

Knowledge of the Gods as "Manifest"

Post by "Don" of December 12, 2022 at 9:40 PM

It's also instructive to remember the scholia to PD1:

[Elsewhere (Epicurus) says that the gods are discernible by reason alone, some being numerically distinct, while others result uniformly from the continuous influx of similar images directed to the same spot and in human form.]

[έν ἄλλοις δέ φησι τοὺς θεοὺς λόγῳ θεωρητοῦς, οὓς μὲν κατ' ἀριθμὸν ὑφεστῶτας, οὓς δὲ καθ' ὁμοειδειαν ἐκ τῆς συνεχοῦς ἐπιρρύσεως τῶν ὁμοίων εἰδώλων ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἀποτετελεσμένῳ ἀνθρωποειδῶς.]

θεωρητοῦς

A. that may be seen

2. of the mind, to be reached by contemplation

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, θεωρ-ητός](#)

λόγῳ "by reason" or "by thinking" or "through reasoning"

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, λόγος](#)

I don't really like Hicks translation of the scholia note: "the gods are discernible by reason alone". My preference would be, using the definitions, for something like "the gods are conceived by contemplation through reasoning."

We don't - can't! - see the [Epicurean gods](#) with our physical eyes. The "truth" of their existence takes place entirely in our minds by reasoning through their existence through contemplation. But through that contemplation, Epicurus asserts that their existence is *εναργής* "clearly discernable to us / manifest to us in our minds."

I continue to maintain that contemplation is the best translation for one of the characteristics of the sage, too. "The sage will also enjoy themselves more than others in contemplation, speculation, and theorizing" (my translation) For full explanation, see:

[Epicurean Sage - ...enjoy themselves more than others in contemplation](#)

Hicks: He will take more delight than other men in state festivals. Yonge: ...and he will find more pleasure than other men in speculations. Yonge appears to...

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