

Episode Twelve - Nothing But Combinations Of Matter And Void

Post by "Cassius" of March 29, 2020 at 7:34 AM

[ADMIN NOTE: The material below will be discussed in Episode 13, rather than 12:]

Today's discussion of Lucretius (Episode 12) contains a couple of really deep issues worth noting before we start:

1) The difference between the PROPERTIES of atoms that are unchanging, and The QUALITIES of BODIES that do change and vary by situation. We are going to have to look closely at whether ATOMS have qualities, or whether only BODIES (combinations of atoms) have qualities, which I think is the case. We also need to look at the terminology because I personally think that EVENTS which is used by Daniel Brown (and closer to the Latin) is much better than ACCIDENTS as used by Munro and Bailey and many others.

4. Physics

Book 1 sets out the fundamental principles of Epicurean atomism.

1.149-482. First comes, in effect, Lucretius' ontology. Nothing comes into being out of nothing or perishes into nothing. The only two *per se* entities are body and void; all other existing things are inseparable or accidental properties of these (Lucretius' own terms for which are *coniuncta* and *eventa* respectively). Two further items that might be suspected of existing independently of any concurrently existing body or void, (1) time and (2) historical facts, are argued to be in fact existentially parasitic on the presently existing world, and thus not after all *per se* existents.

2) this section contains the very interesting discussion of the Helen / Trojan war reference, and gathering what it means is not easy. I think he is using this to again get at the issue of "Existence" and what that word means. I think he is saying that we need to be careful to make sure we do not think that the story of the Trojan war "exists" as some archetype or in another dimension, and he argues that by saying that the events of the Trojan war are long gone and no longer "exist" in real form.

3) Last point maybe is to point out that he says that TIME does not exist except as a function of the movement of bodies. That one may actually be easier, and this is mentioned in the letter to Herodotus that we can compare.

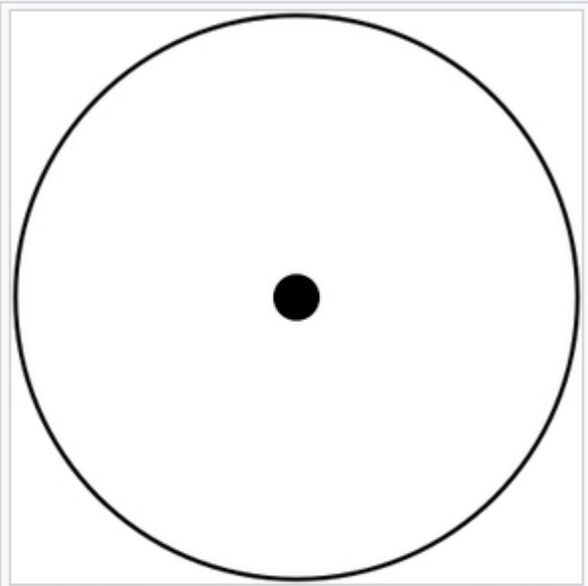
Quote

Moreover, you must firmly grasp this point as well; we must not look for time, as we do for all other things which we look for in an object, by referring them to the general conceptions which we perceive in our own minds, but we must take the direct intuition, in accordance with which we speak of "a long time" or "a short time," and examine it, applying our intuition to time as we do to other things. Neither must we search for expressions as likely to be better, but employ just those which are in common use about it. Nor again must we predicate of time anything else as having the same essential nature as this special perception, as some people do, but we must turn our thoughts particularly to that only with which we associate this peculiar perception and by which we measure it. For indeed this requires no demonstration, but only reflection, to show that it is with days and nights and their divisions that we associate it and likewise also with internal feelings or absence of feeling, and with movements and states of rest; in connection with these last again we think of this very perception as a peculiar kind of accident, and in virtue of this we call it time.

There are lots of aspects of all this to consider but one is "Who would argue that 'actions of themselves subsist, as bodies do, or are in nature (such as is a void)?"

Is that a reference to Platonism?

Then there is the background of monism: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monism>



The circled dot was used by the Pythagoreans and later Greeks to represent the first metaphysical being, the **Monad** or **The Absolute**




Interpretations [edit]

The traditional interpretation of Parmenides' work is that he argued that the everyday perception of reality of the physical world (as described in *doxa*) is mistaken, and that the reality of the world is 'One Being' (as described in *aletheia*): an unchanging, ungenerated, indestructible whole. Under the *Way of Opinion*, Parmenides set out a contrasting but more conventional view of the world, thereby becoming an early exponent of the duality of appearance and reality. For him and his pupils, the phenomena of movement and change are simply appearances of a changeless, eternal reality.

Parmenides was not struggling to formulate the laws of conservation of mass and conservation of energy; he was struggling with the metaphysics of change, which is still a relevant philosophical topic today. Moreover, he argued that movement was impossible because it requires moving into "the void", and Parmenides identified "the void" with nothing, and therefore (by definition) it does not exist. That which does exist is *The Parmenidean One*.

Since existence is an immediately intuited fact, non-existence is the wrong path because a thing cannot disappear, just as something cannot originate from nothing. In such mystical experience (*unio mystica*), however, the distinction between subject and object disappears along with the distinctions between objects, in addition to the fact that if nothing cannot be, it cannot be the object of thought either:



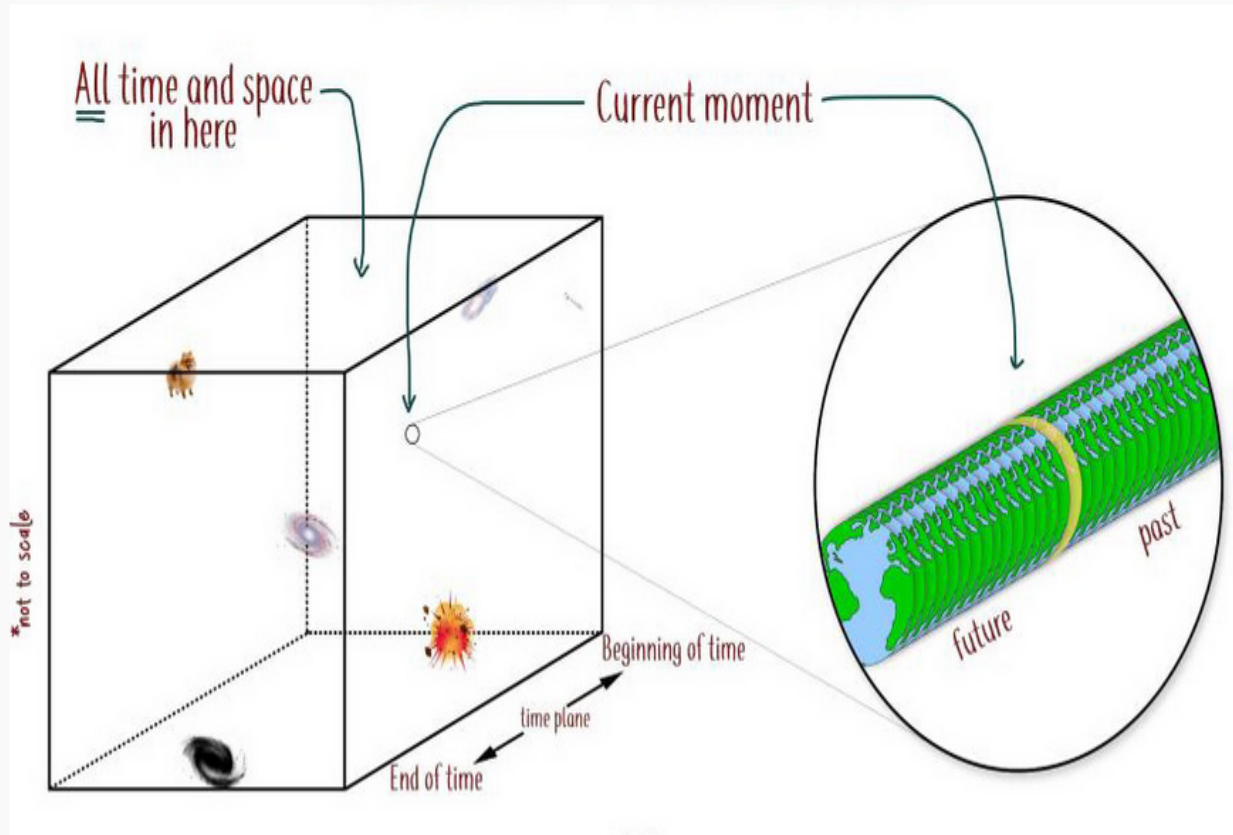
Being according to Parmenides is like a sphere. 

The block universe theory, where time travel is possible but time passing is an illusion

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ABC Science By Dr Kristie Miller for Catalyst

Posted 1 September 2018 at 3:17 pm



The block universe: it contains everything that has ever happened and will happen at any time and at any place. (ABC Science)

Growing block universe

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

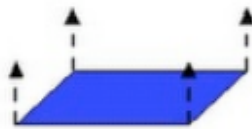
According to the **growing block universe theory of time** (or the **growing block view**), the past and present exist while the future does not. The present is an objective property, to be compared with a moving spotlight. By the passage of time more of the world comes into being; therefore, the block universe is said to be growing. The growth of the block is supposed to happen in the present, a very thin slice of **spacetime**, where more of spacetime is continually coming into being.

The growing block view is an alternative to both eternalism (according to which past, present, and future all exist) and presentism (according to which only the present exists). It is held to be closer to **common-sense** intuitions than the alternatives. **C. D. Broad** was a proponent of the theory (1923). Some modern defenders are **Michael Tooley** (in 1997) and **Peter Forrest** (in 2004).

<https://www.preposterousuniverse.com/blog/2015/04/0...eality-of-time/>

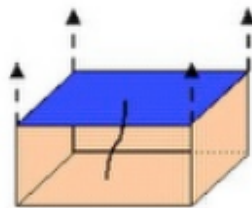
3 METAPHYSICS OF TIME

Presentism
"Nowism"



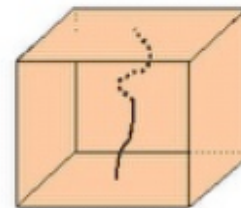
The Present

Possibilism
"The Tree Model"



Past & Present

Eternalism
"The Block Universe"



Past, Present, & Future