

Preconceptions and PD24

Post by "Cassius" of December 28, 2021 at 9:52 PM

Don't this clip is what I see as the real issue, and the part underlined in red is where I think DeWitt canNOT be correct. To me he is implying that an anticipation is an idea (by calling it innate) so to me the point I really expressed above is that the question is whether an

THE ELEMENT OF ANTICIPATION

The core of the problem is to be recognized in the element of anticipation. It is positively stated by Cicero that the use of the term *prolepsis* was an innovation on the part of Epicurus.³⁸ It is agreed that this term *prolepsis* also denotes some sort of concept or idea. No one denies that its proper signification is "anticipation." Therefore, if an idea precedes or anticipates something, this can hardly be anything but experience. The said idea must therefore be innate. Quite correctly, therefore, Cicero wrote with studied precision when reporting on the gods of Epicurus,³⁹ "implanted or rather inborn conceptions of them." Nevertheless it has been deemed unnecessary to believe that Epicurus held such an opinion and it is even declared that "the notion of 'innate ideas' would be wholly repugnant to Epicureanism."⁴⁰ Yet there is compelling evidence for believing the precise opposite, that he thought of all infant behavior as anticipatory of later experience.

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sition here):

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I am pretty sure DeWitt's footnote 40 there is a reference to Bailey (I will look it up and confirm) and there I agree with Bailey, and would say that innate IDEAS are incompatible -- but not innate "principles".

(Note: Yes the cite 40 is to Bailey's "Greek Atomists and Epicurus, section 557.1)

I think deWiitt is mainly just speaking loosely, as I have been guilty of myself above. His last sentence, for example "yet there is compelling...." can still be correct. just because infant behavior may be anticipatory of later experience, that doesn't mean babies have innate "ideas."