

Pleasure and Reality

Post by "Cassius" of April 9, 2019 at 5:36 AM

Godfrey the argument appears in several locations in DeWitt's book, but primarily starting page 142. When you get a chance to look at this material I'll be very interested in your reaction. To connect your specific comments to a particular page, here is this:

Unfortunately the traditional account of the Anticipations have gone for empty. Their excellent reason can be cited for these objections: first, in the graded textbooks of Epicurus the topic was reserved for advanced students and usually omitted from both the Little and the Big Epitome; consequently Lucretius has no help to offer; second, already in antiquity the concepts of such abstract things as justice had become confused with the general concepts of such concrete things as horses and cows; third, modern scholars have become victims of the confusion of the ancients and on their own account have committed the error of merging the Anticipations with the Simulations.

It is highly probable that Epicurus allowed even to certain animals, especially elephants, the possession of those embryonic anticipations of social virtues. The tendency of the day was to have recourse to the study of irrational creatures in order to learn the workings of Nature. It should be recalled too that not only was Epicurus very eager to have information of Pyrrhus, who had been in India, but also that the writings of Alexander's associates, Arrianus, Strabo, and Cleander concerning India were available in his youth, and the same is true of the descriptions of India by Megasthenes of the time of Seleucus. The elder Philo, who quotes three of the above writers, testified to elephants "a sort of divination of justice,"¹⁰ an excellent equivalent of the Epicurean Anticipation. Philo also ascribes to elephants the possession of pride, honesty, goodness, equity, and even religion.¹¹ All of these fall squarely into the category of abstract notions, where the Anticipations belong.

The term *prolepsis* was correctly rendered by Cicero as *anticipatio* or *praesensio* and less precisely, though satisfactorily, by the elder Philo as *divinatio*. It is wrongly rendered as "concepts" by those who confuse the general concept of such a thing as an ox with the abstract idea of justice. One scholar prefers "preconception," but perhaps "preconception" would be preferable. It seems most advantageous, however, to adhere to "Anticipation" because this is the meaning of the Greek word *prolepsis*.

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