

Phaedo and prolepses

Post by "Godfrey" of October 18, 2020 at 5:58 PM

Quote

And if we acquired this knowledge before we were born, and were born having the use of it, then we also knew before we were born and at the instant of birth not only the equal or the greater or the less, but all other ideas; **for we are not speaking only of equality, but of beauty, goodness, justice, holiness, and of all which we stamp with the name of essence in the dialectical process**, both when we ask and when we answer questions.

Quote

Then may we not say, Simmias, that if, as we are always repeating, **there is an absolute beauty, and goodness, and an absolute essence of all things**; and if to this, which is now discovered to have existed in our former state, we refer all our sensations, and with this compare them, finding these ideas to be pre-existent and our inborn possession— then our souls must have had a prior existence, but if not, there would be no force in the argument? There is the same proof that these ideas must have existed before we were born, as that our souls existed before we were born; and if not the ideas, then not the souls.

These are the cites of "essence" from the Phaedo passage above.