

What Epicurus Offers To The Modern World As Of April, 2024?

Post by "Don" of April 28, 2024 at 9:01 AM

Ya'll have been active while I was asleep 😊 Some great posts.

[Quote from Godfrey](#)

practices that may seem cultish today may have served functions of which we are completely unaware.

Completely agree. Without the everyday cultural context, it's almost impossible to put ourselves fully in the mindset of an ancient person. As one example, what did Epicurus feel and think when he was participating in the city festivals (other than gaining pleasure from it)? And the "funeral offerings to my father, mother, and brothers" are specifically called ἐνάγισμα (enagisma) which [one source describes](#) as "enagizein, enagisma and enagismos are particular to hero-cults and the cult of the dead." (Lots of interesting info in that source for sacrifice and ritual. I may have referenced it in the past.)

[Quote from Joshua](#)

I was somewhat interested to learn, after reading Cicero's condemnation on this point, that Plotinus--the founder of Neoplatonism in the 3rd century AD--was adamant that his birthday not be celebrated, and that his portrait not be carved or painted

Wow! THAT is a great find, [Joshua](#) ! That information is completely new to me and certainly does shed an interesting light on Epicurus's decision to celebrate his birthday, both during his life and in perpetuity after his death!

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I think it is important (for me at least) to be clear that the areas where he would change his mind involve relatively insignificant speculations on operations of nature which he knew were open to revision. On the "more philosophical" matters of ethics and epistemology I don't think he would have any reason to revise much at all.

Agreed. My point was "If Epicurus learned modern atomic theory and related findings..." Epicurus's atomic theory and the modern [Standard Model](#) BOTH posit a material, non-supernatural universe. To me, Epicurus's ethics and epistemology rest on his physics (AND I have you, [Cassius](#) , to thank for that understanding!) which set out the general view that we live in that kind of universe. Even if the details of the physics are different, both Epicurus and

modern scientists would agree - from my perspective - that we do indeed live in a world uncreated by gods, governed by understandable principles, and composed of matter and/or energy (depending on what level you want to concentrate).