

Episode 234 - Cicero's OTNOTG - 09 - Dealing With Marcus Aurelius And The Canonical Basis For the Epicurean View Of Divinity

Post by “Cassius” of July 1, 2024 at 10:07 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

On the other, I'm trying to shoehorn a 2,000+ year old round peg into a modern neuroscience square hole. The understanding of Epicurus's perspective is interesting, valuable, and worthwhile from a philosophical and historical perspective but I'm skeptical if it's possible to "translate" that perspective and connect it to a modern neuroscience understanding of the brain, perception, sensation, etc.

I'm not focusing on you or this discussion with this comment, but yes I think you've put your finger on a big problem. Epicurus wasn't working in our current framework and I'd say we need to first understand Epicurus in his own terms before we can even begin to apply what he said to another framework.

But to repeat this isn't a problem of individuals in this discussion, I think the entire history of Epicurus is warped almost beyond recognition by trying to interpret him in terms of ideas that he never thought or considered plausible. Epicurus was working in the framework that had been put in place by Plato and others well before his time, and it's going to be more revealing to compare him to what came *before* than to what came *after*.

I'd say that much of the frustration that we find in disagreements about Epicurus among commentators comes from that attempt to force him into Stoic or Buddhist or modern psychology frameworks. We can and should do that, but *after* we're confident of Epicurus's views, not before.