

# Prolepsis of the gods

Post by "Cassius" of July 3, 2025 at 11:22 AM

Bryan will likely do better than me but I would say:

## [Quote from TauPhi](#)

1) Prolepsis is a canonical faculty, knowledge is possible but prolepsis of gods is logically impossible (we know now that eidolas is a failed theory and images of gods do not reach human minds travelling from intermundia). That means Epicurus blundered with his description of gods being incorruptible and blessed. He had no input data to form prolepsis of gods and make any claims about gods, whatsoever.

I think according to your own reasoning, with which I agree, saying "prolepsis of gods" is improper. Eyes don't see gods or trees or birds or any other "object" either. Once you assign a word or name to what you are talking about you are selectively choosing from the inputs of the eye to the brain, and I would say the same applies to "gods." What we seem to be revolving around is seeing prolepsis as a form of automatic selectivity among the inputs provided by the sensations and feelings, by which the brain *then* in a separate step takes that selected raw data and then assembles the patterns into concepts and attaches names to them.

## [Quote from TauPhi](#)

2) Prolepsis is a form of reasoning and cannot be considered canonical faculty or knowledge is impossible. That means Epicurus blundered with his description of canon or applied pure reasoning in his description of gods. Whether his reasoning is correct or incorrect remains forever undetermined as knowledge is impossible in this case and everything goes.

Same point as above. I would not see prolepsis as a form of "reasoning." Regardless of whether you pursue the "real" or "ideal" view of gods, the prolepsis that Velleius is talking about need not be anything more than the selective pattern-recognition of "blessed/happy" and "deathlessness." After those patterns are realized as applicable to life here, other observations about living beings here, that nature never makes a single thing of a kind, that the universe is eternal and filled with life, etc, would be enough to extend the concept through conceptual reasoning to conclude that such beings do in fact exist somewhere in the universe.

So in both cases I think your original point of reasoning - that prolepsis must be pre-rational and is never a "conclusion"- is the way forward. That original point just needs to be followed to its logical conclusion so that we rigorously separate the faculty of prolepsis from including "conclusions" or "ideas" of any kind.