

Episode 244 - Cicero's OTNOTG 19 - Zeno's Paradoxes - Profundity Or Gaslighting?

Post by "Cassius" of September 4, 2024 at 7:55 AM

The method Diogenes Laertius used to divide the schools has always seemed to be difficult for a lot of people (including me) to follow. It would be good to assemble the reasoning to the extent possible and see what DL himself aligned with what, and what he considered fundamentally different. Clearly dogmatist vs skeptic is one huge division, but is "ethics" vs "dialectic" another, and if so what does that mean?

Quote

But philosophy, the pursuit of wisdom, has had a twofold origin; it started with Anaximander on the one hand, with Pythagoras on the other. The former was a pupil of Thales, Pythagoras was taught by Pherecydes. The one school was called Ionian, because Thales, a Milesian and therefore an Ionian, instructed Anaximander; the other school was called Italian from Pythagoras, who worked for the most part in Italy. [14] And the one school, that of Ionia, terminates with Clitomachus and Chrysippus and Theophrastus, that of Italy with Epicurus. The succession passes from Thales through Anaximander, Anaximenes, Anaxagoras, Archelaus, to Socrates, who introduced ethics or moral philosophy; from Socrates to his pupils the Socratics, and especially to Plato, the founder of the Old Academy; from Plato, through Speusippus and Xenocrates, the succession passes to Polemo, Crantor, and Crates, Arcesilaus, founder of the Middle Academy, Lacydes,¹⁰ founder of the New Academy, Carneades, and Clitomachus. This line brings us to Clitomachus.

[15] There is another which ends with Chrysippus, that is to say by passing from Socrates to Antisthenes, then to Diogenes the Cynic, Crates of Thebes, Zeno of Citium, Cleanthes, Chrysippus. And yet again another ends with Theophrastus; thus from Plato it passes to Aristotle, and from Aristotle to Theophrastus. In this manner the school of Ionia comes to an end.

In the Italian school the order of succession is as follows: first Pherecydes, next Pythagoras, next his son Telauges, then Xenophanes, Parmenides,¹¹ Zeno of Elea, Leucippus, Democritus, who had many pupils, in particular Nausiphanes [and Naucydes], who were teachers of Epicurus.

[16] Philosophers may be divided into dogmatists and sceptics: all those who make assertions about things assuming that they can be known are dogmatists; while all who

suspend their judgement on the ground that things are unknowable are sceptics. Again, some philosophers left writings behind them, while others wrote nothing at all, as was the case according to some authorities with Socrates, Stilpo, Philippus, Menedemus, Pyrrho, Theodorus, Carneades, Bryson; some add Pythagoras and Aristo of Chios, except that they wrote a few letters. Others wrote no more than one treatise each, as Melissus, Parmenides, Anaxagoras. Many works were written by Zeno, more by Xenophanes, more by Democritus, more by Aristotle, more by Epicurus, and still more by Chrysippus.

[17] Some schools took their name from cities, as the Elians and the Megarians, the Eretrians and the Cyrenaics; others from localities, as the Academics and the Stoics; others from incidental circumstances, as the Peripatetics; others again from derisive nicknames, as the Cynics; others from their temperaments, as the Eudaemonists or Happiness School; others from a conceit they entertained, as Truthlovers, Refutationists, and Reasoners from Analogy; others again from their teachers, as Socratics, Epicureans, and the like; some take the name of Physicists from their investigation of nature, others that of Moralists because they discuss morals; while those who are occupied with verbal jugglery are styled Dialecticians.

Quote

18] Philosophy has three parts, physics, ethics, and dialectic or logic. Physics is the part concerned with the universe and all that it contains; ethics that concerned with life and all that has to do with us; while the processes of reasoning employed by both form the province of dialectic. Physics flourished down to the time of Archelaus; ethics, as we have said, started with Socrates; while dialectic goes as far back as Zeno of Elea. In ethics there have been ten schools: the Academic, the Cyrenaic, the Elian, the Megarian, the Cynic, the Eretrian, the Dialectic, the Peripatetic, the Stoic, and the Epicurean.