

Sunday Zoom - August 17, 2025 - 12:30 PM ET - Topic: "All Sensations Are True"

Post by "Bryan" of August 17, 2025 at 11:24 AM

I shared a section of this in relation to the size of the sun, but it is all rather critical material, Sextus Empiricus (fl.c. 200 CE), Against the Professions 7 (Against the Logicians/Dogmatists 1) 203 - 216:

Epicurus says that of the two things which are linked with one another - appearance and judgment- of these, the appearance, which he also calls "detectible reality," always exists as true. For just as the primary Experiences (that is, Pleasure and Suffering) are composed from certain productive things and in accordance with the very productive things themselves (such as Pleasure from what is pleasant - and Pain from what is painful) - and is it not possible that what produces pleasure is not pleasant, nor what results in pain does not exist as painful.

But [*it is*] necessary that both what causes pleasure is pleasant and what causes pain is underlyingly painful by nature: so also in the case of the appearances - given that they exist around us as experiences. What produces each of the [*appearances*] is in every way and altogether capable of appearing - which cannot, being capable of appearing, not exist in truth such as it appears... ..to establish what produces an appearance.

It is also necessary to reason analogously in regards to the [*sensations*] according to [*the details of*] each - for what is visible not only appears visible - but is also such a thing as the kind of thing it appears [*to be*].

And what is audible does not only appear audible - but actually in truth exists as such: and likewise for the other [*senses*]: all appearances, therefore, turn out to be true.

And according to reason: for, if an appearance is called true, say the Epicureans, whenever it is produced from something existing and in accordance with the very thing that exists - and [*given that*] every appearance is composed from something existing that is capable of appearing and in accordance with what is capable of appearing itself - [*then*] by natural necessity, every appearance is true.

But the difference regarding the appearances that seem to fall upon [*us*] from the same sensible thing (such as from a visible one) deceives some people - according to which the original source is apparent as either differently colored, or differently shaped, or otherwise completely changed.

[*Epicureans*] conjectured that, of appearances differing and conflicting in this way, it is necessary that a certain [*appearance*] is true - but the other [*appearance*], from opposing

things, happens to be false (which is naïve and [*a sign*] of men not fully perceiving the nature in the things that exist).

(let us make the reasoning based on visible things in this way) the hard object is not seen as a whole → but [*only*] the color of the hard object.

Of the color, one [*part*] is on the hard object itself (just as in things seen from nearby and from a moderate separation) – the other [*part is*] outside the hard object and underlying in the adjacent locations (just as with things envisioned from a distant separation).

But this, being completely changed in the intervening [*space*] and taking on a particular shape, delivers such an appearance as the kind of thing which it also itself underlies in truth.

In just the same way, therefore, neither is the sound thoroughly heard in a bronze instrument that is being struck, nor the [*sound*] in the mouth of the man who shouted → but rather the [*sound*] that is falling upon our sensation.

And just as no one says that a person hearing a sound from a small distance hears falsely – just because after he has come nearby he instead receives it as louder: in this way I would not say that vision gives a false report because from a far separation it sees the tower as small and round → but from nearby as larger and tetragonal.

But rather [*vision*] truly reports – because even when the sensible object is apparent to [*vision*] as small and of a certain shape: it really is small and of a certain shape – due to the transmission through the air, as the edges of the films are being broken off.

And when [*it appears*] again large and differently shaped, [*it is*] again similarly large and differently shaped → since by now both [*appearances*] are not established as the same thing.

For this is what remains of distorted judgment: to believe that the appearance envisioned from nearby and from far off was the same.

But it exists as the particular of sensation instead to receive only what is present and moving it – such as color – and not to thoroughly separate that what is here is one thing → but what is underlying there is another thing.

Therefore, the appearances, for these reasons, are all true → the judgments, however, are not all true – but, they have some difference.

For, of these [*judgments*], some were true, but others false: since our distinctions [*between true and false*] are established upon appearances – and we distinguish some things correctly, others wretchedly (either by adding and attributing something to the appearances → or by removing something from them – and generally give a false report against unreasoning sensation).

So then, of the judgments, according to Epicurus, some are true, and others are false: true are those attested and not contested by detectible reality → false are those contested and not attested by detectible reality.

Attestation is the comprehension through detectible reality of what is judged [*actually*] being the kind of thing it was once judged [*to be*]: such as, when Plato is approaching from afar, I imagine and judge, due to the separation, that it is Plato – but when he has approached, it was confirmed that it is Plato, with the separation between having been removed – and it was attested through detectible reality itself.

Non-contestation is conformity of what is unclear – but has been postulated and judged – with what appears: such as Epicurus saying that void exists, which is the very thing that is unclear – this is confirmed through a detectible situation – movement.

For if the void does not exist, movement should not exist – with the moving body not having a location into which it will be transferred, because of everything being full and solid: so that what is apparent (that movement does exist) does not contest the unclear thing that has been judged.

But contestation is something opposed to non-contestation – for there was a joint-refutation of the visible thing with the unclear thing that was postulated. As for example the Stoic says that the void does not exist – asserting something unclear – and with this having been so postulated, what is apparent (movement, I mean) should be jointly refuted. For if the void does not exist, then, by natural necessity, movement is not produced – according to the way [*of thinking*] already previously made clear by us.

And so likewise, non-attestation is opposed to attestation: for it is as an underlying occurrence through the detectible reality of what is being judged not existing as such a thing as the exact kind of thing it was judged [*to be*].

Just as, when someone is approaching from far off, because of the separation we imagine it to be Plato – but when the separation has been reduced: we know by detectible reality that it is not Plato. Thus something like this comes to be non-attestation: for what is judged was not attested by what is apparent.

Therefore, attestation and non-contestation are the criterion of something being true – but non-attestation and contestation of being false: while the basis and foundation of all things is detectible reality.

ATTESTED		CONTESTED		
<p>(M) ἐπιμαρτυρούμενον attested</p> <p><i>being attested by sensation is sufficient to establish the truth of a judgment as long as there continues to be no contestation</i></p>	<p>v or</p>	<p>(-W) μὴ ἀντιμαρτυρούμενον not contested</p> <p><i>not being contested by sensation is sufficient to establish the truth of a judgment as long as there continues to be no contestation</i></p>	<p>⇒</p>	<p>(α) TRUE</p>
<p>(-M) μὴ ἐπιμαρτυρούμενον not attested</p> <p><i>not being attested by sensation is sufficient to establish the falsity of a judgment as long as there continues to be no attestation</i></p>	<p>∧ and</p>	<p>(W) ἀντιμαρτυρούμενον contested</p> <p><i>being contested by sensation is sufficient to establish the falsity of a judgment long as there continues to be no attestation</i></p>	<p>⇒</p>	<p>(ο) προσμένον pending <i>(no evidence → unknown)</i></p>
<p>(M) ἐπιμαρτυρούμενον attested</p>	<p>∧ and</p>	<p>(W) ἀντιμαρτυρούμενον contested</p> <p><i>being contested by sensation is sufficient to establish the falsity of a judgment long as there continues to be no attestation</i></p>	<p>⇒</p>	<p>(ο) προσμένον pending <i>(conflicting evidence → more observation needed)</i></p>

