

PD24 - Commentary and Translation of PD 24

Post by "Don" of September 3, 2020 at 11:02 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I would say one of the most continuously difficult parts is that of separating (1) instances of data provided by the "mental presentations/anticipations" from (2) conceptual reasoning, in which concepts are formed after a lot of thought and deliberation and reasoning. I continue to think that if we were to equate "mental presentations/anticipations" with "concepts" we would be confusing two distinct things (the process vs the result) into a single thing (the concept which the result of thinking) and we'd have a feedback loop which would introduce rationalism into the canon and would be why that Epicurus himself only had THREE legs, but the "other Epicureans (in my view mistakenly) came up with four.

This is why I was so surprised when I realized I saw the three components of the Canon listed and the epibolē were included but not the prolepses. I am convinced the doctrine is talking about the Canon. DL seems to imply that the *Epicureans" added a fourth leg to the Canon but PD 24 seems to imply that aisthēsīn, pathē, and epibolē were legitimately a three legged Canon too.

Are the epibolē and prolepses two facets of the same faculty? I believe we've discussed elsewhere on the forum the innate nature of the prolepses. The phrase phantastikē epibolē occurs in DL X.50 and 51

Quote

Falsehood and error always depend upon the intrusion of opinion (when a fact awaits) confirmation or the absence of contradiction, which fact is afterwards frequently not confirmed (or even contradicted) [following a certain movement in ourselves connected with, but distinct from, the **mental picture** presented--which is the cause of error.] [51] "For the presentations which, e.g., are received in a picture or arise in dreams, or from any other form of apprehension by the mind or by the other criteria of truth, would never have resembled what we call the real and true things, had it not been for certain actual things of the kind with which we come in contact. Error would not have occurred, if we had not experienced some other movement in ourselves, conjoined with, but distinct from, the **perception of what is presented**. And from this movement, if it be not confirmed or be contradicted, falsehood results ; while, if it be confirmed or not contradicted, truth results.

"Mental picture" is the translation here in 50, and "perception of what is presented" in 51 of phantastikē epibolē. That's the trouble with translations! They can hide the same phrases in the

original. And 50 and 51 are from the Letter to Herodotus, so this is Epicurus talking. Plus the fact that he's talking about opinion, falsehood, "when a fact awaits", etc., he's addressing the same concerns that arise in PD 24.