

Episode One Hundred Nineteen - Letter to Herodotus 08 - More On Perception Through The Atoms

Post by "Cassius" of April 30, 2022 at 7:07 AM

My week has been busier than usual but this podcast will be up later today. Here are some notes made during final edit:

We get back in to the issue of eternal and unchanging "properties" of atoms (size, weight, shape) vs transient and changing "qualities" of combinations of atoms that we perceive through our senses.

This is a subject that we discussed most recently in terms of what it means to "exist" here: [RE: Eikas Information](#)

For the most part (especially after editing) I think our conversation is pretty clear, but this issue of the best terminology to use to discuss things that are eternal vs things that are not is something we really need to work on! There are a variety of words that get confusing if we don't really make ourselves clear. Here is an effort to organize these into a chart, but it's not complete and needs adjustment, because the "essential conjuncts" list (such things as weight to stones) is not quite the same thing as atomic size, shape, and weight), nor is something like "bondage" quite the same thing as color.

Things That Are Eternal
(Atoms, which have size, shape, and weight)

Words Associated With Things In This
Category:

Properties

Essential conjuncts (Brown)

Weight to Stones

Heat to Fire

Moisture to the Sea

Touch to Bodies

Lack of touchability to void

Things That Are Not Eternal
(Things about atoms that change, such as
color)

Words Associated With Things In This
Category:

Qualities

Events (or "Accidents")

Emerging

The color of combinations of atoms

The odor of combinations of atoms

Human activities, such as The Trojan War

Bondage

Liberty

Riches

Poverty

War

Peace

Source: Lucretius Book One (Brown)

[430] Besides, there is nothing you can strictly say, "It is neither body nor void," which you may call a third degree of things distinct from these. For every being must in quantity be more or less; and if it can be touched, though never so small or light, it must be body, and so esteemed; but if it can't be touched, and has not in itself a power to stop the course of other bodies as they pass, this is the void we call an empty space.

Again, whatever is must either act itself, or be by other agents acted on; or must be something in which other bodies must have a place and move; but nothing without body can act, or be acted on; and where can this be done, but in a vacuum or empty space? Therefore, beside what body is or space, no third degree in nature can be found, nothing that ever can affect our sense, or by the power of thought can be conceived.

[449] All other things you'll find essential conjuncts, or else the events or accidents of these. I call essential conjunct what's so joined to a thing that it cannot, without fatal violence, be forced or parted from it; is weight to stones, to fire heat, moisture to the Sea, touch to all bodies, and not to be touched essential is to void. But, on the contrary, Bondage, Liberty, Riches, Poverty, War, Concord, or the like, which not affect the nature of the thing, but when they come or go, the thing remains entire; these, as it is fit we should, we call Events. Time, likewise, of itself is nothing; our sense collects from things themselves what has been done long since, the thing that present is, and what's to come. For no one, we must own, ever thought of Time distinct from things in motion or at rest.

[464] For when the poets sing of Helen's rape, or of the Trojan State subdued by war, we must not say that these things do exist now in themselves, since Time, irrevocably past, has long since swept away that race of men that were the cause of those events; for every act is either properly the event of things, or of the places where those things are done. Further, if things were not of matter formed, were there no place or space where things might act, the fire that burned in Paris' heart, blown up by love of Helen's beauty, had never raised the famous contests of a cruel war; nor had the wooden horse set Troy on fire, discharging from his belly in the night the armed Greeks: from whence you plainly see that actions do not of themselves subsist, as bodies do, nor are in nature such as is a void, but rather are more justly called the events of body, and of space, where things are carried on.

[483] Lastly, bodies are either the first seeds of things, or formed by the uniting of those seeds. The simple seeds of things no force can strain, their solid parts will never be subdued. Though it is difficult, I own, to think that any thing in nature can be found perfectly solid; for heaven's thunder passes through the walls of houses, just as sound or words; iron in the fire grows hot, and burning stones fly into pieces by the raging heat; the stiffness of the gold is loosed by fire, and made to run; the hard and solid brass, subdued by flames, dissolves; the heat and piercing cold passes through silver; both of these we find as in our hand we hold a cup, and at the top

pour water hot or cold: so nothing wholly solid seems to be found in nature. But because reason and the fixed state of things oblige me, here, I beg, while in few verses we evince that there are beings that consist of solid and everlasting matter which we call the seeds, the first principles of things, from whence the whole of things begin to be.