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Excerpt

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ETHICS

F150a, b Galen, *De Placitis* IV.421,
pp. 396.15–397.8 M, 284.33–286.7 De Lacy;
Galen, *De Placitis* V.471, p. 451.5–13 M,
328.21–7 De Lacy

CONTENT

F150a: Posidonius, who admired Plato's doctrines on the πάθη and the δυνάμεις of the soul, said that instruction on the virtues and on the end is tied to this, and that in short all the doctrines of ethical philosophy are bound as if by a single cord to the knowledge of the powers (δυνάμεις) of the soul.

F150b exemplifies this with another quotation from Posidonius: 'Once the cause of the emotions was seen, it broke the absurdity (of the Chrysippean explanation of the τέλος), showed the sources of distortion in choice and avoidance (of good and evil), distinguished the methods of training, and made clear the problems concerning the impulse (ὄρμηξ) that rises from emotion (πάθος).'

CONTEXT

F150a: comm. on F165.75–102.

F150b: comm. on F187.37ff.

COMMENT

F150a reiterates the claim made by the quotation from near the beginning of Περὶ παθῶν, Bk 1, given in F30. F30 listed

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good and evil, ends and virtues as being dependent on the correct study of *πάθη*; F150a repeats virtues and end, but explicitly widens to the whole of ethical philosophy. More importantly, it clarifies what F30 meant by the correct examination of *πάθη*, namely that the key of moral philosophy lies in knowledge of the *δυνάμεις* of the soul. Psychology is indeed both the fundamental point of difference between Posidonius and Chrysippus, and the core of investigation in all Posidonius' explanations of the problems of ethics. F150b gives one illustration of this in different subdivisions of ethics (Frs. 161, 168, 162, 187, 174, 166; and for divisions of ethics, 89).

There was probably a difference in methodology between Posidonius and Chrysippus. Chrysippus appears to have approached the fundamental problems of psychology and ethics from metaphysics, or Stoic 'physical philosophy' (Plu. *De SR* ch. 9 = *SVF* III.68). Posidonius would not have rejected this (F18), but in practice recognised the importance of observed fact in behaviour as a relevant factor, and this was especially crucial in the problem of *πάθη* (e.g. F169, *imit.*).

Is F150a.6–10 merely a reworded interpretation by Galen of the quotation in F30? If so, all other evidence indicates that the interpretation is undoubtedly correct. But the striking elaboration of the simile, *ὡσπερ ἐκ μιᾶς μῆρινθου δεδέσθαι*, probably shows that Galen is following another statement of Posidonius. The comm. on T105 illustrates Posidonius' fondness for similes. *μῆρινθος* is not common as a metaphor (but see Plu. *Mor.* 333c). The *De Placitis* gives the impression that Posidonius was rather repetitive and discursive in *Περὶ παθῶν*.

For F150a.1–6, cf. T97.

F150b.3–4. *ὀραθεῖσα HL; ὀρατοῖς HL.* When Galen repeats this section of the quotation a few lines later, the codices have *εὐρεθεῖσα* and *αἰρετοῖς*, see F161.1–2. *ὀρατοῖς*, F150b.4, is nonsense. The Aldine corrected to *ὀρεκτοῖς* (*ὀρεκτοῖς* ed. Basil.). This looks like a guess, and Müller was

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right to restore ἀίρετοῖς, which I now read, and which is the normal Stoic twin for φευκτοῖς, referring to choice and avoidance of good and evil (F161). Müller also corrected ὀραθεῖσα to εὐρεθεῖσα, but this seems less probable, since ὀραθεῖσα could help to explain the copying mistake ὀρατοῖς, and ancient authors did not always feel obliged to requote exactly.

F151 Galen, *De Placitis* v.478,
pp. 458.9–459.5 M, p. 334.24–33 De Lacy

CONTENT

In relation to other theories on emotions (πάθη), Posidonius is classified by Galen with Plato (and Cleanthes) against Chrysippus (and probably Zeno). Posidonius added Pythagoras.

CONTEXT

At the end of *De Plac.* Bk iv, Galen declared his intention of continuing in Bk v with criticism directed against Chrysippus' inconsistent statements on emotions (T61), using Posidonius. The direct attack on Chrysippus in Bk v lasts until p. 334.15 De Lacy. At this point Galen excuses himself from examining Zeno's position, since Chrysippus is his main target (p. 334.16–23). F151 follows, and then at p. 336.16 he turns to Plato.

COMMENT

See T91 commentary.

if See above. Galen's plan was to vindicate Plato and Hippocrates by singling out Chrysippus alone of the Stoics for

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attack (cf. *De Plac.* 234.12ff De L), using the help of Posidonius for this.

2–8 The context is the explanation of emotions and their relation to rationality. The worst analysis (7) in Galen's view is that of Chrysippus, who thought that emotions were rational and a kind of judgement (κρίσις) (Frs. 34, 152). The best is the psychology of Plato and Hippocrates, who regarded emotions as stemming from distinct irrational faculties or factors. Posidonius and Cleanthes (and Galen) sided with the latter. Galen indicates that there is room for doubt about Zeno's position (T91), as to whether he meant the same as Chrysippus (2), or followed Plato's principles and starting points (ἀρχαῖς), roughly the same (παρὰπλησίως) as Cleanthes and Posidonius (3–5), or, as Galen believes (ὅπερ ἐγὼ πείθομαι, 5f), adopted an intermediate position, thinking that emotions supervene (ἐπιγίνεσθαι) on judgements (5–8) (Frs. 34, 152).

For these relationships in general: T91–102, Frs. 142–6.

9–11 Posidonius said that Pythagoras' doctrine resembled the Platonic view (of psychology), an inference from written works of some of Pythagoras' pupils, since no work of Pythagoras himself had survived to our times. This is interesting on three counts.

(i) It reveals, as elsewhere, Posidonius' interest in the history of ideas, probably expressed in initial doxographic accounts, one of which no doubt occurred in *On Emotions*: F31 comm. B, F165 comm. on 164–72.

(ii) Posidonius' special interest in Pythagoras and Pythagoreans (T91, T95). The revival of interest in Pythagoreanism was marked in the 1st c. B.C. (see e.g. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists* 117ff). It may well have received a major impetus from Posidonius.

(iii) Galen is careful to distinguish himself from Posidonius here. This is also true of the remarks on Zeno above; because while Galen here admits room for doubt concerning Zeno's position, there is no sign of this in Posidonius (F34, F152).

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F152 Galen, *De Placitis* v.429,
p. 405.5–14 M,
p. 292.17–25 De Lacy

CONTENT

Posidonius opposed Chrysippus' view (given in *On Emotions*, Bk I) that emotions were judgements of a kind (κρίσεις τινος) of the rational (τοῦ λογιστικοῦ), and Zeno's that they were contractions and expansions, risings and fallings of the spirit supervening on judgement. He praised and approved of Plato's doctrine. Posidonius pointed out that emotions were certain motions (κινήσεις τινος) of distinct irrational powers, given the name by Plato of desiderative (ἐπιθυμητικήν) and spirited (θυμοειδή).

CONTEXT

F163, Context (a). At the beginning of *De Plac.* v (292.4ff), Galen refers to his criticism in Bk IV of Chrysippus' position that the emotional and rational elements are situated in one place (the heart) and are the work of a single faculty (δύναμις), before he proceeds to a more detailed attack on Chrysippean inconsistencies at 294.26ff. F152 recalls the discussion in Bk IV given in F34. The link is also indicated in F157.

COMMENT

1–3 For Posidonius' argument against Chrysippus on emotion and judgement, see F34.

3–5 The reference to Zeno also echoes the passage in F34.4ff, *q.v.* The description of emotion by the terms συστολᾶς . . . ταπεινώσεις τῆς ψυχῆς (4f) is common Stoic practice, accepted by Chrysippus and probably by Posido-

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nus (F34. A. 2, 3), and there is no reason for doubting that they go back to Zeno. The words are used in Greek with physical, medical and emotional reference.

συστολή is used of the contraction of organs such as the heart (LSJ, *s.v.*); of contraction of souls in pain (Plu. *Mor.* 564B); it is the opposite of **διάχυσις** in reference to feelings (e.g. Plu. *Mor.* 450A = *SVF* III.468; cf. also [τὴν ψυχὴν] ποτὲ μὲν εἰς ἡδονὰς καὶ διαχύσεις ἄγεσθαι, ποτὲ δὲ εἰς οἴκτους καὶ συστολὰς Ptol. *Harm.* 3.7). It occurs in the Stoic definition of **λύπη** as **ἄλογος συστολή**, *SVF* III.391; D.L. VII. 111 (*SVF* III.412).

διάχυσις: Müller correctly added **δια**, omitted by haplography after **καί**, cf. F34.8, and Plu. *Mor.* 450A (*SVF* III.468), where again it is opposed to **συστολή**. In the Hipp. Corpus (e.g. Hipp. *Vict.* 2.60) it denotes medical ‘diffusion’. It is used of relaxation of mind in Plu. *Mor.* 1092D = Epicurus F410 Us. (cf. *De Plac.* 240.1–10 De L), and of merriment or cheerful expression in Plu. *Cat. Mi.* 46, *Dem.* 25.

ἐπαρσις: of medical rising or swelling, e.g. Hipp. *Coac.* 85; of sexual erection, Arist. *HA* 572b; it can refer to mental elation or exaltation. It is opposed to **ταπείνωσις** here and in F34, and to **μείωσις** in emotions in *De Plac.* 240.5f De Lacy (*SVF* III.463). **ἡδονή** was defined by Stoics as **ἄλογος ἐπαρσις**, *SVF* III.391; D.L. VII.114.

ταπείνωσις: For Petersen’s emendation, cf. F34.7. The opposite of **αὔξησις** in Arist. *PA* 689a 25; medically, the reduction of a swelling (Galen, 12.816); of humiliation, Plb. 9.33.10.

δῆξις also occurred in F34.7. It means literally ‘biting’, Arist. *HA* 623a 1; of physical gnawing pangs, Hipp. *VM* 19, and of mental pangs as emotions in Plu. *Mor.* 450A (*SVF* III.468).

5f Posidonius’ objection to Zeno must have been not so much to the physical description of contraction and expansion as to the view that emotions supervene on judgements (F34.A.3). There is some doubt whether Zeno actually said

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this, because Galen himself seems uncertain (T91, F151); but on the other hand, Galen clearly conveys that Posidonius thought that Zeno held that view; F34.9, τελέως ἀπεχώρησεν ἀμφοτέρων τῶν δοξῶν.

6f Posidonius' approval of Plato (6f) will refer to Plato's three-faculty psychology. That Posidonius could praise and yet differ from Plato can be seen e.g. from Frs. 142–6, F31. The Posidonian phraseology here lies in *κινήσεις τινάς* (9) (cf. F153) of distinct irrational powers.

9f It is uncertain from this passage whether Posidonius also used Plato's terms, *ἐπιθυμητική* and *θυμοειδής*, but Frs. 32, 33, 34 suggest that he did on occasion.

F153 Galen, *De Placitis* v.464, p. 443.9–11
M, p. 322.12–14 De Lacy

CONTENT

Posidonius habitually applied the term 'emotional movements' (*παθητικὰ κινήσεις*).

CONTEXT

In general F169. The immediate context is a discussion by Posidonius of physiognomy (320.29ff), maintaining that different physical characteristics and states produce their own peculiar 'emotional movements', i.e. emotions (*πάθη*). F31 follows shortly.

COMMENT

Posidonius most frequently used the term *κίνησις* (motion or movement) for emotions (*πάθη*). The motions are irrational (F168.15), in being motions of irrational faculties (F152). In

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other words they are peculiarly ‘emotional’ movements (F158, αἱ κατὰ πάθος κινήσεις, F169.115). For this Posidonius coined the technical phrase παθητικαὶ κινήσεις; also Frs. 165.118, 161, 174; Frs. 169.91, 108. This is quite different from the Zenonic συστολή/ἔπαρσις language of F152, because for Posidonius the ‘emotional movements’ from the irrational emotional faculties exerted an ‘emotional pull’ (παθητικὴ ὀλκή, clearly another term coined by Posidonius, F169.80), which in turn affected one’s judgement or decision. So that emotions (πάθη), far from being rational decisions or judgements (as Chrysippus), or supervening on rational decisions or judgements (as Zeno, F152), were a factor in the movements affecting and distorting rational decisions or judgements.

For discussion: F169.8off comm.; Kidd, *Problems* 207.

F154 Plutarch (?), *De Libidine et Aegritudine*

4–6

CONTENT

A fourfold classification of πάθη, involving both body and mind and their interplay, is ascribed to Posidonius.

CONTEXT

This is part of the first of ‘Tyrwhitt’s Fragments’, first published by him in 1773 from *Harleianus* 5612. The authorship has been much debated. It has been widely held that it could not be Plutarch (Pohlenz, *Dissertation* 593 n. 1; Ziegler, *Studi in onore L. Castiglioni* 1135), but Sandbach (*Plu. Mor.* vol. xv (Loeb), pp. 32–5) produced parallels with extant works of Plutarch, and arguments for dating in the 1st c. A.D., possibly in relation to Plutarch’s circle; and in *Rev. de Phil.* 43 (1969),

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211–16, he argued more positively for authorship by Plutarch himself, and this has won support.

COMMENT

The fragment addresses itself to the old question whether body or soul is responsible for πάθη. Strato assigned πάθη entirely to the soul (§4), others (Heraclides is named) to the body (§5). Posidonius (§6) had a fourfold classification:

(1) ψυχικά ἀπλῶς (of the soul without qualification), i.e. those having something to do with rational decisions and suppositions: desires, fears, fits of anger.

(2) σωματικά ἀπλῶς (of the body without qualification): fevers, chills, contractions (πυκνώσεις), opening up of the pores (ἀραιώσεις).

(3) περὶ ψυχὴν σωματικά (physical with mental effects): lethargies, madness arising from black bile, mental pangs from physical gnawing pains (δηγμούς, F34.7, F152 comm.), sense presentations (φαντασίας), feelings of relaxation (διαχύσεις, F152 comm.).

(4) περὶ σῶμα ψυχικά (mental with physical effects): tremors, pallors, that is (καί) changes of appearance in fear and grief.

The author goes on to mention Diodotus (of Sidon, the brother of Boethus, Strabo, xvi.2.24?; or Cicero's house-philosopher?) making a quite different classification between rational and irrational factors of soul. After examining the thesis that πάθη are not of the body nor of the soul but of the whole man (§7), the fragment ends inclining to the view that πάθη are rooted in the flesh.

The reliability of the author is not high. Some of the remarks on Strato and Heraclides in §§4–5 are puzzling. But it is not impossible that Posidonius may have devised such a classification. He was clearly interested in the interplay

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between physical and mental, or body and soul, e.g. F169.84ff comm.

Two things must be granted: (a) πάθος must be used in a more general sense than is usual in Posidonius, for the word must accommodate purely physical affections of the body in category (2), which would not be covered by Posidonius' definition of πάθος in F152; contrast F153. Category (2) is probably included for completeness. It is clear from the fragments of *Περὶ παθῶν* that Posidonius was most interested in category (1), but also in (3) and (4). (b) If the phrase (l. 13) τὰ ἐν κρίσεσι καὶ ὑπολήψεσιν in category (1) is both correct (τὸ ἐκρίσεσι *i*: τὸ κρίσεσιν *hk*; and there is an obvious lacuna shortly before these words) and to be regarded as Posidonian rather than as an interpolation of the author, it must be interpreted generously as 'in the field or area of . . .'; because there is precise evidence that Posidonius criticised Chrysippus and Zeno for saying that πάθη were κρίσεις or supervened on κρίσεις (F152, F34). But of course he did believe that κρίσις and ὑπόληψις were involved in πάθη (F169.77ff, comm.).

Diogenes Laertius shows that classifications of such a type were common in Stoicism; thus that of ἀγαθὰ in D.L. vii.95.

The problem of physical and mental interaction in πάθη arises much earlier than Posidonius, e.g. Arist. *De An.* 403a, and was a phenomenon marked earlier still by the poets, e.g. Sappho F31 LP. But it was clearly a common topic of discussion in the 1st c. B.C., as Cic. *De Off.* I.102, and in the 1st c. A.D., as Plu. *De Virt. Mor.* 450E–451A, for which see Babut, *Plutarque et le Stoïcisme*, ad loc.

F155 Lactantius, *De Ira Dei* 17.13

CONTENT

Posidonius and the definition of anger.