

Prolepsis / Anticipations As Epicurus' Answer to the MENO Problem

Post by “Pacatus” of November 2, 2024 at 3:13 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

I know I'm alive

Just as an (hopefully not too distracting) aside: Wittgenstein argued that, in normal everyday discourse* (as opposed to academic philosophy) that “know” is, at best, superfluous. In the *Philosophical Investigations*, he imagines a passerby who overhears a discussion in which W's interlocutor says: “I *know* that's a tree!” (Note the emphasis.) W says to the puzzled passerby: “Don't worry. This fellow isn't crazy. We're just talking philosophy.”

Imagine again the addition of emphasis: “I *know* I'm alive.” How could there be any doubt? The same with the other examples. If there *were* doubt, to what could you appeal?

And this is where I think the Meno Paradox becomes a sophistic misapplication of deductive syllogistic – hence my post about inductive versus deductive logic.

[W's *On Certainty* was an extended exploration of this question, in response to G.E. Moore.]

* Which W argued was adequate to most of our everyday communication, and that academic philosophy (epistemology) often confused what is apparent.