

Episode One Hundred Six - The Epicurean Attitude Toward Fate / Fortune and the Role of Reason

Post by "Cassius" of January 24, 2022 at 5:38 PM

Following up on Godfrey's comment on concepts and Don's on Logic v Dialectic, this is where the older translations are superior to bailey:

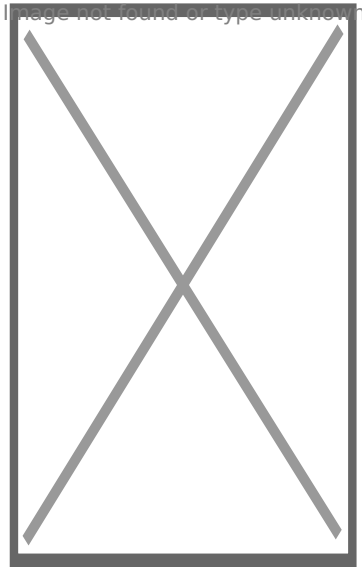
EPICURUS.

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nature; and that the ethical division has reference to the objects of choice and avoidance, and lives, and the chief good of mankind.

XX. Dialectics they wholly reject as superfluous. For they say that the correspondence of words with things is sufficient for the natural philosopher, so as to enable him to advance with certainty in the study of nature.

Now, in the Canon, Epicurus says that the criteria of truth are the senses, and the preconceptions, and the passions. But the Epicureans, in general, add also the perceptive impressions of the intellect. And he says the same thing in his Abridgment, which he addresses to Herodotus, and also in his Fundamental Principles. For, says he, the senses are devoid of reason, nor are they capable of receiving any impressions of memory. For they are not by themselves the cause of any motion, and when they have received any impression from any external cause, then they can add nothing to it, nor can they subtract anything from it. Moreover, they are out of the



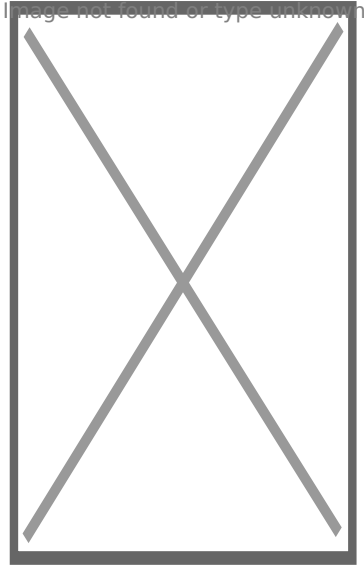
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hand, deals with things to be sought and avoided, with human life and with the end-in-chief.

They reject dialectic as superfluous ; holding that in their inquiries the physicists should be content to employ the ordinary terms for things.^a Now in *The Canon* Epicurus affirms that our sensations and preconceptions and our feelings are the standards of truth ; the Epicureans generally make perceptions of mental presentations ^b to be also standards. His own statements are also to be found in the *Summary* addressed to Herodotus and in the *Sovran Maxims*. Every sensation, he says, is devoid of reason and incapable of memory ; for neither is it self-caused nor, regarded as having an external cause, can it add anything thereto or take anything therefrom. Nor is there anything which can refute sensations or convict them of error : one sensation cannot convict another and kindred sensation, for they are equally valid ; nor can one sensation refute another which is



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I would say:

1 - This is an example of scholarship going backward over time (if I have the time sequence correct) because Bailey is the most voluminous commentator on Epicurus in recent years to have published a translation, and in my reading he is cited to far more often than is Hicks or Yonge. And he has the most extensive public domain version with commentary (The "[Extant Remains](#)" book).

2 - While it looks more appropriate to use "dialectic" rather than "logic," that really doesn't answer the question because as cited above the term is generally now being referred to as "dialectical logic" to reference a particular form or type of logic.

As Martin is saying we are not warring with ALL logic, but on the other hand it is a huge point that the Epicureans were indeed warring with certain types of logic, and not just something that can be adequately referred to as a misuse of what everyone agrees is "logic." Most of the discussion is taking place in terms of "types of logic" so we need to be able to understand what the commentators are talking about.