# Epicurus, gods and God

## Post by “Cassius” of October 14, 2019 at 9:35 AM

Godfrey:

Elayne and I were discussing anticipations in regard to justice and I think this part of that applies here:

Image may contain: text
Image not found or type unknown

Of course there is a long section of DeWitt talking about anticipations of the gods, but I was focusing here solely on "justice", and to continue:

Sometimes to me it seems that DeWitt shifts into talking as if we have an innate "idea" which I think goes to far. It seems to me his best argument is in the sentence highlighted. We have at birth no names for colors, no "concepts" of colors, but we are born with eyes that have the innate ability to perceive different colors differently. The eyes don't tell us whether those colors are pleasing or not, but the sense of pleasure does. In justice, the innate ability to distinguish something as "relating to justice" does not necessarily tell us whether what we are observing is pleasant or painful, but the sense of pleasure, operating at the same time, will weigh in too. With the point being that if we did not have some kind of innate ability to distinguish situations that fall into a category as concerning "justice" then we would never recognize the relationship in the first place, and never process it any further, any more than a lower animal would.

And Godfrey this is the part that relates to this discussion:

In this "innate capacity to recognize an issue" issue, I think this is where DeWitt is going with Epicurus' view of divinity. The anticipation of divinity is a disposition to recognize that something is going on in the relationship between, let's say, where the living thing "is at the moment" and where it "might be" if it developed its capacities to "perfection." As a poor example, sort of like where a person might fit on a spectrum from an Olympic gold medal winner (at the top) to throwing plastic darts in the back yard (at the bottom). The Olympic gold medal winner is a "god among athletes" just like we might aspire to be "gods among men." Either that term "gods among men" was a pure joke, which I doubt, or else it had some relationship/aspirational meaning like this.

So an anticipation of divinity might have a purely earth-bound interpretation, which is separately applied to the issues of isonomy and the infinite / eternal universe to speculate as to the versions that live in the intermundia. But the two aspects of the issue would nevertheless fit together, I think.

So I would expand on the sentence in the DeWitt quote that I underlined in red above by adding the underlined part to speculate this:

"*The innate capacity to distinguish colors is an anticipation of experience no less than the innate capacity to distinguish between justice and injustice [or to distinguish life forms that are "godlike / divine" from those that are not].*