

The Chronos Myth in Cynic Philosophy

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REPRESENTING A DOMINANT TREND in Cynic scholarship, J. L. Moles writes, "The theoretical underpinning of Cynicism is minimalist: the essence of the Cynic message is that the good life is easy to understand and to practice: everything else, including elaborate education and philosophizing, is not only irrelevant but inimical to this central message."¹ For Moles, the true Cynic's "actual behavior is self-justifying." Hence Moles minimizes organizing or justifying factors for the Cynic lifestyle even though he admits (139f, 144, 157) that there is evidence for some of these in the sources, especially the example of Diogenes and the anti-Prometheus or Age of Chronos myth.

This scholarly trend correctly avoids etic categories in assessing Cynicism, as well as the reductionist fallacy of explaining the widespread and diverse Cynic movement by a single or a few factors.² By not perceiving any organizing factors in Cynicism

¹ J. L. MOLES, "Cynics and Politics," in A. Laks and M. Schofield, ed., *Justice and Generosity* (Cambridge 1995: hereafter 'Moles') 157f. A. J. Malherbe explains: "What made a Cynic was his dress and conduct, self-sufficiency, harsh behavior towards what appeared as excesses, and a practical ethical idealism, but not a detailed arrangement of a system" ("Self-Definition among Epicureans and Cynics," in B. F. Meyer and E. P. Sanders, ed., *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition III: Self-Definition in the Greco-Roman World* [Philadelphia 1982] 49). Translations of ancient sources throughout follow the Loeb editions unless otherwise noted.

² For an explanation of the reductionist fallacy, see D. H. Fischer, *Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought* (New York 1970) 172–77. For an example of this fallacy see A. O. Lovejoy and G. Boas, who reduce Cynic ethics to primitivism: *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (Baltimore 1935) 118. For a critique of Lovejoy and Boas, see A. A. Long, "The Socratic Tradition: Diogenes, Crates, and Hellenistic Ethics," in R. Bracht Branham and M.-O. Goulet-Cazé, ed., *The Cynics* (Berkeley 1996) 39. Branham and Goulet-Cazé (3) warn that "to approach such a motley set of traditions with a single point of view or methodology would be to deny its veracity and thereby to impoverish it." They nevertheless recognize (24) a de-

or by failing to assess the weight and importance of such factors, however, this trend overlooks significant information in Cynic sources. Evidence from primary and ancient secondary sources demonstrates that Cynics do often propose justifications for their lifestyle. A repeated justification in these materials is the appeal to myth and especially the myth of the Age of Chronos.³ Moles (157) comments, "The question is whether the Cynic way of life is underpinned by anything that can be described as a theory. The nearest thing to such a theory is the Cynic anti-Prometheus myth." The present essay investigates the significance of myth, especially that of the Age of Chronos, in justifying and informing the Cynic lifestyle.⁴

finitive Cynic metaphor or motto in "defacing the currency" and a "center of gravity" for the philosophy "in the practice of satire (*παρρησία*) and an individualist, not a collectivist ethic" (17). Branham also mentions a Cynic ideology ("Defacing the Currency: Diogenes' Rhetoric and the Invention of Cynicism," in Branham and Goulet-Cazé, 93): "The Cynic motto—'Deface the Current Coin'—makes joking, parody, and satire not merely a useful rhetorical tool, but an indispensable one, constitutive of Cynic ideology as such." Cf. his "Diogenes' Rhetoric and the *Invention of Cynicism*," in M.-O. Goulet-Cazé and R. Goulet, ed., *Le cynisme ancien et ses prolongements* (Paris 1993) 458, 472f. The present essay proposes the Age of Chronos Myth as an important criterion used by Cynics to determine the false cultural values that needed defacing by their satiric critiques.

³ Considering the frequency of mythical justifications in Cynic sources, the scholarly aversion to myth as a justification for the Cynic lifestyle is surprising. For example, Heinrich Niehues-Pröbsting (*Der Kynismus des Diogenes und der Begriff des Zynismus* [= *Humanistische Bibliothek* Abh. 40 (Munich 1979)] 159) asserts in his discussion of two reasons for Cynic use of masturbation: "Mit einer zweiten Begründung der Onanie leistet sich Diogenes einen für den Kyniker ungewöhnlichen and inkonsequenten Rückfall in den Mythos." The sources indicate that the Cynic use of myth was neither uncommon nor inconsistent. Because Heinz Schulz-Falkenthal, "Bemerkungen zum Ideal des naturgemäßen Lebens bei den 'älteren' Kynikern," *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg* 26.2 (1977) 52ff, recognizes the justifying rôle of the Prometheus and Heracles myths in Cynic sources, his assertion that the ideal life for the Cynics does not lie "in einem zurückliegenden ... Goldenen Zeitalter" is even more surprising, because the myth of the Golden Age also occurs in these sources. Schulz-Falkenthal's conception of nature as understood by the Cynics is more modern than ancient.

⁴ For a general description of Cynic philosophy, see T. W. Martin, "By Philosophy and Empty Deceit": Colossians as Response to a Cynic Critique (= *JStNT* Suppl. 118 [Sheffield 1996]) 58–65. Even though this paper argues that the Chronos Myth justifies and informs the Cynic lifestyle, it takes no position on the Cynic view of deity. The myth could inform the Cynic's life-

The Cynics on Myth

Myths, along with their themes and characters, frequently occur in Cynic materials. Ps.-Diogenes defends his begging and attire by appealing to myth. In a letter to his mother Olympias, he credits the myths and not Antisthenes with first instructing him in the Cynic lifestyle:

Now I did not learn these lessons [the Cynic way of life] from Antisthenes first, but from the gods and heroes and those who converted Greece to wisdom, like Homer and the tragic poets. [2] For they said that Hera ... took up a way of life of this sort, collecting alms for the "nymphs of the spring, noble goddesses, life-giving offspring of Inachus, the Argive river." And that Telephus, the son of Heracles, when he came to Argos, appeared in a condition much worse than ours, with beggarly rags thrown around his body as a help against the cold. And that Odysseus, son of Laertes, returned home from Ilium in a torn cloak, caked with kitchen dirt and smoke. Now do my clothing and begging still seem disgraceful to you or are they noble and admirable to kings and to be taken up by every sensible person for frugality's sake?⁵

Ps.-Diogenes (*Ep.* 33.4 Malherbe 142f) again appeals to myth in his remonstrance of Alexander's aspirations to divinity. He protests to Alexander, "And you do not even heed Homer, who warns us not to desire all this, when he describes the sufferings of the Aloadaeans in order to promote self control." In a similar manner, Ps.-Diogenes (*Ep.* 37.4 Malherbe 156f) berates Lacydes for lavishly preparing to host a dinner: "So, order that these be removed somewhere else, and have us recline, as Homer made his heroes in the *Iliad* recline, on the hide of oxen

style as a description—real or metaphorical—of the ideal lifestyle whether Diogenes was an atheist, an agnostic, or a believer. For an evaluation of Diogenes, Crates, Menippus, and Bion's attitude toward deity, see M.-O. Goulet-Cazé, "Religion and the Early Cynics," in Branham and Goulet-Cazé (*supra* n.2) 71–79; cf. her "Le premiers cyniques et la religion," in Goulet-Cazé and Goulet (*supra* n.2) 145–57; a contrasting view in J. L. Moles, "Cynic Cosmopolitanism," in Branham and Goulet-Cazé 113f, and his "Le cosmopolitisme cynique," in Goulet-Cazé and Goulet 270f.

⁵ [Diog.] *Ep.* 34.1f, in A. J. MALHERBE, *The Cynic Epistles* (=SocBibLitSBS 12 [Atlanta 1977: hereafter 'Malherbe']) 142–45; see also [Diog.] *Ep.* 7.2 Malherbe 98f.

from the fields, or as the Spartans do, on a bed of straw. So let the body recline on what it has grown accustomed to.”

Like Ps.-Diogenes, Ps.-Crates uses myth as a sanction for the Cynic lifestyle—in this instance, the avoidance of wine (*Ep.* 10.1 Malherbe 60f):

I have heard, Lysis, that you have constantly been drunk ever since the contest in Eretria. If this is true, it behooves you not to despise what the wise Homer says. For he says, “Wine destroyed even a centaur, the renowned Eurytion” [*Od.* 21.295], and also Cyclops, even though he possessed super-human size and strength. Therefore, if wine adversely affects those who are stronger and greater than we are, how do you think it will affect us? Wretchedly, I think.

Even though Cynics frequently use myths, they do not simply accept them at face value. Cynics disparage Prometheus, whom the myths extol as the great benefactor of the human race.⁶ Cynics are not averse to condemning some myths as erroneous⁷ and, on occasion, to indicting Homer or Hesiod as liars.⁸ Cynics obviously interpret myths by some hermeneutical principle. A comparison of Cynic and Stoic investigations of nature reveals this principle as the Cynics’ conception of life in the Age of Chronos.

The Cynics on Nature

Cynics as well as Stoics describe their ethics as *living according to nature* (ζῶν κατὰ φύσιν).⁹ Indeed, the essence of the Cyn-

⁶ Commenting upon the origin of tilling the soil, sowing, and metal-working, [Anacharsis] writes to Croesus (*Ep.* 9 Malherbe 46f): “They regard as most blessed the first man who devised this silly little undertaking.”

⁷ [Anacharis] to Croesus (*Ep.* 9 Malherbe 46f): “The Greek poets in their poetry distributed the universe among the sons of Chronos.... This distribution arose from the Greeks’ pursuit of their own interests ... they ascribe their own evil to the gods.”

⁸ Homer: [Heraclitus] (*Ep.* 4.3 Malherbe 190f): “According to Homer’s lies he [Heracles] even murdered his guests”; Hesiod: [Heraclitus] to Hermodorus (*Ep.* 9.3 Malherbe 210f): “Many are the Furies of Justice, guardians against errors. Hesiod lied when he said that there are thirty thousand of them. That is too few.”

⁹ *E.g.* [Diogenes] to Hicetas (*Ep.* 7 Malherbe 98f): “I am called heaven’s dog, not earth’s, since I liken myself to it, living as I do, not in conformity with popular opinion but according to nature, free under Zeus.” *Cf.* Malherbe *ad*

ic lifestyle can be described as an *investigation into nature*.¹⁰ Cynics frequently defend their asceticism by an appeal to nature and their lifestyle by an analogy with the animals that contentedly rely upon nature to supply their needs and circumstances.¹¹ This abundant emphasis upon nature implies that Cynics hold some idea of it, and their common ascetic practices based upon nature indicate some uniformity in their conceptions of it.¹² To understand the essential distinction between Cynic and Stoic ethics, the conceptions of nature in these two philosophical traditions must be carefully distinguished.¹³

[Heraclitus] *Ep.* 9: "There is a sharp contrast between the Cynic and the masses ... Nature itself brings judgement on the rapacious lives of the multitude (29/33). How can they act piously toward a statue after they had acted impiously toward nature? (37). The Cynic, in contrast, imitates nature (55)": "Pseudo-Heraclitus, Epistle 4: The Divinization of the Wise Man," *JAC* 21 (1978) 62f; Gomperz (II 143–47 [English ed.]) states that the Cynic ethic was built upon nature.

¹⁰ [Diogenes] to Melesippe (*Ep.* 42 Malherbe 172f): "For Cynicism, as you know, is an investigation of nature" (ὁ γὰρ κυνισμὸς, ὡς οἴσθα, φύσεώς ἐστιν ἀναζήτησις). M.-O. Goulet-Cazé, "Le Cynisme à l'époque Impériale," *ANRW* II.36.4 (Berlin 1990) 2760f, perceives two views of Cynicism: as a short cut to virtue or an investigation into nature. These views are not mutually exclusive: see 2761 n.279 for Cynic epistles that articulate one or the other view.

¹¹ [Diogenes] to Amynder (*Ep.* 21 Malherbe 114f): "As the prophet of indifference I speak these words plainly, which are opposed to the deluded life. But if they seem to be rather hard to some, nature yet confirms them with truth, as does the life of those who live, not under delusion, but in accord with virtue." Cf. D. DUDLEY, *A History of Cynicism* (London 1937: hereafter 'Dudley') 29: "The counterpart of παρησία in speech is ἀναιδέια in action.... For him [Diogenes], whatever is 'according to nature' is proper at all times and in all places"; D.L. 6.69: "He [Diogenes] used to draw out the following arguments. 'If to breakfast is not absurd, therefore it is not absurd to breakfast in the market-place'. Behaving indecently in public, he wished 'it were as easy to banish hunger by rubbing the belly.'" M.-O. GOULET-CAZÉ, *L'Ascèse Cynique* (= *Histoire des doctrines de l'antiquité classique* 10 [Paris 1986: 'Goulet-Cazé']) 61–66, discusses the Cynics' constant references to animal analogies: animals limited their needs to natural necessities and were content with natural circumstances (64). See also Dudley 200; Gomperz II 144f.

¹² See Goulet-Cazé 57–66. J. RIST, *Stoic Philosophy* (Cambridge 1969: hereafter 'Rist') 54, perceives the necessity for a common understanding of nature among the Cynics.

¹³ Rist (54): "Our primary task is to show that there was a specifically Cynic attitude towards the world, and that Zeno knew what it was." The possession of gold is all that is necessary to reveal that Scarabee, a self-proclaimed Cynic, is really a Stoic (Lucian *Fugitivi* 31). Cf. also J. Moles, "'Honestius quam Ambitiosus?' An Exploration of the Cynic's Attitude to Moral Corruption in His

The Stoic conception is determined by an empirical investigation into nature that results in pragmatism.¹⁴ Zeno's break with his Cynic teachers establishes the basic contours of his thinking.¹⁵ Zeno's most important innovation is his division of the Cynic category of morally indifferent things into three classes: preferred, neutral, and not preferred.¹⁶ Zeno defends himself against his Cynic teachers, who reject everything in this category as a hindrance to the moral life, by an appeal to nature: nature as a physical complex of cause and effect.¹⁷ He calls the mechanism of this complex λόγος, which pervades nature and explains cause and effect. By astute observation of both the physical and biological world, the wise individual perceives this complex and pragmatically places himself/herself in harmony with it.¹⁸ Consequently, a morally neutral entity may be preferred because it possesses positive, pragmatic value for living in accord with reason even though the absence of this entity does not prohibit such a life. Included in this category are wealth,

Fellow Men," *JHS* 103 (1983) 104 n.10: "Cynic and Stoic attitudes to ... the meaning of the maxim κατὰ φύσιν ζῆν are characteristically different."

¹⁴ Cicero (*Fin.* 4.14f) distinguishes among three Stoic interpretations of living according to nature.

¹⁵ Rist (69) astutely perceives that Zeno's introduction of a preferred class into the Cynic category of morally indifferent things compelled Zeno to break with his Cynic teachers.

¹⁶ D.L. 7.106, 108. Diogenes (7.101–107) discusses the Stoic division of indifferent things: those preferred because they possess positive value for harmonious living or for living a natural life (natural abilities, skill, life, health, strength, beauty, wealth, fame, noble birth), those rejected because they have negative value toward these pursuits, and those neutral, with neither positive nor negative value.

¹⁷ For this aspect of Zeno's thought see Rist 70ff; E. ZELLER, *The Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics* (New York 1962: hereafter 'Zeller') 385f. Rist concludes (78): "Zeno's most important move against the Cynics, the introduction of the class of preferred things [within the class of indifferents], is energetically supported [by Chrysippus] ... Above all, Zeno's emphasis on φύσις, on the study of the natural world as a necessary basis for the understanding and the performing of moral actions, is given the fullest possible weight; and Chrysippus rejects Ariston's contempt for moral instruction in favor of almost lyrical enthusiasm for the importance of laws, both physical and moral."

¹⁸ See K. von Fritz, "Stoa," *OCD*² 1015. Cf. Cic. *Fin.* 2.34: "In the case of all the philosophers mentioned, their End of Goods logically follows ... with the Stoics, harmony with nature, which they interpret as meaning virtuous or morally good life and further explain this as meaning to live with an understanding of the natural course of events, selecting things that are in accordance with nature and rejecting the opposite."

fame, and noble birth. If Zeno's Cynic instructors had possessed the capacity for disturbance, Zeno's innovation would have thoroughly perplexed them.¹⁹

In contrast to Zeno's empiricism, Cynicism adopts a mythical investigation into nature.²⁰ Cynics describe the life according to nature as life in the Age of Chronos. Recognizing the enslaving power of entities in the morally indifferent category, Ps.-Diogenes writes to the hedonistic Cynic Aristippus, "For the things in Dionysius' court are fine according to all reports, but the freedom in the time of Chronos...." (*Ep.* 32.20 Malherbe 138f). Discussing the error of the Greek poets' distribution of the universe among the sons of Chronos, Ps.-Anacharsis explains to Croesus (*Ep.* 9 Malherbe 46f):

The earth was long ago the common possession of the gods and of men. In time, however, men transgressed by dedicating to the gods as their private precincts what was the common possession of all. In return for these, the gods bestowed upon men fitting gifts: strife, desire for pleasure, and meanness of spirit. From a mixture and a separation of these grew all the evils which afflict all mortals: tilling the soil, sowing, metals, and wars.

Lucian confirms this mythical investigation into nature when he has Philosophy say about the Cynics (*Fugitivi* 17), "It seems to

¹⁹ Zeller (91) notes the paradoxes of the Stoic system resulting from its Cynic origin and Zeno's innovation: "There is, on the one hand, a seeking for what is innate and original, a going back to nature, an aversion to everything artificial and of human device, inherited by Stoicism from its ancestral Cynicism. On the other hand, there is a desire to supplement the Cynic appeal to nature by a higher culture, and to assign scientific reasons for truths which the Cynics laid down as self-evident." See also Zeller's differentiation of Stoicism from Cynicism (389).

²⁰ Gomperz II 146f: "Further, the teaching drawn from a consideration of animal and primitive human life needed to be supplemented by what we may term, with approximate accuracy, a primordial revelation.... Antisthenes, and his disciple Diogenes after him, made a careful study of the mythological histories of the gods and heroes. He wrote a long series of works—commentaries on the Greek bible, we might call them—in which he pressed the Homeric poems into the service of Cynic doctrine by means of an ingenious, but altogether unhistorical exegesis.... But that which turned the scale was doubtless that need of a concrete empirical datum which the Cynics, with all their revolutionary recklessness, deemed a necessary support in their war with society.... Thus to the revelation supposed to be contained in Nature and primitive man, there was added a second revelation, the vehicle of which was imagined to be those earliest productions of the human mind to which we give the names of legend and saga."

them that this is ‘life in the age of Cronus’, and really that sheer honey is distilling into their mouths from the sky!” Maximus of Tyre (*Diss.* 36) also discusses “the familiar conception of the Cynic life as the life of the man in the Golden Age” (tr. Dudley 201). He begins with a myth that describes human origins and comments:

I believe that the poets too come very close to this story of ours when they speak allegorically of a similar kind of life lived under Cronos, king of the gods, a life that knew no wars and no iron weapons, that was peaceful and had no garrisons, where nothing was fought over, a healthy life that lacked for nothing; it would seem that the “golden race” is Hesiod’s teasing term for this era.²¹

Maximus then shifts from myth ($\mu\tilde{\upsilon}\theta\omicron\varsigma$) to a reasoned argument ($\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$) that the life in this Golden Age is preferable to the present life in the Iron Age (36.2ff). He then introduces Diogenes as someone who lived the life of the Golden Age in the present Iron Age (36.5f). Thus, Maximus explicitly describes the life according to nature as the life of the Golden Age of Chronos and explains that following Diogenes provides a way to return to this natural life.

The Cynic investigation into nature according to the myth of life in the age of Chronos results in the particular view of nature adopted by the Cynics. Their primitivist perspective considers nature as it was before Prometheus introduced the corrupting influences of civilization and culture.²² Nature from the begin-

²¹ Max. Tyr. 36.1; M. B. Trapp, *Maximus of Tyre: The Philosophical Orations* (Oxford 1997) 283; for a discussion of this oration, see M. Billerbeck, “The Ideal Cynic from Epictetus to Julian,” in Branham and Goulet-Cazé (*supra* n.2) 213f.

²² For Zeller (91) the Stoics inherited from the Cynics “a seeking for what is innate and original, a going back to nature, an aversion to everything artificial and of human device.” Moles (*supra* n.12: 116f) perceptively observes:

In effect, the virtuous life is equated with τὸ κατὰ φύσιν ζῆν and the phrase κατὰ φύσιν is given a very basic, primitivist, meaning, as both the practice of the Cynics and their characteristic appeals to animal behavior reveal. Man must live in his natural state. Broadly speaking ... the ignorance of vice is the result of the corrupting influence of civilization. Hence the virtuous state in Cynicism is frequently described in Golden Age terms.... And Cynic virtue is, in the last resort, merely a return to man’s natural state.

Goulet-Cazé (59) concurs: “That voluntary return to nature is profoundly anchored within Cynicism. Diogenes has the intention of renewing paradise lost when he attempts to liberate himself from social constraints and when he confronts the πόννοι κατὰ φύσιν.” She (60) explicitly notes that the Cynics were

ning both begets and destroys as the creative elements “mingle and separate ... to cause the arising and perishing of ‘mortal things’. Generation and decay are nothing save the compounding (in fixed ratios) and dissolution of eternally unchanging ‘elements’.”²³ As Ps.-Diogenes instructs Hippon (*Ep.* 25 Malherbe 116f), “I deem it enough to live according to virtue and nature, and that this is in our power. As conditions before birth submit to nature, so even must those after life be consigned to it. For as nature begets, it also destroys.” The combination of the natural elements provides for the generation and sustenance of all living things; the dissolution of these elements condemns all living things to decay and death. Both processes are inevitable; both the work of nature.²⁴

For the Cynic, living according to nature does not necessitate an empirical investigation into nature.²⁵ The myth of life in the age of Chronos provides the Cynic with a hermeneutical principle that supplies the necessary information. To live according to nature is to toil in both the generative and destructive proces-

anti-Promethean because Prometheus bequeathed culture upon humans; similarly Gomperz II 145.

²³ A. J. D. Porteous, “Empedocles,” *OCD*² 382.

²⁴ [Diogenes] (*Ep.* 6 Malherbe 96f) explains to Crates: “Nature is mighty and, since it has been banished from life by appearance, it is what we restore for the salvation of mankind.” He expresses this might of nature in a letter to Hippon (*Ep.* 25 Malherbe 116f): “For as nature begets, it also destroys.” This might of nature is revealed in the only certain thing of which Diogenes is conscious—that death follows birth (*Ep.* 22 Malherbe 114f).

²⁵ Zeller 389: “In the feeling of moral independence, and in his invincible strength of will, the Cynic is opposed to the whole world; he needs for virtue no scientific knowledge of the world and its laws; he regards nothing external to himself; he allows nothing; but, in consequence, he remains with his virtue confined to himself.” Malherbe (*supra* n.9: 50f) comments on [Heraclitus] *Ep.* 4:

Thus, what distinguishes the Cynic represented in this letter from the Stoic, is a rejection of the power of *τύχη* and a stress on the actual life of virtue rather than on a life supported by intricate doctrine.... Cynic theology, on the contrary, had no room for either the popular or the public cult, and generally appears not to have had room for personal religion. Cynic individualism rejected outside claims, even those considered to be part of a divine scheme. Rather, the stress was on the individual’s own will which was all-important in his pursuit of virtue. In this endeavor it was the practical life, unencumbered by theoretical baggage that demonstrated the virtue through which the sage could be said to live with the gods.

ses of nature.²⁶ Correct labor in the generative process prepares one for the eventual destructive process.²⁷ By rejecting every useless toil imposed by civilization, the Cynic engages in the useful labors according to the dual processes of nature.²⁸

Goulet-Cazé (66–71) perceives an ambiguity in the Cynic attitude toward nature. On the one hand, a person must live a life according to nature by relying only upon what nature adequately provides. On the other hand, a person must overcome nature's condemnation that results in suffering and death. In her view, there is no other solution for the Cynic but to accept and prepare for the inevitable condemnation of nature. This Cynic ambiguity toward nature finds its resolution in the mythical view of nature adopted by the Cynics.

Both Stoics and Cynics advocate an investigation into nature. Both, however, utilize different methods. The Stoics employ empiricism that results in pragmatism; the Cynics embrace myth that results in extreme asceticism. Stoicism sees nature as it is presently; Cynicism looks at nature as it was and can be for the undeluded person. Stoics assume a passive posture in regard to nature and by strength of resolve pragmatically cooperate with the vicissitudes of nature. Cynics actively poise themselves toward nature. They labor strenuously to realize nature as it should be and was in the days of Chronos, and toil hardily to prepare for the inevitable fortune that nature brings. These differing approaches to nature give rise to the many differences in the conclusions of the two philosophical schools about what living according to nature requires.

²⁶ [Diogenes] teaches Monimus (*Ep.* 39.2 Malherbe 164f) that Cynic asceticism is a practice in dying. Those who do not live the life according to nature and strip away as much as possible from the body in this life will suffer in death, but "whenever we exercise the proper care, life also becomes sweet, the end is not unpleasant, and the road is very easy. For every practice that encounters such a soul guides it onto easily traveled routes.... And as if the soul were practiced at living all alone, it does not loathe leaving its body behind." For this author Cynicism's extreme asceticism is only a preparation for the complete stripping away of everything at death.

²⁷ Goulet-Cazé (71) discusses the vigorous Cynic training as an attempt to combat fortune and to endure the suffering and death destined to come.

²⁸ Goulet-Cazé (55) notes that Diogenes trained uniformly against the *ponoi* that social custom imposed and that led to all sorts of worries and miseries. She concludes (42ff) that the pleasures of the civilized life are reprehensible to the Cynics for three reasons: suffering is a consequence of intemperance, pleasure leads to spiraling desire which takes more and more effort, and pleasure weakens one's resistance to suffering.

The Cynics on the Natural Life

In contrast to the Stoics, the Cynics adopt an extreme asceticism informed by human life as it was lived in the Golden Age of Chronos. A correlation of the Cynic lifestyle with Ovid's description of the Golden Age provides a rationale for this asceticism, including their rejection of cultural commodities, commerce, war, laws, and seasons.

In the Age of Chronos, the earth without human labor produced everything necessary for human life: "The earth herself, without compulsion, untouched by hoe or plowshare, of herself gave all things needful. And men, content with food which came with no one's seeking, gathered the arbutue fruit ... hanging thick upon the prickly bramble, and acorns fallen from the spreading tree of Jove" (*Ov. Met.* 1.101–106). Based on such descriptions, Cynics concluded that the natural life requires eating only what is available without labor.²⁹

The Cynics reject all foods and beverages not present in the Age of Chronos as a threat to Cynic self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια) and desire for liberty (ἐλευθερία). Wine is avoided because it makes the Cynic dependent upon the wine industry. Cakes and delicacies are refused, for they bind the Cynic to the accomplished chef. Consider Ps.-Diogenes' reasoning (*Ep.* 37 Malherbe 156–59):

I, after first practicing how to eat and drink in the company of Antisthenes, reached the road to happiness in breathless haste. And arriving at where happiness really was, I said, "For your sake, Happiness, and for the sake of the greater good, I persisted in drinking water, eating cresses, and lying on the ground." She answered me and said, "I will make these things, far from a hardship, more pleasant to you than the goods of wealth, which people rank first, ahead of me. But they are not aware that they are nurturing a tyrant for themselves.

²⁹ E.g. [Heraclitus] to Hermodorus (*Ep.* 4.5 Malherbe 192f): "The whole earth is a fruit-bearing witness"; [Anacharsis] to Croesus (*Ep.* 9 Malherbe 48f): "All of us possess the whole earth. What it freely gives, we accept. What it hides, we dismiss from our minds"; Lucian's Cynic: "But I live like that moderate man, making a feast of what is in my reach, and using what is least expensive, with no desire for dainties from the ends of the earth" (*Cynic* 11); "But may I have for bed to meet my needs the whole earth, may I consider the universe my house, and choose for food that which is easiest to procure" (15).

As Ps.-Diogenes astutely realizes, eating foods produced by the culture introduced after the Age of Chronos subjugates one to the tyranny of culture.³⁰ While eating olives among which a cake had been inserted, Diogenes flung the cake away and said, "Stranger, betake thee from the princes' path" (D.L. 6.55).

Because the foods present in the Golden Age were naturally replenished and available to all, they liberate the Cynic from culture and dependence upon others, as in the days of Chronos.³¹ Ps.-Diogenes writes to Monimus (*Ep.* 37 Malherbe 157):

Let ... our drink be spring water and the food bread, and the appetizer salt or watercress. These things I learned to eat and drink, while being taught at the feet of Antisthenes, not as though they were poor fare but that they were superior to the rest and more likely to be found on the road leading to happiness, which should be regarded as the most esteemed of all possessions.³²

In a similar fashion, Ps.-Crates instructs the youth, "Accustom yourselves to eat barley cake and to drink water, and do not

³⁰ Cf. D.L. 6.58: "Plato saw him [Diogenes] washing lettuces, came up to him and quietly said to him, 'Had you paid court to Dionysius, you wouldn't now be washing lettuces,' and ... he with equal calmness made answer, 'If you had washed lettuces, you wouldn't have paid court to Dionysius'."

³¹ Lucian, *Cynic* 15:

I pray that I may have feet no different from horses' hooves, as they say were those of Chiron, and that I myself may not need bedclothes any more than do the lions, nor expensive fare any more than do the dogs. But may I have for bed to meet my needs the whole earth, may I consider the universe my house, and choose for food that which is easiest to procure. Gold and silver may I not need, neither I nor any of my friends. For from the desire for these grow up all men's ills—civic strife, wars, conspiracies and murders. All these have as their fountainhead the desire for more. But may this desire be far from us, and never may I reach out for more than my share, but be able to put up with less than my share.

³² Cf. [Diogenes] to Lacydes (*Ep.* 37.4f Malherbe 156f):

These things I learned to eat and drink, while being taught at the feet of Antisthenes, not as though they were poor fare but that they were superior to the rest and more likely to be found on the road leading to happiness ... In a very secure and precipitous place, one road, steep and rugged, is laid out. And so, because of its ruggedness, an individual, stripped for action ... would have to make the grass or cresses along the road his food and common water his drink, and these especially where it would be necessary to proceed most expeditiously.... One must train oneself to eat cresses and drink water, and to wear a light, ragged cloak.

taste fish and wine. For the latter, like the drugs of Circe, make old men bestial and young men effeminate."³³ Because the earth amply provides grains and vegetables as it did in the Age of Chronos, these foods along with water comprise the strict Cynic diet of the natural life.³⁴

Contentment with what the earth amply provides renders commerce unnecessary; hence, the Age of Chronos lacks such commercial activities as sailing, construction, agriculture, mining, and ownership of property. Ovid describes the lack of commercial activity thus (*Met.* 1.94f):

Not yet had the pine-tree, felled on its native mountains, descended thence into the watery plain to visit other lands; men knew no shores except their own.... Anon the earth, untilled, brought forth her stores of grain, and the fields, though unfallowed, grew white with the heavy, bearded wheat. Streams of milk and streams of sweet nectar flowed, and yellow honey was distilled from the verdant oak.

In the subsequent Silver Age, humans first began to construct homes and to engage in agriculture. Sailing, mining, and private ownership of property, Ovid continues, were introduced in a still later age known as the Iron Age.³⁵

³³ *Ep.* 14 Malherbe 65; *cf.* his exhortation to the young (*Ep.* 18 Malherbe 68f):

Accustom yourselves to wash with cold water, to drink only water, to eat nothing that has not been earned by toil, to wear a cloak, and to make it a habit to sleep on the ground. Then the baths will never be closed to you, the vineyards and flocks fail, the fish shops and couch shops go broke, as they will to those who have learned how to wash with hot water, to drink wine, to eat without having toiled, to wear purple clothing, and to rest on a couch.

³⁴ Heraclitus existed upon a diet of grass and herbs (*D.L.* 9.3); *cf.* *D.L.* 6.105: "They [Cynics] hold that we should live frugally, eating food for nourishment only and wearing a single garment. Wealth and fame and high birth they despise. Some at all events are vegetarians and drink cold water only and are content with any kind of shelter or tubs." For a concise explanation of the Cynic position see Lucian, *Cynic* 5.

³⁵ *Met.* 1.121–24, 127–50:

In that age [Silver] men first sought the shelter of houses. Their homes had heretofore been caves, dense thickets, and branches bound together with bark. Then first the seeds of grain were planted in long furrows, and bullocks groaned beneath the heavy yoke.... The age of hard iron came last. Straightway all evil burst forth into this age of baser vein: modesty and truth and faith fled the earth, and in their place came tricks and plots and snares, violence and cursed love of gain. Men now spread sails to the winds, though the sailor as yet scarce knew them; and keels of pine which long had stood upon high mountain-sides, now leaped insolently over unknown waves. And the ground, which had hitherto been a common possession like sunlight and the

Understanding the natural life as life in the Age of Chronos, Cynics consider commercial activities inimical to nature.³⁶ Anacharsis, the Scythian prince admired by the Cynics, allegedly wrote to Croesus (*Ep.* 9 Malherbe 48f): "All of us possess the whole earth. What it freely gives, we accept. What it hides, we dismiss from our minds."³⁷ In the same letter Ps.-Anacharsis contrasts his Cynic natural lifestyle with that of the deluded Greeks (*Ep.* 9 Malherbe 47):

The Greek poets in their poetry distributed the universe among the sons of Chronos, and assigned to one the sphere of heaven, to the second that of the sea, and to the third that of the nether darkness. This distribution arose from the Greeks' pursuit of their own interests.... The earth was long ago the common possession of gods and men. In time, however, men transgressed by dedicating to the gods as their private precincts what was the common possession of all. In re-

air, the careful surveyor now marked out with long-drawn boundary-line. Not only did men demand of the bounteous fields the crops and sustenance they owed, but they delved as well into the very bowels of the earth; and the wealth which the creator had hidden away and buried deep amidst the very Stygian shades, was brought to light, wealth that pricks men on to crime. And now baneful iron had come, and gold more baneful than iron; war came, which fights with both, and brandished in its bloody hands the clashing arms. Men lived on plunder.... Piety lay vanquished, and the maiden Astraea, last of the immortals, abandoned the blood-soaked earth.

³⁶ Cynics deplore slavery, an essential component of Greco-Roman commerce. [Diogenes] admonishes Lacydes for a lavish meal complete with servant attendants (*Ep.* 37.4 Malherbe 156f): "And don't let even a single waiter stand here in service. For our hands will be adequate for this, and indeed they were given to us by nature for this purpose." Cf. D.L. 6.55: "When he [Diogenes] was advised to go in pursuit of his runaway slave, he replied, 'It would be absurd, if Manes can live without Diogenes, but Diogenes cannot get along without Manes'."

³⁷ Cf. Favorinus *De fuga* 9.15:

The earth is the common mother and nurse of all mankind. Now God gave the finny creatures one fatherland, the sea, to dwell in, and one to the winged race, the heavens, and to those animals that dwell on land he allotted a safe refuge, the earth, roofing it over with the heavens and walling it in with the ocean. Now the birds and the fish preserve the distribution of God, and so do all other animals, that dwell on land. But men alone through lust of greed (πλεονεξία) portion out the earth, splitting up the gift of God and dividing it up amongst themselves.

Dudley (200) comments on his translation: "The speech is also marked by appeals, in the favorite manner of the Cynics, to the habits of animals as affording evidence for the standards of the 'natural life'.... The lesson that we should be content with the qualities we possess κατὰ φύσιν and not seek δόξα and τιμή is enforced."

turn for these, the gods bestowed upon men fitting gifts: strife, desire for pleasure, and meanness of spirit. From a mixture and a separation of these grew all the evils which afflict all mortals: tilling the soil, sowing, metals, and wars. For although they sowed very liberally, they harvested but little, and although they worked at various crafts, they found only a short-lived luxuriousness. They sought the treasures of the earth in various ways, and deemed their search a wonderful thing! They regard as most blessed the first man who devised this silly little undertaking. They do not know that like children they deceive themselves.

Ps.-Anacharsis clearly excludes commercial activities from the Cynic natural life, which finds contentment with natural commodities close at hand.³⁸

Other Cynic writings concur with Ps.-Anacharsis.³⁹ Ps.-Crates castigates the wealthy (*Ep.* 7 Malherbe 58f):

Go hang yourselves, for although you have lupines, dried figs, water, and Megarian tunics, you engage in trade and cultivate much land, you are guilty of treachery, you exercise tyranny and commit murder, and you perpetrate whatever other such things there are—despite the fact that one should live quietly.... Although we possess nothing, we have everything, but you, though you have everything, really have nothing.⁴⁰

Lucian's Cynic agrees (*Cynic* 9f, 15):

And yet all these things happen, although the many-coloured robes can afford no more warmth, and the gilded houses no more shelter, though neither the silver nor the golden goblets improve the drink, nor do the ivory beds provide sweeter sleep, but you will often see the prosperous unable to sleep in their ivory beds and expensive blankets. And need I tell you that the many foods so elaborately prepared afford no more nourishment, but harm the body and produce diseases in it?

³⁸ [Diogenes] *Ep.* 30.4 Malherbe 132f: Antisthenes give him [Diogenes] a bag so that he might carry his house with him everywhere; Lucian *Cynic* 15 (quoted *supra* n.31).

³⁹ *E.g.* A first-century letter [of Socrates] (*Ep.* 6.2 Malherbe 232f): "Therefore, I am satisfied to have the plainest food and the same garment summer and winter, and I do not wear shoes at all, nor do I desire political fame except to the extent that it comes from being prudent and just."

⁴⁰ [Crates's] conclusion illustrates Diogenes' definition of poverty in a letter (33.3 Malherbe 140f) to Phanomachus: "Poverty does not consist in not having money, nor is begging a bad thing, but poverty consists in desiring everything, and that is in your power to do, and to do so with vigor. Therefore, springs and earth are allies to my poverty, yes even caves and goat skins are."

... But may I have for bed to meet my needs the whole earth,
 may I consider the universe my house, and choose for food
 that which is easiest to procure.

According to the Cynics, a life according to nature excludes commercial activities. Just as humans in the Age of Chronos found satisfaction in the food and shelter nature provides, so also Cynics live the life of the Golden Age by seeking similar contentment.⁴¹ This contentment guarantees the freedom of the Golden Age by releasing the Cynic from the tyranny of commerce, with the troubles it brings.⁴²

This lack of commerce in the Age of Chronos removes enticements for war. As everyone has everything needful provided by the fruitful earth, no one needs to take from another. Everyone dwells in security and peace, and the Golden Age knows neither urban defenses nor wars: "Not yet were cities begirt with steep moats; there were no trumpets of straight, no horns of curving brass, no swords or helmets. There was no need at all of armed men, for nations, secure from war's alarms, passed the years in gentle ease" (*Ov. Met.* 1.97–100).

Cynics realize the peace and security of the Golden Age by expelling all desires for possessions neither close at hand nor provided naturally by the earth. Ps.-Diogenes writes to Plato (*Ep.* 46 Malherbe 176f): "I certainly think that I benefit life more than all other men ... for what enemy would campaign against a person so self-sufficient (αὐτάρκης) and simple? Against what king or people would those satisfied with such things begin a

⁴¹ Lucian *Cynic* 11: "But I live like that moderate man, making a feast of what is in my reach, and using what is least expensive, with no desire for dainties from the ends of the earth."

⁴² [Diogenes] to Crates (*Ep.* 9 Malherbe 102f): "I heard that you brought all your property to the assembly, delivered it over to your fatherland, and, standing in the midst of the people, cried out, 'Crates, son of Crates, sets Crates free'." [Diogenes'] critique of Plato (46 Malherbe 176f): "You scorn my rough cloak and wallet as though they were burdensome and difficult, and my way of life as of no benefit, doing no good. Now they are burdensome and difficult to you, for you learned to take your fill without moderation from the tables of a tyrant, and to adorn yourself with the bellies of sheep, but not with the virtue of the soul." Diogenes taught that human sorrows arise from engagement with civilization; consequently, he trained uniformly against the *ponoi* that social custom imposed and that led to all sorts of worries and miseries: Goulet-Cazé (42, 55), who observes (42ff) that Cynics despise the pleasures of the civilized life because they lead to increasing desire that consumes effort, weaken one's resistance to suffering, and occasion intemperance that causes suffering.

war?" Ps.-Diogenes replies to Alexander (*Ep.* 33.3 Malherbe 140–43): "And no one fights me because of it [my poverty], neither on land nor sea. But as I was born, mark well, so also do I live." Crates jestingly describes the paradise of Pera, the philosopher's bag (*Anth. Plan.* 5.13; tr. Dudley 44; cf. D.L. 6.85):

There is a city, Pera, in the midst of the wine-coloured sea of τῦφος, fair and fruitful it is, and exceeding squalid, owning naught. Thither sails no fool nor parasite, no lecher whose delight is in harlots, but it beareth thyme and garlic, figs and loaves. For such men fight not against each other, nor yet do they take up arms for petty gain, nor for glory.... [fr. 5]. Free they are [*i.e.*, the inhabitants of Pera] from Lust the enslaver of men, they are unbent by it: rather do they delight in Freedom, and immortal Basileia.... [fr. 6]. She ruleth their hearts and rejoiceth in her own possessions, no slave is she to gold nor to the wasting desires of Love, nor to aught that has to do with Wantonness.

"For Crates ... the ideal state is Pera, the philosopher's knapsack, symbol of that ἀντάρκεια through which he is independent of all communities. In his knapsack he finds all the joys of the Golden Age—satisfaction of his humble needs, peace, freedom, and contentment...."⁴³

This ideal, contented society in the Age of Chronos lacks not only defenses but also laws. Everyone has everything needful, and the incentive to take from or to mistreat another is lacking. Ovid describes this aspect of the Golden Age (*Met.* 1.89–93): "Golden was that first age, which, with no one to compel, without a law, of its own will, kept faith and did the right. There was no fear of punishment, no threatening words were to be read on brazen tablets; no suppliant throng gazed fearfully upon its judge's face; but without judges lived secure."⁴⁴ According to Ovid, written laws are not needed in the Age of Chronos.

As laws are superfluous to the Golden Age, they are also superfluous to the natural life according to the Cynics. Ps.-Crates writes to his students (*Ep.* 5 Malherbe 56f):

Law is good but it is not superior to philosophy. For the former compels a man not to do wrong, but the latter teaches him not to do a wrong. To the degree that doing something under compulsion is worse than doing it willingly, to that de-

⁴³ H. Baldry, "Zeno's Ideal State," *JHS* 79 (1959) 14.

⁴⁴ For the sophist Critias' expression of this ideal, see Goulet-Cazé, "Religion" (*supra* n.4) 53; cf. her "Les premiers Cyniques" (*supra* n.4) 124.

gree law is worse than philosophy. For this reason do philosophy and do not take part in government. For it is better to know the means by which men are taught to do right than to know the means by which they are compelled not to do wrong.

Ps.-Diogenes assumes a similar rôle for law when he writes to the so-called Greeks (*Ep.* 28.1 Malherbe 120f): "Therefore, nature takes vengeance on you, for in contriving laws for yourselves you have allotted to yourselves the greatest and most pervasive delusion that issues from them, and you admit them as witnesses to your ingrained evil."

For the Cynics, laws composed according to nature are superfluous to persons who live that natural life because these persons naturally do the fitting thing.⁴⁵ Ps.-Heraclitus praises Hermodorus for composing such laws: "Those who will obey yours laws, Hermodorus, will be better men. Don't be irritated. My character (each man's character is his own guardian spirit) prophesies this. Yes, those will obey who have complete power because they have imitated nature" (*Ep.* 9.6 Malherbe 214f; *cf.* 9.1, 210f).

Cynics also know of laws not composed according to nature and feel obliged to ignore them.⁴⁶ "The counterpart of *παρρησία* (frankness) in speech is *ἀναιδέια* (shamelessness) in action.... For him [Diogenes], whatever is 'according to nature' is proper at all times and in all places" (Dudley 29). Diogenes Laertius states (6.69): "He [Diogenes] used to draw out the following arguments. 'If to breakfast is not absurd, therefore it is not absurd to breakfast in the market-place'. Behaving indecently in public, he wished 'it were as easy to banish hunger by rubbing the belly'." Hence, Diogenes identifies himself as the "prophet of indifference" toward all laws and customs not in

⁴⁵ [Heraclitus] to Hermodorus (*Ep.* 9.2 Malherbe 210f): "An Ephesian man, if he is good, is a citizen of the world. For this is the common country of all men, in which the law is not something written, but is God, and the one who transgresses against what is not fitting is impious. But, in fact, no one will transgress if he will not go unnoticed when he has transgressed."

⁴⁶ [Heraclitus] writes to Hermodorus of a "lawless law" that the Ephesians are about to pass against him because it is not in accord with nature: *Ep.* 7.1 Malherbe 200f; *cf.* 7.10, 207f: "You [the Ephesians] transgress the laws, you enact illegal laws, you do by force what does not come to you naturally."

accord with the natural life.⁴⁷ He also identifies himself as a “citizen of the cosmos” to emphasize his freedom from the laws of any particular community.⁴⁸ “Whereas Stoicism developed in the direction of upholding the norms of society, the Cynics shocked the Greeks by abandoning manners and saying and doing whatever they wanted when they wanted.... The Cynics alone among the Greeks did not view life as lived in society as a life of ruling and being ruled.”⁴⁹ In their disregard for laws and customs, the Cynics again demonstrate that their conception of the natural life arises from life as it was in the days of Chronos.⁵⁰

One other aspect of the life in the Age of Chronos explains the bizarre Cynic hostility to the seasons. In Chronos’ days, the earth enjoyed eternal spring.⁵¹ After Jupiter (Zeus) banished Saturn (Chronos) and took control, Jupiter “shortened the bounds of the old-time spring, and through winter, summer,

⁴⁷ [Diogenes] to Aynander (*Ep.* 21 Malherbe 114f): “As the prophet of indifference I speak these words plainly, which are opposed to the deluded life. But if they seem to be rather hard to some, nature yet confirms them with truth, as does the life of those who live, not under delusion, but in accord with virtue”; to Monimus (39.1, 164f): “Don’t we do the same when we ask what is according to nature and what according to convention (νόμον)?”

⁴⁸ D.L. 6.63: “I am a citizen of the world (κοσμοπολίτης)”; and more explicitly, 6.98: “Not one tower hath my country nor one roof, but wide as the whole earth its citadel and home prepared for us to dwell therein”; see also Lucian *Vit. Auct.* 8; cf. W. W. Tarn, “Alexander the Great and the Brotherhood of Man,” *ProcBritAc* 19 (1933) 125: “When Diogenes called himself a cosmopolite ... what he meant was, not that he was a citizen of some imaginary world-state—a thing he never thought about—but that he was not a citizen of any Greek city; it was pure negation”; Rist 59: “The wise man does not inhabit an ordinary city or respect ordinary laws. He has no use for the trappings of civilization like weapons or currency. He is a citizen only of the universe, not of any of the cities of men. It is certain that when Diogenes called himself a ‘cosmopolitan,’ he meant it negatively; he did not belong to any particular city.” *Contra*, Moles 143, who argues that the Cynics had a positive “programme” for creating an ideal world-state.

⁴⁹ E. Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids 1987) 276. Crates said that all he has gained from philosophy is “A quart of lupines and to care for no one” (D.L. 6.86). Cf. Baldry (*supra* n.43) 14: “The Cynics on the other hand welcomed the conception of the philosopher as the odd man out. The wise man not only does, but should, stand apart from society. He is κοσμοπολίτης and owes allegiance to no community but the universe.”

⁵⁰ Rist 59: for Diogenes the mark of the wise is to reject civic conventions; see Goulet-Cazé (*supra* n.10) 2752; for Stoic accommodation, see Zeller 326.

⁵¹ *Ov. Met.* 1.107f: “Then spring was everlasting, and gentle zephyrs with warm breath played with the flowers that sprang unplanted.”

variable autumn, and brief spring completed the year in four seasons. Then first the parched air glared white with burning heat, and icicles hung down congealed by freezing winds."⁵² Diogenes the Cynic resisted the tyranny of the season by hugging freezing statues in winter and in summer by heating his clay sleeping barrel by rolling it over the hot summer sands. Likewise, Crates wore a thick cloak in summer and rags in winter (D.L. 6.87). These strange actions assert the Cynics' liberty from the tyranny of seasons imposed after the Age of Chronos, when "eternal spring" reigned.

The correlation of life in the Golden Age with the Cynic conception of the natural life reveals the importance of this myth for the Cynic lifestyle. By rejecting everything not present in the Age of Chronos and by embracing everything present in that Age, Cynics attempt to realize the life of the Golden Age even among others who persist in living the deluded life of subsequent ages. A comparison of Cynic and Stoic positions on indifference, detachment, and fate further underscores the importance of this myth for Cynic philosophy.

The Cynics on Indifference, Detachment, and Fate

Concerning indifference, both Cynics and Stoics agree that some things are morally right, others wrong, and still others indifferent. The Cynic mythical view of nature leads to the repudiation of everything in the indifferent category that was not present during the Age of Chronos.⁵³ Rejection of hierarchical relationships, wealth, fame, and noble birth are prominent examples. As the gods wore cloaks during this age, a cloak is per-

⁵² *Ov. Met.* 1.113–20. This introduction of the seasons coincided with the rise of the silver race of humans.

⁵³ Zeller 390:

In ethics, too, the difference of the two Schools is also fully apparent. Stoic morality recognizes, at least conditionally, a positive and negative value in external things and circumstances; the Cynic allows absolutely no value. The former forbids affection contrary to reason, the latter any and every kind of affection. The former throws back the individual upon human society, the latter isolates him. The former teaches citizenship of the world in a positive sense, requiring all to feel themselves one with their fellow-men; the latter in the negative sense, of feeling indifferent to home and family.

mitted, though it belongs to the indifferent category.⁵⁴ The empirical view of nature allows the Stoics pragmatically to prefer many items in this indifferent category that the Cynics reject.⁵⁵ Stoics can recognize social superiors, hold wealth, seek fame, and take pride in noble birth. This major distinction between the two schools concerning indifference is related to their differing approaches to nature.

Both Cynics and Stoics argue for detachment as the proper attitude of the wise person.⁵⁶ Cynics, however, seek solitude in the universe and attempt to avoid all passion and feeling. Their anti-social commitment resulting from their mythical understanding of nature forbids participation in a society that would enslave them and detract from their pursuit of freedom. In the days of Chronos, urban and cultural life were absent. In order for a Cynic to return to those days, he or she must reject society. In contrast, the Stoics assess society positively and find

⁵⁴ [Diogenes] to his father Hicetas (*Ep.* 7 Malherbe 98f):

As for my clothing, even Homer writes that Odysseus, the wisest of the Greeks, so dressed ... under Athena's direction. And the vesture is so fine that it is commonly acknowledged to be a discovery not of men but of the gods. "First she gave him a cloak, tunic and mantle, seedy, dirty, stained by filthy smoke. She put around him a large, hairless hide of swift deer and gave him a staff and a poor leather pouch, riddled with holes, with a knapsack strap on it" [*Od.* 13.434–38]. Take heart, Father, at the name which they call me, and at my clothing, since the dog is under the protection of the gods and his clothing is god's invention.

⁵⁵ Rist 72: "We have argued that the introduction of the classes of the preferred and rejected among the intermediates marks Zeno's major break with Cynicism, and that it leads to considerable further breaks, including the abandonment of the Cynic contempt for certain kinds of traditional learning"; cf. Goulet-Cazé's remark (41) that the Cynic sage is insensitive to both pleasures and pain. Pursuing virtue and rejecting evil is the only thing that matters. Indifference for the Stoic is different because some things are preferable some things are not.

⁵⁶ Rist (72) explains the two views of detachment:

According to the Cynics the wise man is ἀπαθής—and the word seems to mean 'totally detached', and, in some of the Cynics at least, 'unemotional' in the fullest sense. We recall Antisthenes' remark that he would rather be mad than feel physical pleasure. Now we know that the Stoics, certainly from the time of Chrysippus, offered a theory very different from that of the Cynics, the theory that, although πάθη, which are irrational movements of the soul, must be extirpated, yet there are rational states of emotion which will be characteristic of the wise man; these are called states of εὐπάθεια

Cf. Zeller 390 (quoted *supra* n.53).

analogies for it in the natural world. They seek to perform dutifully their assigned social rôles. Their view of nature encourages integration, not exclusion, from society. Furthermore, Stoics recognize passions and feelings as natural but place them under strict rational control. Again, these differences are substantiated by their differing approaches to nature.

Both groups endorse doctrines of fate.⁵⁷ The Stoic view of nature as cause and effect results in an absolute determinism.⁵⁸ The chain of events already in process determines every future event, and nothing can alter this process.⁵⁹ The Cynic mythical view of nature produces the conception of an open continuum. Only the generative and destructive processes of nature are inevitable.⁶⁰ Fate demands that every living thing will ultimately die and new living things will be generated. Aside from these two processes, however, nothing else is determined. By their actions, living things can hasten or slow the process of decay

⁵⁷ Malherbe (*supra* n.9: 51) summarizes the distinctive Cynic and Stoic perspectives:

Stoicism had a theology which regarded the divine as exercising control over man and the world. The wise man brings himself into harmony with the divine design as he determines what it is. The means by which he does so is Stoic logic and physics, which provide the basis for his ethics. When he thus attains virtue he in a sense shares the divine life and is able to direct the cult, which is intelligible as a part of the divine scheme. Cynic theology, on the contrary, had no room for either the popular or the public cult, and generally appears not to have had room for personal religion. Cynic individualism rejected outside claims, even those considered to be part of a divine scheme. Rather, the stress was on the individual's own will which was all-important in his pursuit of virtue. In this endeavor it was the practical life, unencumbered by theoretical baggage that demonstrated the virtue through which the sage could be said to live with the gods.

Cf. 50: "Thus, what distinguishes the Cynic ... from the Stoic, is a rejection of the power of *τύχη* and a stress on the actual life of virtue rather than on a life supported by intricate doctrine."

⁵⁸ Zeller 165f: "No sooner, however, will everything have returned to its original unity, and the course of the world have come to an end, than the formation of a new world will begin, so exactly corresponding with the previous world that every particular thing, every particular person, and every occurrence will recur in it, precisely as they occurred in the world preceding." The Stoics used "destiny" or the "will of Zeus" to refer to this determinism (170f).

⁵⁹ *Cf.* Zeller 177f: "The Stoics were thus involved in a difficulty which besets every theory of necessity—the difficulty of doing justice to the claims of morality, and of vindicating the existence of moral responsibility."

⁶⁰ [Diogenes] to Agesilaus (*Ep.* 22 Malherbe 114f: "I am conscious of but one thing certain, that death follows birth.")

but not prevent it.⁶¹ The time of death is not determined by a blueprint although it is inevitable. Individuals are free to act or not act as they choose, and their choices can affect future events. Thus, the empirical nature of Stoicism culminates in determinism; the mythical nature of Cynicism in an open continuum that is restricted only by the natural processes of growth and decay.

The comparison of Cynic and Stoic positions emphasizes the importance of the Chronos myth for understanding the differences between the two philosophies, both of which attempt to live according to nature.⁶² Although both groups adhere to the

⁶¹ [Diogenes] to the so-called Greeks (*Ep.* 28.5 Malherbe 122f):

And where you bar Cynics from a natural and true way of life, how would you not offend them? I, the Cynic, for my part punish you in word, but nature likewise punishes all of you in deed, for death, which you fear, dangles over you equally. Now I have often seen beggars enjoying health because of want, and rich people ailing from the intemperance of their unfortunate stomach and penis. For while you gratified these you were titillated for a short time by pleasure, which displays great and grievous pains.

⁶² Perhaps Seneca offers the best distinguishing summary of Cynic and Stoic attitudes toward nature and their consequent ethic. Seneca compares the Stoic and Cynic motto of living according to nature by contrasting a higher standard of life with a contrary standard, sociability with individualism, proper use of societal goods with the absolute prohibition against their use, moderate conduct with absurd conduct, and plain living with penance. In each example, the former attribute represents his assessment of the Stoic conclusion; the latter attribute the Cynic conclusion. As a Stoic, Seneca criticizes the Cynic viewpoint (*Ep.* 5.2–5):

Inwardly, we ought to be different in all respects, but our exterior should conform to society. Do not wear too fine, nor yet too frowzy, a toga. One needs no silver plate, encrusted and embossed in solid gold; but we should not believe the lack of silver and gold to be proof of the simple life. Let us try to maintain a higher standard of life than that of the multitude, but not a contrary standard; otherwise, we shall frighten away and repel the very persons whom we are trying to improve.... The first thing which philosophy undertakes to give is fellow-feeling with all men; in other words, sympathy and sociability. We part company with our promise if we are unlike other men. We must see to it that the means by which we wish to draw admiration be not absurd and odious. Our motto, as you know, is "Live according to Nature"; but it is quite contrary to nature to torture the body, to hate unlaboured elegance, to be dirty on purpose, to eat food that is not only plain, but disgusting and forbidding. Just as it is a sign of luxury to seek out dainties, so it is madness to avoid that which is customary and can be purchased at no great price. Philosophy calls for plain living, but not for penance; and we may perfectly well be plain and neat at the same time. This is the mean of which I approve; our life should observe a happy medium between the ways of a sage and the ways of the world at large; all men should admire it, but they should understand it also.

For a discussion of Seneca's distinctions between Cynics and Stoics, see M. Billerbeck, "La Réception du Cynisme à Rome," *AntCl* 51 (1982) 159f.

same motto, they formulate different conceptions of indifference, detachment, and fate because the Stoics investigate nature empirically and the Cynics mythically. If the Cynics had moved beyond invective to engage in theoretical discussions with their Stoic counterparts, both groups perhaps might have understood more astutely that their differences resulted from differing conceptions of nature arising from their disparate approaches to the investigation of nature: a mythical versus an empirical approach to nature.

Conclusion

Even though the Chronos Myth does not explain every aspect of Cynic philosophy, this myth lends coherence, organization, and justification to the Cynic lifestyle, as the preceding investigation of the sources demonstrates. This myth informs the Cynic understanding of nature and the natural life as well as the positions Cynics take on important issues such as indifference, detachment, and fate. Cynics do not need Stoicism's physics and logic, for the myth enables them to see nature as it was in the days of Chronos and should be even now for the undeluded person. Cynic asceticism in living the natural life is a rejection of everything not present in the Golden Age. By appealing to their conception of life in that age, Cynics justify and articulate their positions on important issues vis-à-vis other positions. The myth of the Age of Chronos exerts a significant influence upon Cynic philosophy and merits consideration as an important justifying principle for the Cynic lifestyle.⁶³

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⁶³ This investigation of the myth of Chronos in Cynicism should be extended to the assessment of other myths in Cynic sources. Dio Chrysostom contains rich material for such an investigation: Prometheus (6.25, 29; 8.33), Heracles (8.27, 36), and Oedipus (10.24f, 27, 29-32), as well as Pan learning "the trick" from Hermes (6.20), Tantalus in Hades (6.55), Circe's relations with Odysseus (6.62; 8.21), and Tereus and his wife being turned into birds (9.19). Whether these myths actually inform the Cynic world view or simply serve as vehicles to communicate Cynic views, or perhaps a little of both, is important but lies beyond the scope of this paper.