

Episode 243 Cicero's OTNOTG 18 - From "All Sensations Are True" to Reasoning By Similarity And Analogy

Post by "Cassius" of August 27, 2024 at 3:29 PM

As we prepare this week's recording for broadcast it looks like I may need to do some particular slicing in regard to the time we spent on David Sedley's "Point 1" as to Ontological argument in the post immediately above. The argument apparently revolves around the alleged differences between two classes, which appear to be (1) a class that includes "relative terms" vs (2) a class that includes gold and stones.

Apparently the difference between these two classes was being used by the Sceptics to argue that the senses are not real, but Sedley says that the Epicurean was able to turn the argument on its head and use it to show that the argument could just as well prove the reverse.

What is not so clear to me is which class the skeptics were saying was "real," and why. Seems I have read that Plato held that the "idea" of a horse is real, but individual horses 10 feet in front of us we can't be sure of. It therefore may be that the Sceptics were arguing that the relative terms are real, but the gold and stone or not. And in particular, there is something going on about how people perceive the same thing differently under different circumstances. But what's not clear on quick reading is whether what is being perceived differently are the relative terms or the solid objects. And it's even less clear how the argument could be turned on its head to show allegedly the opposite position. But then maybe the reason it's not clear has something to do with how the argument can be used for either side of the question.

If anyone has time to look at this part of the article and attempt to place the argument in simpler terms that would be great. I intend to take a look at this over the next several days to be sure that the podcast discussion that we release doesn't conflict with our best reading of this fairly tricky subject.