

Sunday June 22 - Topic: Prolepsis

Post by “Patrikios” of June 21, 2025 at 5:15 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

I am still drawn to the idea that prolepsis is the subconscious faculty of "pattern recognition" or the mental faculty of discerning significant patterns within the cacophony of sensation. Over time, similar patterns are recognized and fine tuned. Sensations flood our minds constantly. Prolepsis allows us to make sense of sensations, then once patterns are identified within the sensations, we can begin to assign concepts to those patterns cognitively/consciously.

[Don](#) i fully agree with your premise on “pattern recognition”. Many years ago (1980s) I got interested in how to do personal brain training. That led to studying the biological processes of our brain’s **Reticular Activating System** (RAS). RAS acts as a gatekeeper (filter) that determines what information reaches consciousness based on emotional and motivational relevance. I think this is the biological process behind how prolepsis works as a pre-conceived notion or innate concept that helps filter and organize our experiences.

So, I think this is what Epicurus meant by focused, repetitious study (epibole), so we condition (program) our brains to use the resulting natural comprehension (prolepsis) of when/how to apply Epicurean principles to make better choices and avoidances. With enough training, our subconscious uses Kahneman’s System #1 (Fast Thinking mode), to arrive at the optimal decision (based on our prior learning & experiences). It is then left to our rational thinking brain to listen to the felt sensations (e.g. ‘gut feeling’) to acknowledge these balanced decisions that “feel right”, and are based on sound scientific, rational facts.

Is this close to your understanding?