

Episode 259 - Nothing Comes From Nothing

Post by “Cassius” of December 23, 2024 at 9:22 AM

I see Diskin Clay also mentions the Euclid parallel:

Each of the terms of Epicurus' philosophical testament requires careful interpretation, but taken massively the first paragraphs of the Letter to Herodotus show that Epicurus in ordering, condensing and refining his earlier thought, fashioned a stoicheiosis whose aim is elegantly, if not completely expressed by the requirements Proclus found perfectly fulfilled in Euclid's Elements. A passage from Proclus' introduction to the first book of Euclid does not set out all that Epicurus required of his own stoicheiosis, but it deserves study for bringing Epicurus closer to his contemporaries, especially the geometers of the IV century who were at work securing and refining the work of their predecessors. Such an alignment might well seem odd, if not bizarre. A Stoic claimed that the Epicureans never stirred up the “learned dust” (emditus pulver) of geometry“, which goes too far. Such an alignment will not make Epicurus seem a physiologist among geometers. But in his concern for the methodic ordering and presentation of his thought, it does make him a geometer among physiologists.