

PD10 - Interpretations of PD 10 Discussion

Post by "Cassius" of January 17, 2021 at 7:39 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

I think once one starts to say "what he's actually saying is..." that's "like butter scraped over too much bread."

I see your perspective there and think it is a good place to start. However I would not recommend stopping there, because unless you develop more of the context of the discussion it's easy to miss many implications of what is being presented. In this context I don't think Epicurus can be fully appreciated without realizing how much he amounts to a rejection of Platonic viewpoints, and that remains very important today since Platonic viewpoints are embedded in so much of modern thinking. Plato is never mentioned by name in the principle doctrines, yet it seems that Epicurus was probably thinking explicitly about the need to refute his viewpoints when he compiled his list of important doctrines. A list of principles presented as "this is important to understand" isn't fully understood until the reader understands "why this is important."

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He also exhibits great familiarity with the writings of Plato and he distributed among members of his school the work of refuting or ridiculing his various dialogues. His own classification of the desires is developed from a Platonic hint and he begins to erect his structure of hedonism from the point where this topic was left by Plato. A paragraph is extant in which he warns his disciples against the Platonic view of the universe as described in the *Timaeus*, and elsewhere he pokes a little satirical fun at that famous opus. *More than half of his forty Authorized Doctrines are direct contradictions of Platonic teachings.*