

# References to Epicurus' Attitude Toward The "Place of the Sciences And Liberal Arts"

**Post by "Cassius" of July 26, 2020 at 7:19 PM**

Wow my compliments and thanks to both Godfrey and Don for these last posts. Godfrey that quote from Frances Wright is directly on point, and Don thanks for that link to the article on Prolepsis which I have not seen. I have not yet started to read it but the abstract sounds very promising to me. Sounds like most all of us are going to agree with his direction as the prolepsis being pre-rational and not at all the same thing as "concept formation" (which would involve reasoning/opinion).

If I understand the direction Don is going (and I think i do) he will not be surprised that I agree with him and the direction. At this point in the conversation I am prepared to commit that I believe that Epicurus held that prolepsis/anticipation/preconception is a faculty that provides a COMPONENT of "truth," just as do the five senses and the feelings of pain and pleasure, but I would not say that in general we can say that 'truth' IS a preconception.

I am pretty convinced along with Frances Wright and Don that truth is a purely contextual proposition. I think the word "objective" when evaluating the "truth" of a situation means something like "repeated observations from the same perspective under the same conditions will produce the same result" which I gather to be something like the "correspondence theory" of truth in that the opinion corresponds reliability with the situation about which the opinion is given. I think that in order to evaluate the "truth" of any proposition you have to have an opinion about the nature of the observer, and an opinion about the nature of what is being observed, and an opinion about the conditions under which the observation is being made. I think that that is why we're going to find Lucretius devoting so much attention to "images" in De Rerum Natura, in that he is stressing that our opinion as to truth (which he is convinced we can obtain in at least some instances) has to be tested by whether repeated observations produce the same result. That would constitute "our truth" but even then, as Frances Wright says, that truth ceases to exist when the facts change and the repeated observations stop yielding the same result. (And yes I am kind of mirroring the statements about "justice" in the PDs to the effect that justice changes when the facts change.

This is all hugely deep and I reserve the right to amend and change my comments, but the general direction that I am going is that I am agreeing with Don's observations. I think that Elayne is raising a valid point too, but I think that point is eventually going to resolve itself in the direction of clarifying that "we know truth instinctively by prolepsis" more to something like "'truth' is an important and valid human experience in which input from the faculty of preconception is an important point, but one of the most important things to recognize about truth is that what we consider to be true changes with contextual facts." I suspect that's the direction that Frances Wright was going in and her version is probably much more clear than

mine.