

Episode 154 - "Epicurus And His Philosophy" Part 10 - The Canon, Reason, and Nature 01

Post by "Cassius" of December 29, 2022 at 8:59 AM

Also Joshua topics to be considered here are:

1 - We've been discussing anticipations since the forum started and there likely is not enough evidence to be 100% sure which theory is correct. I personally think that DeWitt is onto something with his "intuition" word, and I think the most persuasive discussions we've had in the past consider words like a faculty of "pattern-recognition" which is not so far from intuition. In this discussion the "images" discussions are critical to include and not just exclude, like some people want to do when they read the Diogenes Laertius description and conclude that it's simple: we see series of oxes and put together a picture in our minds of an ox. Surely that does happen as part of the thinking process, but I think the great weight of the evidence is that this comes later in the thought process, while anticipations are a faculty that generate raw input closer to the beginning of the process.

2 - And closely related is the whole "blank slate" issue. I think DeWitt and others are persuasive that "blank slate" is Aristotelian or otherwise, and that Epicurus did NOT consider himself to be a blank slate person who thinks that everything in our minds comes strictly through the five senses.

Of course what we are talking about now is not all in this chapter - it's in the later discussions of Anticipations.

There is a good Voula Tsouna article on Anticipations in which she reviews what Sedley has said and disagrees with some of his analysis, so if those two are not together then we are going to have to go in from the beginning keeping several alternatives in mind. Personally however I think the best way to steer clear of an improper conclusion is to insist that "images" be included in the picture before we can conclude we have a good answer as to what Epicurus really thought.