

Philodemus On Piety

Post by "Don" of December 19, 2020 at 11:02 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

. If you equate a "concept" with a criterion of truth then you lock yourself forever into a particular opinion which would never again be changeable through that faculty, and that's not the way we view the five senses or the feelings of pain and pleasure, which are continuously reporting whatever they receive regardless of preconceived notions.

This is why I'm so excited about the work of Dr Lisa Feldman Barrett. Her explanation of infants and children forming concepts of concrete and abstract "things" strikes me as that "repeated exposure" idea of prolepses. But those concepts are not immutable. I go back to Philodemus's On Anger where he writes about the ability to control our anger by the exercise of "putting-before-the-eyes" of the consequences of our anger before we're actually angry. This fits nicely with Barrett in that this exercise would change our concept (I'm saying prolepsis) of the emotion of anger so that the next time we construct that emotion from sense data and our innate concept/prolepsis of that emotion, our mind has a different prediction and hence a different - hopefully more appropriate - outcome: ex., Don't lose your mind and yell and swear at the person in traffic (they may be rushing to the hospital).

I've found a lot of echoes of Epicurus in Barrett's work from what I've been reading. It's made me more open to the "repeated exposure" idea of formation of the prolepses.