

What If Anything Has Changed About Human Nature In the Last 2000 Years?

Post by "Martin" of January 3, 2024 at 9:43 PM

Quote

since the classical authors referenced here lived 2000+ years ago, has anything changed? What, if anything, is new in the philosophy of life (contrasted to these classical perspectives)?

In reply to this question from comment #2, these are the changes / apparently new ideas of which I am currently aware of:

Beliefs in an almighty, all-knowing god have become dominant and although now somewhat on a decline have left their marks, in particular by the false concept of sin, false promise of an afterlife in heaven and association of pleasure with sins.

The program of materialism has worked out extremely well with science now providing explanations with evidence regarding all macroscopic phenomena humans can naturally sense. Increasingly sophisticated instrumentation is needed to find what is still unknown. The advancement of science has enabled pushing back the overbearing religions.

Mathematics has grown from just arithmetic and geometry for accounting and engineering and a speculative toy of idealistic philosophers to a large set of branches which go far beyond numbers and geometry. Especially calculus has been revolutionary and instrumental to develop better scientific theories.

The ancient justifications of slavery are no more accepted. Instead, machinery has made it partially obsolete, and wage slavery has come up and is widely accepted.

The improvement in material conditions have made it more likely that the results of the hedonic calculus of an individual Epicurean goes much more beyond minimalism today than at Epicurus' times.

The term "hedonic treadmill" has been coined and is used in academic philosophy to dismiss all types of hedonism, ignoring that the hedonic calculus prevents a consistent Epicurean from getting trapped on a hedonic treadmill.

Whereas the non-sceptics of the ancient philosophers including Epicurus thought their respective teachings to be true, fitness of a model to its intended purpose has mostly replaced truth. The concern for truth has been reduced to the truthfulness of logical constructs and protocols of events. This in turn facilitates dismissal of religions and grasping pleasure as the goal.

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3625-what-if-anything-has-changed-about-human-nature-in-the-last-2000-years/?postID=28435#post28435>