

Dead Reddit / The "Isms" Thread

Post by "Joshua" of November 26, 2019 at 7:50 AM

Quote

*Furthermore, while we may all sincerely admire the person of Epicurus, and delight in the historical texts that resulted from the activity of his Garden, **our** path to wisdom – unlike every other **-ismic** school of thought – is neither dependent upon allegiance to a centralizing leader, nor upon a golden age of history, nor upon a doctrinal institution.*

We should ask those schools; they have a different opinion. There is not one of them that wouldn't plead the same or a similar case. Or the same case couched in different terms. I know for a certainty from personal experience that in Buddhism the argument is identical; that instead of Buddhism, many would prefer *Buddhadharma* (Sanskrit) or *-dhamma* (Pali).

"Stop calling [my belief] an -ism!"

[Buddhism](#)

[Christianity](#)

[Mohammedanism](#)

[Humanism](#)

[Capitalism](#)

[Marxism](#)

[Judaism](#)

Sometimes it goes the other way. Taking a word, and weaponizing the -ism.

[Islamism](#)

[Atheism](#)

And, what is for me the most droll article of piffle to have made my acquaintance; [I hate religion, but love Jesus](#)

Anti-ismism is a cottage industry! Ironically, the only school I searched but can't find an example in is Stoicism. This, despite the fact that Stoicism 1.) Also comes from Greek, and therefore enjoys the blessings of our own etymological arguments, and 2.) Is one of the only schools not to have been named after a person.

I don't know about all of you, but I find this sort of thing tedious. I suspect that Lucian, for one—an equal opportunity lampooner of pretense—would have seen right through it.

It pleases me inordinately to hear in DeWitt, as an example, of the "spread of Epicureanism". If it was the "spread of Epicurean philosophy", I wouldn't know what that meant; does that mean that the books are spread, like Gideon bibles, with no one reading them? But "Epicureanism" is unmistakable. It doesn't mean scrolls or sages; it means people. An Attic potter molding a krater. A Roman soldier marching in Gaul. A Corinthian fisherman taking in the morning catch from the Aegean; and all bound in brotherhood by devotion to the school of Epicurus.

And in the same spirit...I'll leave it there! Candor has its place, but so does good humor and good nature. I once witnessed an exchange with a believer in Young-Earth Creationism. The interlocutor replied that "no, [he] believed in Old-Earth Accretionism". I laughed so hard I almost fell off the chair!