Let us begin with the famous paraphrase of the Stoic 'oikeiosis' doctrine by Diogenes Laertius: 'They say that the first inclination which an animal has is to protect itself, as nature brings herself to take an interest in it from the beginning, as Chrysippus affirms in the first book of his treatise on Ends; where he says, that the first and dearest object to every animal is its own existence, and the consciousness of that existence [syneidesin]. For that it is not natural for any animal to be alienated from itself, or even to be brought into such a state as to be indifferent to itself, being neither alienated from nor interested in itself. It remains therefore, that we must assert that nature has bound the animal to itself by the greatest unanimity and affection; for by that means it repels all that is injurious, and attracts all that is akin to it and desirable. But as for what some people [the Epicureans] say, that the first inclination of animals is to pleasure, they [the Stoics] say that to be false. For they say that pleasure, if there be any such thing at all, is an accessory only, which, nature, having sought it out by itself, as well as those things which are adapted to its constitution, receives incidentally in the same manner as animals are pleased, and plants made to flourish. [...] And as reason is given to rational animals according to a more perfect principle, it follows, that to live according to reason, is properly predicated of those who live according to nature. For nature is, as it were the artist who produces the inclination.'

In Stoicism, the (coined) term 'oikeiosis' signifies the differentiated self-relation, and the resulting interrelation, of organic creatures. This doctrine

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2. Diogenes Laertius, Lives, 290-291. Compare J. Annas, The Morality of Happiness (Oxford 1993) 263 ff. Her opinion that: '[...] it is illegitimate to contrast primitive instinctual self-concern with rationally developed impartial concern for others' (271) is lacking a basis in the text;
is developed in what was its biology, but for the name, as well as ethics and anthropology and constitute a pillar of the Stoic system. In his book *The Stoic Theory of Oikeiosis* (1990) Troels Engberg-Pedersen convincingly demonstrates, how the Stoic oikeiosis as opposed to the more substantialistic Aristotelian teleology is more developed from an individual interior viewpoint; the ends are therefore not determined externally by nature, but are developed out of the individuals striving of self-preservation. This striving consists of two or three steps. The first is captured as the 'prote horme', the last, namely 'ratio', also encapsulates the viewpoint of the entire universe, which man, enabled with reason, can and should take on.

The word indicates an action; as opposed to the Epicurean or Democritean atoms the organic compound has a not entirely mechanically explicable feedback of the parts to the whole and among each other and exists only because of the reflexive processes performed by the compound itself. The process includes that life-supporting things are sought and assimilated and harming things are avoided. For man and animals alike, this requires three components: Firstly, the organism must be equipped with some form of self-consciousness, secondly it must be equipped with practical self-care, and thirdly the successful 'oikeiosis' must be accompanied by the sensation of lust, the unsuccessful 'oikeiosis' by dislike. 'Oikeiosis' can be expanded from the self to other living creatures, to one's housemates, one's children

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3 ‘On the nature of men’ is a booktitle by Zenon, see Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* VII 87.

4 T. Engberg-Pedersen, *The Stoic Theory of Oikeiosis. Moral Development and Social Interaction in Early Stoic Philosophy*, Aarhus 1990; In the presentation of the (in most parts) convincing interpretation the reader is getting the impression, however, that the subjectivist reversal would be re-projected to the beginning of Hellenism. That in itself might not be wrong. However, it should be noted that the dichotomy of object and subject, which Engberg-Pedersen uses unreflectedly, does not show up in the Stoic tradition; on the contrary, it has its origin in the Pyrrhonian sceptic. For the Stoic things do not lose their ontological status and are not degraded to objects for (human) subjects. Annas, *Happiness*, 161, footnote 8, is also expressing criticism: ‘Apart from offering an alternative interpretation, however (one based on objectivity and subjectivity rather than the eudaimonist perspective) Engberg-Pedersen does not offer any arguments against the alternative approach, other than the claim that when the Stoics talk of cosmic nature they are being metaphorical.’ See also L. Winkel, ‘Die stoische oikeiosis-Lehre und Ulpians Definition der Gerechtigkeit’, *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte* 105 (1988) 669-679.