

Epicurean Isonomy In The Context Of Statements By Balbus As To Gradations In Life In Book 2 of "On the Nature of the Gods"

Post by "Cassius" of August 7, 2025 at 11:04 PM

Lots to think about!

Should we conclude that after a thing has happened once, that in an infinite and eternal universe it will happen an infinite number of times, but that it is impossible and in fact improper to predict with any confidence after huge numbers of monkeys are born that there will ever be any more intelligent beings born anywhere in the universe?

Frances Wright might well say that yes that would be improper, but regardless of what we think of the logic, I tend to think that Epicurus' views of life on other worlds in fact goes in the other direction.

Hitchens would certainly be right that there are no guarantees in any individual circumstance, but to conclude that the forces which produced similar but many varying results many times before will never operate in such a way seems to me less defensible a conclusion. There is no necessity either way in a particular circumstance, but is not a process which has been observed to be in operation limited by nature rather than by necessity (?). Meaning that what we would expect should be grounded in study of nature, and not by a position that since we have not seen it, it is not possible? So in predictions we can use progression or variation in what we have seen to form rational expectations as to what is possible, always knowing that the "supernatural" is the limit, without prejudging what is natural? Once again I would see a role for pattern recognition and rational distinction between what is possible by nature and what is not.

Lots of questions.