

Lucretius - Not Accidents, Not Incidents, But "Contextidents"

Post by "Cassius" of January 6, 2018 at 11:35 PM

[Alexander RiosGroup Admin](#) But doesn't the word "event" includes all accidents, incidents and all intentional coincidents. Every collision, every emission, and every absorption and every beginning or end of a interlacing is an event. Agreed?

And of course they have context.

What is special about "contextident"?

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[Cassius Amicus](#) type unknown

[Cassius AmicusGroup Admin](#) Yes definitely agreed. But the point I think is significant here is that "events" and "symptoms" clearly are words of logical / natural ***connection** which we can investigate and predict through science, as against "accident" which implies randomness and unpredictability.

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[Cassius Amicus](#)

[Cassius AmicusGroup Admin](#) In other words, the reason I think this is significant is that Epicurus is saying that the atoms provide us predictability and natural explanations for what we see. They do that through their "properties," which are eternal and unchangeable, and through their qualities, which do change according to circumstance, but which change in logical / natural / predictable ways that are wrapped up in their circumstances. Atomic theory therefor allows for science to explore and understand phenomena. What I am rejecting is the use of terms like "accidental" which implies that the things around us are determined "accidentally" or "randomly" or "without explanation" which would make science impossible.

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Alexander Rios type unknown

Alexander Rios*Group Admin* Determined randomly????

That makes zero sense.

That means not determined.

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Cassius Amicus type unknown

Cassius Amicus*Group Admin* Correct. That is what I meant. It would make no sense to say that qualities are determined randomly, and yet that is what the term "accidentally" implies. I am suggesting that Balley and the others who use accidentally are spoling the philosophical point. They are not commenting here on swerves of the atom, they are implying that colors and things we see contextually are RANDOM, which they certainly are not.

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Cassius Amicus

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Alexander Rios type unknown

Alexander Rios*Group Admin* Yeah. So what? At this level of few particles and few interactions we're not applying statistics. And we know that the trajectories depend both on properties (deterministic) and swerve (indeterministic) which is not predictable (modeled by chaos).

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Cassius Amicus

Cassius Amicus*Group Admin* The "so what" is that at the observable level (which is where qualities occur) the qualities ARE predictable and understandable (if we have the tools and

experience and knowledge to dig deep enough)

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Alexander Rios

[Alexander RiosGroup Admin](#) Of course. Because at the body/quality level we are applying statistics and averages. Too many particles to count and keep track of.

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Alexander Rios

[Alexander RiosGroup Admin](#) Sounds to me like you are denying the swerve of individual particles.

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius AmicusGroup Admin](#) No! But I am suggesting that Balley and the others who use accidentally are spoiling the philosophical point. They are not commenting here on swerves of the atom, they are implying that colors and things we see contextually are RANDOM, which they certainly are not.

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Alexander Rios

[Alexander RiosGroup Admin](#) Only when we have huge populations of particles is it that the swerve of each washes out, for the body, and applying averages makes sense, and the body/system becomes more deterministic.

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius AmicusGroup Admin](#) Right! And that higher level is exactly the level that Epicurus is talking about, because it is at that level that humans see and feel and hear and taste and touch etc...

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius AmicusGroup Admin](#) At the level of color and weight as humans measure it, we are talking about huge populations of particles, and at this level, the color and other qualities that we observe flow scientifically / chemically / etc from the order and arrangement and placement etc of the atoms

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius AmicusGroup Admin](#) If what we see and touch and here were "random" or "accidents" then we could know predict from one moment to the next what color an orange might appear to us on the tree

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Alexander Rios

[Alexander RiosGroup Admin](#) Ok. That is mostly true. But the swerve is not 100% washed out. Because bodies are made of parts, and some of those parts are like islands, isolated from the mob of particles, and to those the swerve still plays a non-ignorable role.

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius AmicusGroup Admin](#) Right. I am in no way attacking the swerve itself. I am saying that properties and qualities are the two major steps up from atoms to our real world in which we experience things, and that at our real level world the swerve does not ordinarily come ...

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Alexander Rios

[Alexander RiosGroup Admin](#) In a city each person moves at their own will. Yet when we consider the whole population, we can apply averages and predict, deterministically, and be right in our predictions more often than not.

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius AmicusGroup Admin](#) Yes I completely agree with the individual vs city population analogy. To sort of return full circle to the original point, the strength of Epicurean philosophy in replying to religion is that we have a predictable science of nature which is based on atoms/particles which have natures which allow us to explain nature, through science, and show that nature does not rely on Gods to direct her. If we had no predictable mechanism, we would not succeed in convincing people that we had a viable theory. To suggest that an important step in the process is "accidental" is to break the chain of causation that makes the system work. That is no concern to Bailey and many other translators who are theists and anti-Epicurean, but it should be of great concern to us to maintain the integrity of the Epicurean system.,

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Cassius Amicus

[Cassius AmicusGroup Admin](#) Thank you Alex for continuing to talk about this because I want to be sure I am not overstating or understating the issue. I want to incorporate the swerve and properties and qualities into a coherent whole that makes the system understandable.

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[Manage Alexander RiosGroup Admin The chain of causation cannot ignore the swerve when the population count is small. Or has isolated islands of paricled. Only when the population of particles is "too large to count" does it "wash out" so that the population's model is "in effect" modelled effective ly by a deterministic system. Like · Reply · 1 · 9 mins · Edited Manage Cassius AmicusGroup Admin I think that is a very valid point, but at the qualitative level at](#)

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/230-lucretius-not-accidents-not-incidents-but-contextidents/?postID=362#post362>

which humans observe the world around us, the number of particles are too large to count, do you not agree? Is not science based on the reproducibility of experimentation that produces same results under same circumstances? I understand that does not apply at the subatomic level in all cases, but it does apply at the macro level we see and touch and feel with our natural senses, correct? Like · Reply · 8 mins Manage Cassius AmicusGroup Admin In other words if we are at home and we take an icecube from our refrigerator, and apply a blowtorch to it, EVERY TIME that ice cube is going to melt, regardless of the fact that the swerve of atoms also exists. Like · Reply · 1 · 6 mins Manage Cassius AmicusGroup Admin And if we set our freezers to cool down to 32 degrees Fahrenheit, EVERY TIME our water-filled cube holders are going to freeze and produce ice, again regardless of the fact that atoms continue to swerve at the same time. The point being once again that at the macro level at which we live, we do not rely on gods nor do we throw up our hands in helplessness against accidental chaos , but we build our lives on an understanding of the universe based on atomic science built on the macro understandable properties of atoms and the qualities of the bodies that atoms form when they come together. Like · Reply · 1 min · Edited Manage Alexander RiosGroup Admin Yes. The physical models that we use for everyday human scale, phenomena is usually deterministic. Classical physics can be derived from quantum physics when the count of particles in the population of the bodies is very large. Like · Reply · 1 · Just now Manage Cassius AmicusGroup Admin And there I think we can rest for the night - i better turn in - thanks!