

Eliminative Materialism

Post by "Cassius" of January 6, 2025 at 8:05 AM

Of course what we're talking about here as well is the "you can't bathe twice in the same river" paradox.

It seems Epicurus is telling us to realize that both things are true: (1) the drops / atoms of the river are constantly changing, but (2) it is perfectly proper and beneficial to consider that the "river" is the same river from moment to moment.

If this perspective were not adopted, we would be in all sorts of variations of Plato's cave, and we'd think that nothing we sense is "real" but only a shadow flickering on a wall. Or as Diogenes of Oinoanda attributed to Aristotle, we'd be in the position of thinking that everything was moving so fast that we could never be sure of anything.

The importance of this issue is that Epicurus' perspective allows us to be confident in dealing with both levels of experience and seeing them in a relationship that is proper to human life. It gives us confidence that we don't have to constantly agonize over the mind-bending games of philosophers who wish to attack the reliability of the senses and the possibility of knowledge -- with the goal of making you see things the way they want you to see them!

Quote from Lucretius Book 1 - [102]

You yourself sometime vanquished by the fearsome threats of the seer's sayings, will seek to desert from us. Nay indeed, how many a dream may they even now conjure up before you, which might avail to overthrow your schemes of life, and confound in fear all your fortunes.