

# Phaedo and prolepses

Post by "Cassius" of October 17, 2020 at 4:25 PM

Godfrey also, if I recall what DeWitt had to say before going back and checking it, Dewitt drew what I think is an important distinction between abstract vs concrete concepts. A concept of a concrete thing like an ox is not necessarily the same thing as an abstraction such as "beauty" or "greatness" or "smallness." DL seems to focus on the concrete part, using the ox horse, cow, or man, as a reference -- concrete things.

Here's the section:

## Quote

The concept they speak of as an apprehension or right opinion or thought or general idea stored within the mind, that is to say a recollection of what has often been presented from without, as for instance 'Such and such a thing is a man,' for the moment the word 'man' is spoken, immediately by means of the concept his form too is thought of, as the senses give us the information. Therefore the first signification of every name is immediate and clear evidence. And we could not look for the object of our search, unless we have first known it. For instance, we ask, 'Is that standing yonder a horse or a cow?' To do this we must know by means of a concept the shape of horse and of cow. Otherwise we could not have named them, unless we previously knew their appearance by means of a concept. So the concepts are clear and immediate evidence. Further, the decision of opinion depends on some previous clear and immediate evidence, to which we refer when we express it: for instance, 'How do we know whether this is a man?' Opinion they also call supposition, and say that it may be true or false: if it is confirmed or not contradicted, it is true ; if it is not confirmed or is contradicted, it is false. For this reason was introduced the notion of the problem awaiting confirmation: for example, waiting to come near the tower and see how it looks to the near view.

So that would lead us to question that he might be oversimplifying and that there might be separate viewpoints on "the formation of concepts of real-world things based on experience" which DL seems to be referring to vs "the formation of "universal eternal abstractions" which might not necessarily be the same thing.