

What If Anything Has Changed About Human Nature In the Last 2000 Years?

Post by “Don” of January 8, 2024 at 10:48 PM

[Bryan](#) 's comments are spot on.

Even more complexity comes in when one considers that Epicurus said that we have a prolepsis of justice and a prolepsis of the gods. I reconcile this with the idea that humans appear to have an innate faculty or propensity for fairness and an innate sense of awe or wonder. Both these come from research done with very young infants and toddlers, and, in the case of fairness, non-human species. Those may not have been what Epicurus necessarily had in mind, but for me it reconciles Epicurus's intuition and modern scientific research.

That, along with the idea of an innate faculty of pattern recognition to create those "mental images" that [Bryan](#) mentions, is how I reconcile Cicero's "insitae vel potius inatae cogitiones." To me the Lewis & Short definition of "implanted by nature, inborn, innate, natural" can be reconciled with an inborn faculty or propensity, but I would agree that the mental images are reinforced and strengthened by subsequent exposure to them. In some ways, it's like a child calling every animal a "dog" until they realize "dog" refers to a specific kind of animal after repeated experiences of "dog" in their environment.

The concept of the prolepsis is still very much a work-in-progress for me.