

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

Post by "Cassius" of July 16, 2024 at 11:47 AM

Editing is coming along -- this should be out no later than tomorrow - hopefully sooner.

In the meantime, this part of section 19 (book one) is clearly one of the sections that is most

standing of the nature of a being both blessed and the sum of things everything
50 eternal. Moreover there is the supremely potent principle of infinity, which claims the closest and most careful study; we must understand that it has the following property, that in the sum of things everything has its exact match and counterpart. This property is termed by Epicurus *isonomia*, or the principle of uniform distribution. From this principle it follows that if the whole number of mortals be so many, there must exist no less a number of immortals, and if the causes of destruction are beyond count, the causes of conservation also are bound to be infinite.

adfluat, cum maximis voluptatibus in eas imagines mentem intentam infixamque nostram intellegentiam
50 capere quae sit et beata natura et aeterna. Summa vero vis infinitatis et magna ac diligenti contemplatione dignissima est, in qua intellegi necesse est eam esse naturam ut omnia omnibus paribus paria respondeant. Hanc *ἰσονομίαν* appellat Epicurus, id est aequabilem tributionem. Ex hac igitur illud efficitur, si mortalium tanta multitudo sit, esse immortalium non minorem, et si quae interimant innumerabilia sint, etiam ea quae conservent infinita esse debere.

It looks to me like that is a rendering of a section of "ut omnia omnibus paribus paria respondeat," so Rackham's "match and counterpart" is as open to question as is Yonge's "everything in it is made to correspond completely to some other answering part." In this instance Yonge's "answering" may be a better rendering of "respondeant" than Rackham's "exact match or counterpart." The decision we make on what words to use is going to greatly influence one's conclusion on what is being said. What would seem most likely for an Epicurean to be thinking in terms of "answering" or "corresponding?" We know the basics of Epicurean physics and canonics which cannot be violated in answering the question, so what are the possibilities?

This is a line at which we'll want to train our best big guns of Latin translation expertise!