

Lucretius EpicureanFriends PDF Reference Edition - General Comments

Post by "Cassius" of October 5, 2019 at 2:46 PM

[Quote from Todd](#)

for which "essentials" and "accidents" are typical philosophical descriptions, however problematic for the modern reader.

Yes, that is exactly the issue. In my work I am going for understandability for the modern reader, not for the modern commentator/philosopher class, who in my view have generally made a mess of things 😊

[Quote from Todd](#)

"non-essential" or "non-essential properties" for "accidental" or "accidents", respectively.

Then all of a sudden, we're talking about events???

Yes I agree that essential or non-essential is exactly the issue, but what separates the two except that we observe that at some times they are together as one, but at some times the things observed are separated? To me that distinction qualifies most strictly as an issue of transiency, or change in place over time, which is relatively close to "event." On the other hand "accident" invokes issues of "how did this happen" which is not really the issue -- the issue is simply whether the thing did in fact separate at any point, not "why."

[Quote from Todd](#)

The problem arises because Lucretius gives examples that sound more like events than qualities to us. I would translate that loosely as "the condition of bondage or liberty, the state of being rich or poor, at war or at peace". These are accidents because they can change without changing the nature of the subject experiencing them (i.e, a probably a person in this case).

See Todd I am thinking that Lucretius was exactly right in giving these examples, which is the reason he gave them, to eliminate this confusion. There is no single thing that "intrinsic" about bondage or liberty, rich or poor, other than the passage of time - an event. Those changes

could come about by intent, or by "luck," or by "gambling" or by any other word that can be assigned to human conduct. With the issue not being HOW the change came about, but simply that it did come about, thus showing that the quality being observed is not an essential part of the atomic structure.

[Quote from Todd](#)

The overall point, of course, is that these qualities have no existence independent of matter.

Yes there we are in total agreement. The issue is that these qualities have no independent exist, and arise purely from the combinations of the matter and the void. BUT there is also the essential point that the qualities themselves are not "random" or "chaotic" or matters of luck - the qualities themselves are determined by the arrangement of the matter and void and the particular circumstances of that moment -- of that "event."