeber, Die Grieschische Empirikerschule: eine Sammlung der Fragmente und Darstellung der Lehre; cf. also E. Issel, Quaestiones Sextinae et Galenianae, quoted also by F. Kudlien, "Die Datierung des Sextus Empiricus und des Diogenes Laertius", 253.
5. L. Robin, Pyrrhon et le scepticisme grec, 197. A. Goedeckmeyer, Die Geschichte des Griechischen Skeptizismus, 266, M. Patrick, The Greek Skeptics, 9 and V. Brochard, Les sceptiques grecs, 315 take the view that the Herodotus mentioned by Diogenes Laertius (IX, 116) was the same person as the Herodotus mentioned by Galen.
6. F. Kudlien, "Die Datierung des Sextus Empiricus und des Diogenes Laertius", 252.
7. F. Kudlien, "Die Datierung des Sextus Empiricus und des Diogenes Laertius", 253.
8. E. Zeller, Die Philosophie der Griechen, vol. III, Part II, 49.
9. M. Dal Pra, Lo scetticismo greco, Vol. II, 463.
10. M. Patrick, The Greek Skeptics, 8-20.
11. E. Pappenheim, Lebensverhatlnisse des Sextus Empiricus, 13.
12. A. Russo, Sesto Empirico. Contro i Matematici, XL.
13. V. Brochard, Les sceptiques grecs, 314-15.
14. P.H. I, 65.
15. M. Pohlenz, La Stoá, Ital. transl. Vol. II, 400.

16. D.K. House, Pyrrhonism as Depicted by Sextus Empiricus, 9-13.
17. D.K. House, Pyrrhonism as Depicted by Sextus Empiricus, 11-12.
18. Cf. P.H. I, 83-84, 149; P.H. II, 98; P.H. III, 204-205, 221, 224; M. I, 228, 246; M. II, 25, 35, 77; M. VII, 147.
19. The Suda was a historical and literary lexicon compiled toward the end of the tenth century.
20. Sextus Empiricus, Opera, graece and latine edidit et emendavit A. Fabricius (Lipsiae apud Köln, 1840-41).
21. P.H. I, 152; III, 211, 214; M. I, 246.
22. M. I, 260.
23. M. I, 61 and M. VII, 202.
24. Diogenes Laertius, IX, 116.
25. Pseudo-Galen, Isagog., 4.
26. P.H. I, 236.
27. M. VIII, 191.
28. Cf. V. Brochard, Les sceptiques grecs, 317 and D.K. House, Pyrrhonism as Depicted by Sextus Empiricus, 20 foll.
29. M. Dal Pra, Lo scetticismo greco, Vol. II, 465.
30. M. I, 61 and M. VII, 202.
31. M. VI, 55.
32. L. Robin, Pyrrhon et le scepticisme grec, 198.
33. For the tripartite division of philosophy see: SVF, II, 37, 42, 43; Aristotle, Top. I, 14, 105 b 19; Albinus, Isag., ch. 3. Cf. Ch. III, sec. 1) below, passim.
34. M. I, 16-19.
35. V. Brochard, Les sceptiques grecs, 321.
36. K. Janáček, "Prolegomena to Sextus Empiricus", Acta Universitatis palackianae olomucensis (1948), 50.

CHAPTER II

SCEPTICISM AND DOGMATISM: AN INTRODUCTION

1. The Sceptical method and its relation to the medical schools

As we have already noted at the end of Chapter I, P.H. is considered to be Sextus' earliest work.¹ Of all modern scholars M. Karel Janáček² has provided the fullest historical and philological support for this theory; he maintains that P.H. are the result of a compilation where the personal viewpoint of the author does not play a very significant part, whereas M. is characterized by more personal and precise comments, often in the form of quotations and direct discourse. In the conclusion to his study Janacek writes: "...we say that in M. VII-XI, Sextus was writing for more elementary students or readers than those for whom he wrote P.H....Though the matter of M. VII-XI is principally the same, compared with P.H. it is more elementary as regards the matter itself. The tendency of M. VII-XI being quite clear in both form and pedagogical purpose, I dare say that Sextus was not driven to it by external reasons, especially when his innovations of style are by no means a mosaic whose stones have been gathered in different places. His pursuit of a definite aim would rather point to a single model, which might at the same

time have been a model for the subject matter in the new parts of M. VII-XI."³

Since the purpose of this chapter is to give an outline of Scepticism in the early centuries of the Empire, it is to Sextus' P.H. that we should turn our attention, for this work reflects in a more objective and simple way the meaning of the philosophical school in which we are interested.⁴ Sextus himself stresses many times, and particularly at the beginning of each of the three books of P.H. (I, 4; II, 1; III, 3), that the goal of his work is to offer his readers a concise and accessible introduction to the principal themes of Sceptic research. The practical orientation of his work is a distinctive feature not only of Sextus but of Scepticism in general, and in its practical view of the nature and scope of philosophizing it reflects a major element in post-Aristotelian philosophy. Although this study concentrates mainly on epistemological issues and on the Sceptic's denial of dogmatic knowledge, the practical orientation of Scepticism as a whole should not be forgotten for it represents the ultimate purpose of this philosophical school in the light of which the theoretical questions we are about to discuss ought to be seen and understood.

The very choice of the title "Sketches" (ὑποστυπώσεις) is significant; following the example of earlier Sceptics,⁵ Sextus avoids more binding terms, such as "principles" or

"foundations". The term "sketch" was of clear empirical origin and had been widely used by the Empirical school of medicine⁶ instead of the term "definition", which was clearly of dogmatic origin. Sextus' sceptical inquiry and terminology derive in good part from the debate on the meaning of medical research,⁷ as it had developed particularly within the empirical school headed by Menodotus of Nicomedia (circa 125 a.D.).

Sextus himself, among other sources,⁸ tells us that with Menodotus empirical medicine and Scepticism were in fact united in one person.⁹ Menodotus had undertaken a violent polemic against the dogmatic medical schools (both the "pneumatists" and the "methodics"), going as far as to deny any possibility of judgement at a level of pure sense experience; in response to this a new theory was developed by Theodas of Laodicea (circa 125 a.D.).¹⁰ We are particularly interested in this theory because of the striking resemblance it bears to Sextus' interpretation of sceptic epistemology.

Theodas acknowledged Menodotus' position but also went further in saying that while it is true that experience is not just accumulation of data, it is nonetheless true that the empirical method emphatically forbids either a transcending of experience itself or a passage, through analogy, from what is known to what is unknown. Experience instead, according to Theodas, allows a passage, through memory, from what is similar to the similar, on the assumption that the facts taken individually are not known per se, but become known

through the memory of other *φαινόμενα* in a logically coherent discourse which has no claim whatsoever to the truth.

If, on the one hand, it is right not to make use of the concept of analogy and, through it, to go beyond the limits set by experience, yet, on the other hand, experience cannot be just a meaningless gathering of data, an enumeration ad infinitum, but rather a comparison among different data, and an analysis of the regularity, or non-regularity, with which certain data occur. Thus in the process of medical knowledge, together with the *αὐτοψία* (direct and personal gathering of data) and the *ἱστορία* (documented record of observations made by others), we will have as an essential phase *μίμνησις* (passage from the similar to the similar, that is from what is an object of direct experience to what is not an object of direct experience but is similar). Following these three steps, one would then be able to determine a certain symptomatology, in a description or sketch of a complex set of *φαινόμενα* which has no claim whatsoever to be an objectively valid definition.¹¹ It is particularly interesting for us to notice that *αὐτοψία* and *ἱστορία* were said to be the criterion of truth,¹² which shows the close relationship both in terminology and in concepts between the medical schools and Scepticism, for, as we will see, the discussion of the criterion of truth plays a central role in sceptic philosophy.

2. Nature and limits of the sceptic inquiry

In the opening chapter of P.H. I, Sextus presents us with the description of the nature of philosophical inquiry and the different results that it may attain: "The natural result of any investigation is that the investigators either discover the object of the search or deny that it is discoverable and confess it to be inapprehensible, or persist in their search. So, too, with regard to the objects investigated by philosophy, this is probably why some have claimed to have discovered the truth, others have asserted that it cannot be apprehended, while others again go on inquiring." In this way Sextus determines three distinct categories of philosophical schools: the Dogmatists, like, for instance, Aristotle, Epicurus and the Stoics as well as, in general, all philosophers who believe that the stuff and structure of the universe (including and beyond what appears in sense-experience) are substantially and conclusively known, and revealed in a metaphysical system; secondly, the Academics, like Clitomachus and Carneades; and, finally, the Sceptics.

It is remarkable, as J.P. Dumont points out,¹³ that Sextus includes among his enemies also the Academics, that is the very same people whom Lucullus had identified with true Scepticism.¹⁴ Later we will discuss in greater detail the relation between Scepticism and the Academy, but it is important to emphasize even at this stage that, according

to Sextus, dogmatists are both those who are certain that they have attained the truth and those who maintain the truth to be incomprehensible, although only the former may be called dogmatists strictly speaking. This is a very important point. Sextus' position with regard to the Academics is justified by a fundamental postulate of his philosophy on which he will insist at length in several passages both of P.H. and of M.. Sextus believes that to deny something is the same as to assert its falsity,¹⁵ just as to affirm it is the same as to assert its truth, and the Sceptic cannot allow himself to assert the falsity or the truth of a metaphysical claim. He suspends his judgement on such claims, and he can achieve this by pointing out the conflicts or opposition between them. Skepsis,¹⁶ therefore, is the withholding of assent and of denial; it is the mere recognition that conflicts or opposition between equally plausible or between equally implausible claims do exist, although there is no way of determining the precise amount of truth and falsity in a claim at any precise moment.

Sextus throws more light on the meaning of the word "Scepticism" by examining the four elements which define the Sceptic method: "The sceptic school, then, is called 'Zetetic' (ζητητική) from its activity in investigation and inquiry, and 'Ephectic' (ἐφεκτική) or 'Suspensive' from the state of mind produced in the inquirer after his search, and 'Aporetic' (ἀπορητική) or 'Dubitative' either from its habit of doubting and seeking, as some say, or from

its indecision as regard assent and denial, and 'Pyrrhonean' from the fact that Pyrrho appears to us to have applied himself to Scepticism more thoroughly and more conspicuously than his predecessors".¹⁷ We can easily see how each of these four aspects emphasizes the subjective attitude of the philosopher rather than giving any indication of the object of his inquiry; in other words, it is the psychological disposition of the sceptic philosopher and not the content of his philosophy which, in the first place, differentiates him from the Dogmatists.

Just as the subjective disposition is decisive as far as the method of research is concerned, the moral benefit of the inquiring subject is in the same way decisive as far as the very definition of Scepticism is concerned. Sextus writes: "Scepticism is an ability, or mental attitude, which opposes appearances (φαινόμενα) to judgements (νοούμενα) in any way whatsoever, with the result that, owing to the equipollence of the objects and reasons thus opposed, we are brought firstly to a state of mental suspense (ἐποχή) and next to a state of unperturbedness (ἀταραξία) or quietitude. Now we call it an 'ability' (δύναμις) not in any subtle sense, but simply in respect to 'its being able'. By appearances we now mean the objects of sense-perception (τὰ αἰσθητά), whence we contrast them with the objects of thought or judgements".¹⁸

This passage requires a few words of comment if we are to understand in what sense Sextus uses his philosophical terminology. First of all, it is worth noticing how the term nooumenon, which in itself, although very unusual, is already found in Plato,¹⁹ is here for the first time and some fifteen centuries before Kant opposed to the term phainomenon.²⁰ Then we may notice how carefully Sextus points out that the word dynamis ought to be taken in its plain meaning of "ability" or "capacity". Sextus must obviously have been aware of the fact that at his time the word dynamis, when occurring in a philosophical context, was an accepted technical term from Aristotelian philosophy; since "potency" (*δύναμις*) in Aristotle's system was a metaphysical notion involving powers not directly experienced by the knowing subject, Sextus is trying to emphasize instead the purely phenomenological meaning in which the same term is used in his text.

Again, when we talk about "appearances" (*φαίνόμενα*), it must be clear that this term does not mean "illusion", but simply "that which turns up" without any claim being made about the reality or illusoriness of the experience as far as unclear or hidden structures or reality are concerned. The Sceptic's philosophical activity is thus limited to two factors: we have both the phenomenon as the sum of sense-affections and the objects of thought. Reality, the essence of the external world, what, in short, Sextus calls the "underlying things" (*τὰ ὑποκείμενα*) do not belong to the

sceptic investigation and although the possibility of their existence is not directly challenged, all that can be said about them is that they are unknowable, for they fall outside the range of our cognitive capacity.

In general, the main theoretical postulate, to which Sextus refers on innumerable occasions in the course of his writings, is the following: "...while the dogmatizer posits the matter of his dogma as substantial truth, the Sceptic enunciates his formulae so that they are virtually cancelled by themselves."²¹ What Sextus means is that there is a clear difference between saying something on the assumption that things are actually the way they are said to be, and saying something with the mere purpose of recording a subjective and temporary impression of the subject. The Sceptic will always follow the latter pattern, and even when he may accidentally put too much emphasis on his statements, the reader ought to be warned of this initial caveat, which gives the authentic measure of a truly sceptical attitude.

3. Some remarks on sceptic terminology

The same methodological concern is present in those pages where Sextus examines the expressions commonly used by the Sceptics and gives us a glossary of Sceptic technical terms. The expressions "I determine nothing" (οὐδέν ὁρίζω),²²

"no more this than that" ($\text{o}\ddot{\upsilon}\ \mu\tilde{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\omicron\nu$),²³ etc. should not be interpreted as positive statements but as a linguistic device for expressing a suspension of judgement; they describe a psychological situation, purposely deprived of any ontological commitment. By the same token, Sextus warns that when the expression $\text{o}\ddot{\upsilon}\delta\epsilon\nu\ \delta\rho\acute{\iota}\xi\omega$ is used, although "... 'to determine' is not simply to state a thing but to put forward something non-evident ($\alpha\delta\eta\lambda\omicron\nu$) combined with assent", one should bear in mind that "... whenever the Sceptic says 'I determine nothing', what he means is 'I am now in such a state of mind as neither to affirm dogmatically nor deny any of the matters now in question.' And this he says simply by way of announcing undogmatically what appears to himself regarding the matter presented, not making any confident declaration, but just explaining his own state of mind."²⁴

When we come to Sceptic expressions such as "all things are incomprehensible ($\alpha\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\eta\pi\tau\alpha$)",²⁵ Sextus is very well aware of the danger offered by the obviously positive character of such a statement;²⁶ consequently he points out that "all things" means "all things as far as I am concerned", and that "are incomprehensible" does not mean that they are such per se, but that the subject is affected in such a way that hic et nunc he cannot understand them. What makes the sceptical way of reasoning undogmatic, and what allows the Sceptic to reject the accusation of self-contradiction is his renunciation of any presumption of truth. Sextus compares

the discourse of the Sceptic to a purge, which not only cleanses the body from unhealthy humours, but, together with the humours, also eliminates itself;²⁷ in the same way scepticism not only nullifies dogmatism, but also the dogmatism of its own statements.

The expressions used by the Sceptic should be considered as distinct from the things to which they refer, for he uses them independently of their objective meaning. Sextus is the first one to agree that such an inaccuracy in terminology leads to an improper use of the expressions and consequently to an improper discourse, for the Sceptic does not claim the exclusive validity of his discourse; rather, he presents his own discourse as one that is relative to the subject who pronounces it, and he stresses that the intrinsic relativity of his formulae is what frees the Sceptic from any accusation of Dogmatism.²⁸

4. Sceptic definition of Dogmatism

In order to state his position more clearly, Sextus examines two questions: 1) whether the Sceptic is a Dogmatist; 2) whether the Sceptic belongs to a sect. As far as the first question is concerned, he starts by pointing out the two different meanings of the term dogma: it can signify either "approval of a thing" (τὸ εὐδοκεῖν τινὶ πράγματι)

or "to assent to one of the non-evident (ἀδῆλα) objects of scientific industry".²⁹ Sextus here borrows the term ἀδῆλος from the Stoic vocabulary and from their theory of signs to which the classification of objects as pre-evident (πρόδηλα) and non-evident (ἀδῆλα) was related.³⁰ But, whereas for the Stoics not only the pre-evident objects but also some of the non-evident ones were thought to be apprehensible by means either of suggestive signs (διὰ τῶν ὑπομνηστικῶν) or by means of indicative signs (διὰ τῶν ἐνδεικτικῶν),³¹ Sextus denies such a possibility. To him the non-evident is the same as the real (τὸ ὑποκείμενον), and the real is opposed to the apparent (τὸ φαινόμενον); τὸ φαινόμενον, in turn, is capable of establishing only "that it appears" (τῶν φαινομένων αὐτὸ μόνον παρίσταντων ὅτι φαίνεται), but not "that it really exists" (ὅτι ὑπόκειται).³² Consequently, since the Sceptic consents to the world of appearance and of subjective affections and to that only, it follows that he must deny his assent to the world of being, that is to the non-evident.

The Sceptic identifies dogmatism with ontological commitment, that is with the belief that via sense-impressions the underlying object (τὰ ὑποκείμενα) can be known to the perceiver. Such a commitment is excluded by Sextus, who can then free the Sceptic from the accusation of dogmatism, for "...while the dogmatizer posits the matter of his dogma as substantial truth, the Sceptic enunciates his formulae so

that they are virtually cancelled by themselves... And, most important of all, in his enunciation of these formulae he states what appears to himself and announces his own impression in an undogmatic way, without making any positive assertion regarding the external realities (περὶ τῶν ἑξῶθεν)."³³

Thus the only way the term dogma can be applied to the Sceptic is when it is taken in its broader meaning as "approval of a thing"; in this sense dogma is merely synonymous with the enunciation of statements in a purely descriptive way (as when one says that he gives his approval to the feeling of hunger or of cold), without any ontological implications attached to it. The sceptic discourse is just a chronicle of various sense-affections and Sextus emphasizes that "...of none of our future statements do we positively affirm that the fact is exactly as we state it, but we simply record each fact, like a chronicler, as it appears to us at the moment."³⁴

As far as the second question is concerned, whether the Sceptic belongs to a sect, Sextus draws the usual distinction: sect (αἵρεσις) can be understood either as "adherence to a number of dogmas which are dependent both on one another and on appearances", or as commitment to a "procedure which, in accordance with appearance (τὸ φαινόμενον), follows a certain line of reasoning, that reasoning indicating how it is possible to seem to live rightly... and tending to enable us to suspend judgement."³⁵ The Sceptic belongs to a sect only in the latter meaning of the term.

The main task of Sextus' work is the critique of dogmatism. In order to do that, the sceptic philosopher feels the need to answer those who keep constantly repeating that the Sceptic is incapable of either investigating or in any way cognizing the objects about which they dogmatize. The objection of the Dogmatists is expressed in these words: "For they maintain that the Sceptic either apprehends (καταλαμβάνει) or does not apprehend the statements made by the Dogmatists; if, then, he apprehends, how can he be perplexed about things which he has, as he says, apprehended? Whereas if he does not apprehend, then neither does he know how to discuss matters which he has not apprehended."³⁶ According to Sextus this objection can be interpreted in two ways: 1) Firstly, it is said that in order to confute a doctrine it is necessary to understand it, and that understanding implies giving assent; but once assent is given, it is no longer possible to confute the same doctrine. In other words, the fact that a refutation is extrinsic deprives it of its value, whereas an intrinsic refutation cannot take place, since to grasp the meaning of a doctrine means to renounce its refutation. 2) Secondly, the objection could be more properly directed against the Sceptic, who could not refute Dogmatism without reaching an "apprehension" of it. For, if he cannot grasp the truth and therefore come to an apprehension of it, he has no right to say anything against other truths and apprehensions; in addition, if he

wants to direct polemics against certain intellectual positions, he cannot do so without an understanding of the truth, and without having a truer truth to offer as an alternative to the one he criticizes.

Sextus examines both aspects of the objection, starting from the twofold meaning of the term *καταλαμβάνειν*.

"To apprehend" may mean either "...the simple mental conception (*τὸ νοεῖν ἀπλῶς*) without any further affirmation of the reality of the objects under discussion, or the further assumption of the reality of the objects discussed."³⁷ In the first sense "to apprehend" excludes the ontological commitment that is implied in the second. Sextus could argue that the Dogmatists' objection, if understood in the first sense, is actually in favour of the Sceptic; it could very well represent the position of the Sceptic, rather than an objection by the Dogmatic against the Sceptic. For, if "to apprehend" means "to assent", the Dogmatic himself could not even understand positions opposed to his own, without giving his assent to them and consequently without implicitly renouncing his own position. For example, the Stoic could not understand the position of the Epicurean and vice versa. Therefore, the Dogmatist would be faced with the same alternative with which he had initially challenged the Sceptic: either to assent to a doctrine and consequently exclude the possibility of understanding

all the others, or to comprehend some doctrines and thus implicitly renounce the subjective point of view.

But once the possibility of drawing a distinction between apprehension and assent is excluded, the union of apprehension and assent can be founded only upon evidentiality ($\xi\nu\acute{\alpha}\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$); but evidentiality, being based only upon itself and its own affirmation, is necessarily sub judice and, as such, arbitrary, which is proved by the disagreement among different forms of $\xi\nu\acute{\alpha}\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$.³⁸ Besides, $\xi\nu\acute{\alpha}\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$, conceived in this particular instance as that by which the union of apprehension and assent can occur, necessarily implies an ontological commitment, that is the belief that that of which we have $\xi\nu\acute{\alpha}\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$, does in fact exist; but such a belief is dogmatic and thus unacceptable for the Sceptic. The Sceptic would, therefore, conclude that, if one wants to avoid resorting to $\xi\nu\acute{\alpha}\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$ in order to give a legitimate foundation to comprehension and assent, it will be necessary to turn oneself to inquiry and research.

The position of the Sceptic, instead, is based upon the distinction between "having a simple notion" ($\tau\acute{o}\ \nu\omicron\sigma\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\pi\lambda\tilde{\omega}\varsigma$) and "positively asserting the existence of something" ($\tau\eta\tilde{\nu}\ \epsilon\tilde{\upsilon}\pi\alpha\rho\tilde{\chi}\iota\nu\ \xi\kappa\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu\omega\nu\ \tau\iota\theta\acute{\epsilon}\nu\alpha\iota\ \pi\epsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\ \tilde{\omega}\nu\ \delta\iota\alpha\lambda\epsilon\gamma\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\theta\alpha$),³⁹ with the Sceptic refusing to make any positive statement about the existence of any given object. As Long puts it,

"Sense perception reveals 'what appears' to the percipient; but 'what appears' cannot be used as sound evidence from which to infer 'what is'."⁴⁰ Only through the suspension of any ontological judgement can the Sceptic lay down the possibility of scientific research. His inquiry is based on τὰ φαινόμενα and moves within the limits of sense impressions; but from simple notions (νόησις),⁴¹ one cannot infer the existence of that to which notions are referred; notions have nothing to do with the external world, for it is to τὰ φαινόμενα and not to τὰ ὑποκείμενα that they must be related.

It must also be noticed that the Sceptic's critique of dogmatism does not present itself as a strict refutation, because such a refutation would imply that the opposed view had been comprehended as true (i.e. that the Sceptic had accepted the presuppositions of Dogmatism). It will rather be a research into the foundations of Dogmatism, and will develop only within the limits of simple appearances (τὰ φαινόμενα) and notions (τὰ νοητά) which represent the epistemological boundaries of Scepticism.

FOOTNOTES

1. The only discordant voice is that of M. Philippson, De Philodemi libro. On the basis of the defense of methodic medicine made by Sextus in P.H. I, 236 and II, 166, 193-94, Philippson maintained that M. had been written before P.H. and that Sextus slowly abandoned the position held by the empirical school of medicine (which he defended and compared to sceptical methodology both in M. I, 61, 63-67 and M. VIII, 191, 327) to join the methodic one.
2. K. Janáček, Prolegomena to Sextus Empiricus.
3. K. Janáček, Prolegomena to Sextus Empiricus, 63.
4. A vast bibliography is available on Scepticism. Among the most useful and recent works we may mention: C. Stough, Greek Scepticism; M. Dal Pra, Lo scetticismo greco; L. Robin, Pyrrhon et le scepticisme grec; A. Levi, "Il problema dell'errore nello scetticismo antico", Rivista di Filosofia (1949), 373-87. See also the bibliography under V. Bröckard, Les sceptiques grecs; A. Goedeckmeyer, Die Geschichte des Griechischen Skeptizismus; M. Patrick, The Greek Sceptics.
5. Both A. Long, Hellenistic philosophy, 75 and M. Dal Pra, Lo scetticismo antico, 469-70 consider Aenesidemus, a Greek philosopher of uncertain date, as Sextus' chief source. He was probably the first to elaborate the famous ten tropoi or modes of judgement that are recorded by Sextus (P.H. I, 31-163) and Diogenes Laertius (IX, 79-88). These tropoi are a series of arguments designed to demonstrate that sense impressions as such are not judgements, that it is doubtful whether they correspond to the presented object and that, consequently, they cannot be used as data of the discourse, neither in the Aristotelian sense, because we should first admit a relation of real inherence between the subject and the predicate, both representing objects per se, nor in the Stoic sense, because we should first admit that for all men the presentation A always refers to the presentation B and so on. On Aenesidemus see J.M. Rist, "The Heracliteanism of Aenesidemus", Phoenix (1970), 309-19. Other major sources are Clitomachus, who denied the possibility of absolute knowledge (cf., for instance, M. IX, 1), Antiochus of Ascalon and Menodotus of Nicomedia, whose empirical method of research plays an important role in Sextus' intellectual formation. But Sextus' sources go beyond Aenesidemus and the Academy; in fact, the author whom Sextus quotes more often and whom he seems to know very deeply is Timon of Phlius. Timon was

a follower of Pyrrho, the founder of the Sceptical school, and some of his fragments have survived as quotations in later writers. For a bibliography on Timon see: A.A. Long, Hellenistic philosophy, 80-84; V. Brochard, Les Sceptiques grecs; C. Stough, Greek Skepticism, 16-34; M. Dal Pra, Lo scetticismo greco, Vol. 1, 83-114.

6. Cf. Galen, VIII, 709 K. For a history of ancient medicine and all questions related to the different medical schools see K. Deichgräber, Die Griechische Empirikerschule; R. Walzer, Galen on Medical Experience; L. Edelstein, Ancient Medicine.
7. For the relation between Sextus and the empirical school of medicine see M. Dal Pra, Lo scetticismo greco, Vol. II, 431-460.
8. Galen, X, 142; XIV, 683; XV, 766. Diogenes Laertius, IX, 116.
9. P.H. I, 222.
10. Diogenes Laertius, IX, 116. For Theodas see: M. Dal Pra, Lo scetticismo greco, Vol. II, 449, 457; L. Robin, Pyrrhon et le scepticisme grec, 189-94.
11. M. Dal Pra, Lo scetticismo greco, Vol. II, 454 where it is remarked how the term "sketch" immediately and naturally refers to visual and therefore strictly experimental elements.
12. K. Deichgräber, Die Griechische Empirikerschule, 67-69.
13. J.P. Dumont, Le scepticisme et le phénomène, 20.
14. Cicero, Acad. pr., II, 5, 15. After having referred to the democratic laws relative to the provocatio, Lucullus says: "Nonne cum iam philosophorum disciplinae gravissimae constitissent tum exortus est (ut) in optuma re publica Tib. Gracchus qui otium perturbaret sic Arcesilas qui constitutam philosophiam everteret et in eorum auctoritate delitisceret qui negavissent quicquam sciri aut percipi posse?"
15. Cf., for instance, M. VII, 399-400.
16. The noun skepsis derives from the verb σκεπτεσθαι, meaning "to observe carefully", "to examine".

17. P.H. I, 17. As far as Pyrrho and his relation to Sextus are concerned see: P. Couissin, "Le stoïcisme de la nouvelle Académie", Revue d'histoire de la philosophie (1929), 241-76; P. Couissin, "L'origine et l'évolution de l'époche", Revue des études grecques (1929), 376-97; O. Gigon, "Zur Geschichte der sogenannten Akademie", Museum Helveticum (1944), 47-64; H. Cherniss, The Riddle of the Early Academy; Ph. De Lacy, "Plutarch and the Academic Sceptics", Classical Journal (1953), 79-85; C. Moreschini, "Atteggiamenti scettici e atteggiamenti dogmatici nella filosofia accademica", La parola del passato (1969), 426-36.
18. P.H. I, 8-9.
19. Timaeus, 51 d.
20. This opposition will again be emphasized in P.H. I, 29; I, 31-33; II, 10.
22. P.H. I, 15; see also P.H. I, 4.
23. P.H. I, 188. See Ph. De Lacy, "Ὅς μᾶλλον and the Antecedents of Ancient Scepticism", Phronesis (1958), 59-71. After an excursus of the history of the expression ὅς μᾶλλον, De Lacy concludes by writing: "...the Pyrrhonists give a special meaning to ὅς μᾶλλον, or even transform it into another kind of sentence. It is not assertive. It makes neither an affirmation nor a denial, but merely reports the speaker's failure to assent to one alternative rather than the other." (p. 70).
24. P.H. I, 197; see also Diogenes Laertius, IX, 103: μόνα τὰ παθὴ γινώσκόμεν.
25. P.H. I, 200.
26. A good example of this is provided by Arcesilaus' position, as it reported by Cicero (Acad. post., I, 12, 450): "Itaque Arcesilas negabat esse quicquam quod sciri posset, ne illud quidem ipsum quod Socrates sibi reliquisset, ut nihil scire se sciret; sic omnia latere censebat in occulto neque esse quicquam quod cerni aut intelligi posset; quibus de causis nihil oportere neque profiteri neque affirmare quemquam neque assensione approbare, cohibereque semper et ab omni lapsu continere temeritatem, quae tum esset insignis cum aut falsa aut incognita res approbaretur, neque hoc quicquam esse turpius quam cognitioni et perceptioni assensionem approbationemque praecurrere."
27. M. VIII, 480-1.

28. P.H. I, 14-15.
29. P.H. I, 13.
30. P.H. II, 97 foll. On this subject see G. Preti, "Sulla dottrina del εἰρησέλιον nella logica stoica", Rivista critica di storia della filosofia (1956), 5-14.
31. P.H. II, 99.
32. M. VIII, 368.
33. P.H. I, 15.
34. P.H. I, 4.
35. P.H. I, 16-17.
36. P.H. I, 2-3. Cf. also Plato, Meno, 80 D-E.
37. P.H. II, 4.
38. P.H. I, 8; Cf. P.H. I, 178-9; M. VII, 364-6.
39. P.H. II, 4.
40. A.A. Long, Hellenistic Philosophy, 82.
41. P.H. II, 10.

CHAPTER III

GENERAL PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY OF SEXTUS' WORK

- 1) Sextus' tripartition of philosophy and the priority given to undermining dogmatic logic.

In his attempt to demolish those dogmata which had represented the pillars of traditional ancient philosophy, Sextus establishes the limits and indicates the main difficulties of ancient thought in a critical endeavour to build what we may call a system of the non-system; in doing so he makes use of both the supposedly negative and erroneous doctrines of the Dogmatists, and of the already well established technique of the sceptical *αἰρησις*.

Sextus' attack is articulated in three broad studies; two of the last five books of Against Mathematicians (M. VII-VIII) are dedicated to logic, two to physics (M. IX-X) and the last to ethics (M. XI). The same themes are discussed in P.H., although in a more cursory way, where logic is the subject of Book II, physics and ethics of Book III.

Sextus accepts the division of philosophy into these three branches, a division which was already a commonplace in the philosophical tradition of his time. After having

noted that of the earliest philosophers some recognized one, others two parts of philosophy, Sextus writes: "These thinkers, however, seem to have handled the question incompletely and, in comparison with them, the view of those who divide philosophy into physics, ethics and logic is more satisfactory. Of these Plato is, virtually, the pioneer, as he discussed any problems of physics and ethics, and not few of logic; but those who most expressly adopt this division are Xenocrates and the Peripatetics and also the Stoics."¹

A discussion follows concerning which of these three parts has to be considered as the starting point in building a philosophical system. After a short historical account of the different viewpoints, Sextus stresses the need for individuating those trustworthy principles (τὰς ἀρχάς) and methods (τοὺς τρόπους) which alone allow us to discern the truth: "Now the logical branch (ὁ λογικὸς τόπος) is that which includes the theory of criteria and proofs; so it is with this that we ought to make our beginning. And in order to facilitate our inquiry, in its criticism of the Dogmatists, seeing that things evident are held to be directly cognized by means of a criterion, whereas the non-evident things are discovered by means of signs and proofs through inference from the non evident (διὰ σημείων καὶ ἀποδείξεων κατὰ τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐναργῶν μετάβασιν), we shall take them in this order, inquiring first whether there exists a criterion of things directly perceived either by sense or by reason

(κατ' αἰεθῆσιν ἢ δυνάσιν), and, in the next place, whether there exists a method capable of either signifying or proving things non-evident. For I suppose that if these shall be abolished there will no longer be any question as to the duty of suspending judgement, seeing that no truth is discovered either in things plainly obvious or in things obscure."²

This passage requires a brief comment. First of all, we can notice that, although Sextus does not wish to associate himself with any dogmatic philosopher, he in fact accepts, without critical evaluation, the tripartition of philosophy codified by the Stoics,³ who, in turn, had followed the Platonist Xenocrates in treating philosophy under the three headings of logic, physics and ethics.⁴ It is also important to remark that for the Stoics logic was not just a part of philosophy: Ammonius, son of Hermias (circa 350 a.D.) stressed that for the Stoics logic was a μέρος, not a μέρος of philosophy,⁵ the difference between the two being the same as that between a part (μέρος) and the subdivision of a part in a whole (μέρος).⁶ Mignucci⁷ explains that the Stoic distinction between μέρος and μέρος is based on the following argument: a science of which another science makes use, must be a part (μέρος) of the science which makes use of it, unless it is, in turn, part of another science.⁸ Thus logic, not being part of any other particular science is a μέρος of philosophy; this means that it is not subordinated to any other part of philosophy and that it enjoys an autonomy and a priority⁹ which is justified by the fact that logic does

not need any superior science to guarantee its validity and that its axioms and development are not conditioned by any pre-existent and more general doctrine. The relation between logic and philosophy is, therefore, different from the relation between physics or ethics and philosophy; logic is a part of philosophy but it is also its species, whereas physics and ethics are also parts of philosophy but in the sense of being branches of it; consequently, physics and ethics always presuppose logic.

Such a concept of logic is clearly distinct from Aristotle's position, and the fact that Sextus basically endorses the Stoic view helps us to understand the secondary role played by Aristotle in Sextus' attack against the Dogmatists. For Aristotle logic is essentially metaphysics, of which it represents a part, for the intellect depends on the object, i.e. on being, not only in the assumption of its cognitive contents, but also with regard to the laws that regulate the intellect; these laws are the structure of the object before being the structure of the intellect, and they cannot be the structure of the intellect if they are not the structure of being.¹⁰ Thus logical principles and axioms are only the intellectual reflection of objective relations (intrinsic, that is, to reality), and for this very reason, according to Aristotle, logic cannot claim the autonomy attributed to it by the Stoics.

When Sextus comes to organizing the line of his attack against Dogmatism, it is to logic that he turns his attention in the belief that once the possibility of a science of logic is denied, physics and ethics will consequently collapse together with their logical premises. In planning his critique along these lines, Sextus proves to have a correct insight into the internal structure of both Stoicism and Epicureanism, and a sharp awareness of the many weak points offered by their logical doctrines, but we must emphasize that the strength of his arguments is limited by the particular concept of logic upheld by the very philosophical schools he attacks. Sextus' few and superficial references to Aristotelian logic may thus be explained not only on historical grounds, but probably also by the fact that Sextus himself might have been aware that his arguments could not be applied as effectively to a philosophical system for which logic was intrinsically related to metaphysics.

Sextus' arguments are instead well suited to attack a logical system, such as the Stoics', which, as we shall see, is more related to psychology and whose value is not conditioned by a direct comparison with being, understood as the principle both of things and of the intellect, but only by a comparison with the structures of reason alone. In this sense we can say that Stoic logic is neutral with regard to metaphysics, not because it rejects it, but because it is independent of it and obeys laws which are its own, thus justifying its

priority with regard to the other areas of philosophy. The Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataleptiké (φαντασία καταληπτική),¹¹ on my interpretation, will prove this claim of the a-metaphysical character of Stoic logic. In conclusion, although by Dogmatists Sextus understands all philosophers, with the exception of the Sceptics, we can say that his historical perspective is limited and that he leaves many questions unanswered with regard to philosophical and logical systems which cannot be classified according to the Stoic notion of logic, which Sextus clearly endorses: in other words, the kind of logic attacked by Sextus is a science of judgements rather than an analysis of reality.

2) General Characteristics of Stoic logic

It may be useful at this point to give a short outline of what the Stoics meant by logic, because not only does Sextus accept their concept of logic, but Stoic logic is Sextus' first target, and his attack follows to a remarkable extent the pattern of its principles.¹²

By the term τὸ λογικόν the Stoics meant that doctrine whose object are logoi or discourse. As the science of continuous discourse, logic is rhetoric;¹³ as the science of discourse divided by question and answer, logic is dialectic. More precisely, dialectic is defined as "the science of what is true and of what is false and of what is neither true nor

false".¹³ By the expression "what is neither true nor false" the Stoics probably meant the sophisms or the paradoxes, about whose truth and falsity it is impossible to decide and whose study seemed to fascinate the Stoics who, on this particular point, closely followed the example of the Megarics.¹⁴ In turn, dialectic is divided into two branches: grammar, which deals with words (αἱ φωναί), or "things which signify" (τὰ σημαίνοντα),¹⁵ and logic, strictly speaking, which deals with τὰ λεκτά or "things which are signified"¹⁶ and which, consequently, has as its own object presentations (φαντασίαι), propositions (ᾑξιώματα),¹⁷ definitions (ὅροι),¹⁸ reasonings (συλλογισμοί)¹⁹ and sophisms.²⁰ Dialectic represents, therefore, the general part of logic; it is the art of rational discourse "with a discriminating (διακριτική) and inspective (ἐπισκεπτική) function, which, so to speak, weighs and measures the other parts of philosophy".²¹ Thus the arts of the dialecticians are defined "as instruments of precision to measure hay and manure instead of corn and other precious victuals",²² since it is the task of dialectic "to discover and refute sophisms",²³ that is to eliminate the errors of reasoning, by being aware of the mechanics of discourse and therefore by giving instruction about how "to discuss well" (τὴν δὲ ῥητορικὴν ἐπιστήμην εἶναι τοῦ εὖ λέγειν).²⁴

The "discriminating" and "inspective" function of logic, i.e. the "weighing" of dialectic, allows us to discover sophisms ("hay and manure"): that is, the unjustified passage

from the meaning of one term to the meaning of a different term. By discovering and refuting sophisms, dialectic also allow us to determine what is true and what is false. Although we shall return soon to this subject, it must be clarified here that, according to the Stoics, what is true and what is false is properly predicated only of judgements (ἀξιώματα),²⁵ which are descriptive of how something is affirmed or denied of something else. This important feature of Stoic philosophy allows us to understand how logic, as the study of rational discourse and of the conditions that permit a discourse (διαλέγεσθαι) ultimately coincides with dialectic, that is with that science "...qua ratione verum falsumne sit iudicatur: quid efficiatur a quoque, qui cuique consequens sit, quidque contrarium: quumque ambigue multa dicantur, quomodo quidque eorum dividi explanarique oporteat."²⁶

3) Sextus as historian of ancient logic

The two books Against Logicians (M. VII-VIII) are rich in historical excursuses, some broad and detailed, others introduced en passant to illuminate some specific question. These historical references and doxai are a valuable source of information for modern scholars of ancient philosophy, so valuable that too often and too ungenerously Sextus' own thought is not given due attention and the sceptic philosopher is only considered to be a forerunner, and for that matter

not even a reliable one, of learned historiography.²⁷ I think it would be fairer to acknowledge that Sextus' primary intention was certainly not that of handing down to posterity an accumulation of philosophical information. If indeed he has explained with richness of detail and occasionally with some originality the contents of philosophical works, some of which are lost for us, he did so only in order to support by documentary evidence his own critical thought with regard to them.

For this reason it seems legitimate to compare Sextus' historiographical activity with that undertaken by Aristotle. In particular, we may notice that the broad historical excursuses on the criterion of truth in many ways resemble and have a structure analogous to, say, the first book of the Metaphysics. Aristotle's account of Presocratic thought is integrated there with his exposition of the theory of causality, whereas Sextus concentrates his attention on that notion of the criterion which had been developed by the Stoics. Sextus considers this notion as being already present, even if implicitly, in the earliest philosophers, and he carries on an historical examination which, at the same time, belongs both to the logical order (truth) and the epistemological one (criterion): and just as Aristotle, as an historian of philosophy, saw all preceding philosophies as converging into his own theory of cause (which, in fact, was the same as his doctrine of

substance), in a similar way Sextus sees large tracts of earlier philosophy as converging into his own system of negations and aporiai. Furthermore we can detect in his historical panorama the many connections that classical logic had with ontology and epistemology; thus Sextus' reconstruction is not only a history of formal logic but also a history of the problems of ontology (which will be re-examined in more detail in the Against Physicians) as well as of epistemology. Actually the latter is carefully described with all the main difficulties encountered by dogmatic philosophy: the opposition between subject and object, between appearance and reality, between evidence and non-evidence, between sense and intellect.

Sextus is the first thinker who felt the need to establish a critical history of logic or, at least, of some fundamental questions of logic, centered mainly around those themes which, at his time, were considered to be the crucial ones. The most remarkable drawback of Sextus' history of logic is that the sceptic philosopher did not or could not take due account of Aristotle's Organon and in particular of the Prior and Posterior Analytics, which are at the very basis of Aristotelian logic. Certainly Sextus had no deep knowledge of these works, and it is quite probable that neither had he any direct access to them. In general, one has the impression that Sextus saw Aristotle's logic through the eyes of the Stoics, and particularly of Chrysippus, as is suggested by some,

occasionally arbitrary, associations of Peripatetic and Stoic theories;²⁸ this fact represents Sextus' main weakness as historian of philosophy and, at the same time and more importantly, defines the historical limits of his attack against dogmatic logic.

4) How the critique of dogmatic logic is developed in P.H. and M. respectively

Sextus devotes Book II of P.H. and Book I of M. to the critique of dogmatic logic. In general, we may say that there is some noticeable difference in structure between P.H. and M.; the latter, for instance, is characterized by variety and wealth of argumentation and by a greater attention paid to the historical study of dogmatic theories, and particularly of Stoicism, on which Sextus most often focuses his attention. Naturally we find many extensive parallels between the two works as well as many repetitions which, in some instances, are even textual. Here we want to indicate the principal loci paralleli and the most significant differences in formal order between Sextus' two treatises on logic.

Sextus deals briefly in P.H. (II, 12) and more extensively in M. (VII, 1-26) with the different divisions of philosophy suggested by the Dogmatists. The two chapters of P.H. entitled "Criterion of truth" and "Does a criterion

of truth exist?" (P.H. II, 14-17 and II, 18-21 respectively) correspond to two other chapters of M., although in reverse order (M. VII, 27-29 and VII, 29-37). The three different points of view to which the criterion of truth can be reduced are the subject of three different chapters in P.H. (II, 22-47; II, 48-69; II, 70-79), whereas in M. they are treated in one chapter alone under the comprehensive title "On Man" and include three parts, the first one dealing with the agent (τὸ ὑφ' οὗ; M. VII, 268-286), the second one with the instrument (τὸ δι' οὗ; M. VII, 370-446) and the third one with the operation (τὸ ὡς προσβολήν; M. VII, 370-446). The question of truth follows in P.H. (II, 80-84), whereas in M. it is treated before the question of the criterion (VII, 38-262). The problem "Whether something true exists by nature", which in P.H. follows the question "On truth" (II, 80-84), is found instead at the opening of Book II in M. (VIII, 1-140) and is preceded by a short introduction in which Sextus explains why these two questions which have been treated together in P.H. deserve a separate discussion in M..

In both P.H. and M. the problem of signs comes next: first we find the question of suggestive signs (τὰ ὑπομνηστικά σημεῖα; P.H. II, 97-106 and M. VIII, 143-156), then the question of indicative signs (τὰ ἐνδεικτικά σημεῖα; P.H. II, 107-133 and M. VIII, 159-299); next comes a discussion on demonstration, quite concise in P.H. (II, 134-143, 144-192, 193-203), more detailed and analytic in M., where the following points are examined in turn: the nature and matter of

demonstration (VIII, 300-315, 315-336), whether demonstrations are possible (particular attention is paid to Stoic logic: VIII, 337-410 and 411-452), and the relativity of demonstrations (VIII, 453-481).

We have nothing that corresponds in M. to the short chapter in P.H. dealing with Socratic and Aristotelian induction (II, 204), although the same argument will be treated briefly in Against the Physicists (M. IX, 95-97). Definition and division are studied separately in P.H. (II, 205-212), right after the chapters on demonstration, but they are not mentioned at all in M.; the subject of definition and division is resumed in Against the Moralists (M. XI, 8-14, 31-39 and 15-17). In a similar way the separate discussion of the parts and the whole (P.H. II, 215-217), of genus and species (P.H. II, 219-227) and of common properties (P.H. II, 228) are not paralleled in M., where they are somehow absorbed in the discussion about the criterion, considered from the point of view of the agent (M. VII, 269-280).

Although Sextus must have sought to avoid too many repetitions in P.H. and M., some omissions are quite surprising, as, for instance, in the case of a critical examination of the concept of induction, treated almost per accidens in P.H., II, 104, but totally ignored in M.. This gap is unforgivable, especially for those who, like Robin,²⁹ maintain an essentially empiricist and positivistic

interpretation of Sextus' scepticism; for an empiricist, in a treatise on logic, not to make any explicit reference to the ἐπαγὰγή is indeed surprising. There is also no mention in M. of the question of sophisms which is examined in P.H. II, 229-259.

5) The criterion of truth. Some preliminary remarks.

The central theme of M. VII is the discussion of the criterion of truth. Before we examine the content of M. VII, it is important to see why Sextus' criticism of dogmatic logic is centered on the criterion, that is, why the epistemological problem is seen by Sextus in terms of criterion of truth.³⁰ We have already pointed out that Sextus' notion of logic is of Stoic origin, and he basically endorses the Stoic view that logic is neutral with regard to metaphysics and that it is self-sufficient because it does not require a justification of its rules at an ontological level. Given these characteristics of Stoic logic, it follows that the epistemological problem cannot be any longer defined in terms of being, as in Plato or Aristotle. This is also in tune with the fundamental interests of Stoicism and, in general, of the whole post-Aristotelian philosophy; the Stoic wise man is not primarily concerned with the structure of being, but rather with the practical goal of human well-being.³¹ He strives to eliminate all the possible problems which may arise from any discrepancy

between man and nature in the effort of achieving a full integration of man with the world. He aims at stability, and this is why the only criterion which he is ready to conceive in order to judge the acceptability of a knowledge must bear, in the first place, the character of immutability, that is, be sufficiently clear and stable as to guarantee that imperturbability which is typical of the wise. Although Sextus, as we shall see, draws a distinction between criterion of truth and criterion for the conduct in life, it seems legitimate to say that both criteria are ultimately directed to help man to achieve the ideal of the Stoic Sage.

Once logic is separated from ontology as its vital source, it is clear that the laws regulating logic cannot be drawn directly from the study of being; they rather coincide with the structures of reason, that is with how the intellect thinks, independently from the content of its thoughts. Thus logic is directly related to psychology and this explains why Sextus' account of Stoic epistemology coincides with his treatment of their theory of perception.

Sextus' criticism of the criterion of truth is preceded by an analysis of the verbal elements of such an expression. Thus he examines separately the meaning of the word "criterion" and "truth" in order to be able to reject more forcefully any attempt at unifying these two terms: "...we shall proceed in an orderly way, and since two terms are involved in the

proposition, namely 'criterion' and 'truth', we shall discuss each of these separately, our treatment consisting partly of an exposition of the various senses of the term 'criterion' and 'truth' and of the kind of reality ascribed to them by the Dogmatists, and partly of a more critical inquiry as to the possibility of the real existence of any such things."³² It is important to notice that Sextus' separate treatment of the two terms is not accidental, but it has its own epistemological justification and it is based on the belief that the distinction between criterion and truth is related to the real distinction between the thinking subject and the object which is thought. For the criterion in any of its determinations, whether as man, as sense or intellect, or as phantasia, belongs in fact to the sphere of the subject, whereas truth, as the foundation of every sign, of every propositions, or of every demonstration, belongs to the world of the object per se, that is to the extra-subjective sphere, without which the whole problem could not even be formulated.

The Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataleptiké arose precisely from the need to destroy this partition between the sphere of the subject and that of the object and, as such, the Stoics considered it to be the criterion of truth par excellence. This doctrine is an interesting and almost revolutionary development of the concept of phantasia that Aristotle had placed, together with memory, as intermediary

between sensation and thought. Aristotle understood phantasia as a motion ($\kappa\acute{\iota}\nu\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$) which cannot arise without sensation ($\alpha\iota\sigma\theta\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$) and which is not inherent to what is incapable of having a sensation.³³ As motion, phantasia is like the prolongation, the echo of our sensations. In their attempt to solve the problem of knowledge, the Stoics borrowed the concept of phantasia from Aristotle, but instead of understanding it in a purely psychological sense, as Aristotle did, they gave it a logical and cognitive meaning. Yet their phantasia kataleptiké needed an indisputable foundation to be supported, and this foundation had to be provided either by sensation ($\alpha\iota\sigma\theta\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$) or by reasoning ($\nu\acute{o}\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$).³⁴ But it is this very foundation that Sextus challenges because, according to the sceptic philosopher, the subject is both incapable of knowing the object and also himself.

Sextus starts his analysis of the term "criterion" by pointing out the twofold meaning of the word: "...in one sense it is used of that in view of which we do these things and not those; in the other, it means the thing in view of which we assert that these things exist and those do not exist, and that these are true, those false... For the sceptical philosopher, if he is not to be entirely inert and without a share in the activities of daily life, was necessarily obliged to possess some criterion both of choice and of aversion, that is to say the appearance; even as Timon also testified in his saying - 'Yea, the appearance is

everywhere strong, wherever it approaches'." ³⁵ In this passage Sextus distinguishes between a criterion of truth, that is that by which we judge of the reality or unreality of things (ὑπαρξίς καὶ ἀνυπαρξία), and a criterion for the conduct of life, and he points out how for the Pyrrhonists the appearance (τὸ φαινόμενον) was a criterion in the second sense; ignorance of the real character of things necessitates that our actions be guided by phenomena. It is clear from the aforesaid distinction that Sextus links truth with the criterion by which we judge existence, and not with the criterion as a guide in ordinary life; and it is also clear from the Sceptics' epistemological premises that there cannot be such a thing as a criterion of truth. In fact, the Sceptic would argue that what we perceive is only what appears (τὸ φαινόμενον) and not the existing object (τὸ ἐκτὸς ὑποκείμενον) from which sense impressions arise; but the criterion of truth implies, by definition, an existential judgement, that is, the possibility of establishing that phenomena are identical with the real object. ³⁶ The external reality being unknowable, it follows that a criterion of truth is necessarily inconceivable.

Yet, phenomena are accepted as standard for life; ³⁷ as Stough rightly points out "...it is their very neutrality that makes them acceptable to Sextus. They are descriptive of our impressions, to which we are compelled by nature to give assent." ³⁸ In other words, phenomena must be the standard of life because the reality of experience itself

is indisputable. Man is necessarily passive with respect to phenomena, in the sense that he cannot ignore or alter them at will, so that he must also base his actions and practical life on them.

After having established the two main senses in which the term "criterion" can be understood, Sextus goes on to say that his polemic against dogmatic logic deals with criterion only in so far as it is criterion of truth, and he points out that the criterion of truth can, in turn, have three different meanings: "As general it is used of every measure of standard of apprehension, and in this sense the physical criteria also - such as sight, hearing, taste - are thought worthy of the title; as special it includes every technical measure of apprehension...; in the more special sense the criterion is every measure of apprehension of a non-evident object (ἀδύλου πράγματος), and in this sense the ordinary standards are no longer called criteria but only logical standards (τὰ λογικά) and those which the Dogmatic philosophers introduce as means for the discovery of truth."³⁹ Of these three subsequent meanings of the word "criterion", Sextus argues only against the logical one which is supposed to provide a standard for the apprehension of non-evident objects, or, in Sceptic terms, of τὰ ἔκτος ὑποκείμενα. After having clarified the meaning of the term "criterion", Sextus examines, with an analogous procedure, the meaning of the term "truth".

6) Truth and the true.

In dealing with the problem of truth at this stage of his inquiry,⁴⁰ Sextus basically endorses the Stoic doctrine of truth. He first explains the distinction that the Stoics upheld between truth (ἡ ἀλήθεια) and what is true (τὸ ἀληθές). Truth and what is true differ in three ways, in essence (οὐσία), in composition (συστάσει) and in potency (δυνάμει).

1) οὐσία. Truth is a body (σῶμα), what is true is incorporeal (ἀσώματον). What is true is incorporeal because it is a judgement (ᾠσίωμα), which in turn is an expression (λεκτόν) and therefore is incorporeal.⁴¹ Truth on the other hand is σῶμα, since it "the science that makes true things appear to be true (ἐπιστήμη πάντων ἀληθῶν ἀποφαντική)", and every ἐπιστήμη is a state of the ἡγεμονικόν which, in turn, is a body. Thus, since the Stoics held that all of τὰ ὄντα are corporeal,⁴² it follows that truth is accepted in the category of the existent, whereas what is true, being incorporeal, is rejected.

2) συστάσει. What is true is a simple and isolated proposition; truth, on the contrary, being an ἐπιστήμη,⁴³ is a collection of many elements (ἄθροισμα πλειόνων). Sextus exemplifies the relation between what is true and truth by saying that it is analogous with the one between a citizen and the people, for whereas truth is compound by nature, what is true is not so.

3) *δυνάμει*. What is true does not necessarily imply knowledge; for instance, even a madman can utter the truth and say, "It is daytime" when it is actually daytime, but without having necessarily the knowledge of what is true (*ἐπιστήμη ἀληθοῦς*). On the contrary, truth is knowledge and the sage who possesses this knowledge never speaks falsely, even if he may occasionally say something false, because his disposition (*διὰ θεοῦ*) is good. A physician who deceives a patient, a general who fakes good news to encourage his soldiers "say what is false yet they are not liars because they do not do this with bad intention."⁴⁴ The same applies to a grammarian who utters a solecism as an example, or to the sage who, at times, says something false. For what is true and what is false should not be judged according to the simple enunciation, but according to the intention or disposition of the subject. As Long rightly points out "...the difficulty of this distinction is not so much its ethical assumptions but the implications it seems to have for Sextus' discussion of truth and the true. If truth consists of a body of true propositions and these comprise the sage's knowledge how can the sage stand as the human guarantor of what is true when stating what is false? An attempt to answer this question shows again how difficult it is in Stoicism to separate logic too sharply from physics and ethics."⁴⁵ We may also add that this emphasis on the decisive role played by the intention or disposition of the subject in the definition of truth may reinforce our previous statements about the psychological character of Stoic

epistemology: truth is no longer related to and defined by being, but by a state internal to the knowing subject. This is why that particular *διδόθεις* which is required to state the truth is not established by a true utterance taken individually, and, in the same way, it cannot be destroyed by a false utterance. In this sense *δυνάμει* may be more properly translated by "intentional force" rather than "capacity".

This distinction between truth and the true is very difficult for us to grasp; so much so that the two Greek terms are almost impossible to translate. Furthermore, their respective properties are quite perplexing. We could still understand that truth is something material, for this could be implied as an axiom of absolute materialism. What is more difficult to grasp is the incorporeality of what is true. From Sextus' text it seems that such a property is a consequence of the fact that what is true, being an isolated statement, cannot be "embodied" with the *ἄθροισμα πλειόνων* which constitute truth (cf. 2) above). A more satisfactory explanation though can be offered by the fact that Sextus identifies *τὸ ἀληθές* with the *λεκτόν*. From this perspective the incorporeality of what is true is more comprehensible and its being *ἄσώματον* is justified by its purely logical and intellectual function. This point is clearly explained in another passage of Sextus,⁴⁶ where it is stated that the Stoics distinguish in all their statements: a) *τὸ ἐημáιονον*, which is the voice (*φωνή*), or the simple utterance of a

66.

word; b) τὸ τύγχανον , which is the object of the affirmation;
 c) τὸ σημαϊνόμενον, which is αὐτὸ τὸ πράγμα τὸ ὑπ' αὐτῆς δηλού-
 μενον and which we apprehend as existing in dependence on
 our intellect. Of these three elements which are present in
 all statements, two (the voice and the object) are σώματα;
 the third one (τὸ σημαϊνόμενον), that is the object of δῖάνοια,
 is ἀσώματον and it is τὸ λεκτόν , of which true and false can
 be properly predicated (ὅπερ ἀληθές τε γίγνεται ἢ ψεῦδός).
 Thus the truth and the error of a judgement do not rest in
 a material object, but in the mechanics of the subject's
 cognitive process.

To sum up, we can say that, strange as it may seem,
 the corporeality of truth and the incorporeality of the true
 are both comprehensible in the psychologistic interpretation
 of Stoic epistemology I intend to offer. Truth, as δῖαθεσις,
 is corporeal because it is a form (πως ἔχον) of the
 ἡγεμονικόν, which, in turn, is corporeal. The true is
 incorporeal, because it is ἀσώματον and, in turn, a λεκτόν .
 And it is clear that both definitions do not involve any
 ontological reference and that their opposition in terms of
 οὐσία rests on the assumption that the problem of truth
 must be confined to the sphere of mental activity and of
 that alone.

FOOTNOTES

1. M. VII, 16; cf. also P.H. II, 12-13.
2. M. VII, 25-26.
3. On the tripartition of philosophy see: Albinus, Isag. ch. 3; V, D'Agostino "Sulla tripartizione della filosofia secondo gli Stoici", Rivista di studi classici (1952-53), 24-27; M. Mignucci, Il significato della logica stoica, 104-109.
4. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 39. See also Plutarch, De Stoic. Rep., 9, 1035 a; Cicero, De fin., IV, 4.
5. Ammonius, In an. pr., 8, 20-22.
6. Ammonius, In An. pr. 8, 34-36: μέρος δε μορίου διαφέρει, ὅτι τὸ μέρος μέγα μέρος ἐστίν, τὸ δε μόνιον μικρὸν μέρος ἐστίν καὶ τοῦ μέρους μέρος.
7. M. Mignucci, Il significato della logica stoica, 105.
8. Mignucci bases his observation on the following text of Ammonius (In An. pr., 9, 6-10 in SVF II, 49): ἐάν τις τέχνη κέχρηται τινὶ ὁ μὴ δεμιάς ἄλλης τέχνης μέρος ἐστίν ἢ μόνιον, τοῦτο πάντως ταύτης τῆς τέχνης ἢ μέρος ἐστίν ἢ μόνιον· οἷον, τῇ χειρουργικῇ, φαδίν, κέχρηται ἢ ἱατρικῇ, καὶ ἐπειδὴ οὐδεμιά ἄλλη τέχνη κέχρηται τῇ χειρουργικῇ ὥς μέρος ἢ μόνιῳ, ἢ χειρουργικῇ τῆς ἱατρικῆς οὐκ ἐστίν ὄργανον.
9. See Diogenes Laertius, VII, 40 in SVF I, 46 and II, 43; Plutarch, De Stoic. repugn., 9, 1035 a in SVF II, 42; Sextus Empiricus, M. VII, 22.
10. Among the many examples see: Cat., 12, 14 b, 15-23; De Interpr. 19 a, 33; Anal. Post., II, 3, 90 b, 30. Of fundamental importance is Aristotle's enunciation of the principle of non-contradiction according to which the logic impossibility of predicating being and non-being of a same subject (Met., IV, 3, 1005 b, 18) is based on the ontological impossibility that being is and is not (Met., IV, 4, 1006 a, 3).
11. Given the possible ambiguity of all the English translations of this technical expression, I shall retain the transliterated version throughout this study, with the exception of quotations from Bury's translation.

12. On Stoic logic see: J. Lukasiewicz, "Zur Geschichte der Aussagenlogik", Erkenntnis (1935), 111-131; A. Virieux-Reymond, La logique et l'épistémologie des Stoïciens. Leur rapports avec la logique d'Aristotle, la logistiqua et la pensée contemporaines; B. Mates, Stoic Logic; W. and M. Kneale, The Development of Logic; I.M. Bochenski, Ancient Formal Logic; J. Mau, "Stoische Logik. Ihre Stellung gegenüber der aristotelischen Syllogistik und dem modernen Aussagenkalkül", Hermes (1957), 147-58; M. Mignucci, Il significato della logica stoica; C.A. Viano, "La dialettica stoica", Rivista di filosofia (1958), 179-227; A.A. Long ed., Problems in Stoicism; M.E. Reesor, "The Stoic Concept of Quality", American Journal of Philology (1954), 40-58; M.E. Reesor, "The Stoic Categories", American Journal of Philology (1957), 63-82; J.B. Gould, The Philosophy of Chrysippus; E. Brehier, Chrysippe et l'ancien stoïcisme, 59-107.
13. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 62 in SVF II, 122; Cicero, Orator, 32, 115 in SVF II, 134; Sextus Empiricus, M. XI, 187.
14. For the influence of the Megarics' dialectic on Stoic logic see C.A. Viano, "La dialettica stoica", 187 foll.
15. SVF II, 136-165.
16. SVF II, 166-171.
17. SVF II, 193-220.
18. SVF II, 224-230.
19. SVF II, 231-269.
20. SVF II, 270-87.
21. Arrian, Epict. diss., I, 17, 10 in SVF II, 54.
22. Stobaeus, Ecl., II, 2, 12 in SVF I, 49.
23. Plutarch, St. rep., 1035 F in SVF II, 127.
24. Alexander of Aphrodisias, In Arist. Top., 3 in SVF II, 124; see also Diogenes Laertius, VII, 42 in SVF II, 295.
25. M. VIII, 10-2; Diogenes Laertius, VII, 65 in SVF II, 193; Cicero, Acad. pr., 95 in SVF II, 196.
26. Cicero, Orator, 32, 115 in SVF II, 134.
27. I am referring to the negative judgement of V. Brochard, Les sceptiques grecs, 2nd ed., 321 and of M. Dal Pra, Lo scetticismo greco, 380-83.

28. Among the many examples we may indicate: M. VII, 365, 388 with regard to the validity of phenomenological knowledge and M. VIII, 185 with regard to the notion of the sensible (αἰσθητός).
29. Cf. Pyrrhon et le scepticisme grec, 377-86 and La pensée grecque et l'origine de l'esprit scientifique, 429-33.
30. On the whole question of the criterion see G. Striker, "Κριτήριον τῆς ἀληθείας", Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen (1974), 51-110.
31. The Stoics defined philosophy as "the practise of wisdom" (ἐπιτήδευσις σοφίας): Sextus Empiricus, M. IX, 13 in SVF II, 36.
32. M. VII, 28.
33. De Anima, III, 3, 428 b 11-16.
34. Cf. E. Bréhier, "Le mot NOHTON et la critique du stoïcisme chez Sextus Empiricus", Révue des études anciennes (1914), 269-282.
35. M. VII, 29-30. Cfr. P.H. II, 15-16.
36. Cf. M. VIII, 18-19 and P.H. II, 88-89.
37. Cf. P.H. I, 13, 19, 22-23 and M. VIII, 203, 397.
38. C. Stough, Greek Scepticism, 143.
39. M. VII, 32-33.
40. M. VII, 38-45. See P.H. II, 80-83.
41. The Stoics held that there are only four kinds of incorporeals: space (τόπος), time (χρόνος), void (κενόν) and expression (λεκτόν). Cf. M. X, 218. See also E. Bréhier, La théorie des incorporels dans l'ancien stoïcisme.
42. Plotinus, Ennead. VI lib. I, 28 in SVF II, 319-320.
43. For a definition of the Stoic ἐπιστήμη see Stobaeus, Ecl., II, 73 foll. in SVF III, 112.
44. M. VII, 43-44.
45. A. Long, "Language and Thought in Stoicism", 100 in A.A. Long ed., Problems in Stoicism.
46. M. VIII, 11.

CHAPTER IV

THE CRITERION OF TRUTH AND THE STOIC DOCTRINE OF PHANTASIA

(M. VII, 227-248).

1) The Academic school and the criterion of truth

Sextus' analysis of the criterion of truth starts with a lengthy historical excursus on the different views held by philosophers, ranging from the Presocratics up to the Stoics and the New Academy. According to Sextus the views held by the Dogmatists fall into two categories, those who have rejected the criterion of truth and those who have retained it; of the latter, some have retained it in rational discourse ($\epsilon\acute{\nu}$ λόγῳ), some in non-rational self-evident facts ($\epsilon\acute{\nu}$ ταῖς ἀλόγοις ἐναργείαις), some in both.¹ To this category belongs the majority of "physical philosophers", since Sextus rightly considers their search for the arché or principle of things as equivalent to their search for, and therefore, admission of, a criterion of truth. Democritus, Xenocrates, Plato and Aristotle are also included in this group, together with the Academics and the Cyrenaics, but it is to the Stoics that Sextus devotes the central part of his historical analysis with a detailed exposition of their doctrines.

The very fact that Stoicism is examined at the end of his historical excursus is quite significant because it is not chronologically justified. As Stoicism Sextus had mainly Zeno and Chrysippus in mind, and Sextus' attack on their doctrines follows the one on Academic and Peripatetic philosophers. By examining Stoicism at the end, Sextus meant to emphasize the special importance that Stoicism had for him as the prime target of his critique, and for this purpose he might have found useful to precede his attack on Stoicism with a description and critique of philosophers (principally those of the Academic school) who, in differing ways, had also had reason to argue against the Stoics. By doing so, and by examining the terms of those polemics, Sextus achieves the dual goal of clearing the ground in preparation for his radical attack on Stoicism and, at the same time, of defining the terms of his own sceptical position with regard to what he considered the pseudo-sceptical statements of the Academic school.²

Arcesilaus was the first Academic philosopher to launch a direct attack against the epistemological theories of the Stoics, when he questioned the value of phantasia kataléptike and of katalépsis and showed that there is no criterion of truth, that no assent can ever be given legitimately and that nothing can be known.³ According to the Stoics there are three forms of knowledge which are reciprocally related: knowledge (ἐπιστήμη), opinion (δόξα) and, between the two,

κατάληψις.⁴ Knowledge is defined as an unerring and firm apprehension (κατάληψις) which cannot be altered by reason, opinion as weak and false assent (συγκατάθεσις), and apprehension (κατάληψις) as intermediate between knowledge and opinion; for it is also said to be assent to a phantasia kataléptiké and phantasia kataléptiké is, in turn, said to be that "...which is true and of such a kind as to be incapable of becoming false. And they say that, of these, knowledge subsists only in the wise, and opinion only in the fools, but apprehension is shared alike by both, and it is the criterion of truth."⁵

Arcesilaus' objection is that katalépsis cannot be put between knowledge and opinion as the criterion of truth, because the criterion of truth (or the assent to phantasia kataléptiké) can be found either in the wise man or in the fool; but in the first case it is knowledge, in the second case opinion, and nothing, except a name, can be found between the two.⁶ Furthermore, if katalépsis is assent to phantasia kataléptiké, it cannot exist, and this is so for two reasons:

1) because it is related not to phantasia, as the Stoics maintained, but to reason (λόγος), in so far as reason has as its objects the contents of judgement (τῶν γὰρ ἀξιωματικῶν εἰδῶν αἱ συγκαταθέσεις), or, in other words, because the distinction between true and false can be found only in those contents of judgement, and not in sense-perception;

2) there is no true phantasia that cannot become false; thus it is never possible to draw a precise and sure distinction between a true and a false presentation and Arcesilaus challenged Zeno to bring one single, indisputable example of phantasia kataléptiké. Therefore, if there is no phantasia kataléptiké, there will be no katalépsis and everything will be incomprehensible. In other words, if there is no certainty with regard to sense-perception, there will be no knowledge and it is clear that Arcesilaus subordinated the value of knowledge to the objectivity of sense-perception. This is why he could maintain that nothing certain can be known either by sense-organs or by the intellect and that omnia latere in occulto.⁷

In conclusion, Arcesilaus' criticism rested on two principles: 1) the fundamental kind of knowledge is knowledge by perception; 2) it is impossible to draw a distinction between true and false phantasiai. In general, Arcesilaus rejected simultaneously the true, the false and the probable (ἀναίρομεντα καὶ αὐτὸν τὸ ἀληθές, καὶ τὸ ψεῦδος, καὶ τὸ πιθανόν),⁸ and held that all kinds of knowledge had the same degree of probability or improbability.

At the basis of Arcesilaus' conclusion, we can see a continuity of thought from ancient Stoicism and Epicureanism to the New Academy.⁹ Arcesilaus agreed with Zeno and Cleanthes that not all phantasiai derived from sense-perception are

true, and consequently that it is necessary not to rush to any conclusion but to suspend one's judgement until phantasia itself is so evident as to justify the assent. He also agreed with Epicurus in saying that all sensations as such are true, but he added that, being all true, it is sensible to doubt them all, whether they are conceived as impressions of the soul (τοπώσεις ψυχῆς), as Zeno and Cleanthes did, or as ἑτεροιώσεις ἡγεμονικῶν as Chrysippus maintained, because in both cases nothing allows us to believe that there is correspondence between phantasia derived from sense-perception and the external object. In other words, according to Arcesilaus, true can be legitimately predicated of the sensation as such, but not of the ontological relation between phantasia and sense-objects.

Once the theoretical possibility of an adequate relation between phantasiai and things is ruled out, then the possibility of assent maintained by the Stoics is also denied.¹⁰ Consequently Arcesilaus developed his famous theory of epoché which, according to many ancient sources,¹¹ was a central point of his philosophical system. Sextus tells us that for Arcesilaus not to give assent is the same as to suspend judgement (τὸ δὲ ἀσσυγκαταθετεῖν οὐδὲν ἕτερον ἔστι ἢ τὸ ἐπέχειν),¹² and Cicero translates epoché as adsensionis retentio.¹³ As was pointed out by Couissin, although the term epoché strictly speaking belongs to the Sceptic and neo-Academic vocabulary,

the concept of epoche is first suggested by Zeno and his theory of assent.¹⁴

Yet, once Arcesilaus had denied that the structures of reality match the structures of reason, he admitted the need for a criterion to regulate practical life so that the man who suspends judgement about everything would not be condemned to inactivity but would have a rule according to which he will act rightly. Arcesilaus maintained that "the reasonable" (τὸ εὖλογον) provides such a rule.¹⁵ Thus the righteousness of any given action does not rest upon the righteousness of any hypothetical universal reason, but exclusively upon practical common sense.

Sextus does not elaborate on the meaning and the acceptability of Arcesilaus' doctrine and modern scholars hold different views on the subject. Hirtzel¹⁶ maintains that Arcesilaus' ethical rationalism was, in a way, the continuation of Socrates' teaching, since he, on one hand, renounced the possibility of founding a physical science and, on the other hand, wanted practical activity to be guided by conceptual reason. A different view is held by Long, who, in agreement with von Arnim¹⁷ about the Stoic context of Arcesilaus' remarks about τὸ εὖλογον, wonders whether the theory of τὸ εὖλογον was, in fact, his own view, and not simply the logical consequence of Arcesilaus' critique of the Stoic epistemology.¹⁸

Whichever interpretation may be correct, what is relevant to us is to emphasize how Arcesilaus' method of drawing a conclusion from his opponent's premises is very similar to Sextus' own methodology, for they both turn the Stoics' own arguments into a defence of the sceptic position.¹⁹

Even more radical is Carneades' position,²⁰ since the Academic philosopher not only founds his criticism of Stoic dogmatic epistemology on the assumption that all knowledge derives from sensation, but also eliminates that residue of rationality that Arcesilaus had admitted with his doctrine of τὸ εὐλογον. From Sextus we learn that Carneades' attack against the criterion of truth was directed not only against the Stoics but against his predecessors, although the Stoics represent for him, as for most Academics, the chief opponents. There were two main arguments brought by Carneades against the Dogmatists: 1) There is absolutely no criterion of truth, neither reason (λόγος), nor sense (αἰσθησις), nor phantasia, nor anything else, for everything is deceptive as far as the knowledge of truth is concerned; 2) if a criterion of truth exists, it can be found only in that affection (πάθος) of the soul which is the result of clarity (ἐνάργεια). Before we discuss Carneades' arguments, we should remark that the first argument mentioned by Sextus logically follows the second one, and it actually represents the conclusion of the whole critique, since the devaluation of λόγος derives from the devaluation of phantasia and not vice versa.

Carneades' reasoning can be summarized as follows: man, being a living creature, must rely on his affections in order to know both himself and the external world. But affections, which Carneades identifies with sensations, imply first a change, an alteration in the subject, and only subsequently the possibility of knowing the agent (i.e. the object), the cause of such an affection. But affection is nothing else but phantasia; therefore, the criterion of truth must be sought in that particular kind of πάθος which presents itself with the character of clarity (ἐν τῷ ἀπὸ τῆς ἐναργείας πάθει). But Carneades does not identify clarity with reliability, and he argues that a phantasia of such a kind may, in fact, act like bad messengers, who misreport those who dispatched them, and he concludes that clarity does not guarantee truth. And, following Arcesilaus on this point, Carneades maintains that there is no true phantasia of such a kind that it cannot be false, for it is possible to oppose to any supposedly true phantasia a false one, just as clear and precisely identical. Consequently Carneades denies the existence of a criterion of truth.²¹

Carneades' argument is presented by Cicero in an analytic form which is worth examining here. According to Cicero,²² Carneades' position rests on four assumptions: 1) there is such a thing as a false phantasia (visum); 2) a false phantasia cannot be perceived (percipi); 3) if there are identical phantasiai, it is impossible that some may be perceived and

others not; 4) there is not such a thing as a true phantasia derived from sense-perception (nullum esse visum verum a sensu profectum). Even assuming that true phantasia exists, it would still be possible to have a false phantasia absolutely identical to the true one, so that true phantasia would be indistinguishable from the false. In other words, if a φαντασία αἰσθητική (that is, derived from sense-perception) cannot be at the same time φαντασία κριτική (that is, capable of drawing a distinction between the true and the false),²³ reason (λόγος) too, being dependent on phantasiai cannot be criterion of truth; for reason can judge only what appears to it, i.e. phantasiai, which brings us back to the first of Carneades' arguments mentioned by Sextus, that the true presentation is false.

Although nothing can be perceived as positively true or false, a degree of probability can nevertheless be attributed to some sense-impressions, and thus Carneades maintains that a criterion for practical life can be established. The justification for this admission is founded on the fact that two aspects ought to be distinguished in sense-impressions: the relation to the source, that is to the external object, and the relation to the subject who experiences the sense-impressions. Under the objective aspect, it is true if it corresponds to the presented object, false otherwise; under the subjective aspect, it may appear to be true or false. The one that seems to be true in either case is called probable, the other (the false) improbable (πιθανή φαντασία, ἀπειθής καὶ ἀπίθανος φαντασία).²⁴

Carneades' theory of the degrees of probability as criterion for practical life is the equivalent of Arcesilaus' τὸ εὐλογον ; Carneades established three degrees of probability in three forms of sense-impressions, which should have guided man in practical life and toward happiness: the probable sense-impression (πιθανή), the probable and irreversible (or non-contradicted) (πιθανή καὶ ἀπειρίεπατος), the probable and irreversible and tested (πιθανή καὶ ἀπειρίεπατος καὶ διεξωδευμένη).²⁵

In conclusion, we may note that, although both Arcesilaus' τὸ εὐλογον and Carneades' τὸ πιθανον serve the same practical purpose, Arcesilaus' criterion for practical life has a character of rationality (although exclusively related to praxis) which is lacking in Carneades'. Carneades' probabilism is a logical consequence of a strictly empiricist epistemology, such as the one defended by the Academic school, and in this sense one can say that his theory of τὸ πιθανον is more in tune with the theoretical postulates of the Academy.

2. Ἐνάργεια as criterion of truth. (M. VII, 190-226)

Before examining directly the Stoic doctrine, Sextus gives us an account of the position held by the Cyrenaics and by Epicurus. We will not examine this excursus in detail because it would interrupt the main line of our

analysis of Sextus' attack on Stoic epistemology. Yet something must be said on the concept of ἐνάργεια, on which both the Cyrenaics and Epicurus founded their criterion of truth, for Sextus will often refer to it in his critique of the Stoic doctrine.

The literal translation of the Greek noun ἐνάργεια and of the adjective ἐνάργής is "clarity" (or "vividness") and "clear" (or "vivid") and we find that in the classical authors from Homer on these terms were mostly used with reference to phenomena such as oracles and visions which would affect the organ of sight. Yet, although this original and fundamental meaning is still present in the philosophical texts we are dealing with, the epistemological significance of these terms is more subtle and requires a few words of explanation.

Sextus says that the Cyrenaics confined the criterion of truth ταῖς ἐναργείαις καὶ τοῖς πάθεσιν.²⁶ He also says that according to Epicurus there is a distinction between phantasia and opinion, and that phantasia "...which he also terms ἐνάργεια, is constantly true."²⁷ Sextus argues that the ἐνάργεια of both the Cyrenaics and of Epicurus is unacceptable as the criterion of truth. To the Cyrenaics Sextus objects that, since "...each man perceives his own particular affection (πάθος)",²⁸ the criterion cannot rest on a subjective element. As far as Epicurus is concerned,

Sextus notes that, given the Epicurean identity of phantasia and ἑνάργεια, the ἑνάργεια of phantasia is ἑνάργεια of what appears. But what appears is different from what is; thus ἑνάργεια cannot be criterion of truth.²⁹

It is important to note that Sextus' criticism of the Cyrenaic and Epicurean criterion does not argue against the ἑνάργεια of affections and phantasiai as such, but against the claim that such an ἑνάργεια may be identified as the criterion of truth. In other words, Sextus draws a distinction between the mere occurrence of impressions and phantasiai and the assumption that they may be able to reveal the reality of the external world, that is, to be the criterion of truth. Sextus himself maintains that phenomena per se are "indisputable" (ἀξήγητά), for the very fact that they lie "in feeling and involuntary affection (ἐν πείσει καὶ ἀβουλήτῳ πάθει)."³⁰ In this sense, we could say that their occurrence is evident, that is, undeniable, clear and, therefore credible (πιστόν);³¹ so much so that phenomena are the sceptic criterion in the conduct of life.³² Yet, the indisputability or evidence of their occurrence does not entail that the object of which they are appearances or phantasiai be ἐναργές. Sextus defines τὸ ἐναργές as "...that which is perceived of itself and needs no second thing to establish it",³³ i.e. that which can be immediately apprehended. But human nature is such that

nothing can be apprehended without the mediation of the senses; nothing, therefore, is $\bar{\epsilon}\nu\alpha\rho\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$.³⁴ If nothing is $\bar{\epsilon}\nu\alpha\rho\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$, $\bar{\epsilon}\nu\acute{\alpha}\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$ cannot be the criterion of truth.

The $\bar{\epsilon}\nu\acute{\alpha}\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$ of the Cyrenaics' affections as well as of Epicurus' phantasiai cannot be predicated of the external objects but only of phenomena. $\bar{\epsilon}\nu\acute{\alpha}\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$ in this case is not the same as the immediate apprehension of the external objects, which alone can be the criterion of truth.

The terms $\bar{\epsilon}\nu\alpha\rho\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$ and $\bar{\epsilon}\nu\acute{\alpha}\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$ are not easy to translate into English considering the epistemological significance that they bear in Sextus' text. In view of the previous discussion and whenever the criterion of truth is at stake, I suggest that the term $\bar{\epsilon}\nu\alpha\rho\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$ be translated by "self-evident", where the prefix "self" stresses the immediacy of knowledge required by the criterion of truth, and that the term $\bar{\epsilon}\nu\alpha\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$ be translated by "evidentiality". Unlike "evidence" which may be indicative of the mere occurrence of phenomena, "evidentiality" puts a stronger emphasis on the fact that the criterion of truth deals with a judgement of the existence or non-existence of the external objects, and not with the mere acknowledgement of their appearances.

3) The Stoic doctrine of phantasia in general. (M. VII, 227-61)

After having examined the criteria of truth proposed by the different schools of thought, Sextus devotes a long and detailed section of M. VII (227-261) to illustrating the Stoic position. The Stoics then gave as the criterion of truth the phantasia kataléptiké. That the expression phantasia kataléptiké described the test of truth for Chrysippus and his followers we already know from Carneades and from the anti-Stoic polemic undertaken by the Academics; the latter denied that phantasia kataléptiké had any special characteristic by which it could be considered to be the basic criterion of truth on which the validity of any other tests would depend. This is confirmed by Cicero when he writes: "Neque tamen habere insignem illam et propriam percipiendi notam",³⁵ and "...non inesse in eis propriam, quae numquam alibi esset, veri et certi notam."³⁶

In this section I will discuss the meaning of the word phantasia, which, far from being unambiguous, generated different interpretations within the Stoic school itself. Later on, I will examine the meaning of the expression phantasia kataléptiké, as the Stoic equivalent of criterion of truth.

Sextus presents us with a series of definitions of the term phantasia which are worth examining in detail.³⁷ Zeno

defined it as an impression (τύπωσις) in the soul and we learn from Diogenes Laertius³⁸ that the noun τύπωσις derives from τύπος, that is from the print left by a finger or by a seal on wax and of this we find a confirmation in Alexander of Aphrodisias.³⁹ Zeno's definition led to different interpretations and discussions among the Stoics, for, whereas Cleanthes regarded τύπωσις as involving "eminence" and "depression" (κατὰ εἰσοχὴν καὶ ἐξοχὴν),⁴⁰ just as does the impression made in wax by signet-rings, Chrysippus strongly opposed such a view. Chrysippus argued that Zeno's definition did not allow for the simultaneous occurrence of different images, such as, for instance, of a triangular and of a quadrangular object, for, in this case it would be absurd for the mind to become simultaneously both triangular and quadrangular. Thus Chrysippus suggested that the term τύπωσις was used by Zeno in the sense of ἐτεροίωσις so that the definition of phantasia should be "alteration of the soul" (ἐτεροίωσις ψυχῆς), a definition which allows for the co-existence of many phantasiai at the same time.⁴¹

This is why Chrysippus prefers to interpret τύπωσις as an alteration of the soul similar to the one undergone by the air when many people are speaking at the same time. By the use of this simile Chrysippus does not change the main terms of the problem: for him, just as for the other Stoics, the soul is a corporeal entity, yet it is something infinitely more subtle than wax, and to compare it to the air, as

Chrysippus does, gives a much more accurate idea of its nature. In the same way, by using a more satisfactory simile, Chrysippus does not alter the very nature of phantasia, which remains for him just as for the other Stoics, the corporeal modification of a corporeal principle.

We must, therefore, consider the definition of ἑτεροίωσις ψυχῆς as belonging to the original Stoic doctrine and as being simply a clarification of τύπωσις ἐν ψυχῇ.⁴² We should also note at this point, although we will return on the subject later, that, in a different context,⁴³ Sextus agrees with Chrysippus' criticism of Cleanthes, when he remarks that if τύπωσις is conceived as a mere imprint on the soul, memory (μνήμη), as "the treasury of presentations" (θησαυρισμός οὐδα φαντασίων), and art (τέχνη) as a "system and aggregation of apprehensions" (σύστημα γὰρ καὶ ἀθροισμα καταλήψεων) would consequently be inconceivable.

Yet Chrysippus' definition of phantasia seemed incomplete to other Stoics. Their argument, as we learn from Sextus,⁴⁴ was that one can have a modification in the soul without necessarily having a phantasia; in other words, Chrysippus' definition was not sufficient to draw a distinction between phantasia and any other alteration that a man may undergo. For example, if a scratch occurs in the hand, an ἑτεροίωσις ἐν ψυχῇ will certainly take place, but we could not call it phantasia because, according to the new definition of

phantasia suggested by other Stoics, phantasia "...is a result which occurs not in any chance part of the soul (ψυχή) but only in the mind (διάνοια) and the regent part (ἡγεμονικόν)."45

The discussion which, up to this point, was centered on whether the word "impression" or "alteration" would describe more accurately the effect of phantasia upon the soul, now takes a new turn and it is to the soul and to the various possible interpretations of it that Sextus directs his attention.

The last Stoic argument reported by Sextus suggested a new definition of phantasia as ἑτεροίωσις ἐν ἡγεμονικῷ. Before dealing with the meaning of the term ἡγεμονικόν and its technical use within the Stoic school, let us follow Sextus' exposition of the Stoic doctrine to the end.

Sextus reports (M. VII, 234 foll.) that the difference existing between ψυχή and ἡγεμονικόν was explained by other philosophers of the same school. The word ψυχή has two fundamental meanings: a general one, as that which holds together the whole structure of the living being (τὸ συνέχον τὴν ὅλην σύγκρασιν), and a particular one, as the ruling part (κατ'ἰδίαν τὸ ἡγεμονικόν). Thus when we say that man is a compound of body and soul and that, when death occurs, the soul is separated from the body, by soul we

do not mean the whole soul but only the ἡγεμονικόν. But, even after this distinction, the definition of phantasia was not unanimously accepted by the Stoic school, and some held that this distinction was not enough to differentiate phantasia from the other affections or alterations of the ἡγεμονικόν like, for instance, impulse (ὁρμή) and assent (συγκατάθεσις), unless it was added that phantasia is an affection which implies a passivity of the subject, whereas the other affections are rather the result of some kind of activity of the subject. Consequently a new version of the definition of phantasia was proposed and the Stoics, by recurring once more to their "implications" (συνημψάσεις),⁴⁶ stated that phantasia is a modification of the ἡγεμονικόν understood "by way of passivity" (κατὰ πείσιν) and not "by way of activity" (κατὰ ἐνέργειαν).⁴⁷

A last objection is brought forward by Sextus, when he notes that when the ἡγεμονικόν is being nourished and grows, it is modified κατὰ πείσιν; but this modification is not a phantasia. It follows that the Stoics either ought to admit that phantasia is a particular state, sui generis, or that its being passive is the result either of external impact or of our internal affections (γίνεσθαι ἥτοι κατὰ τὴν ἐκτὸς προβολήν ἢ κατὰ τὰ ἐν ἡμῖν πάθη).⁴⁸

Such are the difficulties presented by the Stoic doctrine of phantasia and we must admit that in his exposition Sextus

demonstrates historical accuracy in presenting the successive phases of development of this theory. Before examining some of these phases in detail, we should notice how the last objection presented by Sextus against the definition of phantasia (M. VII, 240-1) is quite probably Sextus' own.

In the first place he does not introduce this argument by referring to any particular Stoic and not even to any undetermined *τίνας* as he did previously; in the second place, the whole argument is presented at the beginning of a refutation, since it reduces the Stoic position to two alternatives, and we know that the method of dilemma is a familiar weapon in Sextus.

4) A clarification of the meaning of the term τὸ ἡγεμονικόν.

In stating the last objection presented by some Stoics to the definition of phantasia,⁴⁹ Sextus says that when the ἡγεμονικόν is being nourished and grows, it is modified κατὰ πείσιν and that this modification is not a phantasia. This passivity of the ἡγεμονικόν is quite puzzling and it requires a short digression to explain the nature and the meaning of the Stoic concept of the ἡγεμονικόν in view of the crucial part that it plays in their theory of knowledge.

Two elements emerge from the last part of Sextus' account of the Stoic phantasia: 1) According to some Stoics, phantasia

was an alteration of the ἡγεμονικόν "by way of passivity";

2) according to Sextus (and, as we have indicated, presumably to him alone, since he is not supporting his statement by any direct reference to the Stoics) "by way of passivity" the ἡγεμονικόν is only nourished and grows, but this sort of modification is not a phantasia. Yet, Sextus' denial that nourishment and growth are phantasiai does not seem to rest on the fact that the former occur "by way of passivity", or on the implicit assumption that phantasia must occur "by way of activity", but rather on the fact that nourishment and growth are biological phenomena not to be related to the cognitive function of the ἡγεμονικόν. In fact, just a few lines earlier,⁵⁰ when reporting the criticism of "other Stoics", Sextus seems to have no objection to their classification of phantasia as a "passivity" (πείσις) and opposed to impulse, assent and apprehension as "activities" (ἐνέργειαι). We could discharge the whole question by saying that the view held by the "other Stoics" is unorthodox and that Sextus' view is biased, if we were not to admit that the various definitions of phantasia, as impression, alteration, modification, do in fact suggest, at least prima facie, the idea of passivity, and if we were not aware of the difficulties that such an interpretation would cause in the broader context of Stoic epistemology. This is why a clarification of the meaning of τὸ ἡγεμονικόν is called for, particularly if we assume that the most mature phase of the Stoic doctrine defined phantasia as ἑτεροίωσις ἡγεμονικοῦ.⁵¹

Let us consider the following texts:

- 1) Τὸ ἡγεμονικόν is that part of the soul which acts as a guide (ἡγεμών) and which Cicero translates as principatum.⁵²
- 2) Aetius⁵³ compares the ἡγεμονικόν to the head of the sea-polypus and the other parts of the soul to the tentacles, thus suggesting that the soul, although articulated into eight parts, is, in fact, one and derives its coordinating and unifying strength from the ἡγεμονικόν.⁵⁴
- 3) Again Aetius says that the ἡγεμονικόν is the "maker" (ποιῶν) of phantasiai, assents, perceptions and impulses and that τοῦτο λογισμὸν καλοῦσιν.⁵⁵
- 4) Galen reports that, according to Chrysippus, the ἡγεμονικόν is what we call τὸ ἔγώ.⁵⁶
- 5) Iamblichus informs us that the ἡγεμονικόν exercises four different δυνάμεις: phantasiai, assents, impulses and logos;⁵⁷ and this is confirmed by Diogenes Laertius.⁵⁸
- 6) Sextus himself reports that science (ἐπιστήμη) is a πῶς ἔχον ἡγεμονικόν,⁵⁹ just as the fist is considered a particular state of the hand.
- 7) Seneca goes as far as saying that according to Chrysippus "walking is the ἡγεμονικόν itself."⁶⁰

All these passages seem to indicate quite clearly that the ἡγεμονικόν, beside being the ruling part of the soul, definitely plays an active role in Stoic psychological theory.

Texts 2) and 3) establish this with a particular emphasis. Phantasiai, assents, impulses and logos are made by the ἡγεμονικόν and they seem to be so inclusive of all psychological activities as to leave no room for any possible state of passivity of the ἡγεμονικόν. I believe that this dynamic function of the ἡγεμονικόν can be grasped quite easily in connection with assents, impulses and logos; instead, what may pose some difficulties and induce us to reconsider the position of the "other Stoics" is the relation between the ἡγεμονικόν and phantasiai. For, whereas the voluntaristic character of assent⁶¹ and the biological character of impulses seem to be naturally based on the activity of the ἡγεμονικόν, phantasia, as that which must reveal both itself and what has caused it,⁶² is inclusive of a duality (the subject who receives it and the object which has caused it) which cannot be immediately reconciled with the active role of the ἡγεμονικόν. In other words, we must ask ourselves whether the Stoic phantasia, which is at the basis of every kind of perception, is entirely determined by the object, or whether it implies a real activity on the part of the subject.

In order to clarify this point, it may be useful to give a very short summary of the Stoic theory of perception. The Stoics held that every kind of sensation implies tension (τόνος).⁶³ They also maintained that to each of the five sense organs corresponds a pneuma extending itself from the

ἡγεμονικόν to the sense organs and this pneuma is said to allow a "tensional movement" (τονικὴ κίνησις),⁶⁴ by which a sensation can take place. Although the presence of an external stimulus is clearly necessary, the actual process of sensation can and does occur thanks to the "tensional movement" of the pneuma which is originated in the ἡγεμονικόν. Thus the active role played by the ἡγεμονικόν is clearly stated and we can, for instance, read in Alexander of Aphrodisias that "sight proceeds from the ἡγεμονικόν."⁶⁵ In this sense, Aetius' simile of the head of the sea-polyp is extremely well suited to illustrating the dynamic function of the ἡγεμονικόν, which, by its active role, determines the degree of tension of the various sense organs. The active role of the ἡγεμονικόν in every cognitive act is also described by Cicero when he writes: "mens...naturalem vim habet, quam intendit ad ea quibus movetur."⁶⁶

Given such a theory of sensation, we can now understand why the ἡγεμονικόν is "the maker" also of phantasiai; although it is true that phantasia requires the presence of an external stimulus, as well as of a sense organ, it is also true that phantasia cannot occur without the action of the ἡγεμονικόν, whose activity is essential both at a level of pure sensation and at a level of perception (awareness).⁶⁷

In conclusion, it seems clear that the view held by "the other Stoics" and their definition of phantasia as an

alteration "by way of passivity" cannot be reconciled with the Stoic doctrine of the ἡγεμονικόν, and it probably represents an unorthodox view. We must also note that their distinction between phantasia as a "passivity" and impulse, assent and apprehension as "activities",⁶⁸ goes against Iamblichus' and Diogenes Laertius' text where it is stated that phantasiai, assents and impulses are all functions (δυνάμεις)⁶⁹ of the ἡγεμονικόν and thus, presumably, they all enjoy that character of activity which is intrinsic to τὸ ἡγεμονικόν.

5) Different kinds of phantasiai.

At the end of section 3) we discussed the definition of phantasia as "presentation either of things external or of our own internal affections",⁷⁰ and we suggested that this new definition was probably Sextus' own. Whether or not it represents Sextus' own viewpoint on the subject, it is still remarkable because it suggests that Sextus thought that phantasiai do not only originate from external objects, but occasionally may result from a so-called "vacuous attraction" (διάκενος ἑλκυσμός), that is from a product of the imagination or from some kind of internal motion. Phantasia would consequently be the form of all psychical events.

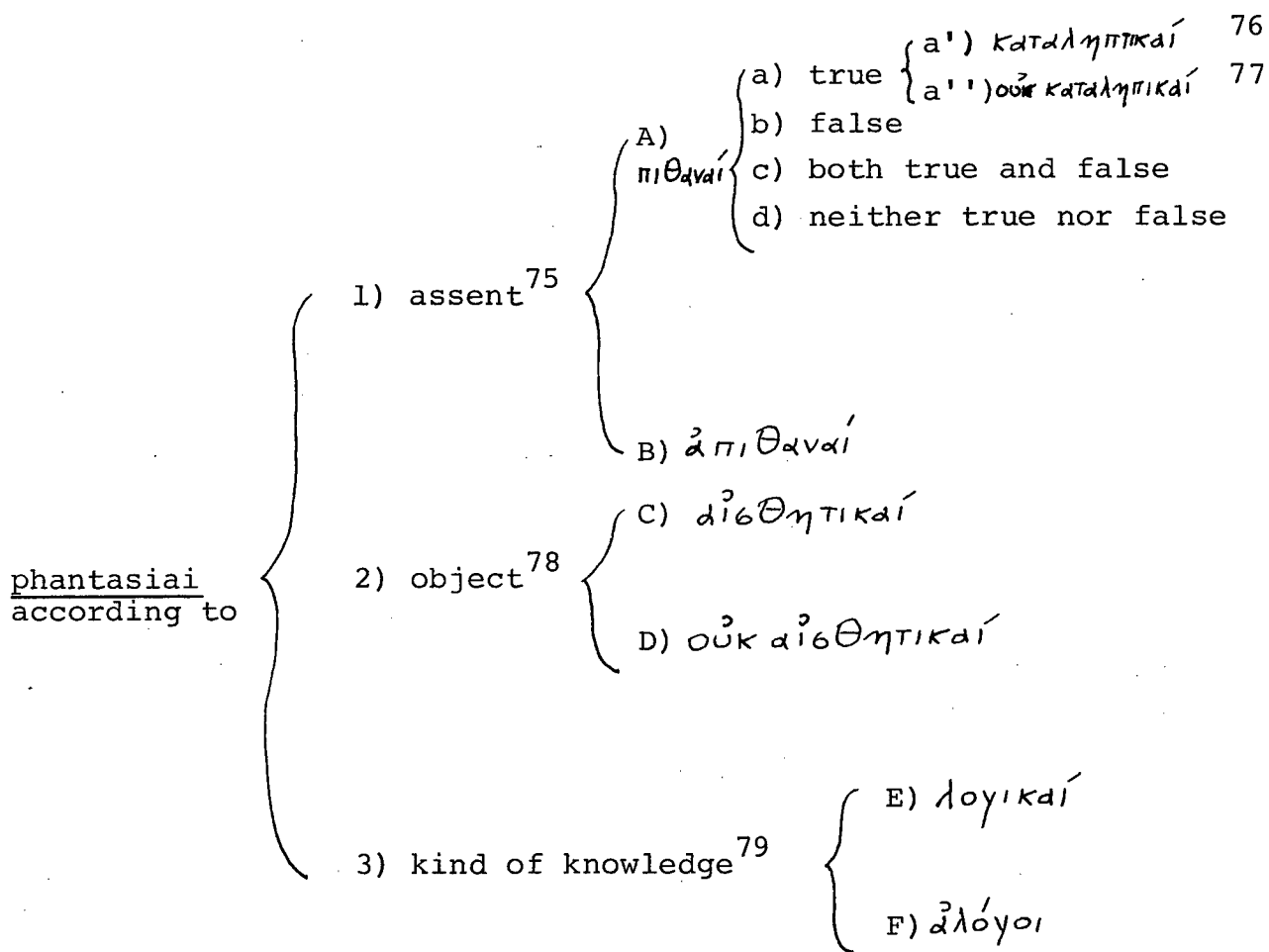
But we learn from other sources that phantasia had a much more restricted meaning for the Stoics. We learn from

Aetius that, according to Chrysippus, there is a difference among φαντασίη , φανταστόν , φανταστικόν and φαντάσμα.⁷¹ Phantasia is a condition of the soul which allows us to know both itself and its cause, as when, seeing something white, we can infer that there is something in the appearance of whiteness which causes the idea of white in us; phantaston is in general all that can move the soul and in particular what can originate a phantasia; phantastikon indicates a false vision in the mind, that is, a vision which is not caused by any phantaston and which is said to be a "vacuous attraction"; phantasma is the non-existent object toward which we are drawn by this false vision.

In addition to this text where the term phantasia is used in a very technical and precise way, there are also others where the term phantasia is used more loosely;⁷² this brings us back to Sextus' text and to his classification of the different kinds of phantasiai. In order to understand the meaning of this classification, we should keep in mind that, as Diogenes Laertius explains,⁷³ the Stoics thought that the theory of phantasia ought logically to precede all others, not only because the criterion of truth was strictly related to and ultimately identified with phantasia, but also because a theory of apprehension and of knowledge presupposes a theory of phantasia. In other words, we can say that phantasia,

in its broader meaning, is the genus of every kind of knowledge; if we go back to Chrysippus' definition of phantasia as ἑτεροίωσις ψυχῆς, it follows that, since every mental activity can be reduced to one or another kind of phantasia, everything, in a way, can be said to be phantasia. The diversity of our psychological conditions receives its unity from the material movement which constitutes it and from the necessary form of this movement, that is, from phantasia.

There are though a variety (διαφοραί) of phantasiai.⁷⁴ According to the Stoics, phantasiai could be divided into three main categories according to the assent, to the object and to the kind of knowledge they might bring, thus giving a complete taxonomy of the cognitive sphere. I will indicate this classification in the form of a diagram, and I will discuss hereafter only those parts which are more relevant in Sextus' text, in primis phantasia kataléptiké.



FOOTNOTES

1. M. VII, 47.
2. Some scholars like Hirzel (Untersuchungen zu Ciceros philosophischen Schriften, III, 22-39), Brochard (Les Sceptiques grecs, 93-98) and von Arnim (Arkesilaos, in Pauly-Wissowa, Realenzyklopaedie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft, II, 1165-1166) held the view that the philosophy of the New Academy developed independently from Pyrrhonism; others, like Natorp (Forschungen zur Geschichte des Erkenntnisproblems im Altertum, 290-91) and Goedeckmeyer (Die Geschichte des griechischen Skeptizismus, 32-34) maintained the opposite.
3. M. VII, 150-158; P.H. I, 232.
4. Cf. M. VII, 151; Cicero, Acad. post., I, 42 in SVF I, 69.
5. M. VII, 151-53.
6. For a discussion of Arcesilaus' criticism of the Stoic Sage see: P. Couissin, "Le Stoïcisme de la Nouvelle Academie", Revue d'histoire de la philosophie (1929), 244-49.
7. Cicero, Acad. post., I, 12, 45; cf. also De Orat., III, 18, 67.
8. Numenius, in Eusebius, Praep. Ev., XIV, 6, 5.
9. See C. Stough, Greek Skepticism, 8; P. Couissin, "Le Stoïcisme de la Nouvelle Academie", 241-276; H. Hartmann, Gewissheit und Wahrheit: der Streit zwischen Stoa und akademischer Skepsis.
10. Cf. Cicero, Acad. pr., II, 18, 59: "Si enim percipi nihil potest, quod utrique visum est, tollendus adsensus est; quid enim est tam futile quam quicquam adprobare non cognitum?"
11. Cicero, Acad. post., I, 12, 45; Acad. pr., II, 18, 59 and 24, 77-8; Sextus Empiricus, P.H. I, 232; Diogenes Laertius, IV, 28; Numenius in Eusebius, Praep. Ev., XIV, 4, 15 and 7, 15; Saint Augustin, Contra Acad., II, 5, 11 and 12-24.
12. M. VII, 157.

13. Cicero, Acad. pr., II, 18, 59.

14. This is an important point for understanding the genesis of sceptical thought and it may justify the lengthy quotation from Couissin's article ("L'origine et l'évolution de l'époché", Revue des études grecques (1929), 390-91): "Or un fait auquel on n'a pas toutjour assez pris garde, c'est que la suspension de l'assentiment n'est concevable que dans une théorie volontariste de l'assentiment. L'ἐποχή, en ce sens, est donc incompatible avec le pyrrhonisme, qui ne doit supposer aucune hypothèse dogmatique. Elle cadre, au contraire, avec la philosophie d'Arcésilas, qui est développée dans le stoïcisme et contre lui. Pour Zénon de Citium, l'assentiment est volontaire, il dépend de nous (ἐφ' ἡμῖν). Une représentation étant donnée, l'esprit peut donner ou refuser l'assentiment à la proposition qu'elle implique. C'est une condition de l'infailibilité du Sage: car il y a des assentiments faux; le Sage doit s'abstenir d'accorder son assentiment à l'incompréhensible et, par conséquent, suspendre (ἀσσυκατάθετεῖν = ἐπέχειν [τὴν συγκατάθεσιν]). L'ἐποχή existe donc dans la philosophie de Zénon: elle est inséparable du μὴ δοῦν ἄσσειν τὸν σοφόν, τούτεστι ψευδεῖ μὴ συγκαταθέεσθαι (Diog., VII, 121). Arcésilas a soutenu que la compréhension (κατάληψις, assentiment à la représentation compréhensive) n'existait pas, que tout était incompréhensible, et que le sage devait, par suite, suspendre l'assentiment, non sur certaines représentations non compréhensives, mais sur toutes les représentations puis qu'aucune n'est compréhensive. Ainsi, il n'est pas l'inventeur de l'ἐποχή, mais de l'ἐποχή περὶ πάντων."

15. M. VII, 158.

16. R. Hirtzel, Untersuchungen über Ciceros philosophische Schriften, III, 156 foll.

17. Von Arnim in Pauly-Wissowa, Real Enzyklopaedie der Klassischen Altertumswissenschaft, sv. "Arkesilaos", col. 1167.

18. A.A. Long, Hellenistic Philosophy, 93.

19. For a bibliography on Arcesilaus see: Von Arnim in Pauly-Wissowa, Real Enzyklopaedie der Klassischen Altertumswissenschaft, sv. "Arkesilaos", col. 1167; O. Gigon, "Zur Geschichte der sogenannten neuen Akademie", Museum Helveticum (1944), 47-64; A. Carlini, "Alcuni dialoghi pseudoplatonici e l'Accademia di Arcesilao", Annali della Scuola normale superiore di Pisa (1962), 33-63; P. Couissin, "Le Stoïcisme de la Nouvelle Académie", "Revue d'histoire de la philosophie", 241-276; H. Cherniss, The Riddle of the Early Academy; O. Seel, Die Platonische Akademie.

20. For a bibliography on Carneades see: F. Picavet, "Le phénoménisme et le probabilisme dans l'école platonicienne: Carneade", Revue philosophique (1887), 378-99 and 498-513; H. Mutschmann, "Die Stufen der Wahrscheinlichkeit bei Karneades", Rheinisches Museum (1911), 190-98; A.A. Long, "Carneades and the Stoic Telos", Phronesis (1967), 59-90.
21. M. VII, 159-65.
22. Acad. pr., II, 26, 83.
23. M. VII, 164.
24. M. VII, 169.
25. M. VII, 173-83.
26. M. VII, 200.
27. M. VII, 203.
28. M. VII, 196.
29. M. VII, 212.
30. P.H. I, 22.
31. M. VII, 391.
32. P.H. I, 21.
33. M. VII, 364.
34. M. VII, 366.
35. Acad. pr., II, 101.
36. Acad. pr., II, 103.
37. I will not attempt a translation of the Greek term $\varphi\alpha\upsilon\tau\alpha\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha$ into English and I will retain the transliterated form throughout the discussion that follows, with the exception of quotations from Bury's translation.
38. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 46 in SVF II, 53.

39. Alexander of Aphrodisias, De Anima, 72, 5-13 in SVF II, 58.
40. M. VII, 228.
41. M. VII, 231.
42. Both Sambursky (The Physics of the Stoics, 26-7) and Watson (Stoic Theory of Knowledge, 34-5) agree in pointing out that the definition of phantasia as ἑτεροίωσις ψυχῆς had the advantage of allowing the contemporary occurrence of different dynamic states of the pneuma, thus avoiding the difficulties that an overliteral interpretation of Zeno's definition might have caused.
43. M. VII, 372 foll.
44. M. VII, 232 foll.
45. M. VII, 233.
46. We do not find the term συνέμψασις in the fragments of ancient Stoics available to us; it is probably a modification of the term ἐμψασις. Cf. SVF II, 24, 20.
47. M. VII, 239.
48. M. VII, 240-1.
49. M. VII, 239.
50. M. VII, 237.
51. Although Chrysippus defined phantasia as ἑτεροίωσις ψυχῆς, it is reasonable to assume that he already meant ἑτεροίωσις ἡγεμονικοῦ; for Sextus reports that according to Chrysippus "...just as the air, when many people are speaking simultaneously, receives in a single moment numberless and different impacts and at once undergoes many alterations also, so too when the regent part (τὸ ἡγεμονικόν) is the subject of a variety of images it will experience something analogous to this." (M. VIII, 230-1)
52. De nat. deor. II, 11, 29.
53. Plac. IV, 21 in SVF II, 836.

54. For a comment on this passage and an historical analysis of the meaning of the term τὸ ἡγεμονικόν in the early Stoa see: F. Adorno, "Sul significato del termine ΗΓΕΜΟΝΙΚΟΝ in Zenone stoico", La parola del passato (1959), 26-41. Adorno stresses that with Zeno τὸ ἡγεμονικόν was not a synonymous with νοῦς and λόγος, but that it meant only the capacity of coordinating, according to its etymological origin. A.J. Voelke (L'idée de volonté dans le Stoïcisme, 20) instead identifies τὸ ἡγεμονικόν with dianoia and logos and he points out how for both Zeno and Chrysippus τὸ ἡγεμονικόν was the principle of dianoia (cf. Chrysippus apud Galen, Hipp. et Plat., II, 5, p. 243 K. in SVF II, 895), was called dianoetikon (Diogenes Laertius, VII, 110 in SVF II, 828), logistikon (Diogenes Laertius, VII, 157 in SVF II, 828) or logismos (Aetius, Plac., IV, 21 in SVF II, 836).
55. Plac., IV, 21 in SVF II, 836.
56. De plac. Hipp. et Plat., II, 2, p. 215 K. in SVF II, 895.
57. De Anima, apud Stobaeus, I, p. 369 W. in SVF II, 831.
58. VII, 159 in SVF II, 837.
59. M. VII, 39.
60. Seneca, Ep. 113, 23 in SVF II, 836: "Cleanthes ait (ambulationem) spiritum esse a principali usque in pedes permissum, Chrysippus ipsum principale."
61. I am anticipating here my interpretation of assent as an act of free choice which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.
62. Aetius, Plac., IV, 21 in SVF II, 54.
63. We may note that the concept of tonos was of fundamental importance also in Stoic physics; for instance, the Stoics maintained that even the solidity (τὸ βέβαιον) of a body is the effect of the dynamics of tonos (cf. Plutarch, De primo frigido, 2, 946 c in SVF II, 407). On this subject see F.H. Sandbach, The Stoics, 76-8.
64. Nemesius, De nat. hom., 2, p. 42 in SVF II, 451.
65. Alexander of Aphrodisias, De Anima, p. 130, 14, 26 in SVF II, 864: De Anima, p. 130, 26-27 in SVF II, 864. Note that Alexander immediately goes on to link this with the τοινικη κίνησις. Cf. R.B. Todd, "ΣΥΝΕΝΤΑΣΙΣ and the Stoic Theory of Perception", Grazer Beiträge (1974), 254 n. 18.
66. Acad. pr., II, 10, 30.

67. In this sense I agree with Voelke ("L'unité de l'âme humaine dans l'ancien stoïcisme", Studia Philosophica (1965), 162) that the Sextian expression τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν φανταδισιόμενον (M. VII, 231) has the verb in the middle not passive mood and that it must, therefore, be translated as "presenting to itself".
68. M. VII, 237.
69. I follow Voelke's translation of δυνάμεις with "functions" rather than "faculties", because, as Voelke explains ("L'unité de l'âme humaine dans l'ancien stoïcisme", 163-4.) the latter may suggest the idea that δυνάμεις are separate entities of the ἡγεμονικὸν whereas, in fact, they are just different dispositions (πῶς ἔχοντα) of the ἡγεμονικὸν .
70. M. VII, 241.
71. Plac., IV, 12, 1 in SVF II, 54.
72. For example, see Diocles of Magnesia in Diogenes Laertius, VII, 51 in SVF II, 61 where the term phantasia is related to τὰ αἰσώματα. See also M. VIII, 409 where not only are τὰ αἰσώματα presented as modifications of the ἡγεμονικὸν , but where the verb φανταδισιῶμαι is used to designate the movement of the ἡγεμονικὸν in relation to τὰ αἰσώματα λεκτά .
73. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 49 in SVF II, 52.
74. N. Festa, (I frammenti degli Stoici antichi, I, 34) maintains that the classification of the different kinds of phantasiai can be ascribed to Zeno. On the different kinds of phantasiai and particularly on the distinction between aistheseis and phantasiai see: R.B. Todd, "ΣΥΝΕΝΤΑΣΙΣ and the Stoic Theory of Perception", Grazer Beiträge (1974), 251-61, at 257-61.
75. M. VII, 242-47.
76. M. VII, 247 foll; P.H. III, 241-3; Cicero, Acad. pr., II, 41-2; Diogenes Laertius, VII, 50-4 in SVF II, 60, 65, 105.
77. M. VII, 247.
78. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 51 in SVF II, 61.
79. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 51 in SVF II, 61.

CHAPTER V

SEXTUS' ACCOUNT OF THE STOIC DOCTRINE OF PHANTASIA KATALEPTIKÉ (M. VII, 248-62).

1) Definition of phantasia kataleptiké

The Stoics held that phantasia kataleptiké was the criterion of truth;¹ according to the diagram sketched at the end of Chapter IV, phantasia kataleptiké is a believable and true phantasia. The definition of phantasia kataleptiké given by Sextus in M. VII, 248 reads as follows: phantasia kataleptiké is one ἀπὸ τοῦ ὑπάρχοντος, and imaged (ἐναπομεμαγμένη) and stamped (ἐναπεσφραγισμένη) in the subject κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ ὑπάρχον, of such a kind as could not be derived ἀπὸ μὴ ὑπάρχοντος. As far as the meaning of the Greek term τὸ ὑπάρχον is concerned, we have to draw a distinction between the significance it had for the Stoics and the way Sextus interprets it. I will analyze the epistemological value of the quoted Stoic definition in Chapter IX. Since it involves a fairly complicated discussion, based on the analysis of terms such as τὸ λεκτόν and ἄξιωμα, which have not yet been examined, it is difficult for me to anticipate my interpretation at the present stage of this study. I will just note that some crucial elements of the

Stoic definition are misunderstood by Sextus. As far as his understanding of the term τὸ ὑπάρχον is concerned, Sextus' text provides us with an answer when he comments on the Stoic definition of phantasia kataleptiké by saying that "...this presentation is eminently perceptive of τὰ ὑποκείμενα."² We know that for Sextus τὸ ὑποκείμενον indicates the real underlying object, as opposed to what appears (τὸ φαινόμενον). Thus I believe that Bury's translation of τὸ ὑπάρχον, τὸ μὴ ὑπάρχον with "existing object" and "non-existing object" is acceptable and this is the translation I will be using in the course of my exposition of Sextus' criticism of phantasia kataleptiké.

A literally identical definition of phantasia kataleptiké is given again by Sextus in M. VII, 426 and P.H. II, 4 and this expression is found in Diogenes Laertius, VII, 46 and 50, also. It is legitimate to assume that this definition was the technical one used by the early Stoics themselves. This assumption is strengthened by the fact that Cicero, who wrote centuries before Sextus, describes phantasia kataleptiké in terms which seem to be an almost exact Latin translation of Sextus' text: "quaesivit de Zenone fortasse (scil. Arcesilaus), quid futurum esset, si nec percipere quicquam posset sapiens nec opinari sapientis posset. Quid ergo id esset? Visum, credo. Quale igitur visum? Tum illum ita definisse: ex eo quod esset, sicut esset, impressum et signatum et effictum."³

As Adorno points out,⁴ Cicero must have had a precise text to translate from, a text practically identical to the one quoted by Sextus and by Diogenes Laertius. Cicero translates the term phantasia with visum, ἐναπομεμαγμένη, ἐναπεσφραγισμένη and ἐναποτετυπωμένη with impressum, signatum, effictum; ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος is translated with ex eo quod esset and κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ ὑπάρχον with sicut esset. The sicut esset interprets rather than translates the Greek, but the idea that phantasia must reproduce the modus essendi of a given object is expressed quite clearly. Obviously, Adorno concludes, such expressions and terminology were antecedent to Cicero's times and, in addition, it is most likely that Cicero himself had direct access to the original Stoic texts, if he could say that "M. Catonem...vidi in bibliotheca sedentem multis circumfusus Stoicorum libris. In maximo otio summaque copia quasi heluari libris, si hoc verbo in tam clara re utendum est, videbatur... ." ⁵

2) Phantasia kataleptiké must satisfy four conditions

Sextus gives us an accurate account of each part of the Stoic definition and he indicates the necessary and sufficient conditions that allow a phantasia to be kataleptiké. There are four such conditions:

- 1) phantasia kataleptiké must derive from an existing object (ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος) (M. VII, 249);

- 2) phantasia kataleptiké must derive from an existing object and according to that particular existing object (κατ'αὐτὸ τὸ ὑπάρχον) (M. VII, 249);
- 3) phantasia kataleptiké must also "be stamped and imaged in the subject, in order that all characteristics (τὰ ἰδιώματα) of the presented objects (τῶν φαντασμάτων) may be reproduced with artistic exactitude (τεχνικῶς)" (M. VII, 251);
- 4) phantasia kataleptiké must be of such a kind as could not be derived from a non-existing object (ἀπὸ μὴ ὑπάρχοντος) (M. VII, 252).

With regard to the first condition, Sextus explains that many phantasiai do occur from what is non-existent and that these cannot be kataleptikai. Such can be the case of a madman or of whoever has a hallucination. If we go back to Aetius' distinction among phantasia, phantaston, phantastikon and phantasma,⁶ we can say that in this instance it is more the case of a phantasma than of a phantasia, much less a kataleptiké one.

The second condition indicated by Sextus states that phantasia kataleptiké must not only derive from an existing object, but also be in accordance with that object. For, according to Sextus, there are some phantasiai which correspond to an object but are not in conformity with that particular object. This second condition is certainly not as clear as the first one. Sextus explains it by referring to the case

of mad Orestes, who derived a phantasia from an existing object (Electra). Sextus puts forward this case of mistaken identity to exemplify how a phantasia can derive from an existing object without being in accordance with it, but unfortunately he does not expand at all on this example, and he does not give an answer to this crucial question: how is a mistake like Orestes' to be analyzed? Let us see if from the elements we have gathered so far we can come up with an answer based on Sextus' text.

Sextus says that Orestes' phantasia of Electra was true in so far as it derived from an existing object (ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος) (i.e. Electra), but false in so far as Orestes' phantasia was the phantasia of the Furies and not that of Electra.⁷ His phantasia, although ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος, was not κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ ὑπάρχον . In Orestes' case we have a phantasia which is derived from something existing (Electra was really there) but not tied to the right thing (Electra was not one of the Furies). This results clearly if we examine the expressions ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος and κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ ὑπάρχον . The former simply declares that phantasia must be from an object, which is existing because, as we have already seen, phantasia is not the same as phantasma, and where the absence of the definite article indicates that the object prompts a phantasia by the mere fact of existing and not because it is a particular and determinate object. This is instead specified by the second expression, where the term αὐτό has an isolating and particularizing force and states that the general existing object

must be individuated as being a specific existing object.

Orestes, by having a phantasia ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος but not κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ ὑπάρχον did not have a phantasia kataléptiké. Was then his phantasia οὐ καταληπτική? Sextus' answer is "No". We have seen at the end of Chapter IV that phantasiai can be subdivided according to the assent into a) true, b) false, c) both true and false, d) neither true nor false and that true phantasiai can, in turn, be καταληπτικάί or οὐ καταληπτικάί. Now Sextus clearly states that Orestes' phantasia was a case of phantasia being true and false at the same time.⁸ Thus, although Orestes did not have a phantasia kataléptiké, his phantasia, being a phantasia of the type c) was not strictly speaking οὐ καταληπτική, because οὐ καταληπτικάί phantasiai are a sub-species of phantasiai of the type a). This fact is quite puzzling and it requires an explanation of what Sextus understands by οὐ καταληπτικάί phantasiai, especially in view of the fact that I will often refer to this particular kind of phantasia in Chapter IX.

Before examining Sextus' text, let us see if we can refer to οὐ καταληπτικάί phantasiai by means of a term which may avoid the linguistic ambiguity of saying that, for instance, Orestes neither had a phantasia kataléptiké, nor did he have a οὐ καταληπτική phantasia. I think that the term akataléptos could be legitimately used to indicate an οὐ καταληπτική phantasia which is true but not kataléptiké. Although in

most instances Sextus uses the adjective akataléptos in relation to the external object which, being ἀδύλον is akataléptos (as, for instance, in P.H. II, 258), it must be made clear that I use the term akataléptos to indicate an οὐ καταληπτικὴ phantasia only for reasons of clarity and not on the assumption such was Sextus' understanding of the term akataléptos.

Sextus defines a phantasia akataléptos as one which is true but experienced by persons κατὰ πάθος. And he explains by saying that "...countless sufferers from frenzy and melancholia receive a phantasia which though true is not kataleptike but occurs externally (ἐξωθεν) and fortuitously (ἐκ τύχης), so that often they make no positive affirmation about it and they do not assent to it."⁹ Thus, qua true, phantasia akataléptos is one "about which it is possible to make a true affirmation"¹⁰ and the reason for which it is not kataléptiké rests on the fact that such affirmation occurs "externally" and "fortuitously". It is important to note that these two adverbs do not define the way in which the object is presented, but the way in which the affirmation is stated. From all we know the phantasia could be ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος and κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ ὑπάρχον. What makes it akataléptos is the fact that its affirmation of truth occurs by chance and the subject is not aware of the reason why his affirmation

happens to be true, although he may assent to it. Sextus' example refers to the case of people in a morbid condition, such as a madman or a neurotic, but I think that an akataléptos phantasia can be received occasionally by any normal and well-balanced individual, whenever he is not aware or does not pay close attention to the truth of his affirmation. In this case his phantasia is true and akataléptos, whereas the very same phantasia may be both true and kataléptiké for the same person under different circumstances.

This brings us to the third condition presented by Sextus: phantasia kataléptiké must reproduce together with the object all its characteristics (ἰδιώματα) and it must do so τεχνικῶς . Bury translates the adverb τεχνικῶς by the expression "with artistic exactitude", a translation which gets only part of the meaning of the Greek, although it may be justified by the context and, more specifically, by Sextus' example when he refers to the artistic skill of carvers: "For just as carvers set their hands to all the parts of the work they are completing, and as the seals on rings always imprint all their marking exactly on the wax, so likewise those who experience apprehension of the real objects

(κατάληψιν τῶν ὑποκειμένων) ought to perceive all their characteristics."¹¹ Before accepting Bury's translation, it may be worth examining what the word τέχνη, and consequently τεχνικῶς, meant for the Stoics.

The ancient sources provide us with several definitions of the term τέχνη. Olympiodorus In Platonis Gorgiam,¹² and with him other authors reported in SVF I, 73, writes: "Ζήνων δὲ φησὶν ὅτι τέχνη ἐστὶ σύστημα ἐκ καταλήψεων συγγεγυμνασμένων πρὸς τι τέλος εὐχρηστον τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ", where art (τέχνη) is defined as an organized and systematic complex of apprehensions (σύστημα ἐκ καταλήψεων συγγεγυμνασμένων). Sextus himself gives an almost identical definition of art in two passages; in M. VII, 373 he says that "art is a system (σύστημα) and an aggregation (ἄθροισμα) of apprehensions" and in P.H. III, 188 that "art...is a system of co-exercised apprehensions (ἐκ καταλήψεων συγγεγυμνασμένων)."¹³ It is clear from these definitions that the understanding of the term σύστημα is the key to grasp the meaning of the term τέχνη. We learn from Dio Chrysostom¹⁴ that the term was used also in connection with the city conceived as an organism and for the universe conceived as a city, that is, in relation to an organic system where the idea of a coherent and methodic organization is implied. This idea is confirmed by Cicero's Latin translation of the Greek definition: "Ars est perceptionum exercitarum constructio ad unum exitum utilem vitae pertinentium."¹⁵ Here σύστημα is translated with

with constructio, a term Cicero himself was probably not satisfied with, if, elsewhere, he felt the need of translating the Greek term in a paraphrastic way: "Ars vero quae potest esse nisi quae non ex una aut duabus sed ex multis animi perceptionibus constat",¹⁶ and "...ex quibus (perceptis) collatis inter se et comparatis artes quoque efficiamus partim ad usum vitae...necessarias."¹⁷ In both passages Cicero stresses the need for a systematic work within the process of knowing.

It seems clear from the previous texts that τέχνη and σύστημα do not consist of a sporadic and isolated form of knowledge; they rather suggest the idea of the capacity to compound together in an organic and systematic way notions previously acquired. This is more understandable if one keeps in mind the strict connection established by the Stoics between τέχνη and ἐπιστήμη, as Stobaeus reports:

Εἶναι δὲ τὴν ἐπιστήμην κατάληψιν ἀσφαλῆ καὶ ἀμετάπτωτον ὑπὸ λόγου. ἑτέραν δὲ ἐπιστήμην σύστημα ἔξ ἐπιστήμων τοιούτων, οἷον ἡ τῶν κατὰ μέρος λογική. ἔν τῷ σπουδαίῳ ὑπάρχουσα. ἄλλην δὲ σύστημα ἔξ ἐπιστήμων τεχνικῶν ἔξ αὐτοῦ ἔχον τὸ βέβαιον, ὥς ἔχουσιν αἱ ἀρεταί. ¹⁸

We may note that the adjective τεχνικός, which I would translate with "methodic", suggests that, according to the Stoics, τέχνη is not referred to specific contents, but to the fact that both the theoretical and practical process must have reason and method as guidelines. Thus the Stoic

τέχνη must be understood not in the sense that it is productive of something which was not in existence before, but in the sense that it qualifies a certain mental process, independently from its content.¹⁹

If, after this long digression, we go back to Sextus' text and to his definition of phantasia kataleptiké as the one which, together with the object, must reproduce all its characteristics and do so τεχνικῶς, it seems to me that the Greek adverb could be translated with "systematically". As a consequence, if phantasia kataleptiké allows us to grasp the object and its characteristics in a systematic way, it lets us understand also how the object and its characteristics are related to a system of ideas, to a τέχνη. Thus not only phantasia kataleptiké must be descriptive of all the characteristics of the object, but also it must do so in conformity to reason.²⁰

3) Phantasia kataleptiké and the uniqueness of phenomena

The fourth condition indicated by Sextus is that phantasia kataleptiké must be "of such a kind as could not be derived from a non-existing object (ἀπὸ μὴ ὑπάρχοντος)." ²¹ Sextus explains that the reason for this further condition lies in the arguments that the Academics, and Carneades in particular, brought against the definition of phantasia kataleptiké.

While the Stoics held that it is impossible to find two phantasiai exactly similar in all respects, the Academics argued that a false phantasia exactly similar to a true one can be found. The Academics' position is illustrated by two arguments brought by Carneades and reported by Sextus. The first is that identical phantasiai can be caused both by an existing and by a non-existing object; the second is that identical phantasiai derive from two existing objects, similar in shape, but different in substance. The first argument is illustrated by the following examples: in waking life a thirsty man gets the same pleasure from a drink as in sleep he gets from the dream of drinking; the same fear is felt by the man who flees from a wild beast as by the man who dreams of fleeing from a wild beast.²² The second argument is illustrated by the case of identical eggs or of identical twins, when the phantasia of the one existing egg will be identical to the phantasia of the other equally existing egg.²³

Carneades' objections, although similar in their argumentation, are quite different in their meaning, and he argues against the ἀπὸ μὴ ὑπάρχοντος clause in two different senses. With the first objection Carneades challenges the Stoics to show how the phantasia of a drink to a man in a dream is different from the phantasia of a drink to a man when awake. For, although the first drink is ἀπὸ μὴ ὑπάρχοντος and the second drink is ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος, the phantasia is apparently the same.²⁴ With the second objection Carneades

challenges the Stoics to show how the phantasia of Castor, for instance, is different from that of Polydeuces. For, although both phantasiai of Castor and of Polydeuces are ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος, if one identifies Castor with Polydeuces, he will have a phantasia ἀπὸ μὴ ὑπάρχοντος, and vice versa.

On the basis of these considerations, J.M. Rist argues that the standard translation of ὅποια οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο ἀπὸ μὴ ὑπάρχοντος with "such as could not be derived from a non-existent object", fits with the first argument brought by Carneades, but it does not do so with the second one, for both Castor and Polydeuces are existent. Consequently Rist suggests that the Greek passage be translated with "of such a kind as could not come from what is not that existing object",²⁵ a translation which I find acceptable because it does justice both to the Stoics' thought and to the Carneades' objections.

We know the Stoic answer to the objections of Carneades. Antiochus of Ascalon rejected Carneades' first argument by saying that the critical powers of a man in dream (or of a madman) are naturally reduced, and that it is absurd to test the veridicality of the criterion of truth under circumstances which are obviously κατὰ πάθος. For, upon waking, nobody judges his dreams to be on a par with his waking experiences.²⁶ As far as the second objection of Carneades is concerned, the Stoics argued that no two things are alike in reality. This

Stoic postulate is clearly stated in a text of Cicero:

"Stoicorum est quidem...nullum esse pilum omnibus rebus talem, qualis sit pilus alius, nullum granum."²⁷ And we know from Sextus that this Stoic postulate led to the formulation of the "Veiled Argument" (ἐγκεκαλυμμένος λόγος):²⁸ "when a snake has thrust out its head, if we wish to examine the real object we shall be plunged into great perplexity and shall not be able to say whether it is the same snake that thrust its head out before or another one, as there are many snakes coiled up in the same hole. So then phantasia kataleptiké possesses no characteristics whereby it differs from the false and akataleptos phantasia;"²⁹.

The Stoic postulate of the uniqueness of phenomena brings as a consequence that our perception of a particular object is never exactly the same as the perception of another particular object. Yet this uniqueness of phenomena is not something that appears evident to the knowing subject at a first look, at least in the great majority of cases. We also know that phantasia kataleptiké must be able to grasp this uniqueness, in that it must define all the characteristics of the object,³⁰ and that phantasia kataleptiké must be marked by the peculiar qualities of being "self-evident" (ἐναργής) and "striking" (πληκτική).³¹ Given these premises, we are faced with a series of difficulties. Phantasia kataleptiké must be able to individuate and to sketch all those characteristics which define a particular object and make it different from all

all others. But phantasia kataléptiké, being ἀποθητική, cannot know the object per se, that is without the mediation of the senses. Besides, in order to say that a phantasia kataléptiké is discernible from all others, one should be able to compare it with all others, which is clearly impossible. Therefore the character of absolute particularity of phantasia kataléptiké, which is a consequence of the postulated uniqueness of the objects, cannot in fact be ever completely satisfied.

We know from Cicero that, according to the Stoics, although there are things which seem to be identical, it is always possible after an attentive examination to find some differences among them and that experience and habit are our valid help to that purpose.³² Thus, for instance, the twins who look identical to a stranger can easily be told apart by their mother. It seems clear at this point that the uniqueness of the objects and the fact that, in many instances, the human mind does not seem to be able to grasp this uniqueness immediately, but must be helped in that by habit and experience, creates a problem in understanding how a phantasia kataléptiké can be "self-evident" and "striking".

When discussing the meaning of the adjective ἐναργής in Chapter IV it was stated that, according to Sextus, ἐναργής is said of what can be apprehended immediately,

i.e. without the mediation of the senses. It is then clear that phantasia kataleptiké, being also aisthetiké, i.e. derived from the senses, cannot be ἐναργής in the Sextian use of this term, a point which will be examined in Chapter IX and which will be a crucial one in Sextus' criticism of the Stoic criterion. Thus, by using the adjective ἐναργής in this particular context, Sextus is merely reporting the Stoics' view and not commenting on it.

According to the Stoics, ἐνάργεια is the result of phantasia kataleptiké and phantasia kataleptiké is a form of knowledge which not only is mediated by the senses, but also requires some kind of checking and comparison. Phantasia kataleptiké implies the idea of a speculative effort, of a search for the particular, an idea which, beside fitting nicely with the meaning of the adverb τεχνικῶς, examined above, is clearly indicated by Sextus himself: "...every man, when he is anxious to apprehend any object exactly, appears of himself to pursue after a phantasia of this kind, as, for instance, in the case of visible things, when he receives a dim presentation of the real object. For he intensifies his gaze and draws close to the object of sight so as not to go wholly astray, and rubs his eyes and in general uses every means until he can receive a clear (τρᾶνήν) and striking (πληκτικὴν) phantasia of the thing under inspection, as though he considered that the credibility of the apprehension (τὴν τῆς καταλήψεως πίστιν) depended upon that."³³

This passage is important for it clearly stresses two fundamental elements of Stoic epistemology: 1) κατάληψις rests on the character of evidentiality in phantasia kataléptiké; 2) the character of evidentiality in phantasia kataléptiké is the result of a speculative effort, which allows us to say that phantasia kataléptiké is not immediately, in the sense of intuitively, evident, although it may be immediately evident, I guess, if we take "immediately" as an adverb of time. Although I will return to these questions later on, we may say that, from all the elements we have gathered so far from Sextus' text, there are reasons to believe that a phantasia is kataléptiké not only because it comes from an object and it is in accordance with that object, but also because it can be "systematically" related to a complex of notions previously acquired, so that it looks as if phantasia kataléptiké starts bearing some remarkable similarity to what the Stoics called phantasia logiké and which Sextus defines as "one in which it is possible to establish by reason the presented object (καθ' ἣν τὸ φαντασθὲν ἔστι λόγῳ παραστῆσαι)." ³⁴

This brings us to the last part of Sextus' account of the Stoic definition of phantasia kataléptiké. Sextus reports that the later Stoics objected that there are cases when a phantasia kataléptiké occurs "but it is improbable (ἀπιβίτος) because of the external circumstances" so that to the standard definition of the older Stoics they added the clause "provided

that it has no obstacle."³⁵ What kind of obstacles the younger Stoics had in mind is explained by the example of Alcestis and Admetus. When Admetus saw Alcestis he had a phantasia kataléptiké of her, but he did not assent to it, knowing that those who are dead do not rise again from dead. In other words, Admetus doubted the real presence of Alcestis because that incoming phantasia did not fit into a pattern of ideas which was founded on the perceiver's previous experience that no dead can rise again from the dead.

J.M. Rist maintains that this clause added by the younger Stoics is superfluous, for it does not add anything to the original doctrine of Zeno and Chrysippus, when it is properly understood. Rist argues that for a phantasia to be kataléptiké it is necessary that it be unique, that is, of such a kind as could not come from any other particular existing object, and that the Stoic Sage is always able to recognize it as such, whatever obstacle he is faced with.³⁶ I agree with Rist in saying that the clause is unnecessary, if the pristine doctrine is properly understood, but I wonder whether Admetus' phantasia was not believable because he failed to recognize the uniqueness of his phantasia, or whether Admetus' misunderstanding rested on the logical impossibility of fitting the phantasia of Alcestis into the ordered structure of his mind. In this case Admetus' fault was that of not satisfying the condition set already by the older Stoics with the adverb τεχνικῶς. Also, one may wonder if it is

true, as Rist maintains, that the Stoic Sage would have been able to have a phantasia kataléptiké of Alcestis under those circumstances, or whether this might have been one of those rare cases where it becomes impossible even for the Sage to tell whether a phantasia is kataléptiké or not.³⁷ We know that the Sage differs from the other men in that he never assents to a false phantasia,³⁸ he never opines,³⁹ he never makes a weak assent,⁴⁰ he has an unerring memory and he alone possesses knowledge (ἐπιστήμη).⁴¹ But, if we accept Sextus' definition of knowledge as related to truth and as a collection (σύθροισμα) of true propositions,⁴² it is difficult to see to what set of previously acquired and corrected remembered true propositions the Sage could have related the phantasia of Alcestis, unless he had previously experienced the case of a dead person rising from the dead. If "the collection or system of truths possessed by the good man is the source of his katalepsis asphalés", as Long puts it,⁴³ it is not so obvious that the Sage would have acted differently from Admetus under the same circumstances.

Whichever interpretation of the clause added by the later Stoics is right, Sextus' account raises the question of assent (συγκατάθεσις) and of its relation to phantasia kataléptiké, which I will discuss in the next section.

4) Συγκατάθεσις and καταλήψις .

Sextus' report of the Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataleptiké as well as of the clause added by the younger Stoics raises a few problems related to the question of assent. Although this question is marginal to main theme of this study, something must be said about it, in the first place because it is a vital element in the Stoic criterion, and in the second place because Sextus argues against it.

From the diagram at the end of Chapter IV, we see that phantasiai can be either πιθαναί or ἀπιθαναί , depending on whether assent is given or not. Phantasiai to which assent is given can in turn be true, false, true and false, and neither true nor false. Of the true ones, some are kataleptikai some akataleptoi. A strong relation between assent and phantasiai is thus established. In addition, assent describes the three cognitive states admitted by the Stoics: knowledge, opinion, and between the two, apprehension.⁴⁴ Knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) is the firm (βεβαία) and unerring (ἀσφαλής) apprehension which cannot be altered by reason; apprehension (καταλήψις) is assent to a phantasia kataleptiké; opinion (δόξα) is weak (ἀσθενής) and false (ψευδής) assent. Zeno's famous simile of the hand, reported by Cicero,⁴⁵ graphically describes the mechanics of acquiring knowledge; first we have the open hand with its fingers outstretched,

corresponding to phantasia (visum, in Cicero); then we have the hand with its fingers slightly contracted, representing assent (adsensio); then the hand is completely closed and makes a fist, symbolizing apprehension (comprehensio); finally the left hand grasps firmly the right fist, and Zeno said that this act indicated knowledge (scientia).

As it has been noted both by Rist⁴⁶ and Sandbach,⁴⁷ this simile is somehow misleading for it suggests that assent and apprehension are successive stages in the cognitive process; although this might have been logically true, psychologically it is not so. Assent is definitely the necessary condition by which apprehension occurs and therefore we can draw a logical distinction between these two factors; yet, in the actual process of knowing these two factors cannot be separated because, just as apprehension implies by definition assent to a phantasia kataléptiké, in the same way assent must be given only to phantasia kataléptiké. This is confirmed by a passage from Cicero,⁴⁸ where it is stated that apprehension (comprehensio) occurs only in so far as phantasia (visum)⁴⁹ is given as acceptum and approbatum, that is if, and only if, assent has taken place. To this very sketchy summary of the Stoic doctrine of assent, we must add what has already been stated in Chapter IV:

1) assent is a *δύναμις* of the *ἡγεμονικόν*; ⁵⁰ 2) the *ἡγεμονικόν* is the "maker" of assents.⁵¹

Two questions related to assent are raised by Sextus' text:

- 1) Is assent given freely?
- 2) What is assent given to?

The first question is not raised by Sextus himself, but by the view of the younger Stoics he reports; the second question is raised by Arcesilaus and reported by Sextus, but there is evidence that Sextus endorsed Arcesilaus' criticism of the Stoics on this particular point.

1) Commenting on the clause added by the younger Stoics, Sextus writes: "For in this latter case it (i.e. phantasia kataléptiké) being plainly evident (ἐναργής) and striking (πληκτική), lays hold of us almost (μόνον οὐχί) by the very hair, as they say, and drags us off to assent, needing nothing else to help it to be thus impressive or to suggest its superiority over all others."⁵² This metaphor seems to suggest that, under those circumstances, one has no choice to grant assent to phantasia kataléptiké; in this case it is clear that assent does not lay in our power. This passage is in open contradiction with what is commonly held to be the Stoic genuine view on assent as a free mental act. Cicero states that "Zeno ad haec quae visa sunt et quasi accepta sensibus assensionem adiungit animorum: qua esse vult in nobis positam et voluntariam";⁵³ Alexander of Aphrodisias maintains that according to the Stoics "what occurs through our instrumentality (δι' ἡμῶν) is attributable

to (in the power of, ἐφ' ἡμῶν) us";⁵⁴ Sextus himself in a different context uses the verb "to induce" (ἐπάγομαι) to describe the way phantasiai lead us to assent, a verb which certainly does not imply any idea of compulsion.⁵⁵

Although freedom of assent is clearly established by these texts, a difficulty arises if we compare the Stoic doctrine of assent with their theory of causation. The Stoics maintained that every event is necessarily tied to an antecedent and is itself necessarily the cause of a consequent, so that the occurrence of all events is regarded as "the unwinding of a rope":⁵⁶ they also maintained that "no particular event, however small, takes place which is not in accordance with universal nature and its principle",⁵⁷ and that also human events and actions are subject to the same cosmic rule.⁵⁸ In order to avoid the contradiction between the belief that man is endowed with the gift of freedom and the deterministic aspects of their cosmology, the Stoics drew a distinction between external and internal causes with the result that human actions, although fated, are not necessitated, and that human judgement is free, although not unconditionally. Cicero reports that Chrysippus explained this fact by comparing human assent to phantasiai to the movement of a rolling drum.⁵⁹ He argued that the drum rolls because it has been pushed: this cause is external and fated. But the drum rolls also because it is a cylinder: this cause is internal and free. The push and

the cylindrical shape of the drum are in the same relation as phantasia and assent.

Sextus himself stresses what we may call "the relative freedom" of assent and he says that apprehension is a twofold thing; voluntary in so far as it depends on the subject and involuntary in so far as it is assent to phantasia kataléptiké.⁶⁰ In answer to our first question, we can then say that assent is free according to the pristine position of the Stoics and that the younger Stoics misrepresented this view or, more probably, they simply overemphasized man's readiness to assent to phantasia kataléptiké, without really intending to deny its freedom.

2) The second problem raised by Sextus' text is that of answering to the following question: what do we assent to? There is evidence that for the Stoics assent is assent to phantasiai; this seems to be implicit in Zeno's simile of the hand and clearly stated in the definition of katalépsis as "assent to phantasia kataléptiké". An indirect confirmation is provided by Arcesilaus' criticism, reported by Sextus.⁶¹ Arcesilaus argued that if apprehension is assent to phantasia kataléptiké (thus confirming that such was the view of the Stoics), apprehension is non-existent "...because assent is not relative to phantasiai but to reason (*πρός λόγον*) (for assents are given to judgements)".

Arcesilaus' criticism is worth a few words of comment, in the first place because Sextus seems to accept it as a valid objection, and in the second place because it gives us the opportunity of further clarifying the Stoic criterion. In addition we may note that Arcesilaus' criticism sounds reasonable, at least prima facie, to anyone attempting to figure out how phantasiai can in fact be assented to; furthermore, we have a passage of Stobaeus declaring that *συγκαταθέσεις μὲν ἀβιωμάτων τίςιν*.⁶² I am unable to evaluate Stobaeus' text, so I will limit my comments to Arcesilaus'.

I think that Arcesilaus' criticism would be acceptable, if phantasia could be identified with bare sensation. In this case it would be difficult to see how assent, which is a rational process, could be given to a bare, i.e. non-qualified sensation, expressing only its occurrence. But phantasia, as we have seen, is by definition "declarative both of itself and of its cause."⁶³ In so far as it is declarative of itself (of its occurrence) it may be identified with bare sensation; however in so far as it indicates that from which it arises it cannot be identified with bare sensation. Arcesilaus' criticism implicitly suggests that phantasia and logos are antithetic, so that if assent is given to the former it cannot be given to the latter and vice versa. But phantasia, being declarative also of its cause, necessarily implies that something is stated about its cause and it is

to this statement that assent is given. Logos and phantasia are not antithetic, but the former is comprehensive of the latter and assent can, in fact, be given directly to phantasia. Arcesilaus' criticism may have possibly been caused by the view of those Stoics who understood phantasia as a modification "by way of passivity", with the result that it was hard, if not impossible, to relate assent as a δύναμις of the ἡγεμονικόν to a passivity of the same. I discussed that interpretation of phantasia in Chapter IV and held that it is probably unorthodox. In any case, Arcesilaus' understanding of the Stoic phantasia is incorrect for it deprives it of that character of rationality to which assent can be related.

FOOTNOTES

1. M. VII, 227; Diogenes Laertius, VII, 54.
2. M. VII, 248.
3. Cicero, Acad. pr., II, 77.
4. F. Adorno, "Sul significato del termine ΥΠΑΡΧΟΝ in Zenone stoico", La parola del passato (1957), 365.
5. Cicero, De finibus, III, 2, 7.
6. Aetius, Plac., IV, 12, 4 in SVF II, 54.
7. M. VII, 245.
8. M. VII, 245.
9. M. VII, 247.
10. M. VII, 244.
11. M. VII, 251.
12. pp. 53, 54 in SVF I, 73.
13. Cf. also M. I, 75; M. II, 10; M. VII, 182; M. XI, 200.
14. Or. XXXVI, 29 in SVF II, 1130.
15. Cicero apud Diomed., II, p. 421 K in SVF I, 73.
16. Acad. pr., II, 22 in SVF I, 73.
17. De nat. deor., II, 148 in SVF I, 73.
18. Ecl., II, p. 74, 16 W in SVF III, 112.
19. This point is clearly explained by M. Isnardi Parente, Techne. Momenti del pensiero greco da Platone a Epicuro, 300. Cf. also G. Watson, Stoic Theory of Knowledge, 3-8.
20. This concept is clearly expressed by the Stoic notion of ἀματαιότης. Diogenes Laertius defines gravity (ἀματαιότης) as a certain condition (ἔξις) relating phantasiai to right reason (ὁρθός λόγος) (VII, 47); The relation between reason and phantasia kataléptike as criterion of truth will be discussed in Chapter IX, Sec. 3).
21. M. VII, 252.

22. M. VII, 403-4.
23. M. VII, 409.
24. We may notice that, if Sextus reports correctly the Academic argument of the thirsty man, it seems that what is indistinguishable is not so much the phantasia of a drink, but rather the pleasure equally enjoyed by the man in sleep and the man in waking life. If this analysis is correct, Carneades' argument could easily be dismissed because it does not prove the point he intended to make.
25. J.M. Rist, Stoic Philosophy, 137-8.
26. Cicero, Acad. pr., II, 52.
27. Acad. pr., II, 85 in SVF II, 113. See also Acad. pr., II, 56-8.
28. This kind of sophistic argument goes back to Eubulides of Miletus (cf. Diogenes Laertius, II, 108; Aristotle, Soph. El., 24, 179 a 33; Lucian, Vit. auct., 22). It runs like this: "He who says that he knows his father and denies to know him when he sees his father veiled in front of him, is contradicting himself." Similar to this was the so-called Electra Argument.
29. M. VII, 410-11.
30. M. VII, 251.
31. M. VII, 257.
32. Cicero, Acad. pr., II, 18: "an non videmus hoc usu evenire, ut quos numquam putassemus a nobis internosci posse, eos consuetudine adhibita, tam facile internosceremus, uti ne minimum quidem similes viderentur". Cf. also Acad. pr., II, 7.
33. M. VII, 258.
34. M. VIII, 70. This passage will be discussed in Chapter IX, Sect. 3).
35. M. VII, 253.
36. J.M. Rist, Stoic Philosophy, 144-5.
37. Cf. M. VII, 416 and P.H. II, 253. I will discuss this question in Chapter VIII, Sec. 3).

38. Stobaeus, Eclog. II, 7, p. 111, 10 in SVF III, 554.
39. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 121 in SVF III, 549.
40. Stobaeus, Eclog. II, 111, 18 W in SVF III, 548.
41. M. VII, 42; Augustinus, Soliloq., I, 5, 9 R in SVF III, 552.
42. M. VII, 40.
43. A.A. Long "Language and thought in Stoicism", in A.A. Long ed. Problems in Stoicism, 101.
44. M. VII, 151.
45. Acad. pr., II, 144 in SVF I, 68.
46. J.M. Rist, Stoic Philosophy, 139.
47. F.H. Sandback, "Phantasia Kataléptiké" in A.A. Long ed. Problems in Stoicism, 13-4.
48. Acad. post., I, 41 in SVF I, 60.
49. Although the Latin term visum may also mean "the thing seen", it is generally accepted to be the translation of the technical term phantasia. This is confirmed by another passage of Cicero where we read: "Quale igitur visum? tum illum ita definisse: ex eo quod esset, sicut esset, impressum et signatum et effictum." (Acad. pr., II, 77)
50. Iamblichus, De Anima, apud Stobaeus, I, p. 369 W. in SVF II, 831; Diogenes Laertius, VII, 159 in SVF II, 837.
51. Aetius, Plac., IV, 21 in SVF II, 836.
52. M. VII, 257. Rist does not agree with Bury's translation of the expression μόνον οὐχί, and he argues that this expression is somehow ambiguous and that it may justify a different reading of the text: "Is Sextus saying that according to the younger Stoics the presentation practically catches hold of us and practically drags us to assent, or that it practically catches us by the hair and actually drags us to assent?" (J.M. Rist, Stoic Philosophy, 144). I cannot see any relevant difference of meaning between the two readings proposed by Rist, for they both imply that the role played by the subject's free will is in fact next to nothing.
53. Acad. post., I, 40 in SVF I, 61.

54. De fato, XIII, 181, 13 in SVF II, 979. I borrow Long's translation and I wish to refer to him for a discussion on Alexander's text and the whole question of the Stoic concept of freedom: A.A. Long, "Freedom and Determinism" in A.A. Long ed., Problems in Stoicism, 173-99. Cf. also A.J. Voelke, L'idée de volonté dans le Stoïcisme, 32-9.
55. M. VII, 405.
56. Cicero, De div., I, 56, 127 in SVF II, 944.
57. Plutarch, Stoic rep., 34, 1050 A in SVF II, 943.
58. Chalcidius, In Tim., CLX-CLXI in SVF II, 943.
59. De fato, 40-3 in SVF II, 974.
60. M. VIII, 398.
61. M. VII, 154.
62. Stobaeus, II, p. 88, 1 W in SVF III, 171.
63. Aetius, Plac. IV, 12, 1 in SVF II, 54.

CHAPTER VI

MAN AS THE CRITERION "BY WHOM" (M. VII, 263-342).

1) Preliminary notes.

Sextus' account of the Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataleptiké concludes his historical excursus on the different criteria of truth held by the Dogmatists. Now Sextus is ready for his ἀντίρρησης. At the beginning of M. VII¹ Sextus explained that, when we talk about criterion in the logical sense (as opposed to the practical one), it is necessary to subdivide it by calling one form of it that of the agent (ὅψ' οὐδ'), another the instrument (δι' οὐδ') and the third one the application and relation (ὡς προσβολή καὶ ἐχέσις). For, just as in the process of weighing an object, three elements are necessarily present, the man who weighs, the scale by which the object is weighed and the act of weighing, that is the use of the scale, in the same way the three criteria mentioned above are called for in philosophy for the determination of things true and false.²

The present chapter and the following two will discuss in turn Sextus' criticism of each of these three criteria. Sextus identifies the criterion ὅψ' οὐδ' with man, the

criterion $\delta\iota'\omicron\tilde{\omicron}$ with the cognitive means available to man (senses, intellect and combination of the two) and the third criterion ($\kappa\alpha\theta'\acute{\omicron}$) with phantasia. Sextus' discussion of the first two criteria are crucial for understanding his sceptical principles. The negative conclusions that he reaches with reference to man and his cognitive faculties as criteria lead as a logical consequence to the conclusion that phantasia too cannot be the criterion. This is why Sextus' discussion of phantasia as criterion is necessarily preceded by the hypothesis that the substantiality ($\psi\pi\acute{o}\tau\epsilon\tau\epsilon\iota\varsigma$) of man and of his cognitive means be granted.³ Thus, whereas Sextus' treatment of the criteria $\psi\varphi'\omicron\tilde{\omicron}$ and $\delta\iota'\omicron\tilde{\omicron}$ presents us with a theoretical explanation of sceptical epistemology, Sextus' criticism of phantasia is rather an application of his epistemological conclusions to the doctrine of phantasia, and, in particular, to the Stoic criterion of truth.

Yet, Sextus' exposition of the sceptic theory of knowledge is not systematic, but is continually interwoven with his account and criticism of other philosophers, so that his own epistemological stand cannot be grasped immediately. In order to provide a general guideline to the reading of this chapter and the following two, I will try to rationalize Sextus' discussion by pointing out what I see as the recurrent philosophical problem of his arguments.

Sextus fails to recognize the notions of a universal concept as well as that of essence, thus misunderstanding a good part of the earlier philosophy he criticizes. His main and supposedly most destructive argument against man as criterion of truth rests on the impossibility of giving a definition of man. Sextus' criticism of man's cognitive means (senses and intellect) rests on their alleged inability to know the real (external) objects as opposed to phenomena. Although Sextus does not express himself in these terms, it seems fair to say that Sextus rejects those criteria because it is impossible to have an ἐπίνοια of the universal man in the definition, just as it is impossible to have an ἐπίνοια of the real (external) object in the actual cognitive process. In this Chapter and in Chapter VII I will argue that Sextus' criticism of the Dogmatists as well as the justification of his sceptical creed is a consequence of the fact that the epistemological value of the Sextian ἐπίνοια is incapable of grasping both the universal concept as employed in the definition and the essence of the real (external) object. I will explain the meaning of the Sextian ἐπίνοια in Sect. 2) of the present Chapter and, again, in Sect. 3) of Chapter VII. For the time being, suffice to say that Sextus' ἐπινολαί are in fact phantasiai or mental images,⁴ and qua images intrinsically unable to form universal concepts and to know essences.

The terms "universal concept" and "essence" that I have been using in these pages ought to be understood in the Aristotelian sense. In general, whenever I use the term "concept" in relation to a definition, such as the definition of Man criticized by Sextus, by "concept" I understand the universal concept (τὸ καθόλου),⁵ expressing the "essence" (τὸ τί ἔστιν)⁶ of Man. As we shall see, Sextus lacks both the notions of universal concept and of essence. Whenever I use the term "concept" in relation to the external object, in the sense of "conception" or "knowledge of" a specific external object, I will in fact be referring to the particular "essence" of that external object.

Going back to Sextus, we may thus outline his criticism of man and of his cognitive faculties as criteria of truth:

1) Sextus' main and, supposedly, most destructive argument against man as criterion rests on his criticism of the definition of man.⁷ Man cannot be defined because none of his attributes, individually taken, can be identified with man. In other words, Sextus argues against the possibility of predicating B of A, unless B is identical with A; no solution is offered to this problem by saying either that A is B and C, or that A is B and C and D, because, according to Sextus this would simply double or triple the same problem. Thus the logical impossibility of the definition rests on

the implicit assumption that unum de altero non dicitur. Sextus' problem is, in short, the general problem of the predication, and, in particular, of the kind of predication used in definition. A definition declares that $A=B$ in the sense that the essence of A, expressed by the universal concept A, is the same as the essence of B, expressed by the universal concept B. In the definition of man, the essence of "man", expressed by the universal concept A is identical with the essence of "rational animal", expressed by the universal concept B. The identity is of essence, not of terms. Lacking the notion of essence and of universal concept, Sextus questions the possibility of saying that "A is B", because the term A is not identical with the term B. The only kind of identity that Sextus seems to be ready to accept must be expressed in the form "A is A", as in "Man is man". But this is a tautology, not a definition.

2) Sextus' attack on the senses and the intellect and the combination of the two, as criteria δι' οὗ , rests on the assumption that what appears (τὸ φαινόμενον) is different from the external object (τὸ ὑποκείμενον).⁸ This duality makes it impossible to extend legitimately the knowledge of the former to the latter. Man can know only what appears, i.e. what appears appears in different ways according to the different circumstances (both internal and external to the subject), and there is no way of relating the multiplicity of the appearances to the one, existing object, underlying (ὑποκείμενον) the appearances arising from it.

Although I will return to this question in the course of my textual analysis, it may be useful to note now that Sextus' problem is that of reconstructing an intelligible unity between subject and predicate in the definition and between subject and object (or, more precisely, between phenomena as modifications of the subject and external objects).in the actual process of knowing. Sextus is fully aware of these dualities which actually provide him with the theoretical justification for his scepticism and lead him to the conclusion that objective knowledge is unattainable. What Sextus is unaware of, or, at least, not sufficiently critical of, are the implications that his idea of unity necessarily suggests.

We have seen that Sextus rejects the possibility of a definition because the subject and the predicate cannot be expressed by identical terms, and we pointed out that Sextus' conclusion was prompted by his lacking the notion of "essence" and of "universal concept". I believe that his failure to understand the meaning of "essence" is what now prevents Sextus from reconstructing an intelligible unity between subject and object. When Sextus says that "...the senses do not apprehend external real objects (τὰ ἔκτος ὑποκείμενα) but only, if at all, their own affections (τὰ ἑαυτῶν πάθη)",⁹ and maintains that phenomena alone are apprehensible, he is necessarily implying that the senses apprehend phenomena because they ultimately coincide with their own modifications.

Conversely, the senses cannot apprehend external objects, because they are not identical to the external objects. Sextus provides us with many examples of this type of reasoning which we will examine later on. What I wish to emphasize now is that in this case Sextus' ideal of unity would ultimately be that of the ontological identity of constituents: i.e. identity of subject and object, or as he puts it, identity of subjective modifications (phenomena) and external objects.

But such an identity is rightly seen by Sextus as unacceptable, for it goes against the evidence of the existence of the subject and of his modifications as independent from that of the object,¹⁰ a metaphysical postulate implicit in his opposition between phenomenon and external object, and one that Sextus never questions, thus revealing the most "dogmatic" feature of his philosophy. Had Sextus renounced his belief that external objects, although unknowable, do exist, he would have found a solution to his scepticism, and by assimilating what appears to what exists he could have reconstructed that intelligible unity of subject and object. This was the solution offered by modern phenomenologists, such as Berkeley, whose affirmation that esse est percipi abolishes the existential duality of subject and object. Sextus belonged to a philosophical age in which it was inconceivable to question the reality of the

external object: what he questions is not whether the phenomenon is all that exists, but whether the knowledge of the phenomenon entails the knowledge of the external object.

Sextus acknowledges the existence of the external objects as well as the existence (in the 'sense of the occurrence) of phenomena in so far as they appear. The same acknowledgement prompted Aristotle to elaborate his theory of being whose existence is known intuitively and immediately, on which both his metaphysics and theory of knowledge are founded. From this theory of being Aristotle derived those axiomata or koinai archai (principle of identity, law of contradiction and law of the excluded middle),¹¹ which are ultimately the Aristotelian criteria of truth, although Aristotle does not refer to them by this expression. Sextus is either unaware of, or unwilling to discuss these criteria, although he inevitably refers to them in the course of his arguments. In other words Sextus' scepticism arises from his failure to answer the Socratic question: τί ἐστίν ? The concept of a universal concept (τὸ καθόλου, whose discovery Aristotle attributes to Socrates)¹² is extraneous to Sextus' philosophy. This is obvious also from the way Sextus presents the epistemological problem. He gives us a phenomenology of knowledge, that is he explains how we know (through the mediation of the senses) and what we know (phenomena), but he never answers the question: what is knowledge? in the

sense of: what is the concept of knowledge? He gives us the quia and the quomodo, but not the propter quid.

2) Man, being inconceivable, is inapprehensible.

(M. VII, 263-82).

First of all, we must notice that there is a close correspondence both in subject and in dialectical approach between M. VII, 263-313 and P.H. II, 22-45, although not all arguments are developed in the same order or with equal emphasis in the two texts. For instance, the notions of definition and of division, examined in P.H. II, 205-13 and re-examined in the form of an excursus in M. XI, 8-17, 31-39, are not directly discussed in M. VII, but they are just criticized almost per incidens in this section on man. The same holds true for those questions related to the nexus involving the whole and the parts (P.H. II, 215-17), the genus and the species (P.H. II, 219-27), and the common properties (P.H. II, 228), which are not treated ex professo in M. VII, but which are just referred to in the course of the discussion about the agent.¹³ Incidentally all this is another confirmation of the generally accepted anteriority of P.H. to M.¹⁴

In the first section of his discussion on man, Sextus affirms that "conception ($\xi\pi\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$) in every case precedes apprehension ($\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\acute{\eta}\psi\iota\varsigma$)", ¹⁵ and that if man, as criterion, is to be apprehended, he must be conceived ($\xi\pi\iota\nu\omicron\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\theta\alpha\iota$) long before. But, man being inconceivable, as Sextus is about to show in detail, it follows that the subject who knows is also inapprehensible, and, as such, obviously cannot be assumed to be the criterion of truth. Sextus' statement that "conception in every case precedes apprehension" needs some comments. It is certainly one of the most dogmatic statements we could be presented with by a Sceptic, for not only does Sextus not discuss or justify it, but he also does not provide us with a definition of the term $\xi\pi\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$. In addition, the statement quoted seems to be in open contradiction with Sextus' belief that $\xi\pi\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$ is conditioned by the corresponding sensation and that without the latter the former just cannot occur. This is confirmed by several passages of Sextus, among which we may quote the following two: "Every conception ($\xi\pi\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$)...must be preceded by experience through sense ($\delta\iota\alpha\ \tau\tilde{\eta}\varsigma\ \alpha\tilde{\iota}\sigma\theta\acute{\eta}\sigma\epsilon\omega\varsigma\ \pi\epsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\pi\tau\omega\epsilon\iota$), and on this account if sensibles are abolished all conceptual thought ($\pi\tilde{\alpha}\delta\alpha\ \nu\acute{o}\eta\varsigma\iota\varsigma$) is necessarily abolished at the same time", ¹⁶ and "...Democritus and Plato, by rejecting the senses ($\tau\alpha\varsigma\ \alpha\tilde{\iota}\sigma\theta\acute{\eta}\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$) and abolishing sensibles ($\tau\alpha\ \alpha\tilde{\iota}\sigma\theta\eta\tau\acute{\alpha}$) and following intelligibles ($\tau\alpha\ \nu\omicron\eta\tau\acute{\alpha}$) only, throw things into confusion and shake to pieces not only the truth of

existing things but even the conception ($\xi\pi\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$) of them. For every thought ($\nu\acute{o}\eta\omicron\iota\varsigma$) occurs either owing to sensation or not apart from sensation, and either owing to experience ($\alpha\pi\omicron\ \pi\epsilon\rho\iota\pi\tau\omega\acute{\epsilon}\omega\varsigma$) or not without experience."¹⁷

Let us see if the two quoted passages can help us to determine what Sextus means by $\xi\pi\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$ and, consequently, what is the significance of the initial claim that " $\xi\pi\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$ in every case precedes apprehension." Bury translates $\xi\pi\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$ with "conception", and $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota\pi\tau\omega\acute{\epsilon}\omega\varsigma$ with "experience". If $\xi\pi\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$ means conception as universal ($\tau\omicron\ \kappa\alpha\theta\acute{o}\lambda\omicron\upsilon$) in the Socratic sense of indicating by mental abstraction what is common to a category of objects and if this conception is the elaboration of empirical data, then Sextus would certainly be giving us an accurate description of the Socratic and Aristotelian concept as well as his endorsement of it, but he would in fact contradict his initial claim. The problem is that the term $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota\pi\tau\omega\acute{\epsilon}\omega\varsigma$ does not mean "experience", but only "contact" or "encounter", thus indicating a purely physical and sensory occurrence, without any implication of reflective thought suggested by the term "experience". If $\xi\pi\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$ is the result of contact, it is hard to see how conception could derive from it, and it is more likely that by $\xi\pi\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$ Sextus meant "conceiving of a mental image". I have already pointed out in the previous section that this view is held by C. Stough, who maintains that for Sextus

"to conceive of something is to form an image of it" and that "its content or meaning is to be established by looking for its original in sense experience."¹⁸ Stough supports her view by referring to the Sextian argument against the possibility of forming an εἰκόνα of length without breadth;¹⁹ if by εἰκόνα Sextus understands image, he is right in saying that one cannot form the image of the geometrical line, just as one cannot imagine a polygon of ten thousand sides. But if by εἰκόνα he understands concept, there are no reasons to deny that one can conceive a geometrical line or a polygon of ten thousand sides.

In addition to Stough's remarks, if we examine the text following on Sextus' criticism of Democritus and Plato (M. VIII, 57), we find the term phantasiai used in relation to the verb νοεῖν. In this passage Sextus says that not even false phantasiai are detached from things known to us by sense-experience and that when Heracles in his madness imagines (ἀναπλάσσει) the Furies "...he is conceiving (νοεῖ) a shape compounded of things that have appeared to his senses." In this instance νοεῖ is clearly seen as involving images, not universal concepts. If this analysis is correct, i.e. if Sextus has an image in mind when he talks about conception, then his initial claim that every conception precedes apprehension no longer conflicts with his theory of apprehension. According to Sextus, to apprehend is to apprehend phenomena, but phenomena are identified by Sextus

with phantasiai or impressions of them,²⁰ and we cannot talk about phantasiai without having an image of them. Thus the Sextian "conception" can be ultimately identified with the image of our impressions, which, in turn are the data, the objects of apprehension and, as such, necessarily precede apprehension. We must also add that in this case images are necessarily contingent, i.e. related to the particular phenomenon we apprehend, and to attribute to them a value of universality would indeed be a dogmatic assumption. Man, as universal, is not the object of sense-experience; therefore, one cannot have an image (εἰκόνις) of Man and Man is inapprehensible. Sextus' failure to recognize the metaphysical and epistemological value of the universal concept is the real cause of his scepticism, and of his criticism of the definition of man as criterion.

Let us follow now the development of Sextus' criticism of man as criterion. Sextus examines the different definitions of man proposed by the ancient philosophers and he points out that they are either vague and approximate, or just indicative of accidental characteristics and not of the essential nature of man. Thus Socrates', Democritus' and Epicurus' definitions fall within the former category, whereas Aristotle's and the Peripatetics' fall within the latter.

From an epistemological point of view, the way that Sextus criticizes Aristotle's definition is of most interest

to us. Sextus quotes the definition "Man is a rational mortal animal, receptive of thought and knowledge",²¹ and he immediately concludes that we are thus presented not with man but only with the attributes of man.²² Sextus' reasoning is that, if we analyze each of the characteristics attributed to man individually, we will find that each, individually taken, can be attributed to other beings as well as to man; thus, for instance, "animal" can be predicated also of a dog, "rational" also of a god and "mortal" of all living things. Besides, Sextus argues that from the Dogmatists' claim that the definition of man is not based on these attributes individually taken, but on their "aggregation" (ἀθροισμα) and "sum" (συνδραμεῖν), it is impossible to see how the sum of attributes which do not indicate man can present us with the idea of man.

Sextus' failure to understand the Peripatetic definition derives precisely from viewing the different attributes of man as a sum, as if the definition of man would be that of rational + mortal + animal. Sextus lacks the notion of genus and of "differentia specifica" which is essential to the Aristotelian definition and for which animal is the genus and rational is the "differentia specifica", i.e. not an addition to the notion of animal, but a delimitation of the same and, as such, already included in the notion of animality. A sum of attributes is not a definition (ὅρος, δριμύς) in its fundamental etymological meaning of "boundary", "limit",

"circumscribing"; the purpose of a definition is rather that of further specifying and limiting the comprehension of the first attribute by means of other attributes which are already included in the most general one, until one reaches a point at which there is no further differentiation.²³ This point indicates the essence (τὸ τί ἔστιν, οὐσία) of the thing to be defined.²⁴

Sextus' conception of definition as a sum, and the consequent conception of attributes as parts, implies that the process of defining is the same as the process of dividing. This view is explicitly treated and criticized by Aristotle,²⁵ who explains that the notion of dividing belongs to demonstration, but not to definition. Definition is not the same as demonstration: demonstration proves that an attribute is, or is not, predicated of a subject, but it does not exhibit the essence of that subject, which is in fact presupposed by the demonstration. Again, we must note that Sextus' failure to understand the meaning of a universal concept proves fatal to his arguments; ἀθροισμα is not a concept, it does not reveal the essence of something, just as, for instance, "people" as the sum, the collectivity of man, do not reveal what a man is. In the same way the collectivity of man's attributes do not explain what a man is, unless we explain their relation to one another, that is what is the nature of their composition (genus and

"differentia specifica").²⁶ Thus Sextus is right in saying that the sum of man's attributes does not provide us with the definition of man, but he is wrong in assuming that such was the nature of the Aristotelian definition. Besides, whereas Aristotle's definition of man declares the logico-ontological identity of the universal man (which is the subject, and, as a universal, is one) with his essence (which is the predicate and one), Sextus argues that the oneness attributed to the subject is lost in the predicate. The question is that, whereas for Aristotle the expression "Man is a rational animal" has one subject and one predicate, indicating one essence, and can formally be expressed in the proposition "A is B", Sextus reads the quoted expression as "A is B (rational) and C (animal)", thus arriving at the difficulty of seeing how the one (A) can be defined as the many (B and C).²⁷

In addition to this argument, Sextus also criticizes the individual attributes ascribed to man. He argues that "rational" cannot be properly predicated of man, for a madman is a man and he is not rational. Aristotle could have answered that the fact that a madman is not rational does not make him irrational. In other words the temporary privation of something is not the same as the negation or the contradictory of something;²⁸ in fact, we can say that a particular man is mad on the assumption that human nature is rational. We do not predicate "mad" of a cabbage. Next,

Sextus argues that "being mortal" is not strictly speaking a defining property of man, for "when we are men we are alive and not dead."²⁹ This observation is obviously a sophistic one, for Sextus reasons as if the word "mortal" were synonymous with the word "dead". A dead man is dead because he had the character of being mortal; but a man is mortal also when he is alive, unless "being alive" is wrongly taken as a synonym with "being immortal".

Sextus' survey of the Peripatetic definition of man in M. VII is not as detailed as in P.H. II, where the same arguments are discussed in an almost identical order. Here we find an interesting passage that can explain some rather gratuitous statements of M. VII: "...the attributes contained in this definition (i.e. "Man is a rational mortal animal, receptive of intelligence and science") are used either in an actual, or full (κατ' ἐνέργειαν), or in a potential (δυνάμει), sense; if in a full sense, he who has not already acquired complete science and is not rationally perfect and in the very act of dying - for this is to be mortal in the full sense of the word - is not a man. And if the sense is to be potential, then he will not be a man who possesses reason in perfection or who has acquired intelligence and science; but this conclusion is even more absurd than the former."³⁰ This use of Aristotelian terms is quite unusual in the text of a Sceptic and Sextus seems to go along with the dogmatic distinction between act and

potency. The weakness of Sextus' argument derives, once more, from his inaccurate knowledge of the Aristotelian theory of substance and of definition. According to Aristotle, substance is first with regard to definition, to knowledge and to time, and it is first with regard to definition, because the definition of substance is necessarily implicit in the definition of every other thing.³¹ But substance is act,³² as opposed to matter as potentiality, and, since definitions deal with substances, the very formulation of Sextus' argument would have been inconceivable for Aristotle. Besides, Sextus has a peculiar conception of the notion of act, when he argues that the definition of rational man in act would be the same as man possessing reason in perfection, or complete science. Complete science as the identification of intelligence and intelligibles is pure act, and its treatment belongs to Aristotelian theology,³³ not to his doctrine of human substance. We have already discussed Sextus' criticism of the attribute "mortal"; we may just note that here Sextus identifies "mortal" with "moribund", an inconsistency with M. VII, where he identifies "mortal" with "dead".

- 3) Man, being incapable of knowing himself, is inapprehensible
(M. VII, 283-313).

In the second part of his discussion about man as criterion of truth, Sextus discusses the problem from a different point

of view. His argument is summarized as follows: "If man is apprehensible either he as a whole wholly seeks and apprehends himself, or as a whole he is the object sought and coming under apprehension, (or he is partly the subject, partly the object of apprehension), just as if one were to imagine the sense of sight seeing itself; for either it will be wholly seeing or seen, or partly seeing itself and partly seen by itself."³⁴ Sextus is trying to show that the inapprehensibility of man is demonstrated by a reductio ad absurdum expressed in these three impossibilities:

- 1) It is impossible for man as a whole to know himself because, being a whole as a subject, he would have no object of apprehension.
- 2) It is impossible for man to know himself as a whole because, being a whole as an object, there would be no subject of apprehension.
- 3) Assuming that man is partly subject and partly object, his "wholeness" cannot be maintained in either cases.

The new turn taken by Sextus' arguments is a switch from the analysis of man as universal concept, that is as the object of definition, to man as an individual. For it is clear that the problem of whether and how man may know himself pertains to the individual man and not to the genus man. Lacking the notion of man as a substantial unity, Sextus conceives the individuality of man in its strict

etymological sense, that is as in-dividuum, which is the literary translation of the Greek α' -τομον. As such, man cannot be either subject or object of himself without losing his wholeness. This brings Sextus to conclude that "man does not as a whole perceive himself but forms the apprehension of himself by means of some part of himself."³⁵

At this point, Sextus proceeds to show that this alternative also is inconclusive. Man, being a compound of body, as well as senses and intellect, would either have to apprehend senses and intellect with his body or to apprehend body with his senses and intellect. Body cannot apprehend senses and intellect, because a) body is non-rational ($\alpha\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\nu$), that is different by nature from senses and intellect; b) body cannot perceive senses and intellect without losing its identity and becoming other from what it is. We may grant the first point, although it should be noted that there was no general agreement among ancient philosophers on that. The Stoics, for instance, would have argued that, everything being corporeal, including the intellect, body is not necessarily non-rational. As far as the second point is concerned, it is necessary to clarify in what sense Sextus says that body loses its identity in knowing senses and intellect. Although Sextus considers this possibility only hypothetically, because a) has already denied the capability of body to know senses and intellect, it is important to analyze this second point,

because the same argument will be used by Sextus to show that also the senses and the intellect cannot know their objects.

Sextus maintains that the body cannot know the senses and the intellect because, in apprehending these, "...it must be similar (ὁμοιοῦσθαι) to them, that is, it must be in a similar condition and become (γίνεσθαι) both senses and intellect."³⁶ And Sextus explains that "...just as that which perceives a hot thing as hot perceives it by being heated, and being heated is at once hot, and as that which acquires knowledge of a cold thing as cold by feeling cold is at once cold, so also if the fleshly substance perceives the senses and senses it has sense-perception, and having sense-perception it certainly will become sense, and in this way be the object sought."³⁷ Sextus' text prompts three questions: 1) If that which acquires knowledge (which, in this instance, is supposed to be the body and later on the senses and the intellect) of something cold knows the cold by feeling cold and becoming at once cold, would Sextus admit that that which acquires knowledge of something red, would feel red and become red? 2) What does Sextus understand by "substance"? In M. VII, 291, Sextus uses the term ὑποκείμετα, and in M. VII, 287 the term ὁ ὄγκος, which literally means "bulk", "mass". 3) Why should the body be similar (ὁμοιοῦσθαι) to the sense and the intellect in order to apprehend them, and why must this similarity involve

a "becoming" (γίνεσθαι) senses and intellect? Being similar is not the same as being identical, whereas if something "becomes" something else, it is identical with the something else it has turned into. These questions we will try to answer after having examined the rest of Sextus' argument, for the same theme recurs in his treatment of the senses and intellect as subjects of apprehension.

Sextus continues his discussion by showing that similarly it is impossible for the senses and for the intellect to apprehend body. It is impossible for the senses because:

- 1) senses are passive and irrational, whereas the act of knowing, that is the act "of putting together (τὸ συντιθέναι) one thing with another", ³⁸ is rational; 2) they are incorporeal (οὐκ ἔχουσιν ὡματικὴν φύσιν), ³⁹ and therefore unable to seize the bodily substance (ὁ ὄγκος). Senses can see the attributes of a body (τὰ συμβεβηκότα τῷ ὄγκῳ), but not the bodily substance to which attributes belong. For just as the sum of man's attributes does not give the definition of man, in the same way the united combination (ἡ κοινὴ εὐνοδος) of the attributes of a thing is not the thing of which they are properties (οὐκ... ἔστι τὸ ὧ τι συμβέβηκεν); ⁴⁰ 3) even if body were the sum of its attributes, senses, being irrational, would be unable to put together (τὸ συντιθέναι) one property with the other; 4) furthermore, each sense perceives only its specific object and body is not the

specific object of any sense; 5) finally, the senses cannot even apprehend themselves, nor, in consequence, can they be perceptive of one another.

In the same way, Sextus shows that also the intellect is unable to apprehend body, senses and itself, contrary to the belief of the Dogmatists. Sextus accuses the Dogmatists of not substantiating their claim and of not explaining whether the intellect apprehends "...by making contact all at once with the substance as a whole (ὅψ' ἐν ὅλῳ ἐπιπεσοῦσα τῷ ὅγκῳ), or with its parts, and by combining these it apprehends the whole."⁴¹ But Sextus argues that: 1) the intellect, being rational, cannot apprehend body and senses which are irrational; 2) even if the intellect were able to apprehend the senses, by doing so it would "...become of like nature with them (αὐτὴ γενήσεται ὁμοιοειδὴς ἐκείναις)",⁴² thus losing its identity and abolishing the distinction between subject and object.

For the same reasons, Sextus continues, the intellect is unable to apprehend itself. It cannot do so as a whole, for it cannot as a whole be at the same time apprehension and apprehending (κατάληψις καὶ καταλαμβάνων);⁴³ besides, if the apprehending subject is the whole, the apprehended object would no longer be anything. But the intellect cannot apprehend itself by using a part of itself, because in this case a process ad infinitum would be established, for that

part of the intellect would, in turn, either have to apprehend itself as a whole or by means of another part.⁴⁴

Sextus' arguments suggest the following conclusions:

- 1) By "substance" (which, in this section of Sextus' text is human substance) Sextus understands the element underlying (τὸ ὑποκείμενον) apprehension. It is not the sum of those attributes which can be ascribed to man, but it is referred to as "bulk", "mass", *ὄγκος*. Not being the sum of man's attributes, the sum of our individual apprehensions does not entail the apprehension of human substance. Its actual existence is taken for granted;
- 2) Sextus rejects the possibility of body, senses and intellect being, in turn, the subject and object of self-apprehension. The reason for this is analogous to the one brought by Sextus in rejecting the possibility of giving a definition of man. In both cases the wholeness and the oneness of the subject is lost: in the case of the definition it is lost in its predicate; in the case of self-apprehension it is lost in its object. Definition and self-apprehension beg for a duality; if we concede the duality we destroy the identity of the subject. If we do not concede the duality, both definition and self-apprehension just cannot take place.
- 3) Whether it is the body or the sense or the intellect that is the subject of self-apprehension, that which apprehends is bound to become what is apprehended, with the result that

we have an ontological identity of subject and object.

Sextus expressly says that whichever part is involved in the process of apprehending, in order to do so it must change its nature and "become of like nature (*ὁμοιοειδής*) with its object." To the Socratic-Aristotelian notion of knowing as conceptualizing Sextus opposes the notion of apprehension as assimilation of the object on the part of the subject, at least as far as self-apprehension is concerned. To express Sextus' view by means of a simile, one could say that, just as the slice of bread I eat, once it is eaten, is no longer bread but it becomes part of my flesh and bones, in the same way the hypothesized process of self-apprehension implies something similar to the swallowing of the subject on the part of the object and vice versa.

Although I will return to this problem in the following chapter, it must be noted that the claim that it is impossible for the intellect, which is rational, to apprehend body and senses, which are irrational, in the process of self-apprehension, establishes a principle whose epistemological value cannot be logically limited only to self-apprehension. If the essential diversity of intellect and senses is seen as a major and insuperable obstacle in the process of self-apprehension, the same principle ought to be true whenever the intellect is presented with any kind of non-rational objects, including and in primis phenomena.⁴⁵ But, as we

will see in Chapter VII, Sextus maintains that the apprehension of phenomena is possible and this to me is a serious inconsistency in Sextus' philosophy.

- 4) No man, as an individual, can claim to be criterion of truth.
(M. VII, 315-342).

After having shown how man cannot be validly accepted as criterion of truth for theoretical reasons, Sextus proceeds to explain how also de facto man is not the criterion. Sextus argues that whoever may claim to have discovered the criterion of truth, would have to say so either in an assertive or in a demonstrative way (ἀποφαίνεται ἢ ἀπόδειξιν παραλαμβάνει).⁴⁶ If he would utter it by assertion, he would provide no proof and his claim would be unacceptable; if he would want to justify it by means of a demonstration, he would have to found his demonstration upon an undisputed and previously agreed upon criterion, which would start an infinite regress.⁴⁷

Next, Sextus examines what we could call an argument ex auctoritate; in the instance of a man whose criterion ought to be trusted because of the personal qualities of that man, such as age, reputation, work and intellect, Sextus argues that there is no ground for trusting any one man on this basis, for such an approach to the problem would

be inappropriate to an inquiry into the truth.⁴⁸ A fairly obvious point and one we can easily agree with, though, rather surprisingly, Sextus describes it as "the most important argument of all."⁴⁹

Also the agreement of the many cannot be accepted as criterion, in the first place, because one would never find an absolute majority and, in the second place, because as long as those who agree are in one disposition (and they cannot be otherwise, being in agreement) they do not differ numerically from the one man who disagrees. The points of view would just be two, no matter how many supporters either of them has. In conclusion, the fact that neither age, nor work, nor intellect, nor the agreement of the many can be reasonably assumed to be a criterion, would prove that also de facto the criterion of truth does not exist.

FOOTNOTES

1. M. VII, 35-7.
2. For a comment on this tripartition of the criterion of truth, see G. Striker, "Κριτήριον τῆς ἀληθείας ", Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen (1974), 51-110.
3. M. VII, 370.
4. Cf. C. Stough, Greek Skepticism, 110-12.
5. Met. VII, 12.
6. An. post., II, 3, 90 b 31 and 90 b 5.
7. M. VII, 264 foll.
8. P.H. II, 72; M. VII, 300, 354, 381-4.
9. P.H. II, 72.
10. M. VII, 294-6.
11. An. post., 72 a, 14-24.
12. Met., XIII, 4, 1078 b.
13. Cf. i.e. M. VII, 267, 270.
14. Cf. Ch. I, Sect. 2).
15. M. VII, 263.
16. M. VIII, 60.
17. M. VIII, 56.
18. C. Stough, Greek Skepticism, 111.
19. M. III, 37-57; IX, 390-412.
20. P.H. I, 22.

21. M. VII, 269. We must note that the quoted Aristotelian definition of man is of doxographic origin, for it does not occur in Aristotle's writings. Aristotle would have probably rejected for it does not obey to the law of economy stated in Top., VI, 3 and An. post., II, 13; in fact, "mortal" is redundant of "animal", and "receptive of thought and knowledge" is redundant of "rational". This observation does not affect at all the significance of Sextus' criticism of the Aristotelian definition.
22. Bury translates τὰ συμπεπνηκότα with "properties". I believe this is incorrect. "Property" translates the Greek ἴδιον and it is very important not to confuse attributes with properties for "A property is something which does not show the essence of a thing but belongs to it alone and is predicated convertibly of it." (Aristotle, Top., I, 5, 102 a 18) Aristotle's example of a property of man is to be able to learn grammar. Attributes are not convertible with the subject and it is therefore misleading to translate "rational" and "animal" with "properties".
23. An. post., II, 13, 97 b 5.
24. Anal. post., II, 3, 90 b 15-20.
25. Anal. pr., I, 46 a 31 and Anal. post., II, 5.
26. Top., VI, 14.
27. Aristotle discusses the value of definitions in the forms: "X is A and B", "X is made up of A and B" and "X is A plus B" in Top., VI, 13.
28. An. post., I, 4.
29. M. VII, 272.
30. P.H. II, 27.
31. Met., VII, 1, 1028 a 31.
32. Met., VIII, 2.
33. Met., XII, 6-10.
34. M. VII, 284.
35. M. VII, 287.
36. M. VII, 289.

37. M. VII, 290-1.
38. M. VII, 297.
39. M. VII, 294.
40. M. VII, 295-6.
41. M. VII, 303.
42. M. VII, 305.
43. M. VII, 311.
44. M. VII, 312.
45. To argue that phenomena are already inclusive of an element of rationality (being perception, i.e. awareness of sensations, and not bare, non-rational sensations) simply moves the question backward, for one would still have to explain how the rational and the non-rational can co-exist within the occurrence of a phenomenon.
46. M. VII, 315.
47. M. VII, 339.
48. M. VII, 320.
49. M. VII, 320 and P.H. II, 59-60.

CHAPTER VII

SENSES AND INTELLECT AS CRITERIA "BY MEANS OF WHICH"

(M. VII, 343-69).

1) Preliminary notes

After having shown that man cannot be accepted as criterion of truth because of his inapprehensibility, Sextus examines the possibility that the instrument by which ($\delta\iota' \omicron\tilde{\nu}$) man acquires knowledge may provide an acceptable criterion. The dialectical scheme as well as the philosophical issues of this section bear a great similarity to the section on man. Here too Sextus anticipates the negative conclusion of his inquiry and epitomizes tendentiously the Dogmatists' views.

Before examining his arguments in detail, we may note that this whole section of M. VII is somehow superfluous or, at least, redundant in view of the negative conclusions reached by Sextus' account of man as criterion. Once man as criterion is ruled out, a further analysis of man's cognitive instruments is per se logically bound to reach the same negative conclusion, for one cannot see how the parts (i.e. man's cognitive faculties) could fulfill what the whole (i.e. man) is lacking. If the senses and the intellect

and their combination are unable to apprehend man, who is the first and most immediate reality we are faced with, then it would seem that the ineligibility of man's cognitive instruments to be criteria of truth with regard to his knowledge of the external world would already be proved a fortiori.

This is why the present section of M. VII does not add much to our knowledge of Sextus' epistemological premises in his critique of the three criteria of truth, for Sextus has already laid down the fundamental points of his criticism in discussing man in criterion. Nevertheless, Sextus' discussion of man's cognitive instruments is very important for an understanding of the basic principles of his own epistemology, and in particular of his doctrine of phenomenon and ὑποκείμενον.

Sextus does not seem to be concerned at all with a critical examination of the nature of the intellect and of the senses, a consequence of the fact that, as I have already pointed out in my introduction to Chapter VI, Sextus never provides us with an answer to the crucial question: what is knowledge? His only concern is to show the impossibility of any kind of interaction and synthesis between the specific objects and fields of experience of the intellect, on the one side, and of the senses, on the other. The senses and the intellect stand as two separate worlds, both incapable

of transcending the sphere of their own immediate objects and of filling the gap caused by their substantial heterogeneity,¹ despite the fact that, as Sextus conceded, "...it be granted that these different faculties really belong to the same substance (περὶ τὴν αὐτὴν οὐσίαν ὑποκείμεναι).² Despite the use of the Aristotelian term οὐσία, we have already seen that by "substance" Sextus understands ὄγκος (physical mass) and this may explain why he does not provide us with any theory of the human soul as the form, the element unifying body and intellect.

Although Sextus' intention is that of criticizing the Dogmatists' views, his approach is clearly biased by an historically narrow perspective and by the uneven importance attributed to the different terms in which different Dogmatists express their views, which must be given separate emphasis. While he had devoted a lengthy section of M. VII to a fairly accurate, though uncritical, account of the various definitions of man, ranging from the Presocratics to the Hellenistic philosophers, his treatment of man's cognitive instruments is not framed by an equally detailed historical account. His approach to the study of senses and intellect is emphatically and exclusively dualistic, and he does not analyse any previous attempt at mediating the world of the senses with that of the intellect, thus ignoring a considerable part of ancient psychology and epistemology, from Aristotle up to the later Peripatetic school. His criticism of the

definition of man, that is of his essence expressed in a universal concept, is not paralleled by a criticism of the Dogmatists' theory of soul. Sextus was either not interested in it, or, more probably, he rightly saw no necessity for a discussion of this kind in view of the negative conclusions reached with regard to the definition of man. If man cannot be defined, neither can senses and intellect be defined.

Sextus is content to say that the senses and the intellect belong to the same ousia (presumably, human soul), just as in the previous section he was content to say that body, senses and intellect belonged to the same ὑποκείμενον or ὅλος (the totality of man). Again, we can say that Sextus fails to answer the Socratic τί ἐστίν both with regard to the totality of man and of his cognitive instruments, and that this is the major source of his scepticism. This difficulty is, in turn, derived from his failure to understand the meaning of some Aristotelian terms such as universal concept (τὸ καθόλου), essence and substance. As we shall see, Sextus' discussion of the intellect as criterion suggests that idea for Sextus ultimately means phantasia and it is on this ground that he criticizes the Dogmatists, thus misinterpreting the meaning of their theories.³

Sextus' purpose is that of showing that, because of the inadequacy of his cognitive means, man is "by nature" incapable

of discovering the truth.⁴ This radical statement, which reveals a spirit very distant from the basically intellectualistic character of most classical philosophy, is the fundamental and recurring theme of the sceptic philosopher and it rests upon the conviction that the character of the real world falls outside the cognitive capacities of man. Before examining Sextus' criticism of human cognitive faculties and his negative conclusion about their adequacy for apprehending the truth, it is important to note that this inadequacy is ultimately caused by the dogmatic (i.e. non-justified) assumption that the external world really exists. Modern empiricists, from Berkeley to Hume, escape scepticism not because their epistemological analysis is substantially different from the Sextian analysis (which explains the popularity enjoyed by Sextus among modern empiricists), but because they eliminate the dogmatic claim that something real exists outside the subject. In this case, the senses and the intellect have nothing to be adequate to, and scepticism is avoided. The real root of Sextus' scepticism is, in my view, not so much the fallibility of senses or the heterogeneity of senses and intellect, but the encumbrance of this dogmatically assumed and yet mysterious ὑποκείμενον, whose existence Sextus is unable to exploit as the point of departure for a metaphysic of being or, more generally, as an ubi consistam (and, as such, as criterion of truth), while its existence poses, at the same time, insuperable epistemological difficulties.⁵

2) The inadequacy of the senses as criteria (M. VII, 344-47).

Sextus states that if man discovers the truth, he discovers it either by employing the senses alone, or the intellect alone, or the combination of the two.⁶ Senses and intellect are two separate entities and Stough rightly observes that this sharp separation suggests the idea of a "personification of these capacities (*δυνάμεις*)."⁷ If it is clear that they are separate entities it is not however equally clear whether they have separate objects. We will examine this question later; but from my anticipated conclusion that Sextus' ideas are to be identified with phantasiai, it would follow that senses and intellect do not have separate objects.⁸

Sextus' criticism of the senses as criteria rests on the following points:

- 1) Senses are irrational "by nature" and they have "no further capacity beyond that of being impressed by the objects (*πλέον τοῦ τυποῦσθαι πρὸς τῶν φανταστῶν*)."⁹
- 2) Senses can be moved, for instance, in a whiteish or sweetish way, but they are incapable of having an impression (phantasia) regarding such an object that "this thing is white" and "this thing is sweet".¹⁰
- 3) Senses may give false or inaccurate reports and be in conflict among each other, as it has been shown by the Ten Modes of Aenesidemus.¹¹

4) Senses are not self-sufficient in giving a composite picture of the perceived object without the aid of memory and of associative faculties.¹²

We can take 1) for granted, whereas the other points require a few words of comment. 2) and 3) are contradictory, if one assumes that the meaning of the word αἰσθησις is that of bare sense affection. Senses cannot give false reports if they are mere affections such as "being moved in a whiteish way", as stated in 2). If they give false reports it is because they make statements of the kind "this is white", a statement which can be true or false; but this goes against 2). Stough is right in saying that Sextus here is playing "on the broader meaning of αἰσθησις",¹³ a recurrent feature in Sextus' writings and skillfully employed for polemical purposes. For the same term αἰσθησις is used by Sextus also to indicate perception, that is awareness of sense modification, an awareness which, whether it is expressed in the dogmatic form "This is white" or in the sceptical form "This appears to be white", necessarily implies a form of judgement. As such it always involves some kind of mental activity by which a relation is established between the sense-data and the intellect which recognizes such data. The presence or absence of this mental activity which Sextus calls the λογικὴ δύναμις¹⁴ is what distinguishes sensation from perception. In view of the ambiguity of the term αἰσθησις, we can say that it is used in the sense of sensation in 1)

and 2); in the sense of perception in 3) and 4). 4) raises the question of perceiving a composite object, such as man or a plant. Sextus stresses the need for an unifying element of judgement which he identifies with the associative faculty of the mind and with memory. Although Sextus does not elaborate on the specific role of memory in the perceptive process,¹⁵ it is clear that memory acts as a trait d'union which allows the mind to register the sense-data and to elaborate them in the perception of composite objects.

3) The inadequacy of the intellect as criterion (M. VII, 348-53).

If the senses cannot be the criterion of truth, neither can the intellect (*ἡ διάνοια*). Sextus supports this thesis with a series of arguments which can be thus summarized:

1) If the intellect were the criterion of truth, it ought to know itself in the first place. But it cannot do so, as is shown by the disagreement of the philosophers on this matter.

2) Intellects are many in number, and, therefore, inevitably in conflict among themselves. Consequently a third party would be necessary to act as an arbiter, thus creating a process leading ad infinitum.

3) Since most philosophers believe that man is a combination of senses and intellect, the presence of the senses would

inevitably represent an obstacle to the intellect's judging the truth of the external objects.

Of these three arguments only the third one provides us with a theoretical explanation of why the intellect cannot act as criterion. The first point is just an argument ab extrinseco; Sextus argues that philosophers disagree not only with regard to the locus of the intellect, but also with regard to its very nature,¹⁶ for, whereas the majority assert that the intellect is distinct from the senses, others, like Strato and Aenesidemus, believe that it is the senses. Thus the intellect cannot be the criterion.

The second objection is based on the multiplicity of intellects. Intellects, being many in number, are bound to disagree, and their disagreement requires the intervention of a third party to act as an arbiter. If the third party is different from the intellect, the insufficiency of the intellect as criterion is already proved; if it is the intellect, it cannot be criterion, because what is the cause of disagreement cannot at the same time act as an arbiter. Intellects are many presumably because men are many. So the disagreement of the intellects is just the logical consequence of the disagreement of men, a point which was already discussed at the end of Chapter VI.

The third objection presented by Sextus against the intellect as criterion arises from the difficulties that the co-existence of the intellect and of the senses within the same individual would pose. Sextus argues that, since most philosophers agree in saying that man is formed of an intellectual part (τὸ διανοητικόν) and of a sensitive one (τὸ αἰσθητικόν), the latter, "...being set in front (πρόκειται)" of the former, would necessarily prevent the intellect from perceiving the external object. For just as the body which lies between the sight and the object of sight prevents the sight from seeing its object, in the same way the senses would prevent the intellect from perceiving the external object.¹⁷ We will not ask Sextus to explain why the senses are set "in front of" the intellect and not, for instance, beside or below the same, but we will simply assume that the meaning of his objection is that the priority of the senses causes a difficulty for the intellect. Yet, at this point in his discussion, Sextus does not elaborate on the kind of difficulty raised by the presence of the senses. Later on we will learn that this difficulty is that of sense-data mediating our knowledge of the external world, but so far this third argument does not in fact explain why the intellect cannot per se be the criterion; it simply states that the senses exist and that this is a problem for the intellect. This argument would prove the impossibility of the intellect being criterion only on the assumption that

the intellect is corporeal and, as such, physically prevented by the presence of the senses to operate. If such is the case, Sextus' model would be probative, but there is no evidence that Sextus ever conceived the intellect as corporeal, or ever could conceive this, as a Sceptic.

It may be useful at this point to see what Sextus understands by intellect. A source of confusion is the indiscriminate use that Sextus makes of the terms $\nu\omicron\upsilon\tilde{\varsigma}$ and $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$.¹⁸ In an earlier account of the Peripatetic philosophy Sextus draws a distinction between the meaning of the two terms and he says that "...this kind of affection of the soul the Peripatetic philosophers call either reason ($\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$) or intellect ($\nu\omicron\upsilon\tilde{\varsigma}$) according to the different ways in which it occurs - reason in so far as it is potency, intellect in so far as it is actuality; for whenever the soul is potentially able to form this representation ($\tau\omicron\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\alpha\pi\lambda\alpha\sigma\mu\acute{\omicron}\nu$) - that is to say, whenever it is of a nature to do so - it is called reason, but whenever it is already actually doing so, it is termed intellect."¹⁹ Sextus' account of Aristotelian psychology is not very accurate, for Aristotle expressly states that $\nu\omicron\upsilon\tilde{\varsigma}$ can also be in potency.²⁰ The difference between $\nu\omicron\upsilon\tilde{\varsigma}$ and $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$ rests in the different way they operate: $\nu\omicron\upsilon\tilde{\varsigma}$ or $\nu\acute{\omicron}\eta\varsigma\iota\varsigma$ is a kind of intuitive knowledge and is that by which the first principles are grasped,²¹ whereas $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$ is rather a kind of discursive reasoning which "affirms or denies all that

can be intelligible and thinkable",²² so that it is always knowledge of something different from itself and only secondarily of itself.²³

After his reference to the Peripatetic distinction between νοῦς and διάνοια, Sextus uses these terms indifferently. In the present section he seems to prefer the term διάνοια, but later on, when he criticizes the combined action of the senses and of the intellect,²⁴ the term νοῦς is used instead. The same applies to his use of the terms νοητόν and διανοητικόν,²⁵ both employed in opposition to αἰσθητόν and αἰσθητικόν. Despite this inconsistency, it is probably reasonable to assume that the prevalent use of the term διάνοια is actually justified by the fact that it is reason in its discursive capacity of judging the sense-data that interests Sextus. Νοῦς as the intuitive capacity of grasping the first principles is very likely something that, because of its metaphysical implications, does not appeal to Sextus, as we shall see later on.

We still have to examine what is the object of the intellect, according to Sextus. We have just mentioned the use of the terms νοητόν and διανοητικόν. As usual, Sextus does not provide us with a definition of the terms he employs, so we will have to look at the context they are used in to find out what their real meaning is. What Sextus clearly states is that all intelligible things (πᾶν νοητόν)

derive from sense-data,²⁶ either owing to sensation (αἰσθησις) or to "encounter" (περίπτωσις).²⁷ This states the origin, but not the content of what is intelligible. We must then ask ourselves: what is νόησις and what is a νοητόν? We have already pointed out at the end of the first section of Chapter VI that Stough is right in saying that Sextus' ideas are in fact conceptions and mental images and that his criticism of the Peripatetic definition of man is biased by the fact that Sextus fails to see the difference existing between an image and a concept. The present discussion on the intellect and on the senses as criteria seems to confirm fully Stough's view. The senses cannot be the criterion because they have no further capacity beyond that of being impressed by "the objects imaged" (τὰ φανταστικά),²⁸ and they can only be moved in a whiteish or sweetish or similar way. They lack the capacity of having a phantasia of the object causing them to be impressed,²⁹ because senses are alogoi. The intellect instead can have phantasiai, and phantasiai are the content of its thought (νόησις): phantasiai are ultimately noeta. This is proved by Sextus' claim that the idea of length without breadth is inconceivable (ἀνεπιννοητόν);³⁰ since we do not have a phantasia of length without breadth, such an idea is meaningless, i.e. devoid of content. It is also proved by Orestes, who, imagining (ἀναπλάσσων) the Furies, thinks (νοεῖ) that a shape (μορφήν) compounded of things appeared to his senses.³¹

And we should not forget that in his account of the Peripatetic distinction between νοῦς and διδάνοια, Sextus says that διδάνοια is the capacity of forming an ἀναπλάσμος,³² that is an image, a fiction of something else. We may also add that, in his criticism of the Stoic theory of signs, Sextus maintains that sign is not a νοητόν,³³ for it does not present or indicate anything, that is because it is impossible to have a phantasia of it.

Before drawing some conclusions and indicating the consequences that the identification of idea with phantasia bears with regard to the criticism of the criterion "by means of which", let us examine the last part of Sextus' discussion.

4) The inadequacy of the combination of senses and intellect (M. VII, 354-69)

Sextus argues that, just as the senses and the intellect individually taken do not provide us with the criterion of truth, neither does their combination. His main arguments are formulated as follows:

1) Senses do not provide the intellect with the external object (τὰ ἔκτος), but each sense reports its own peculiar affection (παθος).³⁴

2) The intellect is unable to apprehend the peculiar affection of each sense because, in order to do so, the

intellect should be sensitively moved (αἰσθητικῶς κινεῖται) and, by doing so, it would become sense and irrational, and it would cease from being any longer thought. So the intellect cannot, as thought and while remaining thought, apprehend the affections of the senses.³⁵

3) Even if the intellect were able to receive the affection of the senses it could not know the external objects. For there is a difference between the thing presented (τὸ φανταστόν) and its phantasia, just as, for instance, there is a difference between the fire (which burns) and the phantasia of fire (which does not burn).³⁶

4) The argument of the "similar" (i.e. that "things similar to certain things are other than those things to which they are similar")³⁷ is used to show that, even granting that the external objects are similar to our affections, this similarity does not entail that the apprehension of the affections be the same as the apprehension of the external objects. Just as one who does not know Socrates but on looking at his picture cannot decide whether the picture resembles Socrates or not, in the same way the intellect cannot know whether the sense-data resemble the external objects or not.³⁸

Sextus also examines the Dogmatists' reply to his objections but, before examining them, we shall comment on the previous points. Besides restating that what is rational

cannot be assimilated to what is non-rational, Sextus emphasizes the distinction between the real object and the phenomenon. The phenomenon is the only possible and unquestionable object of human experience. The phenomenon is unquestionable because "it lies in passivity (ἐν πείσει) and involuntary affection (ἀβουλήτῳ πάθει)." ³⁹ Man, being naturally capable of sensation and thought, ⁴⁰ is compelled to recognize and to assent to phenomena. Man, being naturally capable of sensation, is necessarily affected by what appears to him (phenomenon), and, being naturally capable of thought, can form a νοητόν of the phenomenon. What we have previously stated in Chapter VI, Sect. 2) as well as in Sect. 3) of this chapter about Sextus' identification of idea with phantasia, clearly results from the following passage: "The criterion of the Sceptic School is...the appearance (τὸ φαινόμενον), giving this name to what is potentially (δυνάμει) phantasia." ⁴¹ Thus phantasia is what man thinks, when he thinks of what appears, phantasia is the mental description of phenomena and of these only, for nothing can be thought unless it is derived from sense experience. ⁴² Thus, strictly speaking, what appears is called phenomenon in so far as it is opposed to what is (τὸ ὑποκείμενον); but in so far as it is thought, phenomenon is the same as phantasia. In this sense I agree with Stough, when she says that "...impressions are received from the external object, but they cannot be of that object. Nor can they be of the phenomenal object, for impression and phenomenon are identical." ⁴³

We mentioned that phenomenon, as virtual phantasia, is the criterion of the Sceptic. If we recall the Sextian distinction between the criterion as the standard of practical life, and as the criterion of truth,⁴⁴ examined in Chapter III, as well as the Sextian distinction between apprehending (καταλαμβάνειν) as having a simple mental conception (ἀπλῶς νοεῖν), and apprehending as stating the reality of the object under discussion (τὴν ὑπαρξίν τιθέναι),⁴⁵ examined in Chapter II, it is now clear why the phenomenon is the Sceptic's only criterion for practical life, and why it is only possible to have a notion, a phantasia of it. Thus phenomena merely establish that they appear, and their appearance does not entail any positive knowledge of the object of which they are appearances. The intellect, being able to think of phantasiai and of these only, is naturally prevented from knowing the external objects. Consequently, Sextus can say that whereas the intellect is cognizant (γνωρίξει) of things similar to the external objects, it is not cognizant of the external objects themselves.⁴⁶

Next, Sextus examines the Dogmatists' objection that the senses and the intellect, although different in their nature, are nevertheless parts of the one soul of which they are separate but co-existing faculties and that the soul, being endowed with this two-fold apparatus can apprehend both the intelligible objects (νοητά) and the sensible ones (αἰσθητά).⁴⁷

Sextus' reply is that whatever is rational cannot apprehend what is irrational, without becoming, in turn irrational, and vice versa. Thus the soul in general (κοινῶς ἡ ψυχὴ), being the intellect (διάνοια),⁴⁸ cannot apprehend as soul what is irrational. Sextus' identification of the soul in general with the intellect is clearly gratuitous, for the Dogmatists referred to the intellect as a faculty of the soul, not as the soul.

But, Sextus continues, even conceding that the intellect "...peers through the sensitive passages as through peep-holes and makes contact with the external object apart from the senses placed in front of it", the intellect would not apprehend the external object as self-evident (ἐναργές).⁴⁹ For a definition of self-evident, Sextus endorses the definition given by "his opponents": self-evident is that which is grasped of itself (τὸ ἑξ ἑαυτοῦ λαμβανόμενον) and needs no second thing to establish it.⁵⁰ Thus evidentiality is the immediate grasping of something. But Sextus argues that nothing can be grasped without the mediation of our affections (ἐκ παθῶν), and, therefore, that nothing is self-evident. To know the truth is to know the external object per se,⁵¹ i.e. without the mediation of the senses, which are irrational and fallible. If nothing is self-evident, then truth is unknowable (ἀγνώστον).⁵² Before summing up Sextus' arguments, it must be noted that Sextus' hypothesis that the intellect may know without the mediation of the senses

drops out in the course of his discussion about the self-evident. And it drops not because it has been proved wrong but because its opposite (that is, that the intellect cannot know without the mediation of the senses) had been assumed as true. Opposite premises do not allow syllogism to take place.

- 5) Conclusion to Sextus' criticism of the criterion "by whom" and of the criterion "by means of which".

To sum up, these are the crucial propositions of Sextus' attack on the Dogmatists' criteria, and these are also the points on which an evaluation of Sextus' philosophy should be based:

- 1) That self-evident knowledge is to be identified with immediate, intuitive knowledge, not mediated by sense affection, and that evidentiality is to be identified as conditio sine qua non of the criterion of truth.
- 2) That there is a contrast between phenomenon and external object (τὸ φαινόμενον, τὸ ἔκτος).
- 3) That phantasia is to be identified with noesis of the phenomenon, and of that alone.
- 4) That the intellect (rational) and the senses (irrational) are heterogeneous. Neither term can apprehend the other without losing its identity, that is without becoming other from what it is.

If there is a criterion of truth, it must be able to immediately grasp its object. Such a thing does not exist. Why? Because the very nature of man prevents him from knowing anything immediately. What is man's nature? Man is a compound of senses and intellect, two elements that are essentially heterogeneous. The senses are merely capable of being impressed; they are irrational and provide the intellect only with the phenomenal object, not with the real one. The intellect is rational, but inevitably tied to and conditioned by the senses because man is "by nature" a compound of senses and intellect. The intellect operates by means of phantasiai, that is by phenomena presented to the intellect and provided by sense affections. Phenomena are different from the external objects, but, even if they were not so, their mere occurrence poses an obstacle for the intellect which is, in any case, prevented from attaining immediate, self-evident knowledge. Thus a criterion of truth does not exist and the only possible solution regarding the problem of truth is that of "suspending judgement".

Now that we have described Sextus' position, let us see if something can be said in defence of the Dogmatists. I think that the following questions could have been legitimately asked of Sextus:

1) If the intellect cannot grasp the truth immediately because man is by nature a compound of senses and intellect, is not man's nature presupposed as evidently so? If not,

where is Sextus' justification of his claim? Sextus might, in turn, argue that his accurate distinction between apprehending as "having a simple notion" and apprehending as "affirming the existence of something" must be kept in mind,⁵³ and that he is simply operating with a notion of man's nature as being so and so and that he is not affirming its reality. But can a simple notion of man's nature entail all the philosophical consequences that we know it does, while allowing Sextus to conclude that nothing true exists? Does a notion qua notion entails logical consequences, and, more important, where does it come from, if it is true that all noeta must derive from sense experience? Is it, perhaps, an inborn notion, and inborn in what? If it is a notion, its origin must be justified, and, if it must be justified, it follows that human nature cannot be presupposed, and thus cannot be used to explain man's inability to reach the truth. If, instead, to apprehend man's nature is not to have a simple notion of it, but means to affirm its existence, is not its being existent self-evident? The same arguments could also be applied to the senses and to the intellect and to their operations. Granted that the senses can only be impressed passively and that the intellect can only apprehend the phenomena, is not the capacity of the senses to be impressed passively and the capacity of the intellect to apprehend phenomena given as self-evident? If not, what is that by which (the mediating element) we say that they operate in the way that they do operate?

The recognition that there was immediate (self-evident) knowledge of being qua being (that is, still undetermined, but nevertheless existing) provided Aristotle with his criterion. A further analysis of the laws which regulate being (the *Koivai ἀρχαί*), laws "about which it is impossible to err",⁵⁴ allowed him to elaborate a doctrine of truth (logic and metaphysics). We may now ask ourselves: what prevented Sextus, so eagerly in search of a criterion of truth, to see this? I have no definite answers, just suggestions. Sextus was prevented from admitting self-evident universal propositions (the Aristotelian *ἀρχαί*) about the nature of reality simply because he did not admit universals as being anything other than terms attached to particular mental images. His noeta are phantasiai and whereas a determined and particular being, such as, for instance, this house or this man, can be phantasized, being as such cannot. In addition Sextus' dianoia is a mere mental registration of phenomena which, in so far as they are thought, become phantasiai. Its activity consists in its ability to perform certain mental operations, such as combining separate phenomena so that they are perceived as unified wholes,⁵⁵ and as framing by analogy from experience the idea of a Fury or of a pygmy, even without having not seen one directly.⁵⁶ Yet this dianoia does not conceptualize, it has no abstractive power. It works like a computer, not like the Dogmatists' vous; it can organize, compare and combine whatever data are

supplied to it, but it is unable to answer to the Socratic
τί ἐστίν ; had Sextus said that man is a compound of senses
and of a mental capacity for retaining phenomena in the form
of phantasiai, he would have given us a more accurate
description of his own thought.

Sextus' philosophy presents us with another difficulty
and if I understand this difficulty correctly, it would seem
that his position is nihilistic rather than sceptical.
Sextus' analysis of the criterion $\delta\iota' οὗ$ comes to the conclusion
that a criterion does not exist and that the intellect
apprehends ($\gammaνωρίσεται$) only phenomena and not the external
objects.⁵⁷ I will not repeat Sextus' arguments against the
possibility of apprehending the external objects, but I
wonder whether his claim that phenomena are apprehensible
is legitimate. We have seen that in his analysis of the
process of self-apprehension, which I examined in Chapter VI,
Sextus maintained that man is incapable of knowing himself
because the senses and the intellect, being heterogeneous,
are reciprocally unknowable. Why should not the same principle
be valid as far as the alleged knowledge of the phenomenon
is concerned? If the intellect knows the phenomena, and by
phenomena we understand what appears to the senses, i.e. an
irrational and passive process, how can the intellect, which
is rational, keep its rationality and identity in knowing
phenomena? Was it not stated that the intellect can know
the senses only under the condition that it becomes the same

with the senses,⁵⁸ and thus irrational? If this is valid for the knowledge of the senses, it should also be valid for the knowledge of sense affections. It could be argued that, strictly speaking, the intellect knows phantasiai, but this does not change anything because "...the phenomenon...is virtually phantasia."⁵⁹ Beside, even if the intellect were to know phantasiai and not phenomena, phantasiai are, by definition, from aisthesis,⁶⁰ and the nature of the problem would still be the same. Instead of asking ourselves how can the intellect know sense affections without becoming sense affection and irrational, we would have to ask how can phantasia which is a mental entity and not a physical one, be derived from aisthesis without being aisthesis. In both cases the intellect is not only out of touch and unable to make contact with reality, but must also be in this state with regard to the appearance of the reality, if it is to retain its rationality and identity.

The principle by which one thing cannot be (in the definition) or know (in the process of knowing) another thing, without becoming identical to this second thing, makes Sextus' distinction between phenomenon and external object altogether superfluous. Whether the senses provide me with the phenomenon or with the external object, in both cases I am neither. In addition, I cannot apprehend myself. This is what I would term nihilism rather than scepticism. The fact that most

studies on Sextus pay great attention to the opposition phenomenon-real object⁶¹ is certainly understandable in view of the great emphasis put by Sextus himself on this opposition, and also in view of the enormous influence that such an opposition had on modern thought. But, if my analysis of the consequences entailed by Sextus' criticism of self-apprehension is correct, it would seem that this point is of far greater epistemological relevance than the opposition between phenomenon and real object.

FOOTNOTES

1. M. VII, 306-9.
2. M. VII, 308.
3. M. VII, 220-22. This passage will be discussed in Section 3).
4. M. VII, 343.
5. It may be useful to note that Sextus' alleged fallibility of the senses as well as the opposition phenomenon-real object would have not been considered as a serious difficulty by Aristotle, who would have argued that the very fact that something appears and that it appears to someone is sufficient to entail that we have an intuitive and unshakable knowledge of being, which is the Aristotelian criterion of truth, to put it in Sextian terms. Cf. Aristotle's criticism of the Protagorean arguments in Met. III, 1010 b 1.
6. M. VII, 343.
7. C. Stough, Greek Skepticism, 148, where she refers to the following passages of Sextus: P.H. I, 99, 128; II, 72; M. VII, 293-4, 344-7.
8. Cf. Albinus, Isag., ch. 4 passim, where the sharp distinction between the senses and the intellect appears in a discussion about the criterion. It is the sort of text which might have justified the tendentious claim by the Sceptics that the senses and the intellect have different objects, and are, therefore, totally distinct faculties. Cf. also Alexander of Aphrodisias, In Met., 402, 10-3; In de sensu, III, 24-7; De anima, 91, 10-3; 87, 11-6; 83, 2-23.
9. M. VII, 344.
10. M. VII, 344.
11. M. VII, 346; cf. P.H. I, 91 foll. and II, 51-6.
12. M. VII, 346; cf. M. VII, 133, 219.
13. C. Stough, Greek Skepticism, 109, n.9.

14. M. VII, 297; XI, 226-7.
15. M. VII, 133, 219.
16. M. VII, 349; see also M. VII, 313 and P.H. I, 118.
17. M. VII, 352-3.
18. Bury translates νοῦς by "thought" and δianoia by "intellect". Considering that the Latin equivalents for these terms were respectively intellectus and ratio, I feel that the etymology of the English terms should be kept and that νοῦς is more correctly translated by "intellect", δianoia by "reason".
19. M. VII, 222-3.
20. De anima, III, 4, 429 a 18.
21. An. post., II, 19, 100 b 12. For the enunciation of the first principles see: Anal. post., I, 2 and Met., III, 3 foll.
22. Met., III, 7, 1012 a 2.
23. Met., XII, 9, 1074 b 36.
24. M. VII, 355.
25. See M. VIII, 356 for the use of the term νοητόν; see M. VII, 352 for the use of the term διανοητικόν.
26. M. VIII, 356 and 60.
27. M. VIII, 56.
28. M. VII, 344.
29. M. VII, 344.
30. M. IX, 392.
31. M. VIII, 57.
32. M. VII, 223.
33. M. VIII, 264. For a discussion of this passage see: E. Bréhier, "Le mot NOHTON et la critique du Stoïcisme chez Sextus Empiricus", Revue des études anciennes (1914), 269-82.
34. M. VII, 355.

35. M. VII, 356.
36. M. VII, 357.
37. M. VII, 357; cf. P.H. II, 72.
38. M. VII, 358.
39. P.H. I, 22.
40. P.H. I, 13, 19, 22-4; M. VIII, 397, 203.
41. P.H. I, 22.
42. M. VIII, 60, 356.
43. C. Stough, Greek Skepticism, 124.
44. Cf. M. VII, 29-30 and P.H. I, 15-6, 21-2.
45. P.H. II, 4.
46. M. VII, 358.
47. M. VII, 359-60.
48. M. VII, 360.
49. M. VII, 364. Cf. Chapter IV, Sect. 2).
50. M. VII, 364.
51. M. VIII, 323.
52. M. VII, 368.
53. Cf. Chapter II, Sect. 4.
54. διαψευθεῖναι ἀδύνατον. Met., IV, 3, 1005 b 12.
55. M. VII, 297, 346.
56. M. VIII, 57-61 and M. III, 40-4.
57. M. VII, 358.
58. M. VII, 305.
59. P.H. I, 22.
60. M. VIII, 60, 356.

61. Cf., for instance, C. Stough, Greek Skepticism, 115-25; M. Dal Pra, Lo scetticismo greco, vol. II, 483-90; J.P. Dumont, Le Scepticisme et le phénomène, passim; A.A. Long, Hellenistic Philosophy, 81-5; A. Verdan, Le scepticisme philosophique, 9-20; G. Cortassa, "τὸ φαivόμενον e τὸ ἀδύνατον in Sesto Empirico", Rivista di filosofia (1975), 276-92; G. Preti, "Lo scetticismo e il problema della conoscenza", Rivista critica di storia della filosofia (1974), I, 3-31; II, 123-43; III, 243-63.
62. For the influence of ancient Skepticism on modern thought see: R. Popkin, "Berkeley and Scepticism", Review of Metaphysics (1951), 223-46; "David Hume: His Pyrrhonism and His Critique of Pyrrhonism", Philosophical Quarterly (1951), 385-407; The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Descartes (Assen 1960).

CHAPTER VIII

PHANTASIA AS CRITERION "ACCORDING TO WHICH" (M. VII, 370-425).

1) Criticism of the concept of phantasia in general (M. VII, 370-87).

Following his usual method, Sextus carries on his discussion on the criterion from a new viewpoint, that of phantasia as the criterion καθ' ᾧ objects are judged. In order to do so, Sextus hypothesizes the substantiality (ὕπoστασις)¹ of man, senses and the intellect, which had been denied in the previous sections of M. VII. Without such a hypothesis, a discussion of phantasia would simply be superfluous. It must be noted that Sextus' new set of arguments against the criterion of truth does not tell us anything new in philosophical terms; it is a mere application of his epistemological principles to the dogmatic notion of phantasia as criterion.

Sextus starts by saying that of those who make phantasia the rule of things, some, namely the Stoics,² referred to phantasia kataléptiké, others, namely the Academics and Carneades in particular,³ referred to phantasia pithané. Sextus' aim is that of criticizing and showing the

contradictions of the genus phantasia itself, for, once this has been done, the different kinds of phantasiai proposed as criterion of truth, would consequently be shown to be unacceptable.⁴

For this purpose, Sextus goes back to the Stoic definition of phantasia as τύπωσις ἐν ψυχῇ and attacks both Cleanthes' interpretation of it as impression "by way of depression and eminence" and Chrysippus' interpretation as impression "by way of mere alteration."⁵ Sextus argues that if Cleanthes' definition is accepted, memory as "a treasury of phantasiai",⁶ and art as "a system and aggregation of apprehensions"⁷ would be abolished, because one phantasia will erase its successor. Furthermore, Sextus points out the weakness of Cleanthes' definition in terms of physical philosophy and particularly with regard to the Stoic doctrine of πνεῦμα (breath) which for the Stoics was the substance of the ἡγεμονικόν.⁸ Sextus argues that if phenomena are "a vision of things non apparent (τῶν ἀληέλων)",⁹ and we find that the bodies of phenomena (τῶν φαινομένων σώματα) are formed by parts which are much denser than breath yet unable to retain any impression made upon them, it is reasonable to assume that neither can breath retain any impression derived from a phantasia. Bodies of phenomena must be sense organs; it is a peculiar expression, but the general meaning of Sextus' argument is quite clear. Just as water or wax, which are both denser than breath cannot

retain any impression for a reasonable length of time, much less can breath retain the ^{τύπωσις} of a phantasia. Here Sextus is quite convincing in pointing out the inevitable problems to which the materialistic notion of the Stoic πνεῦμα leads.

If an impression in the soul by way of depression and eminence is ruled out, any other kind of alteration is equally inconceivable. Given that there are two kinds of alterations, one by way of affection (κατὰ πάθος), the other consisting in a change of the substance (ἀλλοίωσις ^ἢ τοῦ ὑποκειμένου),¹⁰ in the first case the more recent alteration would change the previous one so that the intellect would be unable to tell the difference and to compare different affections. In the second case, at the very moment of reception a phantasia will cease from being soul and will be destroyed, with the consequence that comprehension will be impossible. Furthermore, Sextus points out that the very reality of alteration presents some insuperable difficulties for it is impossible to establish the very nature of permanence and of change: "For if a thing changes and is altered either what remains changes and is altered or what does not remain. But neither what remains is altered and changes - for it remains by being such as it was - nor what does not remain, for this has been destroyed and been changed but does not change."¹¹

We may note that when Sextus draws a distinction between an alteration by way of affection and an alteration consisting in a change in the substance, he is clearly referring to the Peripatetic distinction between alteration and generation.¹² By alteration the Peripatetics understood one of the four kinds of change (*ἀλλοίωσις*) which can occur in a corporeal being and precisely the change secundum qualitatem and which does not cause the essence of the corporeal being to change,¹³ whereas by generation we understand the becoming of one being from another being and in general all forms of becoming.¹⁴

Even if the existence of alteration be granted - Sextus continues - the real existence of phantasia would not follow. Here Sextus refers to the definition of phantasia as an alteration of the *ἡγεμονικόν*, and he argues that since it is not agreed whether and where *τὸ ἡγεμονικόν* exists, one must suspend his judgement. Furthermore, even assuming that phantasia is an impression of *τὸ ἡγεμονικόν*, we are faced with the difficulty of understanding how *τὸ ἡγεμονικόν* could be affected by such a phantasia. If the alteration taking place in *τὸ ἡγεμονικόν* is the same as the alteration of the senses, which are irrational, then also *τὸ ἡγεμονικόν*, being altered, would have to become irrational. If the alteration is different, *τὸ ἡγεμονικόν* would not receive the presented object (*τὸ φανταστόν*) exactly as it is (*ὅποσον ὑπόκειται*),¹⁵ but there would be a discrepancy

between τὸ φανταστόν and τὸ ὑποκείμενον . Therefore, in neither of these ways can phantasia be said to be an impression and alteration of τὸ ἡγεμονικόν . The inevitable mediation of the senses and the substantial heterogeneity of senses and intellect returns as the insuperable difficulty which prevents the knowing subject from legitimately identifying τὸ φανταστόν with τὸ ὑποκείμενον .

This opposition between τὸ φανταστόν and τὸ ὑποκείμενον may be puzzling in view of the Sextian opposition between phenomenon and external object that we examined in Chapter VII, and one may wonder whether τὸ φανταστόν is the same as the phenomenon, since they are both opposed to τὸ ὑποκείμενον . But we should not forget that Sextus is making an internal analysis of the Stoic doctrine of phantasia and he cannot do so without using Stoic terminology and concepts. The fact that some of the Stoic terms, such as phantasia, are the same as the ones employed by Sextus in his account of the sceptic position can be a source of confusion. In order to avoid that, it is important to stress that Sextus' criticism of phantasia as criterion refers to the Stoic notion of phantasia as τύπωσις ἐν ψυχῇ , a notion that presupposes the belief that whatever exists is corporeal, including the soul. Sextus did not agree with this belief as is shown by his criticism of the Stoic soul as πνεῦμα . Sextus' phantasia is not an impression in the soul, it is an image, a noeton of phenomena. The term τὸ φανταστόν is also Stoic,

not Sceptic. We have seen in Chapter IV, Sect. 5), that, according to Aetius,¹⁶ a phantaston is in general anything that can move the soul and in particular what can originate a phantasia, such as what is white and what is cold. But the Stoics assumed that what can move something else is corporeal and what is corporeal is existing; thus they would have not used the term "phenomenon" to indicate the prompter of a phantasia. Thus the opposition phantaston external object is ad usum Stoicorum, although it is clear that Sextus himself views the phantaston as the phenomenon, whereas for the Stoics it was in fact the external object.

Sextus' analysis takes now a new turn and he tries to demonstrate that phantasia cannot reproduce the very reality of the external object because of the logico-metaphysical implications of the notion of cause and effect. Sextus argues that the effect is different from the cause which produces it, and that phantasia, being the effect of the phantaston, it follows that phantasia is different from it. Thus, when the mind apprehends phantasiai, it apprehends the effects of the phantasta, but not the external objects themselves (τὰ ἔκτος φανταστά).¹⁷ Sextus' reasoning is quite puzzling in the light of his sceptical creed, and it is surprising to see him making use of the concept of cause to support his anti-dogmatic views. The causal explanation was one of the dogmatic arguments which had been widely criticized by the Sceptics, and we have a lengthy account

of Aenesidemos' attack on the eight Tropes in Sextus' writings.¹⁸ Aenesidemos' Tropes basically stress that the concept of cause, on which a large portion of dogmatic metaphysics was founded, is fallacious for it postulates that the external objects (that is, non-evident entities) can explain phenomena (and, therefore, phantasiai), and that in turn phenomena are interpreted by invoking principles or entities which cannot be directly experienced.

Yet, before accusing Sextus of dogmatism, we must say that Sextus is, in fact, in total agreement with Aenesidemos, for he does not say that the phantaston being the cause of phantasia is in any way explanatory of phantasia, but he is simply stating that phantasia, being phantasia of something else (the phantaston) must be different from it, and precisely because it is different our knowledge of phantasia does not entail any knowledge of the phantaston. Sextus examines also the possibility that phantasia is similar to the phantaston; but he argues that this is only guesswork, because there is no rational way of proving this similarity. In fact, the intellect could know this either without a phantasia or by means of a phantasia. But since the intellect is intrinsically unable to apprehend without a phantasia, a phantasia is necessary and, in order to ascertain whether it is itself similar to the phantaston which produced it, it ought to apprehend both itself and the phantaston. But phantasia cannot apprehend itself without becoming the phantaston

and thus being no longer phantasia. Sextus' favourite argument does not spare the Stoic phantasia.¹⁹

- 2) Neither all phantasiai are true nor are they all false.
(M. VII, 380-400).

A new aspect of the problem is now examined by Sextus. Assuming that phantasia is the criterion, one of the following alternatives ought to be true:

- 1) All phantasiai are true.
- 2) No phantasia is true.
- 3) Some phantasiai are true and some are false.

But since all three alternatives will be proven to be unacceptable, Sextus concludes that such a thing as phantasia as criterion does not exist.

Let us examine the three alternatives in detail. That every phantasia is true was maintained by Protagoras, and we learn from Sextus that already Democritus²⁰ and Plato²¹ opposed such a view, arguing that "...if every phantasia is true, the judgement that not every phantasia is true, being based on a phantasia, will also be true, and thus the judgement that every phantasia is true will become false."²² To this traditional refutation of Protagoras' position, Sextus adds other arguments which can be thus summarized:

- 1) Phenomena are not the same as external objects.
- 2) Ἐνάργεια of phenomena is not the same as Ἐνάργεια of the external objects.
- 3) The definition of truth and error implies a contrast.

1) and 2) are strictly related. We have already seen in the previous chapter that phenomena set a limit to the legitimate use of the term Ἐνάργεια. There we pointed out that Ἐνάργεια, understood as immediate, intuitive knowledge of the object is a kind of knowledge which must take place without the mediation of the senses, in order to avoid all the difficulties arising from the fact that senses are irrational and fallible. And Sextus had come to the conclusion that the very nature of man, as a compound of intellect and senses, prevents him from any kind of immediate knowledge and that man is consequently unable to have a criterion of truth. In that context we translated Ἐνάργεια by "evidentiality". Here Sextus refers Ἐνάργεια not to knowledge, but to phenomena and he argues that phenomena are evident from the very fact that they appear, and that since what appears "...lies in feeling (ἐν πείσει) and involuntary affection (ἀβουλήτῳ πάθει)",²³ the appearance of phenomena is not open to question. Let us consider the following passage: "For our feelings do not respond in the same way, at the present moment, to the judgement 'it is day' and to the judgement 'it is night'...nor do these

judgements bring with them equally clear evidence (τὴν ἰσὺν
προβάλλει ἐνάργειαν), but 'it is now day'... seems to be
credible, whereas 'it is night'... is not equally credible
(ὁμοίως πιστόν), but appears not to be the actual fact."²⁴
Thus the ἐνάργεια of phenomena is a matter of credibility with
reference to the things of which the phenomena are declarative.
To say that one thing ("it is day") appears at the same time to be
its opposite ("it is not day") is incredible, that is it goes
against the evidence of our feelings (πάθη). Thus
ἐνάργεια in this context means "credibility". But then,
if all phantasiai are true, they also ought to be all
evident (credible), and if they are all credible, there will
be no such a thing as inquiring and doubting, for a man
inquires and doubts about a matter which is not clear
(ἀδηλούμενον) and not about a matter which is manifest
(φανερὸς).²⁵ Thus not all phantasiai are true because
not all phenomena are at the same time all credible, and
because doubt and inquiring require that something be not
manifest.

This argument is an interesting one for here Sextus
attacks the notion of ἐνάργεια not on the ground of immediate
knowledge, but on the ground of the credibility of phenomena
and on the assumption that if everything is ἐναργές,
philosophizing would cease to exist. The latter consequence
is in fact an ab extrinseco argument and is dogmatically
presented by Sextus as irrefutable. Whereas inquiry and
doubt always played an essential part in the history of
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philosophical thought, in the pre-sceptic philosophy their value and importance was a methodological one, and it was understood as a means and an instrument for evaluating different philosophical solutions. Thus it bore a positive and constructive meaning, as Socrates' maieutic method shows,²⁶ and as Aristotle explained.²⁷

For the Sceptics on the other hand, doubt is not only the method of philosophical inquiry, but ultimately it also provides the content of such an inquiry; so that to the Aristotelian claim that "...about the first principle (i.e. the principle of non-contradiction) it is impossible to err"²⁸ we can oppose this axiom of Sextus: "The main basic principle of the sceptic system is that of opposing to every proposition an equal proposition; for we believe that as a consequence of this we end by ceasing to dogmatize."²⁹

Hence we can express the fundamental difference between the Socratic and the Sceptic doubt. Sextus' inquiry is carried on as an elegant game, as a divertissement, free from any childish and uncivilized dogmatism, according to the rules of the game by which nothing can be positively affirmed but only temporarily hypothesized. Sextus' dialectic is courteous just as is Socrates', but it is animated by a radically different spirit. Sextus' is courteous on the assumption that nobody can know the truth and not, as in

Socrates' case, on the assumption that every man shares a portion of the truth.

The following argument used by Sextus to show the impossibility of saying that all phantasiai are true is based on the nature of definition. Sextus argues that in order to say that something is x we have to be able to differentiate x from y, for a definition always implies a contrast and "all things are conceived by way of correlation (κατὰ σύμβλησιν)." ³⁰ Thus Sextus argues that "...if every phantasia is true, nothing is false, and, nothing being false, lying will no longer exist nor error nor lack of art nor vice." ³¹ Beside, if all phantasiai were true, demonstration would be superfluous for nothing would have to be proved not to be false.

It is interesting to note the dialectical use that Sextus makes of the concept of demonstration. The impossibility of giving proof is brought here as a proof of the fact that not every phantasia is true. Yet we have a few passages, mostly related to the Stoic doctrine of lekta, where Sextus states that we can have no idea of demonstration, ³² from the very fact that demonstration is not a part of our evident experience and that a non-evident conclusion cannot be inferred from evident premises. But if it is true that Sextus attacks demonstration, it is also true that he emphasizes the possibility of verifiability with regard to

phenomenal truth when he says that "every argument is judged to be either true or false according to its reference to the thing concerning which it is brought forward; for if it is found to be in accord with the thing concerning which it is brought forward, it is held to be true, but if at variance, false."³³

The last argument brought by Sextus against the claim that all phantasiai are true is based on a sophism, or more precisely on a pseudo-syllogism which has four terms instead of three.³⁴ Sextus' reasoning can be schematized as follows:

- a) all things are true and therefore evident;
- b) the non-evident is a particular case of "all things"
- c) it is true and evident that all things are non-evident

This reasoning lacks any logic; the only conclusion which could legitimately be drawn from a) and b) is that the non-evident is true and evident, which is the opposite of c). The reason for Sextus' sophism is that whereas in the minor proposition the non-evident has a particular meaning, in the conclusion it has an universal one, so that instead of three the syllogism has four terms. Sextus' conclusion is that it is impossible to maintain that all propositions are true, and for analogous reasons he tries to demonstrate now that it is just as impossible to maintain that all phantasiai are false.

Besides the usual argument for the impossibility of defining things without admitting a contradiction, and consequently truth and error,³⁵ Sextus shows the intrinsic logical impossibility of stating that all phantasiai are false. He argues that "...as a universal rule, it is impossible to assert that any particular thing is false without also affirming a truth. For example, when we assert that A is false, we are predicating the existence of that very falsity of A, and we are affirming that 'A is false', so that what we potentially declare is this 'It is true that A is false'."³⁶ It is quite remarkable what use Sextus makes of the concepts of truth and falsity in this passage. Sextus says that from 1) "A is false", it follows that 2) "It is true that A is false". In 1) "false" is applied to the object; in 2) "true" is applied to the judgement. Sextus is clearly playing with the ambiguity of the term $\psi\epsilon\tilde{\upsilon}\delta\omicron\varsigma$ (which can mean "false" (a) or "unreal" (b)) and $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta\theta\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$ (which can mean "true" (a) or "real" (b)). He uses these terms in the (a) sense when referring to the statement and in the (b) sense when referring to the object. In other words, whereas the statement "A is false" affirms the unreality of A, the statement "It is true that A is false" affirms the truth, i.e. the occurrence of the judgement "A is false" regardless of its epistemological content.³⁷

3) Criticism of phantasia kataleptike as criterion of truth.
(M. VII, 401-425).

After having ruled out the possibility that all phantasiai may be true, and shown that the opposite, i.e. that all phantasiai may be false, is equally absurd, Sextus examines the point of view of those who maintain that among phantasiai some are reliable and some are not: such was the position of the Stoics and of the Academics, the former with their theory of phantasia kataleptike, the latter with that of phantasia pithane.³⁸ Although Sextus carefully examines both theories, it is against the Stoics that his criticism is mostly directed, not only because they were his chief opponents but also because of the deeper epistemological significance of their doctrine. Despite Sextus' rejection of the Academic solution, he occasionally even uses Carneades' arguments against the Stoics³⁹ and the Academic probabilism provides him with an additional weapon against the Stoic theory of knowledge which had made of phantasia kataleptike its talisman.

Sextus presents us with a series of arguments against the Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataleptike, which we can organize as follows:

- 1) M. VII 402-408.
- 2) M. VII 408-411.
- 3) M. VII 411-414.

- 4) M. VII 415-423.
- 5) M. VII 424-425.
- 6) M. VII 426-429.
- 7) M. VII 430-435.

All these arguments are based on the assumption that the Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataleptike does not go beyond the sphere of subjectivism and its difficulties. According to Sextus, the Stoics provided no solution to the problem of the heterogeneity of "criterion" and "truth", which is indeed related to the heterogeneity of the thinking subject and of the object thought. For the criterion, as man, sense, or intellect and phantasia, is bound to belong to the domain of phenomena, whereas truth must belong to the world of the external object, to the extra-subjective sphere, without which the very problem of the criterion cannot even be posed. As we shall see in the next chapter, Sextus' failure to see that the Stoic truth is established by an internal operation of the mind, that is by the lekton, prevents him from having an accurate picture of the Stoic notion of truth.

Sextus' attack seeks to show that the Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataleptike failed to bridge the gap between subjectivity and objectivity and that its being rooted in both ἀίθεσις and δόξα is epistemologically untenable.

The first argument (M. VII, 402-8) is a repetition of M. VII, 164. Starting from the standard definition of phantasia kataleptike as one which "...is caused ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος and imaged and stamped in the subject κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ ὑπάρχον, of such a kind as it could not derive ἀπὸ μὴ ὑπάρχοντος ",⁴⁰ Sextus stresses the impossibility of drawing a distinction between a phantasia arising from a real object and one arising from an imaginary one. For, since the same sentiment of fear is felt both by the man who flees from a wild beast and by the man who dreams of fleeing from an imaginary wild beast, it follows that phantasia kataleptike cannot be distinguished from a false phantasia because ἐπ' ἰδέης ταύτης ἐναργεῖς καὶ πληκτικὰς εὐρίσκεσθαι .⁴¹ What is the right translation of these Greek terms? Πληκτική clearly means "striking"; ἐναργής, as we have seen, is sometimes used in the sense of what is immediately known, and sometimes in the sense of the credibility of phenomena. I think that in this case both meanings are present. We could say that both the phantasia of the real beast and the one of the imaginary beast have the same degree of "credibility" with the consequence that the former cannot be distinguished from the latter, and we could also say that such a phantasia per se is unable to have "immediate knowledge" of the existence or non-existence of the object from which it arises. The association of the term πληκτική with the term ἐναργής would make the rendering of ἐναργής by "credible" more acceptable considering that just as there are degrees of

intensity in the same way there are degrees of credibility. But, it should not be forgotten that the real cause for Sextus' rejection of the criterion rests on its impossibility of achieving immediate, intuitive knowledge of the reality and this is the basic meaning of his attack on phantasia kataléptiké.

If it is impossible to distinguish between the phantasia caused by a real object and the one caused by an imaginary one, it is also impossible to distinguish between the phantasiai of two objects which are similar in shape, but different in substance. Both the first and this second argument (M. VII, 408-11) were used by the Academics, and Sextus is merely reporting them here. The Academics argued that if a Stoic is presented in turn with two identical eggs or with a set of identical twins, he will not be able to tell them apart and to declare indubitably of which of the two eggs and of which twin he will receive a phantasia kataléptiké. The same holds true for the argument of the "Veiled",⁴² which we have already discussed in Chapter V, Sect. 3). Thus Sextus concludes that since phantasia kataléptiké cannot be told apart from a false phantasia, it cannot be the criterion.

We know that Carneades' and Sextus' argument would not have been accepted by the Stoics, who maintained that

there are not identical things in reality and that "omnia sui generis esse."⁴³ Beside the Stoics would have argued that phantasia kataléptiké is not possible for every single object and that in the case of seemingly identical eggs or twins, the Sage would have suspended his judgement.

The third argument brought by Sextus (M. VII, 411-14) rests upon the analysis of sight, for "...if anything else is apprehensive of anything, the sense of sight is so."⁴⁴ Following Carneades, Sextus repeats the objection from delusion,⁴⁵ and supports it by adducing the example of our experience with colours. Sight, which supposedly should be able to perceive colours (as well as sizes, forms and motion), is in fact unable to do so; the colour of a man, for instance, will vary not only with his age and conditions, but even by the hour. Besides sight deceives us in many other ways and Sextus mentions the usual examples of deceptive perception (the oar in the water, the tower looking both round and square etc.), thus re-emphasizing the impossibility of distinguishing phantasia kataléptiké from a false one. The third argument is based on the eighth Tropoi of Aenesidemus, i.e. the Trope of relation (ὁ ἀπὸ τοῦ πρὸς τι),⁴⁶ and we know that Sextus ranked this trope as the fundamental and more general one to which all other Tropoi can be reduced.⁴⁷

The impossibility of phantasia kataléptiké being the criterion is also shown by the fourth argument of Sextus (M. VII, 415-23), where he examines the case of the sorites. This sophism which, according to Aristotle,⁴⁸ goes back to Zeno of Elaea, was expressed in different forms by the Academics and it took its name from the example of the heap of hay-seeds. In this instance, it was argued that, assuming that a heap of seeds does not cease to be a heap when we subtract one seed, we are bound to conclude that, by also subtracting one seed after the other, we will have a heap even when only one seed will be left.⁴⁹ Sextus argues that if the proposition "Fifty is few" is a phantasia kataléptiké, whereas the proposition "Ten thousand is few" is clearly false, the Stoic Sage would probably assent to the phantasia "Fifty is few". But carrying on likewise, he will end up by assenting also to the phantasia "Ten thousand is few", thus assenting to a phantasia which is clearly false. The argument of the sorites would thus pose for the Stoics the problem of deciding at what point a phantasia ceases to be kataléptiké and, it being clear that with reference to the category of quantity and to its progressive degrees little and much have only a relative value, Sextus can conclude that also in this case phantasia kataléptiké cannot be the criterion. The sorites is basically a case of the Trope of the relativity, since little and much are relative entities.

The fifth argument presented by Sextus (M. VII, 424-5) is strictly related to the third one, to which it can actually be reduced. Sextus enumerates the five elements which the Stoics held to be indispensable for phantasia to occur. These elements are the organ of sense (τὸ αἰσθητήριον), the object of sense (τὸ αἰσθητόν), the place (ὁ τόπος), the manner (τὸ πῶς) and the intellect (ἡ διάνοια). Sextus notes that if only one of these elements is missing, phantasia kataleptiké cannot occur, and this is the reason why the later Stoics added to the standard definition of phantasia kataleptiké the clause "provided that it has no obstacle."⁵⁰ Sextus' argument is again based on the trope of relativity and he notes that an obstacle (and, for that matter, usually more than one) is bound to be always present, for each of the five elements varies in each particular circumstance so that we can never draw any conclusion about the objectivity of the cognitive conditions.

To sum up, all the objections discussed here that are brought by Sextus against phantasia kataleptiké rest on the assumption that phantasia kataleptiké, being aisthetiké, is bound to get entangled in all the difficulties relative to the senses, to the intellect and to phantasia individually taken as criterion, and already discussed by us in Chapters VI and VII. Sextus conceives phantasia kataleptiké as being the same as correct perception and one to which assent must be given because it actually presents us with the truth of the object perceived. I believe that this was not the Stoic

view, as it will be shown in the next chapter. If my analysis there is correct, then Sextus misinterprets the Stoic criterion, and his arguments cannot be applied to it. The last argument brought by Sextus against phantasia kataleptiké is that "of circular reasoning." This will be the starting point of my interpretation of the Stoic criterion and it will be discussed in the next chapter.

FOOTNOTES

1. M. VII, 370.
2. M. VII, 227 foll.
3. M. VII, 174 foll.
4. M. VII, 371; cf. M. VIII, 400.
5. M. VII, 372. For Cleanthes see SVF I, 485, for Chrysippus SVF II, 56. Cf. also Sextus' previous account in M. VII, 227 foll., discussed in Chapter IV, Sec. 3).
6. SVF I, 64.
7. P.H. III, 241.
8. P.H. II, 70, 81.
9. M. VII, 374. Cf. Plutarch, De comm. not., 1085 A on this argument about imprints on πνεῦμα. Bury translates ἀδηλός by "non-evident". In view of our previous discussion about the meaning of the term ἐναργής as "self-evident", i.e. "immediately known", I think it is better to avoid the term "evident" in this particular context and to translate ἀδηλός by "non-apparent" or "non-manifest". Thus phenomena are apparent because they appear, whereas ἀδηλός indicates what does not appear, that is τὸ ὑποκείμενον.
10. M. VII, 376.
11. M. VII, 378. This problem is discussed at length in Aristotle's Phys., VIII, 5-6.
12. Cf., Aristotle, Phys., VIII, 3 and De gen. et corr., I, 4.
13. Aristotle, Met., XII, 2, 1069 b 9 foll..
14. Aristotle, Phys., V, 1-2.
15. M. VII, 382.
16. Plac., IV, 12, 1 in SVF II, 54.
17. M. VII, 383.

18. P.H. I, 180-5.
19. M. VII, 384-7.
20. Cf. Diels, frs. 68 A 8 and 114.
21. Theaet., 171 a; Euthyd. 286 b-c.
22. M. VII, 389.
23. P.H. I, 22.
24. M. VII, 391.
25. M. VII, 393.
26. Plato, Meno, 79 foll.
27. De longitudine et brevitae vitae, I, 465 b 21 foll.
28. Met., IV, 3, 1005 b 12.
29. P.H. I, 12.
30. M. VII, 395.
31. M. VII, 395.
32. Cf., for instance, M. VIII, 382.
33. M. VII, 323.
34. The first rule of syllogism was formulated as follows:
"Terminus esto triplex: maior, mediusque, minorque."
35. M. VII, 400.
36. M. VII, 399.
37. Cf. A. Levi, "Il problema dell'errore nello scetticismo antico", Rivista di filosofia (1949), 273-87.
38. For Sextus' criticism of phantasia pithane, see M. VII, 435-38.
39. There are many examples of Sextus' dependence on Carneades' probabilism. A clear example is provided by M. VIII, 473-4, a propos of the arguments against apodictic syllogism.
40. M. VII, 402; Cf. M. VII, 248, 252.

41. M. VII, 403; Cf. M. VII, 248, 252.
42. This argument goes back to Eubulides of Miletus and it was expressed in the following way: "He who says that he knows his father and denies that he knows him when the father stands veiled in front of him, is contradicting himself." Cf. Diogenes Laertius, II, 108; Aristotle, Soph. el., 24, 179 a 33.
43. Cicero, Acad. pr., 26, 85, 18, in SVF II, 113.
44. M. VII, 411.
45. Cf. Cicero, Acad. pr., 26-8.
46. Cf. P.H. I, 135-40; Diogenes Laertius, IX, 87-8; Philo, De ebrietate, 186-8.
47. P.H. I, 38-9. For an evaluation of Aenesidemus' Tropoi and of Sextus' interpretation of them, see M. Dal Pra, Lo scetticismo greco, Vol. II, 363 foll.
48. Phys., VII, 5, 250 b 20. We should note that here we are not dealing with a heap of syllogisms (union of subject and predicate in the conclusion through many middle terms, as in Aristotle, An. pr., I, 23) but only with an accumulation of phantasiai.
49. Cicero, Acad. pr., 16, 28-9.
50. Cf. M. VII, 254 foll.. This passage has been discussed in Chapter V, Sec. 3).

CHAPTER IX

THE FALLACY OF CIRCULAR REASONING (ὁ δι' ἀλλήλων τρόπος)

(M. VII, 426-9).

1) The status questionis

The main argument directed by Sextus against the Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataleptiké is a logical one, and it depends on a general logical principle rather than any inherent features of the Stoic doctrine. Before examining Sextus' text, it must be noticed that the argument of circular reasoning was the fifth of Agrippa's Five Tropes, or ways of suspension of judgement. Agrippa had sketched a system of the formal conditions of Dogmatism and had shown that all the theoretical possibilities of philosophical inquiry inevitably lead to the suspension of judgement.¹

The Trope of circular reasoning is defined by Sextus as "...the form used when the proof itself which ought to establish the matter of inquiry requires confirmation derived from that matter; in this case, being unable to assume either in order to establish the other, we suspend judgement about both."² In other words, A cannot prove B, if A must be proved by B. Such, argues Sextus, is the case with the Stoic

definition of phantasia kataleptiké as "...that which is imprinted and impressed ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος and κατ' αὐτό τὸ ὑπάρχον , of such a kind as would not be produced ἀπὸ μὴ ὑπάρχοντος." For, "...since everything that is definitely explained is explained by things known",³ one would assume that the Stoic definition of phantasia kataleptiké rests on the knowledge of what the τὸ ὑπάρχον is. But this is not so, Sextus explains, for if asked to define the τὸ ὑπάρχον , the Stoics would answer that it is "that which excites phantasia kataleptiké".⁴ Sextus points out that this answer is unacceptable and that it is a clear example of circular reasoning, for the Stoics are actually trying to explain the unknown, i.e. phantasia kataleptiké, by means of something which is equally unknown, i.e. τὸ ὑπάρχον .⁵

Whether or not Sextus' criticism is well-founded and acceptable depends clearly on the meaning that we may assume the term τὸ ὑπάρχον had for the Stoics. Only when we have determined this can we examine whether Sextus was aware of the meaning attributed to the aforesaid term by the Stoics and, if so, whether his accusation of circular reasoning is valid or not. It should be understood that the interpretation of the meaning of the term τὸ ὑπάρχον which I am about to suggest, is not only offered tentatively, but will also be developed almost entirely within the limits set by the Sextian text and, more specifically, by Sextus' argument of circular reasoning.

Bury translates the term τὸ ὑπάρχον by "real object" at M. VII, 426 where the argument of circular reasoning is examined, and by "existing object" at M. VII, 248-9, where Sextus gives his account of the Stoic criterion. We examined the latter passage in Chapter V, Sect. 1), and we noted that Sextus equates τὸ ὑπάρχον with τὸ ὑποκείμενον. Bury translates τὸ ὑποκείμενον as "real object", so that we can say that Bury is inconsistent in his translation of the term τὸ ὑπάρχον. But, apart from this inconsistency, what matters to us is to stress that Bury's translation of the term τὸ ὑπάρχον actually reflects the traditional interpretation of such a term among the vast majority of scholars.⁶ This commonly accepted interpretation is supported on both philosophical and philological grounds. The philosophical ones are more obvious and they rest on the allegedly indisputable fact that the Stoics explained reality in purely materialistic terms and that their theory of knowledge is necessarily conditioned by, and follows from, such a materialism. The Stoics held that anything that is real is corporeal and they conceived body as what can act or can be acted upon;⁷ Cicero says that, according to Zeno, "nec vero aut quod efficeret aliquid aut quod efficeretur posse esse non corpus".⁸ Consequently, it has been argued that τὸ ὑπάρχον, being that which excites (κινουῦν) phantasia kataléptiké,⁹ ought to be conceived as a body and, therefore, as an external object, whence the rendering of τὸ ὑπάρχον as "the real (existing) object".

It is important to stress at this point that the interpretation I am about to suggest of the meaning of the term τὸ ὑπάρχον is in no way intended to deny that for the Stoics real objects, which they conceived exclusively as bodies, do exist and that their existence is external with regard to the knowing subject and that the knowledge of reality is, therefore, according to the Stoics, attainable. The point I am about to question is whether the term τὸ ὑπάρχον, which is central to an interpretation of the meaning of the Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataléptiké as criterion of truth, as well as to the Sextian polemics related to it, can simply be translated by "the real (existing) object". That is, we must see whether it indicates the mere physical and bodily existence of an external object that, once it is imprinted and impressed in the mind, is capable of exciting a particular kind of phantasia (namely phantasia kataléptiké), which, because of its characteristics, is conceived as the test of truth.

The traditional rendering of the term τὸ ὑπάρχον by "the real (existing) object", although satisfactory, at least prima facie, from the point of view of Stoic physics and ontology, leaves at least two major questions unanswered:

a) if τὸ ὑπάρχον is the technical term used by the Stoics to refer to the real object in its merely physical and bodily existence (i.e. as synonymous with τὸ ὄν), we would have difficulty in making sense of the strict relation, established

by the Stoics themselves, between τὸ ὑπάρχον and τὸ λεκτόν, which is defined as one of the four incorporeal entities;

b) if τὸ ὑπάρχον = the real object, and if the Stoic definition of τὸ ὑπάρχον is "that which excites a phantasia kataléptiké",¹⁰ we must admit that the Stoic theory of knowledge does in fact present some unclear, if not contradictory aspects, and that Sextus' accusation of circular reasoning cannot be dismissed as a sceptical sophism, or simply ignored, as it is by most students of Stoicism. In other words, to say that criterion of truth rests on the mere correspondence between "the real object" and the mental image of it is indeed dogmatic, unless it is explained how this can be done. The further specifications of the definition of phantasia kataléptiké examined in Chapter V, Sect. 2) (i.e. "according to that particular object itself, of such a kind as would not be produced by a non-real object"), per se do not give a satisfactory answer to this question. They simply expand on the notion that phantasia kataléptiké must be a faithful mental reproduction of a particular real object, but they do not explain how one can be certain of having a phantasia of such a kind. Without an answer to this question, the gulf between the image (phantasia) and the allegedly real object is still there and one cannot abolish it by saying that the real object is the prompter of phantasia kataléptiké, without deserving the accusation of circular reasoning.

As far as Sextus' criticism is concerned, A.A. Long argues that Sextus' complaints are not justified because if it is true that phantasia kataleptiké is defined in terms of τὸ ὑπάρχον , τὸ ὑπάρχον can be defined independently of phantasia kataleptiké. Long maintains that, since the existence of material objects is a fundamental postulate of Stoic metaphysics, such objects are not defined in terms of phantasia kataleptiké, whereas the latter is indeed defined in terms of them. According to Long, what makes the phantasia kataleptiké the test of truth and "...the guarantor of valid perception is the fact that it enables a man to grasp the particular character of the objects which prompts it" so that he can conclude that "...the basic sense of hyparchein in Stoicism is 'exist' and in this sense it applies strictly only to material objects. This is what to hyparchon means when Sextus cites it as 'that which excites an apprehensive presentation'".¹¹

Leaving aside, for the time being, the philological difficulties related to the term τὸ ὑπάρχον, of which Long gives a lengthy account, it seems that, according to him, the reason why τὸ ὑπάρχον cannot be said to be defined in terms of phantasia kataleptiké, is that τὸ ὑπάρχον indicates a material object and that the existence of material objects is one of the tenets of Stoic metaphysics. While it is certain that material objects do exist for the Stoic as it is explained by their physics, it is not obvious though that τὸ ὑπάρχον ought to be one of them, unless we deduce the

materiality of τὸ ὑπάρχον from the fact that it is able to excite an apprehensive presentation and from the fact that whatever can excite anything has to be a body. This, of course, would beg the question entirely. But even if we substitute for the word τὸ ὑπάρχον the expression "material object", the fallacy would still be there, as Sextus could easily show. Besides, Long's identification of τὸ ὑπάρχον with the material object is not supported directly by any Stoic text. The word σώματα is always related to the terms τὸ ὄν , τὰ ὄντα and, as far as I know on the basis of von Arnim's collection, there is no evidence for assuming that τὸ ὑπάρχον is ever interchangeable with τὸ ὄν in relation to the existence of bodies.¹²

2) Philological aspect of the problem.

Before discussing Long's interpretation any further, and before we reach any alternative suggestion about the Stoic use of the term τὸ ὑπάρχον, we must stress that our inquiry into the meaning of τὸ ὑπάρχον and the implications that such a meaning involves with regard to Sextus' criticism is based on the assumption that the choice of the term τὸ ὑπάρχον to indicate what excites phantasia kataleptiké is Stoic and not Sextian. Such an assumption is highly relevant for the understanding of the whole question, since there is evidence that the meaning of the terms τὸ ὑπάρχον

and ὑπάρχειν at the time of the early Stoá was not the same as what we find in Sextus' time.

There is no doubt that the infinitive ὑπάρχειν is used by Sextus as a synonym for εἶναι in its existential use, as at M. IX, 29-194 and in M. VIII, 381, 459; in the last two examples ὑπάρχειν is used in opposition to ἐπινοεῖν, to stress the existence of something as opposed to its conception. The same holds true of the substantive ὑπαρξίς (and of the substantive form τὰ ὑπάρχειν in M. VII, 29 and M. VIII, 159), which always indicate the existence of an object;¹³ ὑπαρξίς is also predicated of τῶν ἔκτος ὑποκειμένων,¹⁴ namely of the external objects whose presentation, in Sceptic terminology is the phenomenon. Of particular interest to us is the association of ὑπαρξίς with τὰ λεκτά in M. VIII, 262, where Sextus hypothesizes the existence of τὰ λεκτά; but it is important to stress that in this instance Sextus is not reporting Stoic thought, but is only speculating about it.

As far as the participial form τὸ ὑπάρχον is concerned, the situation is less clear. I know only of a few instances where Sextus uses this form and in all these instances, with the exception of M. VIII, 10 where τὸ ὑπάρχον is related to τὸ ἀληθές (a passage we will deal with shortly), τὸ ὑπάρχον is used by Sextus in connection with the Stoic definition of phantasia kataleptiké as that which "is derived from an ὑπάρχον and imaged and stamped in the subject in accordance

with that particular $\epsilon\pi\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\omicron\nu$, of such a kind as could not be derived from a $\mu\eta\ \epsilon\pi\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\omicron\nu$ ".¹⁵

It seems certain that the aforesaid definition of phantasia kataléptiké is of direct Stoic origin and that it is not a Sextian elaboration of a Stoic concept. This can be proved by the fact that we have an almost identical definition of phantasia kataléptiké in Diogenes Laertius,¹⁶ and that Cicero's account of it sounds like a literal translation of Sextus' and Diogenes' text.¹⁷ Adorno has also shown that such a definition can reasonably be ascribed to Zeno himself,¹⁸ and the same view is shared by Sandbach.¹⁹ As a supplementary proof, we can also add that had the aforesaid definition of phantasia kataléptiké been Sextian and not Stoic, we would have to explain why Sextus refers to what excites a phantasia kataléptiké with the term $\tau\omicron\ \epsilon\pi\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\omicron\nu$ and not with the term $\tau\omicron\ \epsilon\pi\omicron\kappa\epsilon\acute{\iota}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$. For it is clear from the whole Sextian polemic against the Stoics that, according to the Sceptic philosopher, it is indeed a real and external object which prompts a phantasia kataléptiké while, at the same time, we also know that the Sceptics had a specific term, $\tau\omicron\ \epsilon\pi\omicron\kappa\epsilon\acute{\iota}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$, to designate such an entity, as indicated in Chapters VII and VIII.

Therefore it seems reasonable to conclude that our philological efforts to understand the meaning of the terms $\tau\omicron\ \epsilon\pi\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\omicron\nu$ and $\epsilon\pi\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$ must concentrate on the meaning that

these terms had at the time of the Early Stoa'. If we failed to do this, our research would be historically biased and we would end up missing both the meaning of the Stoic criterion of truth as well as the value of Sextus' arguments.

Both Adorno²⁰ and Kahn²¹ point out that the original meaning of ὑπάρχειν is not the same as εἶναι in its existential use. The very etymology of the word and the proposition ὑπό suggest the idea of relation and of temporal priority which is not present in εἶναι. Kahn draws a distinction between the literal use of the term and the philosophical one; he illustrates the former with examples drawn from the historians and shows how Herodotus and Thucydides used ὑπάρχειν in the sense of "being a beginning", "being present with", "being available for". There are also instances of ὑπάρχειν with the dative, as a synonym for παρχειμι in the possessive construction, so that "...before ὑπάρχειν becomes specialized as a verb of existence we find it used in a predicative construction as an expression equivalent for εἶναι as copula verb".²²

As far as the philosophical use of ὑπάρχειν is concerned, Kahn explains that Aristotle uses ὑπάρχειν in the sense of "belonging to", "being inherent", as in τὸ Β τῷ Α ὑπάρχει,²³ so that (in De Int. 16 b 10) the attributes of a subject are said to be τὰ ὑπάρχοντα.²⁴

Adorno points out that ὑπάρχειν is used in the Aristotelian

sense of "being present to", "belonging to" also by Plato.²⁵

It is in the post-Aristotelian philosophy that our evidence of the meaning of ὑπάρχειν cannot be backed up by philosophical texts. As we have pointed out there is little or no doubt that in the terminology of the Hellenistic philosophers, ὑπάρχειν is a synonym for εἶναι in the existential sense, but I do not think that we are allowed to conclude, as Festugière does,²⁶ that it is just due to sheer accident that we have no examples of ὑπαρξίς in the sense of "real existence" before the time of Philodemus. Philodemus was born in Gadara around 110 B.C.,²⁷ more than two centuries after Zeno's acmé and I do not see why one should refuse to admit that, even without any other source of evidence, it is far more likely that Zeno's use of the word ὑπάρχειν was closer to Aristotle's (who was just one generation older than Zeno) than to Philodemus'. Festugière instead believes that Zeno's usage of the term ὑπάρχειν is in line with Philodemus, and he founds his hypothesis on the fact that: a) we have a fragment of Epicurus saying that *μαντική οὐσα ἀνύπαρκτος, εἴ καὶ ὑπαρκτή, οὐδέν...*²⁸
b) there are three passages in SVF (II, 973; III, 672 bis) where the term ἀνύπαρκτος is used in connection with Chrysippus' thought, so that Festugière can conclude that this adjective implies the presence of the noun ὑπαρξίς as belonging to the philosophical terminology of the Early Stoá and that the use of ὑπαρξίς is definitely "existential".

I am unable to comment on Epicurus' fragment, except for saying that it can hardly be considered a philosophical text. As far as the three passages in SVF are concerned, we seem to run into the same problem that we had with Sextus' use of the term ὑπάρχειν ; the three passages are quotations from Plutarch and, since there is no evidence that Plutarch is quoting Chrysippus directly, the existential meaning of the adjective ὑπαρκτός can be easily justified by the fact that Plutarch lived in the second half of the first century a.D. and his terminology is different from that of the fourth century B.C.

To conclude we can say that, although there is no positive philological evidence to prove that for the Stoics τὸ ὑπάρχον did not indicate the external object in its mere bodily existence, there is also no positive evidence to prove that it did. In fact, the latter hypothesis is biased for chronological reasons. I do not think it is a good point to insert, as Kahn does, on the fact that, since the Latin rendering of ὑπαρξίς is exsistentia, it is likely that such was the meaning of the term for the philosophers of the classical period. The term exsistentia itself is a late and pre-Medieval Latin term and Kahn himself labels it as a learned invention.²⁹ It can be misleading to base one's interpretation of a Greek term on the Latin rendering and Kahn himself gives us the opportunity to verify

it, when he quotes the following passage of Marius Victorinus:
 "Id est exsistentia vel subsistentia vel, si... dicas...
 vel exsistentialem vel substantialitatem vel essentialitatem,
 id est ὑπαρκτότητα, οὐσιότητα, ὄντοτητα".³⁰ If we were to
 understand the meaning of τὸ ὄν from the translation of the
 Greek ὄντοτητα with the Latin essentialitatem, we would
 certainly be misguided, for the concept of essence was
 expressed by Plato and Aristotle with the terms εἶδος,
 οὐσία or τὸ τί ἔστιν and not to τὸ ὄν.

Before we are done with the philological problems related
 with the term τὸ ὑπάρχον, we must consider also Long's
 approach to this question. Long bases his conviction that
 τὸ ὑπάρχον for the Stoics meant real existence on reasons
 which are mostly philosophical and we will deal with them
 shortly. But he also tries to support his viewpoint
 philologically and to explain that the very ambiguity of
 the term ὑπάρχειν is the source of much confusion in under-
 standing Stoic thought. Long argues that in philosophical
 Greek it can mean: 1) "to exist" in contrast with appearing;
 2) "to be the case"; 3) "to be present in" or "to be predicated
 of" a subject; 4) "to be real or genuine", and he points out
 that all these different uses of ὑπάρχειν occur in Stoic
 texts.³¹ I tend to agree with Long as far as the second
 and third meaning is concerned, but I cannot discover any
 example illustrating the first and fourth meaning, unless by
 Stoic texts we understand the accounts of Stoicism given by

later sources such as Sextus and Plutarch. Besides, Long's distinction of the four meanings of ὑπάρχειν occurs in relation to his discussion of the Stoic distinction between signs and signals and the polemic carried out by the Stoic Basileides³² about the existence of lekta. But, although we are not sure whether or not he was the teacher of Marcus Aurelius, it is most likely that Basileides was a later Stoic and, as such, centuries away from Zeno and Chrysippus.

In addition, Long points out that the Stoics drew a distinction between ὑπάρχειν and ὑφεστάναι and that it is not ὑπάρχειν but ὑφεστάναι which occurs in definitions of lekta. Although Long's concern is that of showing that lekta do not enjoy an independent existence - a point we readily agree with - some of his remarks are of great interest for our present purpose. Long quotes a passage from Stobaeus, according to whom "Chrysippus says only the present hyparchein; the future and the past huphestanai but do not hyparchein, just as accidents (ta symbebékota) are said to hyparchein as predicates, e.g. 'walking' hyparchein moi when I am walking, but it does not hyparchei when I am lying down or sitting".³³ This passage seems to confirm a use of ὑπάρχειν not as a verb of existence but in the attributive sense, as in the Aristotelian "B belongs to A" (τὸ β τῷ α ὑπάρχει) and Long agrees that no existential claim is made for the present when it is said to ὑπάρχειν. But, whereas he seems

to imply that the aforesaid use of ὑπάρχειν is somehow anomalous and justified by the difficulty of explaining that, although they are all non-existing entities, the present subsists in a different way from the past and the future, it seems to me that this particular instance cannot be overlooked as far as the meaning of τὸ ὑπάρχον in the definition of phantasia kataléptiké is concerned.

Without getting involved with the Stoic theory of time³⁴ and limiting our interest to the meaning of the terms ὑπάρχειν and τὸ ὑπάρχον, I wonder whether the choice of the term ὑπάρχειν to indicate the present and in contrast with the term ὑφεστάναι indicating the past and the future cannot be related to the term τὸ ὑπάρχον which designates the prompter of a phantasia kataléptiké. For a phantasia kataléptiké, being also aisthetiké, implies a judgement given hic et nunc, so that the present is always, so to speak, included in the judgement; τὸ ὑπάρχον being the prompter of a phantasia kataléptiké, the present can be said ὑπάρχειν, whereas the past and the future ὑφεστάναι because they elude the possibility of being perceived and one cannot have a phantasia kataléptiké of a past or future event.

For the time being it suffices to say that there are philological reasons which allow us to question the standard rendering of τὸ ὑπάρχον as "the external object"; but philology alone cannot help us to attempt an alternative

translation of this crucial term, without re-considering the philosophical motivations of the Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataleptiké.

3) Philosophical aspect of the problem.

Sextus' accusation of circular reasoning rests on the assumption that the Stoics' phantasia kataleptiké is defined by τὸ ὑπάρχον and that τὸ ὑπάρχον in turn is defined as the prompter of phantasia kataleptiké. But whereas it is true that phantasia kataleptiké is defined in terms of τὸ ὑπάρχον, there are reasons to question Sextus' assumption that the definition of τὸ ὑπάρχον depends at all on its capacity for moving a phantasia kataleptiké. Moreover, there are reasons to doubt that Sextus' understanding of τὸ ὑπάρχον as the external object³⁵ reflects the genuine thought of the Stoics. If Sextus were right, the Stoic definition of phantasia kataleptiké as "that which is caused by an existing object and imaged and stamped in the subject in accordance with that particular object, of such a kind as it could not be derived from a non-existent object", could ultimately be summed up by saying that the criterion of truth (i.e. phantasia kataleptiké) is the recognizable and perceivable existence of a given external object.

We must now consider some difficulties that the aforesaid interpretation would present. If τὸ ὑπάρχον is the external object and if the external object is the guarantor of valid perception and consequently of the possibility of establishing a criterion of truth, it is hard to understand how a phantasia can be true, that is objective (if τὸ ὑπάρχον = the external object), without being kataléptiké.³⁶ For the Stoics held that when a true phantasia is received "externally" (ἐξ ὧθεν) and "by accident" (ἐκ τύχης) such a presentation is not kataléptiké; and Sextus explains that under these circumstances "often they make no positive affirmation about it and do not assent to it".³⁷ Although Sextus is referring to people in a morbid condition, it seems reasonable to assume that it is not the morbid condition as such which causes a true phantasia to be akataléptos but, in the first place, the fact that such a phantasia occurs externally and fortuitously. Thus even the sane or a child can have a true phantasia, that is, make a true affirmation of the kind "it is day" or "it is light", when it is actually day and there is actually light, but such an affirmation cannot be said to be a phantasia kataléptiké if received accidentally, despite its conformity with the external object. In other words, if phantasia kataléptiké is prompted by an external object, so is akataléptos phantasia. Hence τὸ ὑπάρχον simply understood as the external object provides no distinguishing mark for the former.

There is no doubt that the external object is a prerequisite for both a phantasia kataleptiké and a phantasia akataleptos to take place, just as there is no doubt that a phantasia kataleptiké, being aisthetiké, is not a mere construction of the mind (*διδνοια*), but presupposes an object capable of causing an impression to occur in the mind. Yet the Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataleptiké is certainly meant to suggest that the criterion of truth does not coincide with a phantasia aisthetiké in its complete definition, which is what I understand by the standard rendering of "one which is caused by an existing object and imaged and stamped in the subject in accordance with that particular existing object, of such a kind as could not be derived from a non-existent object". One of the difficulties offered by this interpretation of τὸ ὑπάρχον as "the existing object" is that one does not understand how phantasia kataleptiké can act, as it must, as criterion of truth; for a criterion ought to be not only the subjective test of reality and truth, but also the medium by which truth can be communicated by articulate thought in discourse. For a criterion has to be invoked when that of which it is the criterion (i.e. the truth, in this case) is assented. Articulate thought presupposes some degree of coherence and coherence implies not only a correct and true grasping of reality at a purely perceptual level, but also the capacity for linking and classifying reality in an organic way. I believe that this condition was clearly expressed by the adverb τεχνικῶς which I examined in Chapter V, Sect. 2),

discussing the definition of the Stoic criterion at M. VII, 248 foll.

That the value of phantasia kataléptiké as criterion of truth cannot be limited to the correspondence of presentation and external object, that is to a function which is inevitably contingent, spatially and temporally circumscribed, because the empirical character of phantasia kataléptiké (which, as we have seen, is always aisthetiké), results from the Stoic distinction between truth and the true. Given their precise and original distinction, it cannot be accidental that phantasia kataléptiké is defined as criterion of truth (της ἀληθείας) and not as criterion of the true (τοῦ ἀληθοῦ).

Let us quickly recall the difference between truth and the true. Sextus tells us that they differ in substance, composition and meaning.³⁸ Truth (ἀλήθεια) is corporeal, is something compound and involves knowledge, whereas the true (τὸ ἀληθές) is incorporeal, simple and uniform and it does not involve knowledge. Leaving aside for a moment the difference in substance (i.e. the distinction between corporeal and incorporeal), it is difficult to see how phantasia kataléptiké can be the criterion of truth, that is the criterion of something articulated, compound and subsuming knowledge, by the mere fact of deriving "from an existing object", "according to that particular object" etc. In other words the simple conformity of presentation with the object is not

enough to explain the complexity of the truth of which phantasia kataleptiké ought to be the criterion. This is why the standard rendering of τὸ ὑπάρχον as "the external object", seems to be unsatisfactory.

Before we carry on with this argument we must remove one possible objection. It has been argued by many scholars³⁹ that phantasia kataleptiké draws its peculiar character of presenting itself as the criterion of truth from the fact that it requires a certain disposition (διάθεσις, ἔξις), which is a form of the ἡγεμονικόν. This disposition which is described as τὸ ἐκτικόν πνεῦμα,⁴⁰ is strictly related to the concept of tension (τόνος), for it is necessary for the pneuma to have a certain tension in order to allow a sensation to take place. And we know that the degree of tension is what determines the degree of precision and of accuracy of each sensation.⁴¹ But the notion of tension is crucial not only for understanding the mechanics of sensation but also that of κατάληψις and we learn from Stobaeus that science can be defined as a disposition which allows us to receive presentations without being shaken by reason and that such a disposition ἐν τόνῳ καὶ δυνάμει κεῖσθαι.⁴² The action of the τόμος is also what determines the evidence and intensity of phantasia kataleptiké, according to Sextus,⁴³ so that phantasia kataleptiké has also the quality of being striking (πληκτική).⁴⁴

Although the aforesaid characteristics of phantasia kataléptiké are of crucial importance for understanding the dynamic aspect of συγκατάθεσις, and although they clearly indicate the active role played by the subject in the cognitive process,⁴⁵ they do not per se offer us a sure criterion to distinguish phantasia kataléptiké from that which is akataléptos; εἴσις and τόνος are more or less implied by any kind of sensation, and συγκατάθεσις too may occur in instances of true but akataléptos phantasia.⁴⁶ Besides, the standard definition of phantasia kataléptiké as that coming ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος and κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ ὑπάρχον etc. is presented as self-sufficient in the sense that its constitutive elements should be able to indicate the peculiar character of the criterion of truth. The notion of εἴσις, τόνος, συγκατάθεσις can certainly help our understanding of phantasia kataléptiké, but only in so far as they can help us to understand the Stoic theory of knowledge in general. Conversely, once we have defined the true meaning of phantasia kataléptiké, we will be able to grasp more fully the significance of those terms in relation to that particular form of knowledge which is phantasia kataléptiké.

For this purpose, let us go back to the Stoic distinction between truth and the true. If truth is a compound, that is ἄθροισμα πλειόνων, as I indicated in Chapter III, Sect. 6), it is clear that the starting point of our inquiry and the clue to understanding the nature of truth must be the

analysis of the notion of the true (i.e. of what constitutes truth). Let us consider the following texts:

1) Diogenes Laertius tells us that Chrysippus wrote a book against those who held that true and false things exist (Πρὸς τοὺς νομίζοντας καὶ ψευδῆ καὶ ἀληθῆ εἶναι);⁴⁷

2) Zeno maintained that a phantasia, per se, is neither good nor bad ("eamque neque in rectis neque in pravis numerabat");⁴⁸

3) True and false are predicated only of propositions, as we learn from Diogenes Laertius:⁴⁹ ἀξιῶμα δὲ ἔστιν ὃ ἔστιν ἀληθὲς ἢ ψεῦδος ;

4) Sextus informs us that, according to the Stoics, the true "is τὸ ὑπάρχον and is opposed to something, and the false is τὸ μὴ ὑπάρχον and is opposed to something; and this being an incorporeal judgement (ἀσώματον ἀξιῶμα) is an intelligible (νοητόν)";⁵⁰

Before we carry on with other texts, it will be useful to make some short comments on the previous ones. We may say that text 1) not only shows that the true and the false do not exist (and are, therefore, incorporeal according to the Stoic equation τὸ ὂν = τὸ ὥμα), but also offers an additional proof of the fact that εἶναι and not ὑπάρχειν is the term used by the Stoics to indicate existence. Text 2) indicates that not only the true and the false, but also the good and the bad cannot be attributed to phantasia

without further specifications; true and false that is can be predicated of a phantasia only in a reflective sense and through the mediation of a proposition. This is proved by text 4) where the true is defined in terms of τὸ ὑπάρχον and is said to be an ἀξίωμα.

An ἀξίωμα, beside having the character of being false or true, as it is stated by text 3), is usually defined as a "self-complete expression (λεκτόν) which is of itself declaratory (ἀποφαντὸν ὅσον ἐφ' ἑαυτῷ)";⁵¹ in other words, an ἀξίωμα is conceived as a particular kind of λεκτόν which has a complete meaning and which establishes a positive or a negative relation between a subject and a predicate. Elsewhere Sextus says that the Stoics "term some of the self-complete expressions (αὐτοτελή λεκτά) ἀξιώματα, in uttering which we either speak the truth or lie".⁵² We can draw two important conclusions from these texts: 1) The true can properly be predicated only of ἀξιώματα; 2) ἀξιώματα are defined in terms of λεκτόν. We know that τὸ λεκτόν was one of the four kinds of incorporeal entities,⁵³ so that we may start to understand why the true is said to be incorporeal; for if the true is a characteristic of an ἀξίωμα and if an ἀξίωμα is a λεκτόν, the true too must be incorporeal, since the properties of what is incorporeal must, in turn, be incorporeal.⁵⁴

If we go back to text 4), it is thus explained why the true is said to be an ἀσώματον ἀξίωμα. We still have to

explain how it is said to be νοητόν and, more important for us, how the true can be identified with τὸ ὑπάρχον . As far as the significance of the adjective νοητόν is concerned, we may explain it by recalling that the true is an ἀξίωμα , that an ἀξίωμα is defined in terms of λεκτόν and that, according to Sextus, the Stoics held that τὸ λεκτόν "is that which subsists in conformity with a rational presentation (κατὰ λογικὴν φαντασίαν), and that a rational presentation is one in which it is possible to establish by reason the presented object (καθ' ἣν τὸ φαντασθέν ἔστι λόγῳ παραστῆσαι)".⁵⁵ According to this definition, we can say that τὰ λεκτά are basically things signified by discursive reason,⁵⁶ so that the true, being a λεκτόν , is also, and necessarily so, a νοητόν .⁵⁷ In other words, τὸ λεκτόν is the result of a rational presentation, i.e. of a presentation of the mind which is rationally coordinated.

Yet, the true, beside being νοητόν , σώματος ἀξίωμα and therefore τὸ λεκτόν , is also said to be τὸ ὑπάρχον . If we accept the standard rendering of τὸ ὑπάρχον with "the external object", we would be faced with the following difficulties:

- 1) to explain how the external object, that is a corporeal entity (τὸ σῶμα) can be defined as something incorporeal (i.e. as τὸ ἀληθές);
- 2) to explain how τὸ ὑπάρχον , as the external object, may occur in both the definition of τὸ ἀληθές and of phantasia

kataléptiké (as the prompter of the same) when we know that not all true phantasiai are kataléptikai. This second point seems to pose no difficulty to Long who argues that "...the hyparxis of sensibles, material objects, is logically prior to that of lekta, and no lekton can 'be the case' unless what it describes exists".⁵⁸ In other words, Long's interpretation seems to imply, if I understand it correctly, that the existence of material objects grasped by phantasia kataléptiké, which is the criterion of truth, comes logically before the hyparxis (=being the case) of lekta, which define the true. But then we would find that the compound, i.e. truth, comes before the simple, i.e. the true, which is formally unacceptable. Besides, the logical priority of the hyparxis of material object to the hyparxis of lekta goes against a passage of Sextus where it is stated that "...the Stoics assert that some sensibles and some intelligibles are true, the sensibles, however, not directly so but by reference to the intelligibles associated with them".⁵⁹ However understood, Long's interpretation, as we have already pointed out, leaves unanswered why a phantasia may be true and akataléptos at the same time; if the hyparxis of statements rests upon the hyparxis of objects, then only phantasiai kataléptikai ought to be true.

Given these difficulties, I propose to attempt a definition of τὸ ὑπάρχον based on M. VIII, 10, leaving aside, for a moment, the occurrence of τὸ ὑπάρχον in the standard

definition of phantasia kataleptiké. We will see later if such an interpretation of τὸ ὑπάρχον can stand also in the context of a definition of phantasia kataleptiké and if, in such a context, it succeeds in avoiding Sextus' accusation of circular reasoning.

M. VIII, 10 presents us with a definition of the true as " τὸ ὑπάρχον and ἀντικείμενόν τινι "; Bury translates by "that which subsists and is opposed to something"; Long translates "that which is the case and is the contradictory of what is not the case",⁶⁰ and explains that what makes something the case is τὸ ὑπάρχον in the sense of "that which exists", as the prompter of phantasia kataleptiké. Bury's translation is too vague to be of any help and Long's follows the opposite route to the one we are now trying to follow, by explaining the present passage with reference to the occurrence of τὸ ὑπάρχον in the definition of the criterion of truth. Instead I believe that the meaning of τὸ ὑπάρχον in a context where it is related to the true could be enlightened by the other characteristics of the true. The true is said to be νοητόν,⁶¹ ἁνώματον ἀξίωμα,⁶² and, in so far as it is an ἀξίωμα, it is also related to τὸ λεκτόν.⁶³ The true is incorporeal by definition and so is τὸ λεκτόν. It is thus reasonable to assume that τὸ ὑπάρχον, being the term which defines the true, ought to be incorporeal and, more precisely, a form of τὸ λεκτόν.

In order to substantiate this hypothesis, let us go back to our short analysis of the meaning of ὑπάρχειν in philosophical Greek. We have seen that Aristotle uses ὑπάρχειν in the sense of "belonging to", or "being predicated of", and that τὰ ὑπάρχοντα are the attributes of a subject. Therefore, we can tentatively translate the Stoics' τὸ ὑπάρχον by "that which is predicated of", "that which belongs to" in the sense of the dependent categories.⁶⁴ But to predicate something of something else is the same as formulating an ἄξιωμα (judgement, proposition) and we know that for the Stoics a proposition is not a combination of words (which are σώματα and corporeal) but of what is signified by words (τὸ ἐννοούμενον δὲ αὐτὸ τὸ πρᾶγμα), which is incorporeal and which coincides with τὸ λεκτόν.⁶⁵ Thus τὸ ὑπάρχον, understood as "that which is predicated of", ultimately describes τὸ λεκτόν in its grammatical use and this is confirmed by Lloyd who maintains that "...the proper place of the Stoic categories was with the lekton".⁶⁶ If this is correct, then also the second part of the definition of the true as "opposed to something" starts making sense, for we know that the Stoics treated opposites among τὰ λεκτά.⁶⁷

A major problem arises at this point. If τὸ ὑπάρχον in M. VIII, 10 can be explained in terms of τὸ λεκτόν, we must ask ourselves if the same explanation is valid and acceptable in a context of phantasia kataleptiké. Assuming that it is so, the standard definition of phantasia kataleptiké would

then be rendered as follows: "Phantasia kataléptiké is that which comes from a λεκτόν and is stamped and impressed according to that particular λεκτόν and it is such as could not derive from what is not a λεκτόν". But it could be easily argued that just as τὸ ὑπάρχον as the external object does not seem to be able to distinguish phantasia kataléptiké from true phantasia, the same is true for τὸ ὑπάρχον understood as τὸ λεκτόν. I think that a solution could be offered by asking ourselves what kind of phantasia can be kataléptiké. We know that the Stoics held that there are different kinds of phantasiai; Diogenes Laertius tells us that some phantasiai are rational (λογικαί) and some are irrational, and that the rational ones are called νοήσεις.⁶⁸ We also know that of the things which are thought (τὰ νοούμενα) some are thought as the result of a stimulus (κατὰ περίπτωσιν), some by similitude (καθ' ὁμοιότητα), some by analogy (κατ' ἀναλογίαν), some by transposition (κατὰ μετάθεσιν), some by synthesis (κατὰ σύνθεσιν), and some by opposition (κατ' ἐναντιώσιν) and that sensible objects are thought as the result of a stimulus.⁶⁹

Now phantasia kataléptiké, being aisthetiké, always presupposes a datum, an external object causing a sensation to which the intellection is related. This is clearly expressed by Sextus: "For every thought occurs either owing to sensation or not apart from sensation, and either owing to experience and not without experience".⁷⁰ But

we know that what can act or be acted upon is $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$, and therefore intellectual knowledge, being based on sensation, always presupposes the existence of bodies ($\tau\alpha\ \sigma\omega\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$, $\tau\alpha\ \sigma\upsilon\gamma\gamma\alpha\mu\alpha$). Yet bodies, per se, do not seem to be able to cause a phantasia to be kataléptiké, unless a judgement takes place, which is the same as saying that in order to have a phantasia kataléptiké the external object must present itself in such a way as to be the element of a possible $\alpha\lambda\theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\sigma\mu\alpha$; as such, it must be $\tau\omicron\ \alpha\lambda\eta\theta\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$, $\tau\omicron\ \lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\acute{o}\nu$ and $\tau\omicron\ \upsilon\pi\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\omicron\nu$. Phantasia kataléptiké is certainly the result of the action of an external and bodily cause, but its cognitive value, as criterion of truth rests upon the fact that it establishes the existence of the object in a specific logical relation, i.e. with a $\lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\acute{o}\nu$. And in this sense phantasia kataléptiké is also logiké. Consequently I suggest that $\tau\omicron\ \upsilon\pi\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\omicron\nu$ in the context of the definition of phantasia kataléptiké be understood as "the external object in so far as it is signified as $\tau\omicron\ \lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\acute{o}\nu$ ", that is the external object in its relation to $\tau\omicron\ \lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\acute{o}\nu$ which is asserted by the subject in the judgement. In this perspective assent ($\sigma\upsilon\gamma\kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\alpha}\theta\epsilon\varsigma\iota\varsigma$) is not referred directly to phantasia but to $\alpha\lambda\theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\sigma\mu\alpha$ and to $\lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\acute{o}\nu$ as the content of the judgement; we can say that $\sigma\upsilon\gamma\kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\alpha}\theta\epsilon\varsigma\iota\varsigma$ is primarily and directly referred to what is signified of an object, and only secondarily to the object itself.⁷¹

That phantasia kataleptiké is the criterion of truth and therefore more comprehensive than a true phantasia is proved by the fact that, beside individuating the isolated true thing (i.e. τὸ λεκτόν) of the object, it grasps this isolated true thing τεχνικῶς , that is systematically,⁷² so that phantasia kataleptiké, beside acknowledging the existence of external objects, is also capable of organizing τὰ λεκτά of these objects as linguistic structures. This observation is quite important and, I believe, it confirms my view that τὸ ὑπάρχον understood simply as the external object cannot be the guarantor of phantasia kataleptiké. For, if phantasia kataleptiké is the criterion of truth, one would expect that its value as criterion can be communicated to other men in the form of articulated speech so that its universal value may be conveyed. But we know that this is precisely the function of τὸ λεκτόν and this is also why the isolated true thing grasped occasionally by a child or a madman is an akataleptos, though true, phantasia, because that type of phantasia is not a criterion of truth.

In his discussion of τὸ λεκτόν , Long quotes a very interesting passage from Seneca (Ep. mor. 117, 13). Here is Long's translation: "There are material natures, such as this man, this horse, and they are accompanied by movements of thought (motus animorum) which make affirmation about them. These movements contain something peculiar to themselves which is separated from material objects. For

instance, I see Cato walking; the sense of sight reveals this to me and the mind believes it. What I see is the material object (corpus est) and it is to a material object that I direct my eyes and my mind. Then I say 'Cato is walking'. It is not a material object (non corpus) which I now state, but a certain affirmation about the material object (enuntiativum quiddam de corpore)".⁷³ Although Long's interest in and comment on this passage is related to his discussion about τὸ λεκτόν, we may ask ourselves if the expression "Cato is walking" is a phantasia kataleptiké. It is certainly aisthetiké, it implies a judgement, it is reflective enough to indicate that the sense-data are elaborated by the mind in a composite way and assent is given to it ("the mind believes it"). Thus it seems to be kataleptiké; if this analysis is correct, it is remarkable that Seneca emphasizes that it is not the material object (corpus), but an affirmation about the material object which is stated by the knowing subject. And this seems to confirm our interpretation of τὸ ὑπάρχον.

We must see now whether our interpretation of τὸ ὑπάρχον succeeds in avoiding Sextus' accusation of circular reasoning. It would seem that Sextus' argument is not well-founded. It is certainly true that phantasia kataleptiké is defined in terms of τὸ ὑπάρχον, but we have seen from our analysis of M. VIII, 10 that τὸ ὑπάρχον can be defined in a different way. Therefore the fact that τὸ ὑπάρχον is said to be

"the prompter of phantasia kataleptiké" is not equivalent to its definition, because τὸ ὑπάρχον is defined by τὸ λεκτόν, that is by what is in the sense of being true, or being the case. Τὸ ὑπάρχον can be said of the external object without being identical with it, just as the true can be predicated of the external object through the mediation of an ἀφίωμα without being identical with the external object. In this sense, I believe that Adorno's⁷⁴ criticism is valid when he says that Sextus' accusation would have been acceptable had τὸ ὑπάρχον meant τὸ ὄν. But if I have succeeded in explaining that this identity is not supported by the Stoic texts, both for philological and philosophical reasons, then we must conclude that Sextus' otherwise telling criticism is biased by a misunderstanding of Stoic epistemology.

4) Conclusion.

After having criticised the different criteria of truth held by the Dogmatists, Sextus devotes the final section of Book VII to a defence of the sceptical position. Sextus reports that his negative conclusions with regard to the criterion of truth prompted a reaction of the Dogmatists, who argued that Sextus' very refutation of the Dogmatic criterion was contradictory. According to the Dogmatists, Sextus asserts the non-existence of the criterion "...either without judging (ἀκριτως) or with the help of a criterion

(μετὰ κριτηρίου); but if it is without judging, he will not be trusted (ἀπίστος), while if it is with a criterion, he will be self-refuted."⁷⁵ Sextus' self-defence is based, once more, on his distinction between the criterion of truth and criterion for conduct in practical life and he argues that, whereas he denies the existence of a criterion of truth because of the inevitable infinite regress and contradictions entailed by such a notion, the Sceptic does in fact use phenomena as criteria for practical life. Phenomena provide the Sceptic with a guideline,⁷⁶ and allow him to lead an active life. The occurrence of phenomena is unquestionable (ἀσκητά),⁷⁷ and provide man with a credible reference in his daily life. This fact is per se sufficient to guarantee that ἀταραξία, which is the ultimate goal of the Sceptic. Trouble arises whenever man is not content with the unquestionable guide provided by phenomena in practical life and aims at an explanation of the phenomenal world in terms of truth.

But the Sextian notion of "truth" is that of knowledge of the real object.⁷⁸ As we have seen in Chapter VI, VII, and VIII Sextus believes man to be incapable of forming an adequate ἐπίνοια of the reality. Therefore, nothing is true.⁷⁹ Sextus' criticism of those Dogmatists who, like himself, linked truth (and the knowledge of truth) with the real (and Aristotle is the chief example) is biased by the Sextian notion of "intelligible" as mere image, which, qua image,

is inadequate to provide him with the essence of the object to be known. As far as Sextus' criticism of the Stoic criterion is concerned, he fails to see that the Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataleptiké offers a solution to the problem of truth not by linking truth to the real, but by linking it to the lekton.

As we have seen in Chapter III, sect. 1) and 2), Sextus endorses the Stoic tripartition of philosophy as well as the Stoic notion of logic, as independent from metaphysics. Yet, when we come to the problem of truth, whereas the Stoics identified the true with the lekton, thus being consistent with their a-metaphysical and psychologistic notion of logic, Sextus endorses the traditional linking of logical truth with metaphysical reality and his opposing what appears and what is real leads him to conclude that nothing is true.

Given certain philosophical premises (i.e. the independence of logic from metaphysics and the identification of universal concepts and essences with phantasiai), it may be possible to say that had Sextus properly understood the significance of the Stoic doctrine of phantasia kataleptiké, he might have agreed with the Stoic notion of lekton. After all, the Stoic lekton is nothing but an attempt to find an element of cognitive stability, i.e. a trustworthy element

to which assent can be given, without recurring to the traditional notions of universal concept and of essence, that is to notions rejected a priori by detaching logic from metaphysics.

FOOTNOTES

1. For an account of Agrippa's Five Tropes see P.H. I, 164-69 and Diogenes Laertius, IX, 88 foll.
2. P.H. I, 169.
3. M. VII, 426.
4. M. VII, 426. Cf. also P.H. III, 242; M. VIII, 85-88; M. XI, 183.
5. For the fifth Mode of Agrippa, or Mode of circular reasoning, see P.H. I, 169 and Diogenes Laertius, IX, 89.
6. Cf. also the Italian translation of Sextus' works by A. Russo where τὸ ὑπάρχον is translated by "oggetto esistente". See also R.D. Hick's translation "real object" in Diogenes Laertius, Lives of Eminent Philosophers.
7. SVF II, 525. See also SVF II, 359, 381. The definition of reality as that which can act or can be acted upon goes back to the argument of the Eleatic Stranger in Plato's Sophist (247 a). The Stoics accepted Plato's definition of reality but they agreed that being understood as reality can be predicated only of bodies, thus reversing the scope of Plato's argument.
8. Cicero, Acad. post., I, 39.
9. M. VIII, 85. See also P.H. III, 242.
10. M. VIII, 85.
11. A.A. Long, "Language and Thought in Stoicism" in A.A. Long, Problems in Stoicism, 91-2.
12. Cf. SVF, II, 329 (τὸ ὄν κατὰ σώματων μόνων λέγεσθαι); II, 320 (τὰ σώματα μόνα τὰ ὄντα); II, 336 (ὄν καὶ σῶμα τὸ αἰτίον); II, 525 (ὄντος τὸ ποιεῖν τι καὶ πάσχειν).
13. Among the many examples see P.H., II, 103 (πρὸς τὴν ὑπαρξίν τοῦ φαινομένου); III, 168 (περὶ τῆς ὑπαρξεως τῶν τε ἀγαθῶν καὶ κακῶν); M. VII, 71 (ὑπαρξεως μετέχω); M. VIII, 381 (πολλὰ γὰρ ἔστιν ἅπερ ἐπινοεῖται μὲν... οὐ μετέχει δὲ τινος ὑπαρξεως).
14. P.H. I, 134.

15. M. VII, 248. See also M. VII, 426; M. VIII, 85-86; M. XI, 183; P.H. II, 4; P.H. III, 242.
16. VII, 46 and 50.
17. Cicero, Acad. pr. II, 18 and 77. Cf. Chapter V, Sect. 1).
18. F. Adorno, "Sul significato del termine 'ΥΠΑΡΧΟΝ in Zenone stoico", La parola del passato (1957), 263-4.
19. F.H. Sandbach, "Phantasia Kataleptike", A.A. Long ed., Problems in Stoicism, 20, n. 12.
20. F. Adorno, "Sul significato del termine 'ΥΠΑΡΧΟΝ in Zenone stoico", 263-4.
21. C.H. Kahn, "On the Terminology for Copula and Existence", in Islamic Philosophy and the Classical Tradition. Ed. S.M. Stern et al., 151-3.
22. C.H. Kahn, "On the Terminology for Copula and Existence", 153.
23. An. pr., II, 25 a 15. See also De Anima, I, 1, 402 a 10; Top., II, 1, 109 a 14; De Int. 16 a 32.
24. De Int., 16 b 10.
25. F. Adorno, "Sul significato del termine 'ΥΠΑΡΧΟΝ in Zenone stoico", 363. Cf. Rep., 483 a: Ἡ οὖν ὑπάρχει διανοία μεγάλη πρέπεια καὶ θεωρία πάντος μὲν χρόνου πάσης δὲ οὐσίας, ὅσον ...
26. P. Festugière, La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste, IV, 11, n. 1.
27. Strabo, XIV, 754.
28. Fr. 27 Usener (Diogenes Laertius, X, 135).
29. C.H. Kahn, "On the Terminology for Copula and Existence", 156. Cf. H. Dörrie, "ὑπόστασις, Wort und Bedeutungsgeschichte", Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen (1955), 36-83.
30. Adv. Arium, III, 7, 9, cited in P. Hadot, Porphyre et Victorinus, II, 29, text 40.
31. A.A. Long, "Language and Thought in Stoicism" in A.A. Long ed., Problems in Stoicism, 89.

32. M. VIII, 257-64.
33. Stobaeus, Ecl., I, 106.
34. On this subject see: V. Goldschmidt, Le système stoïcien et l'idée de temps, 36 foll.; "ΥΠΑΡΧΕΙΝ et ΥΦΙΣΤΑΝΑΙ dans la philosophie Stoïcienne", Revue des études grecques (1972); 331-44.
35. We have already explained the meaning of this term in Sextus' terminology and it is interesting to notice that when Sextus does not quote the Stoics but only paraphrases them, he refers to the prompter of phantasia kataleptike as τὸ ἔκτός, as in M. VII, 241.
36. M. VII, 247.
37. M. VII, 247. Cf. Chapter V, Sect. 2), where I explain why I use the adjective akataléptos to indicate a true, οὐ καταληπτική phantasia.
38. M. VII, 38 foll.
39. A.J. Voelke, L'idée de volonté dans le Stoïcisme, 41-43 and 46 foll; F. Ravaissou, Essai sur la metaphysique d'Aristôte, 126-35 and Memoire sur le Stoïcisme, 31-40; V. Goldschmidt, Le système stoïcien et l'idée de temps, 121 foll.; F. Adorno, "Sul significato del termine ἡγεμονικόν in Zenone stoico", La parola del passato (1959), 36-7.
40. Pseudo-Galen, Introductio sive medicus, 9, t. XIV in SVF II, 716. On the Stoic notion of ἐξῆς see P. Hadot, Porphyre et Victorinus, I, 228-234.
41. Cf. SVF II, 863. Cf. Chapter IV, Sect. 4).
42. Stobaeus, II, p. 74, 16 W in SVF III, 112.
43. M. VII, 408: τὸ ἐναργὲς καὶ ἐντονον ἰδίωμα.
44. M. VII, 403.
45. Aetius (Plac. IV, 21 in SVF II, 836) goes as far as saying that τὸ ἡγεμονικόν is what makes (τὸ ποιοῦν) phantasiai, assent, sensations and tendencies. Cf. Chap. IV, 4).
46. Cfr. M. VII, 247 where Sextus says that those who have a true but akataléptos phantasia "often (πολλάκις) make no positive affirmation about it and do not assent to it". Therefore occasionally assent can be given under those circumstances.

47. VII, 189 in SVF II, 15.
48. Cicero, Acad. post. 11.
49. VII, 65 in SVF II, 193. See also Cicero, Acad. pr. 95 in SVF II, 196 and Sextus Empiricus, M. VIII, 12.
In the light of these texts it is hard to understand how Mates (Stoic Logic, 28) can maintain that truth and falsity do not define the proposition (ἀξιωμα).
50. M. VIII, 10.
51. P.H. II, 104. See also Diogenes Laertius, VII, 65 in SVF II, 193. It is certain that the aforesaid definition of ἀξιωμα is authentically Stoic for we read in Aulus Gellius (Noct. Att., XVI, 8, 4) that "Redimus igitur necessario ad Graecos libros. Ex quibus accepimus ἀξιωμα esse his verbis: λεκτὸν αὐτοτελὲς ἀποφάντων ὁσόν ἐφ' αὐτῷ".
52. M. VIII, 73.
53. M. X, 218.
54. Simplicius, In Cat. Arist., 208, 33 - 209, 3 Kalbfleisch (SVF II, 388).
55. M. VIII, 70. Cfr. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 63 in SVF II, 181.
56. This is confirmed by M. VIII, 11-12.
57. This is clearly confirmed by a text of Diogenes Laertius (VII, 51) in SVF II, 61 where it is said that phantasiai logikai are thoughts (νοήματα) and peculiar to men.
58. A.A. Long, "Language and Thought in Stoicism", 94.
59. M. VIII, 10.
60. A. Long, "Language and Thought in Stoicism", 92-3.
61. M. VIII, 10.
62. M. VIII, 10.
63. P.H. II, 104.
64. Cfr. C.H. Kahn, "On the Terminology for Copula and Existence", 153 where ὑπάρχειν in the Aristotelic sense is said to be paralleled by κατηγορεῖσθαι.
65. M. VIII, 12.

66. A.C. Lloyd, "Grammar and Metaphysics in the Stoa" in A.A. Long ed., Problems in Stoicism, 66.
67. Simplicius, In Cat. Arist., VIII, p. 388 in SVF II, 173. On this particular problem and the relation between τὰ λεκτά and Stoic grammar see A.C. Lloyd, "Grammar and Metaphysics in the Stoa", 58-74.
68. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 51 in SVF II, 61. Cf. Chapter IV, Sect. 5).
69. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 52 in SVF II, 87.
70. M. VIII, 56.
71. Cfr. A. Levi, "La teoria stoica della verità e dell'errore", in Revue d'histoire de la philosophie, 116 foll.
72. M. VII, 248.
73. A. Long, "Language and Thought in Stoicism", 77-8.
74. F. Adorno, "Sul significato del termine 'ΥΠΑΡΧΟΝ in Zenone stoico", 367-68.
75. M. VII, 440. Cf. SVF II, 118.
76. M. VII, 444. Cf. P.H. I, 21-3.
77. P.H. I, 22.
78. M. VIII, 323.
79. P.H. II, 88 foll; M. VIII, 17 foll. and 31 foll..

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