

# A brief overview to the Stoic Philosophy of Natural Law

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The name *Stoa* derives from the name colorful room -*stoa polikle*, located in Athens, in which the *Stoic school* had its center where lectures were conducted.

Stoic philosophy speaks to nature. *Early Stoa* (following the late Plato), is based on the idea of *common natural law - nomos koinos*, which can be even call our *own human nature into practical deeds*. Something what is the measure of the very purpose of human virtues is a universal human nature indeed. When the Stoics speak of nature, they don't work like Epicurus who aimed to liberate a man from fear, bigotry and ignorance. Stoics glorify world as a whole. In a fine and legality of the continent they see the purpose and highest sense that is God by himself.

The founder of this new philosophical direction was **Zeno**. As *Bertrand Russell* said, Zeno had no patience with the *metaphysical sophistry*. For him, what was important, it was a virtue, so the physics and metaphysics assessed from the standpoint of how much they contribute to virtue. Metaphysical reflection of its time trying to overcome with the help of *common sense*, and it's called *materialism* by Ancient Greeks. Any doubt in sense made him angry and that can be found by the

performers of his philosophy. However, his complete anti-metaphysical thought landmark had just led him in the direction of metaphysics, or his own metaphysics.<sup>1</sup>

Zeno was in the belief that there's no thing, and that's the random and the course of nature determined by the natural laws. He believed that in the beginning there was only fire, and then gradually emerged and other elements - air, water, earth and just this order. He was convinced that there'll be a cosmic fire and everything would again become a fire. A large number of the Stoics considered that it's not the ultimate end, in order to propagate the Christian teaching. The occurrence of fire represents the closing of a circle. This means such a movement to the infinity, because everything that happened before it'll occur again and to not just once, but a several times.

For the Stoics everything has a purpose that is related to human beings (some animals are good for food, and some give a man the chance to put courage to the test, however bugs are useful because they don't allow us to stay in bed for a long time). Supreme power they sometimes referred to as God, and sometimes as Zeus. *Seneca claimed that there were three different views of Zeus* -first is the view of Stoics, than other from the general rule of mythology and view of mythology of ancient civilizations.

God or the legislator has separated from the world and it represents the soul of the world. Each individual carries a part of the divine fire. The entire things are part of a single system, or nature. To this end, the belief that the individual's life that is

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<sup>1</sup> In the textbook "History of Western Philosophy" of Bertrand Russell, in the section on Stoic philosophy, is determined more closely this statement. So the states on how Zenon is trying to prove that there is a real world. Very clearly this is all reflected in Zeno dialogue with a skeptic who asked him: "What do you mean by real?" Zenon answered: "I think the firm and materially. I think this one hundred solid. "Skeptic he answered with a question:" A God, a soul?" Zenon is also to have an answer, but he said the following:" Perfectly solid, if anything, stronger than the table then these are they. " Skeptic had another interesting question: "A virtue or justice or rule triple; also solid?" Zenon again answered in the affirmative:" Of course, it is quite tough. " And this is conditioned by Stoic conception of justice and natural law, which is also mentioned.

consistent with the nature of good. In a certain sense, every life is in accordance with nature because it's what god made him by the laws of nature. In another sense, human life is only then in harmony with nature when the individual's will directed toward goals that're the aims of nature. As they considered a virtue consists in the will that's in harmony with nature. In the life of every individual virtue is what is good, what precisely is the only good. Some concepts such as health, happiness, property has no meaning for them. Virtue is the will and everything that is really good or bad in a person's life depends only on himself. How they thought, virtue depends solely on the individual. A man may impoverish, they said, or he may remain chaste; tyrant could ends up in jail, but he still continued to live with the persistent of nature; may be sentenced to death, but also may die with dignity like Socrates. People, therefore, have power only over external matters, while the true good embodied in virtue is a matter purely individual. Philosopher's reasoning is correct, he's the master of fate in everything on price alone, because no external force can't deny it for that virtue. It is important to understand that for the Stoics virtue destination by itself, and not something that seems good. They're compared with the physician who own life exposes threat to prevent infection and we're all in the belief that it's an evil disease. If we both thought the same doctor could calm to stay at home. **Stoics aren't moral to do good, but make good to be moral.**

Stoic philosophy is a unique blend of Eastern spiritual influences and partly of Cynics. Where in lies the Cynic influence? It should start gradually. Antisthenes, who was one of the most devoted disciples of Socrates, was the founder of the philosophical school of Cynics. His ideal was Heracles. In his book of advices to the rulers, the wise ruler type by which requires another rule he take the Persian king Cyrus. Another of his models was Socrates, namely his life as the ideal of simplicity of needs, which is the only opening the way to happiness.

The Stoics considered a natural right measure of all applicable laws and all existing state of that period. They first had a conviction about the need for some sort of kinship, like the brotherhood between people and the whole world declared as a none large insurance policy - **cosmopolis**. They`re still called it *the community of gods and men*. The real mind as the general law covers everything. He`s anthropocentric and it`s equal to Zeus. From it follows *lex natura = lex divina*. It`s the norm, which is also true for mental and stupid creatures. This is standpoint of **Chrysippus**.

This view and understanding of natural law some authors call pathetic or democratic pathetic. In other hand, this philosophical direction and his learning about natural right is revolutionary.

By Ernst Bloch, stoicism is a reminiscent of today's Freemasons or like a fraternal alliance of all classes of our century, because a person more after they din`t *zoon politikon- political will*, but the *zoon koinonikon- community will*. This is reflected in the stillness of the everyday life, in a nonchalant and voluntary lecture fate and joining the variable forms of political community. In such a cosmopolitan rapture he could be just as ideology (not philosophy) and the magnificent empire of Alexander the Great and the Roman Empire and the ecumenical Christian community and the ideology of nobles and slaves.

Stoicism is spread and through Rome. It`s also present in the works of Seneca, Lucius Annaeus, the slave Epictetus (Epiktetos), and the emperor Marcus Aurelius (Marcus Annus Verus).

Aurelius has expressed the idea of *human dignity - dignitas humana* as the heart of the natural law. As an emperor he devoted his whole life by *Stoic`s virtue*. He was fully agrees with Epictetus (Epiktetos) in philosophical issues.

It's interesting that the patricians Peas Tiberius (Tiberius Gracchus) under the influence of Stoic natural law teachings became a plebeian tribune. In the Roman stoicism appeared the concept of *lex aeterna- eternal law*, which is understood as a destiny that rules the world.

Learning about the natural law that appeared during the period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century was a kind of attempt stoic learning. *Stoics differed from ius gentium to ius naturale*. This natural law was drawn from first principles that're the basis of the entire summer in general knowledge. Stoics believed that the nature of all human beings are equal. Marcus Aurelius in his "*Thoughts (to himself)*" expressly advocates for *Polito* where everything has the same law, then *Polito* which manages taking into account equal rights and equal freedom of speech and the royal government that above all respects the freedom of his subordinates. This represented an idea, an ideal that could be reached in the Roman Empire. He influenced the legislation, particularly in terms of improving the status of slaves and women. It may be noted that Christianity took over a portion of a stoic learning. There's very possible prevalence of stoicism and entry into force of despotism, however Stoic doctrine of natural law, and thus the natural equality. Cassignas in Christian garb, received a great power that the mind in ancient times couldn't be granted even emperors.

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