

New Sedley Chapter On Ancient Greek Atheism

Post by "Godfrey" of April 11, 2022 at 11:57 AM

I guess that I was unclear in my summaries of attestation &c. My reference point is Sextus Empiricus as described in this previous post:

Thread

[The Beginning of an Outline of Epicurean Reasoning](#)

Getting away from Philodemus On Signs for a moment, I've been looking at The Hellenistic Philosophers by Long and Sedley for original quotes from Epicurus regarding signs and methods of inference. I also had a look at a cluster of Principle Doctrines that are relevant (PD 22 & 23 are from Nate's compilation, with thanks).

PD22 *We must take into account both the underlying purpose and **all the evidence of clear perception, to which we refer our opinions**. Otherwise, everything will be filled with...*



Godfrey

March 17, 2022 at 9:19 PM

In commentary elsewhere in The Hellenistic Philosophers, Long and Sedley point out some potential errors in this formulation based on the sources that Sextus Empiricus was using. So there's still a lot to sort out!

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Godfrey: just to be clear in terms of images I think the foundational observations about them is that images was a theory about *everything* and how we perceive them. So the first step in the process is to discuss the theory about things directly in front of us, not starting with gods long distances away.

Agreed. I realized in the middle of posting that this was an important point. The texts have lots of instances of reasoning/inference but very little explanation that I can find. Presently I'm overloaded with unprocessed collected data; I may have to step back and let it percolate for a while.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Do we have even any specific examples of a description of an Epicurean observation of a god with which to agree or disagree?

None that I'm aware of, although there is that description of gods in the form of humans and speaking Greek. I don't remember the source of that, but I remember it as a product of reasoning and not an observation.