

Episode 234 - Cicero's OTNOTG - 09 - Dealing With Marcus Aurelius And The Canonical Basis For the Epicurean View Of Divinity

Post by "TauPhi" of June 30, 2024 at 10:55 PM

[Quote from Little Rocker](#)

I suppose the question is whether Epicurus thought ἐπιβολὰς τῆς διανοίας was a different criterion from 'the other criteria' (τῶν κριτηρίων). You could think the Epicureans were taking it as an additional criterion from a straightforward reading of the Letter to Herodotus itself. See DL X 38, and especially 51 (τινὰς ἐπιβολὰς τῆς διανοίας ἢ τῶν λοιπῶν κριτηρίων). But then what would it contribute that the other criteria do not?

Image perceptions of the mind are 'senses at the distance', so to speak. According to Epicureans every object (most likely with the exception of singular atoms and the void - but let's not go there right now) emits images - εἰδωλα. That's why we have two ways of detecting objects:

- 1) direct contact - eidolas do not make any difference as we have exposure to the objects themselves. In this scenario, the senses are criterion of truth (take precedence) for image perceptions of the mind, which in simpler terms, makes the 4th criterion irrelevant.
- 2) indirect contact - we get the truth about objects by their eidolas sent to us at the distance (this is the example of a round tower in Epicurean terms). In this scenario, the 4th criterion is crucial and it is considered a full-fledged criterion of truth (equal to the other canonical three criteria) allowing us to know the truth about objects outside of direct sensations.

The answers to your questions [Little Rocker](#) are probably something like that:

[Quote from Little Rocker](#)

whether Epicurus thought ἐπιβολὰς τῆς διανοίας was a different criterion from 'the other criteria' (τῶν κριτηρίων).

Yes, most likely and probably he reserved the three canonical criteria for 'perfect conditions of getting to the truth' without complications arising from 'suspension of belief' due to eidolas' possible distortions resulting from the distance between the observer and the object.

[Quote from Little Rocker](#)

But then what would it contribute that the other criteria do not?

The ability to know truth about our surroundings outside of the direct contact.