

Episode One Hundred Fourteen - Letter to Herodotus 03 - The Starting Point of Physics

Post by "Cassius" of March 25, 2022 at 9:36 AM

Episode 114 will be out soon (later today). In final editing, I am finding that I think we have significantly more work to do on the topic discussed near the end of the podcast, which is the line:

Quote

Furthermore, the universe always was such as it is now, and always will be the same. For there is nothing into which it changes: for outside the universe there is nothing which could come into it and bring about the change.

We (correctly I think) discussed this as an example of Epicurus reasoning at a "logical" rather than "empirical" level, but I am not sure by the end of the podcast we had put this in perspective of how much of Epicurean physics follows exactly this course (reasoning from what is observable to draw things that are not observable). We're pretty comfortable that atoms are an example of things we can't see and yet we draw firm conclusions about, but in dealing with this conclusion (that there is nothing outside the universe which can come into it) we probably need to spend more time discussing what level of confidence Epicurus placed in this conclusion. Our discussion may not have been clear enough in bringing out that issue of level of confidence.

I'm not sure that what I am noting here deserves specific backtracking to cover more in the next episode, but I wanted this note here in case someone listening to the podcast also makes the same observation that this issue probably needs further treatment as part of our development of discussion of Epicurean logic.