

Episode 335 - EATAQ 17 - Epicurean Analysis Of Stoic Claims About Notions And Memory

Post by "Cassius" of May 23, 2026 at 4:39 PM

just a brief comment on where we are going on the podcast at the moment:

1 - We're going through Academic Questions to help us get a general grounding on the issues of knowledge and skepticism as they were understood at the time that Epicurean philosophy was flourishing in the ancient world.

2 - When we finish what we decide to do with Academic Questions (we don't have the time to go through every word of it), we are going to be in a position to tackle - and we will tackle - what's left of Philodemus' "On Signs" / "On Methods of Inference"

3 - And in case it's not clear where all this leads:

As best I can tell, those who claim to be modern Stoics have pretty much abandoned any interest in the true Stoic theory of knowledge. I am sure that there are many reasons for that, but I strongly suspect that one of the primary reasons is that modern Stoics in general run from the truth that Stoicism is essentially a theistic philosophy that makes no sense outside a supernatural-based intelligent design view of the universe.

We - at least the EpicureanFriends forum in general - are not going to take that position of neglect and suppression in regard to Epicurus. The main hurdle we have is not that Epicureanism starts with a false view of the universe, or that we suspect the truth of the radical skepticism that overtook the Academics and other ancient philosophers. Our hurdle today is that for generations everyone has chosen to focus exclusively on tranquility and other issues which can be reconciled with the dominant Judeo-Christianity and Humanist mix that passes for moral consensus. As a result, most of us have very little understanding of the fundamentals what Epicurus was actually teaching - even in ethics. In canonics, most of us have only a tenuous idea - at best - of what the "prolepsis" discussion is all about.

By the time we finish with "On Signs" we should have a very clear understanding of the general direction of the Epicurean theory of knowledge. At that point I expect that most of us will then be in a position to confidently assert the Epicurean view of knowledge as one of the foundational aspects of Epicurean philosophy that it certainly is. And the rest won't have any reason for confusion about what it is they are actually rejecting.

To close with a good word for those who are "actual" Stoics - even today -- *At least they aren't radical Skeptics!* 😊