

Episode 251 - Cicero's OTNOTG 26 - How Niagara Falls Helps Us Understand the Flux, the Heap, and the Epicurean Gods

Post by "Cassius" of October 18, 2024 at 9:36 AM

As to paragraph 40, the first part is essentially the "action" vs "idleness" argument which with I think we are pretty well equipped to deal. It also argues that since Epicurus values bodily pleasure, and Cotta does not admit that the gods of Epicurus have real bodies, or even quasi-bodies, then the gods cannot experience the kind of pleasure that Epicurus praises. This latter argument is often met by the argument that what Epicurus really valued is "katastematic" pleasure rather than bodily pleasure, which I think is an argument that is totally off the mark.

First:

Epicurean pleasure is *not* "inaction," no matter how much some people (who essentially agree with Cicero and the Platonic argument that virtue and the mind are higher or more "noble" than the ignoble pleasures of the body) might want to try to infer that based on the word "katastematic" or other arguments. Even mental thinking is a form of action, and the atoms of all living bodies are constantly moving. Only the living can experience pleasure of any kind, no matter how we slice up the numberless subtypes of "pleasure."

We've dealt with that a lot in the past so we should be able to present that clearly, but if anyone has ideas for illustrations or backup arguments please post.

Second:

Cotta refuses to admit that the contention that gods have quasi-bodies makes any sense, but that is the contention: the bodies of the gods are also made of atoms, but the atoms are continuously replenished indefinitely. Since the [Epicurean gods](#) do have bodies of a sort, there is no reason that the [Epicurean gods](#) cannot experience both "bodily" and "mental" types of pleasures, just as humans do.