

What Determines That Which Is Possible And That Which is Impossible?

Post by “waterholic” of May 13, 2024 at 5:05 AM

From Philodemus' "On methods of inference": "But (we answer) it will be sufficient for us to base our belief on probability in these matters, just as we do in regard to what is learned from trial; for example, that we shall be safe sailing in summer, since we have had experience of favourable winds in that season."

My reading is that the emphasis is not on "what is possible", but "what is probable". So we need void to have motion "within our experience", i.e. given what we sense in our physical world. This means for all practical senses it is impossible to have motion without void, unless we sense evidence to the contrary.

Possible: everything, depending on the degree of certainty

Probable: that which is consistent with our senses and anticipation (prolepsis)

Improbable: that which is inconsistent with our senses and anticipation

Impossible: nothing, depending on the degree of certainty

To be fair, in the same section Philodemus justifies the small sun theory (I just had to make that disclosure).