

A Discussion On Anticipations from 2017

Post by "Cassius" of April 13, 2019 at 11:48 PM

The following notes were from a discussion in 2017 among several of our core members. The discussion was prompted when we were talking about trying to come to a summary position on the nature of anticipations, which proved to be something we had to defer. The discussion was also in part influenced by the Voula Tsouna article "Epicurean Preconceptions."

To illustrate the anti-DeWitt position, I am going to post separately in the files section the chapter from Bailey's "Greek Atomists and Epicurus" on Canonics, which includes Anticipations.

I always cite Bailey with hesitation because I frequently find his interpretations unconvincing, and he is clearly not sympathetic to Epicurus or try to interpret Epicurus in a favorable light. He is in my view the opposite of DeWitt. So while I strongly trust DeWitt due to his lifetime of work and research in support of Epicurus, it is possible that DeWitt gets certain interpretations wrong. And while I strongly distrust Bailey, due to his constant stated disagreement with and deprecation of Epicurus' views, it is possible that he gets particular interpretations correct. Here is the Bailey / Majority view of anticipations:

"According to Epicurean psychology the act of perception in the sense-organ stirs the particles of 'soul' in its neighbourhood and they communicate the movement to other soul-particles and so on till the movement reaches the mind (which is situated in the breast), and there creates a representation of the sense-image. The mind then by a spontaneous movement, akin to the act of attention on the part of the senses, compares the new image with previously existing general conceptions and pronounces that 'this is, or is not, so-and-so'. Just as without cognition mere sensation is valueless, so the individual image is without significance apart from the general concept: apart from the general concept no one can inquire or feel doubt or even hold an opinion, no, nor refute one'. So far Epicurus' position does not seem to be peculiar: the acceptance of cognition as a necessary element in perception, and the admission of the impossibility of classification or even recognition without general conceptions are practically universal. It is necessary to ask how Epicurus conceived his general concepts, what was their origin and what their validity.

To return for a moment to psychology, the 'mind-image' aroused by the movements of the soul-particles started in their turn by the sensational motions of the sense-organs, does not immediately perish, but remains stored up in the mind, and may be, as it were, 'called up' for subsequent contemplation. Thus an act of memory is the momentary attention of the mind to an 'image' so preserved in itself, and a mental comparison is the apprehension by the mind of two or more such images side by side. But this is not all, for when as the result of many individual perceptions of objects of the same class, a series of similar images, is, as it were,

heaped one upon another in the mind, the result is a kind of 'composite photograph' of the genus or species: the dissimilarities of the individual images have disappeared, and that which is common to all is retained in what is in fact a 'general concept'. The combined 'images' of many horses, seen in sense-perception, has created in the mind the 'general concept' of 'horse'.

To this 'general concept' Epicurus gives the name of 'anticipation': it is that which we have permanently in our mind to enable us to anticipate the general appearance of anything for which we are looking or wish to create, and to identify and distinguish the individual images of sense-perception when they are presented to us. 'Anticipations' then take their place as the second criterion of truth. They owe their validity to the fact that, although they are not themselves directly sensations, they are immediately built up of sensations: our 'anticipation' of horse is simply the aggregate--or perhaps one should rather say the average--of a number of individual sensations of horses. The 'anticipation' is not itself 'true' for it does not correspond to or issue from any one external existence, but it is a 'clear vision' and as such a test of truth: that which is the common element in a number of 'images' of 'horse' must itself constitute a clear general 'image' of 'horse', and to it may be referred as a certain test the subsequent 'images' presented to us in sense-perception.

This account of the 'anticipations' is not to be found explicitly stated in any Epicurean source, but it is generally adopted by modern writers, and is strongly supported by such testimony as is available.....

And here is Bailey stating the inevitable result of holding that anticipations are "concepts" - "the concepts are themselves infallible as tests of truth just as are individual sensations." So the concept of "capitalism" or "socialism" is just as infallible as a test of truth as your seeing and touching and tasting an ice cream cone and finding it pleasurable (???)

Image may contain: text

Post by "Cassius" of April 13, 2019 at 11:49 PM

And for those who really want to dive into the details, here is an extended discussion (note: by Bailey!) of "present impressions of the mind." The cites I have mentioned here from Bailey give a good overview of the majority/non-Dewitt position on this topic.

Post by “Cassius” of April 13, 2019 at 11:50 PM

Comments by another poster:

See Schneider's great MA thesis on perception for a field survey that includes Bailey, DeWitt, and other commentators, <https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%...zXrEiq6ZNn3s7g->

Look at this criticism: "As later scholars note, Bailey's rich interpretation of the role played by the apprehension (epiboles) of the senses and the mind goes beyond well the evidence."

Post by “Cassius” of April 13, 2019 at 11:52 PM

A post by Elli:

<<But first of all, Herodotus, before we begin the investigation of our opinions, we must firmly grasp the concepts that are attached to our words (Epicurus greek sentence is "τα υποτεταγμένα τοις φθόγγοις"), so that we can refer to them as we proceed. Unless we have a firm grasp of the meaning of each word, we leave everything uncertain, and we go on to infinity using empty words that are devoid of meaning. Thus it is essential that we rely on the first mental image associated with each word, without need of explanation, if we are to have a firm standard to which to refer as we proceed in our study>>.

According to the scientific findings :

Prolepsis= anticipations, as a criterion of truth in the Canon, are not the instincts. Instincts for humans is the neurotransmitter of dopamine that stimulates a desire to satisfy the instinctive needs (natural and necessary i.e. food, water and making sex).

Prolepsis =anticipations are based on the ability of the human speech.

Humans after they born they can learn and using words. The first language with words is taught by our parents' language. Then we learn and other languages.

Words are connected with concepts based on images of the reality.

Humans can think, can have imagination, abstract imagination, and making many calculations. As well as humans dream to imagine (vision) themselves in the future. Prudence as an ability of human is a practical reasoning based on experiences with actions for making right calculations among pleasure and pain, to achieve the goal of pleasure and when any pleasure is fulfilled, also <<eudaimonia>> is achieved too, as said by Epicurus. When we do actions based on prudence, is injected to the body the hormone endorphin which is synonym with the word "eudaimonia" and makariotita = "bliss-blissful". As endorphin is natural and is injected by natural activities is also balanced with the right doses in the body.

Because in the opposite if someone takes narcotics, he stimulates the dopamine connected with a desire to gain a goal of pleasure, but the endorphin as a chemical substitute i.e. heroin, morphine etc. is not natural and it is not injected in the body with the balanced doses, and the goal of eudaimonia is not gained.

Thus the body after the lack of heroin has pains and the person goes to an endless circle to gain a pleasure that is not the balanced one..

Human being confuses a desire (dopamine) as he wants to gain a pleasure. But meanwhile there is not a right calculation (not prudence) among pleasure and pain, thus, the consequence is not beneficial and is painful.

The doctors give serotonin (a chemical substitute as the dopamine) to the persons that suffers from depression. Those persons that suffers of lack of serotonin have not any desire to fulfill any goal.

When there is a huge pain in the body usually in the diseases of cancer opiates and morphine are the chemical substitute of endorphin. Thus, Epicurus was right to define that the pleasure is synonym with the words aponia, ataraxia and eudaimonia.

Doctrine 3. The limit of quantity in pleasures is the removal of all that is painful. Wherever pleasure is present, as long as it is there, there is neither pain of body nor of mind, nor of both at once.

Fg 2. Lack of mental disturbance and lack of bodily pain are static pleasures (means eudaimonia), whereas revelry and rejoicing are active pleasures involving movement.

Fg 423 What brings unsurpassed pleasure is the removal of a great pain; and this is the nature of the good, if you apply your mind rightly and then stand firm and do not stroll about chattering emptily.

Hiram:

But if prolepsis is linked to human speech as you say, how does that connect with the Letter to Herodotus when towards the end it refers to our ability to conceive of time as prolepsis? I have linked this before to the circadian rhythms which are biological, and therefore instincts.

Elli:

\Hiram where does Epicurus say to conceive the time as prolepsis ?? Here is the passage from Herodotus letter : <<Moreover, you must firmly grasp this point as well; we must not look for time, as we do for all other things which we look for in an object, by referring them to the general conceptions which we perceive in our own minds, but we must take the direct intuition, in accordance with which we speak of "a long time" or "a short time," and examine it, applying our intuition to time as we do to other things. Neither must we search for expressions as likely to be better, but employ just those which are in common use about it.

Nor again must we predicate of time anything else as having the same essential nature as this special perception, as some people do, but we must turn our thoughts particularly to that only with which we associate this peculiar perception and by which we measure it. For indeed this requires no demonstration, but only reflection, to show that it is with days and nights and their divisions that we associate it and likewise also with internal feelings or absence of feeling, and with movements and states of rest; in connection with these last again we think of this very perception as a peculiar kind of accident, and in virtue of this we call it time>>.

Post by "Cassius" of April 14, 2019 at 12:00 AM

Glancing back at the state of the summary of the canon, my current thought is that it is no so important to take a detailed position on how anticipations operate, and the main thing is noting (as I think we do) that preconceptions are an innate faculty for the forming of conceptions. The question of *how* conceptions are formed can be left to another day so long as the general statement doesn't imply that reason is used to form them.

However I think the current version needs a brief passage added to emphasize the role of pain and pleasure. The point of emphasis in Torquatus is that Nature herself is the judge of what is and is not contrary to Nature, and that the only faculty given us by Nature to judge that which is desirable and undesirable in itself is the faculty of pleasure and pain.

As long as we emphasize like Torquatus that pleasure is the only faculty given us for knowing what is desirable in itself,. then we cut off any implication that anticipations or cognitive reasoning could be used to justify a different or superior goal to that of living pleasurably.

Here's the section from Torquatus:

“This he sets out to prove as follows: Every animal, as soon as it is born, seeks for pleasure, and delights in it as the Chief Good, while it recoils from pain as the Chief Evil, and so far as possible avoids it. This it does as long as it remains unperverted, and at the prompting of Nature's own unbiased and honest verdict. Hence Epicurus refuses to admit any necessity for argument or discussion to prove that pleasure is desirable and pain to be avoided. These facts, he thinks, are perceived by the senses, as that fire is hot, snow is white, honey is sweet. None of these things need be proved by elaborate argument -- it is enough merely to draw attention to them. For there is a difference, he holds, between formal syllogistic proof of a thing and a mere notice or reminder. The former is the method for discovering abstruse and recondite truths, the latter for indicating facts that are obvious and evident.”

“Strip mankind of sensation, and nothing remains. It follows that Nature herself is the judge of that which is in accordance with or contrary to nature. What does Nature perceive or what does she judge of, beside pleasure and pain, to guide her actions of desire and of avoidance?”

“Some members of our school however would refine upon this doctrine. These say that it is not enough for the judgment of good and evil to rest with the senses. The facts that pleasure is in and for itself desirable and pain in and for itself to be avoided can also be grasped by the intellect and the reason. Accordingly, they declare that the perception that the one is to be sought after and the other avoided is a natural and innate idea of the mind. Others again, with whom I agree, observing that a great many philosophers advance a vast array of reasons to prove why pleasure should not be counted as a good nor pain as an evil, consider that we had better not be too confident of our case. In their view, it requires elaborate and reasoned argument, and abstruse theoretical discussion of the nature of pleasure and pain.

Here's an effort to emphasize the role of pleasure and to generalize on anticipations

Canon: the Standard of Truth

The entire system of Epicurean philosophy is based on the study of nature. Taken together, our connections with nature are referred to as the Canon of Truth, which is the "measure" or "test" of those opinions which we hold to be true. Epicurus identified three categories of human faculties which comprise the way in which we measure truth: (1) the "five senses" (the faculties by which we perceive sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell), (2) the "anticipations" (a mental faculty by which we process abstractions), and (3) the "feelings" (the faculty by which we perceive pleasure and pain). In setting out his Canon, Epicurus was reacting against the Skeptics, who denied that it was possible for humans to have clear knowledge about the world around us, and the Platonists, who held that logic is the pathway to a divine and absolute truth

that governs all humanity at all times and all places.

While other schools deny that truth is knowable by ordinary humans, we reject that view and hold that humans can have confidence in their conclusions by referring to the proper standard for establishing something as true. This is the role of the Epicurean Canon of Truth - by it we recognize that our natural faculties are the fundamental touchstone on which we make judgments as to what is and is not true. The Canon is sometimes compared to a tripod, because its three legs provide a steady foundation on which we make all judgments about what is true and what is false.

It is important to see that the faculties of the Canon are *pre-cognitive.* The faculties of the Canon report to us their perceptions, and it is up to our minds to organize this raw data into opinions that we can consider to be true or false. Each natural faculty has unique jurisdiction over its particular aspect of nature; each is a direct contact with reality that reports to us raw and unprocessed information. Only eyes can see. Only ears can hear. Only the faculty of pleasure and pain can inform us what to choose and what to avoid. Only the faculty of anticipations can allow us to form and work with concepts in a way consistent with human nature. In this role as witnesses, the faculties of the canon work together to provide data. On the foundation of that data our minds then weigh and balance this information, comparing data from multiple observations and under varying conditions, and from the resulting data we assemble those observations into conclusions. Through this process of gathering data and testing our opinions against that data, we are enabled by Nature to have confidence that our judgments are consistent with reality.

The Epicurean Canon has many profound implications. Among the most important is that the Canon establishes Nature, and not "Reason," as the ultimate standard and authority for truth. Nature herself is the judge of what is and is not contrary to Nature, and the only faculty given us by Nature to judge that which is desirable and undesirable in itself is the faculty of pleasure and pain. Thus wisdom through true reasoning is the process of properly processing the information provided by the Canon to achieve pleasurable living. Reason is used in the service of pleasurable living to decide when to forgo certain pleasures or to choose certain pains, but always toward the single goal of living pleurably. Abstractions and opinions about ethical issues are not direct contacts with reality, and in order to be considered to be true must always be tested against Nature's goal for life - living pleurably.

Another profound implication is that the Canon emancipates us from arbitrary authorities. A famous example of this was the Epicurean defiance of conventional notions of the role of women and slaves, who were treated as intellectual equals in the Garden of Epicurus. In their search for truth the Epicureans do not look to priests, to mediators, to divine revelation, or to experts in logic, but to the faculties provided by Nature. Thus Epicureans study how these faculties operate, how the data they provide can sometimes be distorted, and how those distortions can be corrected. Only by grounding all our opinions and our choices in the data provided by the Canon of Truth can we live happily and in accordance with nature.

Post by "Cassius" of April 14, 2019 at 12:01 AM

Elli's comment on that last summary:

Cassius wrote : Glancing back at the state of the summary of the canon, my current thought is that it is no so important to take a detailed position on how anticipations operate, and the main thing is noting (as I think we do) that preconceptions are an innate faculty for the forming of conceptions. The question of *how* conceptions are formed can be left to another day so long as the general statement doesn't imply that reason is used to form them.

<<the preconceptions are an innate faculty for the forming of conceptions>>.

I do not agree Cassius, with the procedure, because is not started like this ! First are the concepts based on words and then they become pre-concepts.

i.e. The concepts have been formed with the words and the faculty of speech and are based on words and with this way they exist inside the brain as pre-concepts =images, and the brain draws them very quickly and spontaneously when we speak or we see or we feel something around us.

1. example : we watch the Discovery channel and we ask : What is this animal that has a body with white and black stripes and eating grass ? Someone who know what is zebra would answer zebra. Someone who does not know what is zebra would say that is seems to be like a horse. Both they are right, because they see an animal, and this is the main concept of the word animal. But the accurate one is the first who said zebra. Since he learned the word what is the animal zebra, he knows the name of the animal zebra, and has this pre-concept with an image in his brain. And that is because his mother and father read him books with pictures with animals or they went to the zoo to watch the animals and they gave him all the names of the animals For complicated concepts e.g. for "justice" the child learned with experiences based on words with discussions and actions inside his home, after in school, after in the society and so on, but all have been formed with the words and the faculty of speech that is based on senses and calculation pleasure and pain. And all are as pre-concepts/images inside the brain. The brain remembers the most of the experiences and has the capacity to store, to add, to remove, but nothing is not removed totally. There is not a total format in the brain while we are alive because we have been formed the preconcepts-images already.

2. example : The preconcept /image based on the concept of the word "home " ! One has formed a pre-concept inside his the brain based on the experience of a palace, another one of an apartment, another one of detached house, another one of a hut, and the Diogenis the cynic of his pot. But all they think and speak for the same thing-concept based on the word "home", and all they have the pre-concept/image about a shelter to not be cold.

IMO this is the procedure, and if it won't be like this the world and the reality will be chaotic.

Post by "Cassius" of April 14, 2019 at 12:02 AM

Cassius to Elli -

Elli I am sorry I will be driving most of the rest of the day, so my responses will be delayed but this is what I would like to talk about: Given what you wrote, what is your interpretation of this passage from Diogenes Laertius? What is the difference between the position taken by Epicurus himself and that of "the Epicureans"?

"Thus in The Canon Epicurus says that the tests of truth are the sensations and anticipations and the feelings; the Epicureans add to these the intuitive apprehensions of the mind."

And also what is your interpretation of this passage from the Epicurean speaker Velleius in "on the nature of the gods"?

"For Epicurus alone first founded the idea of the existence of the Gods on the impression which Nature herself hath made on the minds of all men. For what nation, what people are there, who have not, without any learning, a natural idea, or prenotion, of a Deity? Epicurus calls this anticipation; that is, an antecedent conception of the fact in the mind, without which nothing can be understood, inquired after, or discoursed on. This is the force and advantage of the reasoning we receive from that celestial volume of Epicurus concerning The Rule and Judgment of Things."

"Here, then, you see the foundation of this question clearly laid. Since it is the constant and universal opinion of mankind, independent of education, custom, or law, that there are Gods, it must necessarily follow that this knowledge is implanted in our minds, or, rather, innate in us. That opinion respecting which there is a general agreement in universal Nature must infallibly be true."

Post by "Cassius" of April 14, 2019 at 12:03 AM

From Elli -

Guys It took me a whole year and something to LEARN my two little boys to not shit on their napkins-pampers. It took me a whole year and something to learn them WORDS AND WHAT THE WORDS DENOTE ! Epicurus DOES NOT addressed to little children. Epicurus adressed to mature guys and speaks about pre-concepts/images that are in the brain and derived from concepts based on words :

First of all, guys, we must grasp the CONCEPTS attached to words, in order that we may be able to refer to them and so to judge the inferences of opinion or problems of investigation or reflection, so that we may not either leave everything uncertain and go on explaining to infinity or use words devoid of meaning. For this purpose it is essential that the first MENTAL IMAGE associated with EACH WORD should be regarded, and that there should be NO NEED OF EXPLANATION, if we are really to have a STANDARD to which to refer a problem of investigation or reflection or a mental inference. And besides we must keep all our investigations in accord with our sensations, and in particular with the immediate apprehensions whether of the MIND or of ANY ONE OF THE INSTRUMENTS OF JUDGEMENT, and likewise in accord with the FEELINGS existing in us, in order that we may have indications whereby we may judge both the problem of sense perception and the unseen..

And every image which we obtain by an act of apprehension on the part of the mind or of the sense-organs, whether of shape or of properties, this image is the shape or the properties of the concrete object, and is produced by the constant repetition of the image or the impression it has left. Now falsehood and error always lie in the addition of opinion with regard to what is waiting to be confirmed or not contradicted, and then is not confirmed or is contradicted. For the similarity between the things which exist, which we call real and the images received as a likeness of things and produced either in sleep or through some other acts of apprehension on the part of the mind or the other instruments of judgment, could never be, unless there were some effluences of this nature actually brought into contact with our senses. And error would not exist unless another kind of movement too were produced inside ourselves, closely linked to the apprehension of images, but differing from it; and it is owing to this, supposing it is not confirmed, or is contradicted, that falsehood arises; but if it is confirmed or not contradicted, it is true. Therefore we must do

our best to keep this doctrine in mind, in order that on the one hand the standards of judgment dependent on the clear visions may not be undermined, and on the other error may not be as firmly established as truth and so throw all into confusion.

Moreover, we must suppose that human nature too was TAUGHT and constrained to do many things of every kind merely by circumstances; and that later on REASONING elaborated what had been suggested by nature and made further inventions, in some matters quickly, in others slowly, at some epochs and times making great advances, and lesser again at others. And so

NAMES too were not at first deliberately GIVEN TO THINGS, but men's natures according to their different nationalities had their own peculiar feelings and received their peculiar impressions, and so each in their own way emitted air formed into shape by each of these feelings and impressions, according to the differences made in the different nations by the places of their abode as well. And then later on by common consent in each nationality SPECIAL NAMES were deliberately given in order to make their MEANINGS OR CONCEPTS less ambiguous to one another and more BRIEFLY DEMONSTRATED. And sometimes those who were acquainted with them brought in things hitherto unknown and introduced sounds for them, on some occasions being naturally constrained to utter them, and on others choosing them by REASONING in accordance with the prevailing mode of FORMATION, and thus making their MEANING-CONCEPT CLEAR.

Post by "Cassius" of April 14, 2019 at 12:05 AM

From Elli:

IMO this is a description of the Canon : Epicurus had limited the Dialectic method on the rules that lead to the formation of correct judgments namely to distinguish the imaginary from the real. This clarification he named it Criterion of truth and this part of his philosophy called it Canonicon or Stichioticon.

The Canon includes:

1. Two principles: a) [Nothing can be created from nothing](#). b) the principle of the analogy (as long as all the known elements of two bodies are similar then all their unknown will be similar).
 2. Fourth criteria of truth: a) The senses. b) The passions or emotions (pleasure and pain) c) the anticipations or preconceptions (concepts based on words) d) the fantastic impositions of the mind.
 3. The empirical methodology of the confirmed and not contradicted and the non confirmed and contradicted.
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Post by "Cassius" of April 14, 2019 at 12:06 AM

From Elli:

Cassius wrote : <<It is important to see that the faculties of the Canon are *pre-cognitive.*>>

What means pre-cognitive ? Based on lexicon I found the etymology and the meaning of this word.

precognitive adj (seeing the future) ?! ενορατικός, προγνωστικός, μαντικός.

precognitive adj (happening without cognition = parapsychology) ?!

εξωαισθητήριος (=out of sensory-out of senses)?!

oracular adj (prophetic) προφητικός, μαντικός (seeing the future) ?!

visionary n (person who sees visions) (κάποιος που βλέπει οράματα) ενορατικός ?!

e.g. Felisa Sistiaga was a visionary who claimed to have seen the Virgin Mary.??!!!

Has this word “pre-cognitive” something to do with Epicurean philosophy and the Canon ??

[Cassius](#) my friend, I have the feeling that you try to reject totally the reasoning from the Canon ? If you try to reject the Reason by itself and the mind/brain by itself, ok that's right, I agree with you. But there is a DANGER to fall in trap to conclude that the Canon has not reasoning at all, but this is false. Indeed the mind/brain without the senses is a mass of meat, but in the contrary the mind/brain by itself in a quite room is able to do SOBER REASONING to CALCULATE, since mind/brain HAD STORED many CONCEPTS based on words with images that are based on past senses and feelings. These are the ANTICIPATIONS OR PRECONCEPTIONS.

Mind/brain can composing unaffected and more abstract subjective thinking drawing from the most distant imagination. Mind/brain can manage data of a produced sensation and emotion. Is a criterion of judgment with the collaboration of senses and the feelings of course. But the Senses by themselves can't work too, because as Epicurus said senses are ALOGES -=without reason. For this here comes the mind/brain to declare what the senses had seen, heard, touched etc. as well as the mind can do the calculation among pleasure and pain (PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE)

Doctrine 24. If you reject any single sensation and fail to distinguish between the conclusion of opinion as to the appearance awaiting confirmation and that which is actually given by the sensation or feeling, OR EACH INTUITIVE APPREHENSION OF THE MIND, you will confound all other sensations as well with the same groundless opinion, so that you will reject every STANDARD OF JUDGEMENT. And if among the mental images created by your opinion you affirm both that which awaits confirmation and that which does not, you will not escape error, since you will have preserved the whole cause of doubt in every judgment between what is right and what is wrong.

From the letter to Meneoceus based on reasoning :

- The right procedure, however, is to weigh them against one another and to scrutinize the advantages and disadvantages; for we treat the good under certain circumstances as an evil and conversely the evil as a good.

- Of all these virtues the source is the prudence, the greatest good of all – and hence more precious than philosophy itself – teaching us the impossibility of living pleasantly without living according to reason, honor, and justice, and conversely, of living according to reason, honor, and justice without living pleasantly; for the virtues are of one nature with the pleasurable life and conversely, the pleasurable life is inseparable from the virtues.

- It is not continuous drinkings and revelings, nor the satisfaction of lusts, nor the enjoyment of fish and other luxuries of the wealthy table, which produce a pleasant life, but sober reasoning, searching out the motives for all choice and avoidance, and banishing mere opinions, to which are due the greatest disturbance of the spirit.

Some sayings that are based on reasoning :

E.S. 27. In all other occupations the fruit comes painfully after completion, but in philosophy pleasure goes hand in hand with knowledge; for enjoyment does not follow comprehension, but comprehension and enjoyment are simultaneous.

ES. 45. The study of nature does not make men productive of boasting or bragging nor apt to display that culture which is the object of rivalry with the many, but high-spirited and self-sufficient, taking pride in the good things of their own minds and not of their circumstances.

ES 55. We must heal our misfortunes by the grateful RECOLLECTION of what has been and by the RECOGNITION that it is impossible to undo that which has been done.

ES 71. Every desire must be confronted by this question: what will happen to me if the object of my desire is accomplished and what if it is not?

Post by “Cassius” of April 14, 2019 at 12:07 AM

Cassius to Elli -

Yes Elli I am thinking that the Canon provides a reference that functions "automatically" without conscious reasoning (maybe the better word is "logic") and before the application of words. In other terms I see anticipation and all elements of the Canon as inputs in the formation of words, but not words themselves. Concepts and words I see as the work product of the reasoning mind after the injection of opinion. "Zebra" is our opinion of a good word to use for a particular variety of horses but the concept and word zebra exist only in the human mind after reasoning

through a set of attributes we decide to call essential for "zebras." And no human would ever have been able to develop the concept / word zebra, no matter how many striped horses he saw, if he did not have an innate faculty disposing him to organize observations into words. But the faculty itself does not contain words because words are formed only after inclusion of opinions.