

Eclectic Take on Epicurean Philosophy; Earlier Origin of Some Epicurean Concepts; Method of Loci

Post by "Cassius" of November 22, 2023 at 6:14 PM

Probably worth restating that these two aren't inconsistent from my personal point of view:

1 - From my point of view, everyone has a right to make up their minds and do whatever they want to do, and I think in general we want maximum freedom of expression and action in the world. I know that I want that for myself, and so I don't think it's a good idea to do anything to deny it to others.

2 - On the other hand, from my point of view as well, every "group project" in life requires some degree of agreement among the members of the group on what the project is and how to attain it. This website is all "I" (our core people) can really speak for, and we have a right and obligation to set out clearly what we're doing so that people who invest their time and effort in it will know the ground rules before they start making that investment -- so that they can count on their investment meaning something as they themselves set out to contribute.

We'll do our best here at the forum to balance both those considerations, but (2) is going to take priority over (1) because we're just one website, one location, and it's easy for alternative views to coalesce elsewhere.

Now having repeated that again about what "WE're" doing, there is still a "philosophical" issue with questions such as Eoghan raised in terms of:

1 - When we say "eclectic" and "eclecticism" what do we really mean? In my view what we're really talking about is a semi-philosophical position that "consistency" is not important or that it is secondary to a particular result. In a sense we all agree, after concluding that pleasure/happiness is the goal, that "whatever works in our case" is actually the right way to look at things. However from the Epicurean viewpoint there are in fact unchanging and unchangeable aspects of the universe that derive from the atoms that we can't change no matter how much we mix and match ideas. It's at that level I think that it's most worthwhile to talk about "eclecticism" as a controversial viewpoint.

2 - That still leaves huge variety of alternative choices in how one lives an Epicurean life, and I think most all of us encourage experimentation and variety, but it's not experimentation or variety for the sake of experimentation or variety, it's calibration of alternatives in the pursuit of pleasure, within boundaries that we agree on such as no supernatural gods and no life after death and the primary role of the senses over abstract propositional logic -- things like that which serve as boundaries that we can all know about and understand through reading Epicurus.