

Episode 237 - Cicero's OTNOTG - 12 - Isonomia And The Implications of Infinity

Post by “Godfrey” of July 14, 2024 at 1:41 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I don't really know if it adds anything to talk about "dichotomies" if that is all the word means. It's the details behind that which will need to be examined

That is exactly my point: the only reason to mention dichotomies is that "mortal" and "immortal" are seemingly set up as opposites (what I'm calling dichotomous) by Cicero. I guess the point I would make is that, after reasoning it out, setting them up in that way is meaningless and therefore, to me, Cicero is setting his argument up in a way that is basically irrelevant. However, if there's textual evidence that Epicurus set up his argument in the same way, then I'd wonder whether I'm missing something.

As for the possible immortality of the gods, isn't it stated somewhere that Epicurus proposed that the gods are made of a different type of matter? I'm again exposing my ignorance here: I can't point to a source of this idea, and it's not something that I would posit. But I can see how someone who was developing atomic theory more or less from scratch might consider such an idea if they were convinced of the existence of material, immortal (and blissful) beings with no beginning and no end, in the same way that atoms have no beginning or end. These beings would have all of the characteristics that we commonly attribute to them in our discussions, but they would at the same time individually have no beginning or end due to the type of matter from which they're made. So my question is whether there is any credible textual evidence that Epicurus considered this to be a valid possibility. 2300 years ago this may have seemed reasonable, even if it doesn't seem so to us moderns.

At any rate, I'm not espousing this idea, I'm just trying to flesh out the arguments and the associated reasoning.