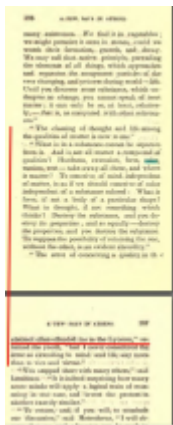


An Anti-Stoic Analysis Of Free Will That May (Or May Not) Be Helpful To Us

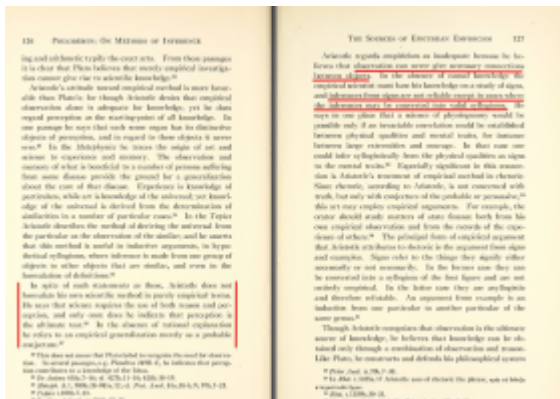
Post by "Cassius" of September 16, 2021 at 4:37 PM

I have engaged in a little private back and forth discussion with the author of the article, and have forwarded him a couple of clips in support of my view of this. I will try to circle back and add some commentary but for future reference here are the clips.

Aaron it is my understanding from what Francis Wright wrote in "A Few Days In Athens" that Aristotle held "color" to be something that exists apart from the entity which we perceive to have color. Do you believe that to be incorrect?



Also, in part of my analysis I am relying on this commentary from commentator Philip DeLacy as to the Epicurean Philodemus' "On Methods of Inference" -->



The last reference I would throw into this pot is a comment by Richard Dawkins in which he seems to also place Aristotle in Plato's camp, as per DeLacy:

2014 : WHAT SCIENTIFIC IDEA IS READY FOR RETIREMENT?

BY RICHARD DAWKINS | 2014 FEBRUARY 20 | THE MINDBLOWER

Richard Dawkins

Evolutionary biologist, Emeritus Professor of the Public Understanding of Science, Oxford; Author, *Reckless as to Faith* and *A Life*

Essentialism

Essentialism—what the called “the tyranny of the discontinuous mind”—stems from Plato, with his characteristically Greek geometric view of things. For Plato, a circle, or a right triangle, were ideal forms, definable mathematically but never realized in practice. A circle drawn in the sand was an imperfect approximation to the ideal Platonic circle hanging in some distant space. That works for geometric shapes like circles, but essentialism has been applied to living things and Ernst Mayr blamed this for humanity’s late discovery of evolution—as late as the nineteenth century. In the Aristotle you meet all birds and fishes and plants as imperfect approximations to an ideal Platonic reality, it isn’t clear to you that essentialism means you’re overlooking nature, and nature could take a good deal of convincing. If you think, following the dictionary definition of essentialism, that the essence of rabbitsness is “gray” or the essence of rabbits’ grace is “might mean, and that’s nonsense in itself, evolution is not an idea that will spring readily to your mind, and you may resist when somebody else suggests it.

Palaeontologists will argue passionately about whether a particular fossil is, say, *Australopithecus* or *Homo*. But any evolutionist knows there must have existed individuals who were exactly intermediate. It’s essentialist folly to insist on the necessity of shoehorning your fossil into one genus or the other. There never was an *Australopithecus* mother who gave birth to a *Homo* child, for every child ever born belonged to the same species as its mother. The whole system of labelling species with obscure Latin names is geared to a linear idea, the process, in which ancestors have been conveniently expunged from our awareness (and “ring species” tacitly ignored). If by some miracle every ancestor were preserved as a fossil, discontinuous naming would be impossible. Classifications are necessarily fixed of ring “spells” as emblematic for evolutionists, but given are a forbidding lesson for essentialists who, with good reason, want to give species discrete names. Quarrelling about whether a fossil is “really” *Australopithecus* or *Homo* is like quarrelling over whether George should be called “fat”. He’s five foot ten, doesn’t that tell you what you need to know?

So to bring that back home to the discussion, my tentative diagnosis has been that by appearing to include "concepts" in her discussion of the law of identity (at least as many of her casual follows seem to do, and I can understand why) the implication of Rand is that concepts such as capitalism are also subject to categorization by "essentials" which leads to the Platonic idealism which at least on the surface Rand always campaigned against.

Last excerpt, from Heller's biography "Ayn Rand and the World She Made"

Two years earlier, she had written an inscription in Paterson's copy of *The Fountainhead* that quoted Rand's tribute to God: "You have been the one constant in my life that can never be repeated." This was a warm commendation, conveying affection and respect. Yet it also carried a substantial dig: one, one that echoed Rand's mixed sympathies for Hyman. Rand was beginning to think of Paterson as stubborn, even stiff. On first moving to Hollywood, she had studied long, hard lessons with Paterson. But by 1945, her side of the correspondence had cooled. In the midst of divorce, conflict had opened a narrow rift between them. God, the father was one sure point. Rand had always known that Paterson believed in God, although she also knew that the crutch individualist did not welcome any organized religion and thought that the Christian morality would one day be replaced by something better. Rand held faith of one kind to be inconsistent with rationality, she particularly despised Christianity, with its insistence on suffering and brotherhood, as "the best possible kindergarten of conservatism." The woman had panned and dodged this issue for years. But in their letters it rose acrimoniously to the surface, with Rand at one point writing that "our certainties being, by definition, is a totalitarian dictator. Ah, but he won't use his power? Never mind. He has it." The two also conducted a fascinating, though highly charged, argument about the limits of Aristotelian deductive reasoning. Paterson thought that Rand's use of logic sometimes resembled the arid arguments put forward by the philosophers Rand more disliked. When such philosophers "had strung some words together, in the form of a syllogism or other logical construction, they thought that [the formulation] had to be so—without asking if the facts which constitute the necessary premises are so." Paterson wrote, "Also, for example, the logic of: 'All men are mortal. Socrates is a man therefore Socrates is mortal. That is a good syllogism.'" she wrote, "but its truth depends on the premises being true—that man are mortal, that Socrates is a man. Logic is an instrument for dealing with whatever you can get into its compass." The older woman thought that God and man were both to some degree immeasurable. She argued that Rand found deductive reasoning too much and overvalued matters that reason might identify as being worthy of investigation but that were illogical, or impossible, at least for now. Rand thought that the alternative to a morality of reason was "the fat of evolution," and that no hypothetical entities and spheres that the human mind was by its nature inadequate to understand was at best perverse.