

J.-P. BRUN, Le village massaliote de La Galère à Porquerolles (Var) et la géographie de Stoichades au 1^{er} siècle av. J.-C., in: M. BATS et al. (eds.), *Marseille grecque et la Gaule*, 1992, 279–288, in part. 284–287; A. L. F. RIVET, *Gallia Narbonensis*, 1988, 223. E.O.

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Stoichedon see → Incriptions; → Writing; → Writing, direction of

Stoicheion (στοιχείον/*stoicheion*, Latin *elementum*). The primarily philosophical concept of *stoicheion* (originally meaning ‘letter’) denotes the irreducible basic components or the foundations of Being. Probably by analogy of letters with words, the concept represents an attempt to understand the bewilderingly great multiplicity of the natural world as combinations of a limited number of elements. The term *stoicheion* was in antiquity fundamentally linked to the classical theory, fully formulated by → Empedocles [1], of the four elements earth, water, air and fire (although Empedocles’ technical term for them was not yet *stoicheion* but ‘roots’, *rhizómata*; Emp. fr. 6 B 15 DK). The Pythagoreans (→ Pythagorean School) adopted the theory of the basic elements, but saw their main characteristic in their geometric shape (theory of the five regular polyhedrons). → Leucippus and → Democritus further reduced the Empedoclean elements to homogeneous atoms (*átoma*). Plato [1] and Aristotle [6] reintroduced the distinction between bodies and their attributes. Plato reclaimed the comparison with letters (Pl. Phlb. 18b-d) and further developed the geometric figures as basic elements (Pl. Ti. 48b-c; 53c–57d). Aristotle added ether to the four elements, their main characteristic no longer being the shape but rather the natural movement of the elements (Aristot. Cael. 3,307b); only the principle (*archê*) remained wholly self-sufficient (Aristot. Metaph. 1070b 23). A reference to the four elementary substances is also found in the *Corpus Hippocraticum*. In → Galen the four bodily fluids (blood, mucus, yellow and black bile) are regarded as a type of *stoicheion* (→ Humoral theory). The Latin term *elementum* usually refers to the four elementary substances (Sen. QNat. 3,12; Cic. Acad. 1,26; Lucr. 1,907–914; 2,688–691). In the Roman and Byzantine periods the word *stoicheion* took on the additional meaning of heavenly bodies, → constellations, magic symbols, spirits and demons.

→ Cosmology; → Elements, theories of the; → Metaphysics; → Ontology

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Stoicism

I. HISTORY II. OVERVIEW OF STOIC PHILOSOPHY III. LOGIC IV. PHYSICS V. ETHICS

I. HISTORY

Stoicism was an intellectual movement rooted in an Athenian school of philosophy founded by → Zeno [2] of Citium in the late 4th cent. BC; it took its name from the place where Zeno’s lessons were held, the *Stoá Poikilē* (‘painted colonnade’, → Stoa [1]), and developed most significantly by its next two leaders, → Cleanthes [2] of Assus and → Chrysippus [2] of Soli. It flourished primarily within the context of the school at Athens until the sack of the city by Roman forces in 86 BC; besides Athens, Rhodes was also an important centre of activity in the 2nd cent. BC. By the Augustan Period its activities were more dispersed, and it became a central part of Greco-Roman intellectual life generally. Important Stoic philosophers of the Imperial Period are → Musonius [1] Rufus (c. AD 30–100), → Seneca [2] (c. 4 BC–AD 65) and the emperor → Marcus [2] Aurelius (AD 121–180). Musonius and his pupil → Epictetus left behind the text of their lectures (speeches and discourses, published by others); Seneca’s philosophical works consist of the ‘Letters to Lucilius’, several treatises and a series of rhetorical works on various subjects (*Dialogi*), while Marcus Aurelius wrote only ‘Self-reflections’. The foundation by Hadrian (AD 117–138) of a chair of Stoic philosophy returned Athens to importance in the activities of the school. Its institutional life slowly faded with the rise of → Neoplatonism in the 3rd cent. AD, yet its influence on philosophy and religion persisted (if sometimes indirectly) until the end of Antiquity. Its impact on medieval thought was sporadic, but with the revival of classical learning Stoicism was rediscovered and had a profound impact on early modern philosophy. Its influence on the religion, philosophy and literature of European civilizations since then has been intermittent, but at least in ethics it has remained a significant inspiration until the present time (see [4]).

II. OVERVIEW OF STOIC PHILOSOPHY

The school was rooted deeply in the Socratic tradition (→ Socrates [2]; → Socratics), with substantial influences from → Cynicism and Platonism and (at least in its later history) from the Peripatetic tradition (→ Peripatos). Socratic and Cynic influences created a strand of radical commitment to ‘nature’ (*φύσις/phýsis*; Lat. *natura*) in opposition to the ‘convention’ (*νόμος/nómos*) of Greek polis culture; nevertheless the school was culturally conservative, retaining through allegorical interpretation what it regarded as the wisdom of the ancient poets (especially in physics and cosmology; → *allegoresis*) and adapting itself readily to the differing values and institutions of many cultures, especially that of Imperial Rome. The two central ideas of Stoicism