

# Plotinus and Epicurean Epistemology by Lloyd P. Gerson

Post by "Cassius" of October 15, 2022 at 4:43 PM

Quote

That is, the confirming or 'witnessing' evidence adduced by Epicurus is unable to turn belief into true belief that is not merely accidentally true because there is nothing added to the original presentation that entails the truth of the belief. There is no belief that  $o$ , which added to the belief that  $p$ , entails  $q$ . [...]

Pardon me for being obvious if this is already clear from the context (I haven't had time to study the links) but this phrasing is strikingly similar to that which I remember from DeLacey's appendix to "On Methods of Inference" and his discussion of the difference between Epicurus and the Platonic /Aristotelian line.

This goes to the heart of the issue of Epicurus' criticism of certain types of logic divorced from sensory evidence and seems to be of major importance in understanding Epicurean reasoning, even if we find the subject dry today.

I surely hope that someone someday will have the time and the talent to really dive into this and bring out Epicurus' viewpoint into full view.

Right now we're left with this vague concern that someone Epicurus was anti scientific in being critical of any variation of the term "logic," and it would be a huge advance if we could bring his position out from the shadows.

IMHO we have a huge issue today and we are overbroad if we treat all calls to "science" and "logic" as being unchallengeable, if we don't recognize that true science and true logic have to be validated by the senses in order to be worth following.

Even writing that sentence can cause eyebrows to raise but I am convinced this issue is one of Epicurus' most important points. How else did he see the wisdom in challenging and overturning Plato and Aristotle if he didn't see limitations of their claims in these areas?