

Prolepsis Citations from Long & Sedley

Post by "Eikadistes" of July 6, 2024 at 10:05 PM

After all this, and ten years of devoted study, I must say, understanding *prolēpseis* is like holding wet soap. It functionally works when you just cup it and apply gently, but when you squeeze it to test its composition, it just slips out of your hand and re-orient itself toward another drain.

Diognes describes *prolēpseis as cog* in the wheel of formulating language. Hermarkhos and Philodemos entertain hypotheses that almost make me suspect that a *prolēpseis* is a song that we receive on our mental radios from the FM being transmitted from the gods in deep space. And I'm not into that. That frankly sounds oddly mythic, and unnecessarily reliant on metaphor.

I bring up my drug hypotheis with you guys (too) frequently because, honestly ... I'm really just an defacto atheist who thinks religion is really fucking dumb, and I have tried - **TRIED**, I mean, was raised Methodist, questions God as a pre-teen, dated a Catholic for years and entertained mass, accepted the rituals of Cathoicism, prayed with fraternity at Mosques, worshipped at Buddhist temples, engaged the artifaces of New Age commercialism, dedicated myself to replicating the meditative practices described in *Gita* and Paramahansa Yogananda's famous book, and re-studied heterodox Christianity with nonjudgmental eyes, and NONE of the provided me with any practice advice, and all of them blinded me to the reality of the genuine religious experience **until I ate mushrooms**. Six grams of *psilocybin cubensis* will provide any atheist with a fascinating journey through convincing intellectual demonstrations that lead to reasonable religious belief. All natural, all conditioned by chemicals that happened to be released in a young philosopher's brain.

If *prolēpseis* are just "common sense" human concepts, like "justice" or "divinity" or "time" then ... fuck it, right? Who care what they really are, or where they came from, or how they work. They simply are, like color. Wavelength measures in nanometers or not, we know what color is because DAMN there is it. Likewise, people talk about the gods, when I drop LSD, I feel downright blissful and holy and oceanic and incorruptible and pure and utterly godlike, and I want to know.

Or is this just his response to Plato's belief in innate ideas that precede birth and have a more fundamental reality than death. These are the "idea"-level of human existence, and Epicurus is just trying to contextualize them in mental processes to the best of his linguistic creativity. If this is the case, *prolēpseis* isn't technical we just mean "notions" or "ideas" or "concepts" that are on-point when it comes to being reflective of the place, person, objects or process to which they refer.

As far as the gods go, they've been here, they're here, they'll be here ... it's on the cash in my pocket I use to buy weed, it was in my 9th-grade biology class when we talking about Darwin and Mendel, it gets a tax break on every street corner in Central Florida, like ... we can't escape it. They are self-described godly people, who believe ungodlike things. F\$%@ 'em.

But back to LSD ... I don't mean to bring it up as an abstract point of show-and-tell or as a fringe theory (like the simulation fantasy that has encapsulate undisplined minds) ...but really, **I'm asking my Epicurean friend who accept Epicurean theology: do your guys have experiences in your mind with a humanoid figure that you have seen in very unique dreams?** (maybe a new thread [Cassius](#)). I never have, of hundreds of recorded dreams. I have a few figures that I identify as "God", but my personal definition in "what 'God' is" is a "Helper" or a "Guardian", which is, according to Epicurus, is a false conception that comes from culture, not natural impressions.

Fair enough. Even so, I have **never** dreamed of a blissful humanoid. I've seen **some** interviews with people on DMT who describe Machine Elf Faeries that are eerily similar in description to Epicurean detities, but still ... I am constantly fighting the feeling that Epicurus walked about from church feeling re-charged and inspired, and I've just felt guilty and ashamed, and I have, for a deacde now, really struggled to understand this principle for what it means to my life.

I wish we had his letters to Metrodoros about his struggled conception of divinity. Did Metrodoros share similar gripes as do it? Did any other Epicureans say, "look ... **BRILLIANT** *argument to the bozo thesists about their circular reasoning to provide them with a genuine challenge ... but we don't believe in ... like ... okay, so, for real, we just think Apollo is dumb and we eat food and discuss physics and the nature of human desires ... we don't get on our knees, slit a lamb's throat, paint our face with blood, and then assume that this act will somehow reinforce our psycho-social health, that's, ugh, gross, right?"* Or if Epicurus really did practice the Dionysian mysteries with regularity, was his god the intoxicating feeling of empathy and warmness in non-alcoholics that was personified as a jolly god?

I really want to flesh this out, because, for me personally, if Epicurean theology isn't consistent, a few other key parts of the philosophy begin to unravel, the more I see it.