

Episode 155 - "Epicurus And His Philosophy" Part 11 - The Canon, Reason, and Nature 02

Post by "Godfrey" of January 11, 2023 at 1:22 AM

From the Hopkins Press article linked in [Don](#) 's post above: "*In De Anima (Of the Soul) he [Aristotle] argues that, for every sense, there is a sense organ.*" It would seem that Epicurus was referencing this, and thinking of the brain as a sense organ when he wrote about images, dreams and knowledge of the gods. Centaurs and such were also perceived in this way by images getting jumbled in transit, as it were.

Our conception of the brain is far removed from this idea, and this makes it more difficult to understand the Canon as Epicurus intended it. Dreams, images and gods do originate from outside input. The difference between Epicurus and us is that we see such things as subconscious mental processes, processing external input from myths, legends and religion, often occurring in infancy and early childhood. Epicurus (to my understanding) describes such things as sensations that the brain experiences directly, with no processing involved.

However there's a further point about which I'm quite unclear. What exactly are *epibolai*? And what is meant by "grasping" and "focusing the attention"? The latter two, at least, sound to me like mental processes. Then my question is whether or not any Epicureans are including these mental processes in the Canon and why? This may have already been answered and I missed it in my befuddlement: if so, I apologize.