

The Definitive "Chrysippus' Hand Argument" Thread

Post by "Cassius" of April 19, 2023 at 10:29 AM

I was looking for a passage that I thought I remembered from Lucian, where he remarked (or so I thought) that it was surprising or un-Stoic to look for an ever-present "guide." Unfortunately I cannot find what I am looking for, but while looking I found this, a cute list of illustrations of the type of logic as the guide of life to which Lucian and presumably Epicurus objected. This is from an appendix to the Fowler translation of the Works of Lucian of Samosata:

pure reason, as opposed to emotion, for the guide of life, resulted in much attention to logic, including its paradoxical forms. Among these logical puzzles are the following: (1) Sorites, the heap trick. Suppose a heap of corn. Is it a heap? Yes. Take a grain away. Is it a heap? Yes. And so on, till only one grain is left. The drawing of the line is impossible. (2) The Horns. If you have not lost a thing, you still have it?

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Certainly. Have you lost your horns? No. Then you are horned. (3) The Crocodile. A child is caught by a crocodile; the father asks him to give it back. I will, says the crocodile, on condition that you tell me correctly whether I shall do so or not. The dilemma is obvious. (4) The Day and Night. This appears to be a proof that there is no such thing as night, through the ambiguity in 'Day being, Night cannot be,' which in Greek, though not in English, is equally natural in the sense of Since it is day, it cannot be night, and, If day exists, night cannot. (5) The Reaper. I will prove to you that you will not reap your corn, thus. If you reap it, you will not either-reap-or-not-reap, but reap. If you do not reap it, you will not either-reap-or-not-reap, but not reap. So in each case you will not either reap or not reap, that is, there will be no reaping. (6) The Rightful Owner. Unexplained; but *see* Epictetus, ii, xix. (7) and (8) The Electra, and The Man in the Hood, sufficiently explained in *Sale of Creeds* (22).