

Episode One Hundred Forty-Eight - "Epicurus And His Philosophy" Part 04 - True Opinions And False Opinions About Epicurus

Post by "Cassius" of November 7, 2022 at 7:11 AM

Quote from Norman DeWitt Chapter One

True: Epicurus taught reasoning chiefly by deduction. For example, atoms cannot be observed directly; their existence and properties must be determined by deduction, and the principles thereby deduced serve as standards for assessing truth. In this Epicurus was adopting the procedures of Euclid and partying company with both Plato and the Ionian scientists.

False: Epicurus was a strict empiricist and taught reasoning mainly by induction.

We did not get to this point in Episode 146, so before we record episode 147 let's make some notes and be clear on this point as to the difference between deduction and induction by defining those terms so we can be clear about when Epicurus is reasoning from the particular to the general as opposed to from the particular to the general. This is important because while we probably have little confusion about what it means to speak about particular atoms and void and their movement, we will need to spend some time talking about what is meant by "the general." The definition below uses the term "universal" and we will need to address "[The Problem of Universals](#)".

Merriam-Webster:

induction

in·duc·tion [in-'dək-shən](#)

2 a(1): inference of a generalized conclusion from particular instances

compare [DEDUCTION sense 2a](#)

deduction

de·duc·tion [di-'dək-shən](#)

2 a: the deriving of a conclusion by reasoning based on intuition rather than *deduction*, specifically : [inference](#) in which the conclusion about particulars follows necessarily from general or universal premises (see [PREMISE entry 1 sense 1](#))

compare [INDUCTION](#)