

Dead Reddit / The "Isms" Thread

Post by "Cassius" of December 9, 2019 at 8:53 AM

Another thing that I think is VERY important about the role of Epicurus. From Diogenes Laertius:

"He [the wise man] will be more susceptible of emotion than other men: that will be no hindrance to his wisdom. However, not every bodily constitution nor every nationality would permit a man to become wise."

Epicurus existed in a very specific society - ancient Greece, and his philosophy prospered in a very specific society - the ancient Greco-Roman world. It has never flourished in any other society other than that one.

That's why Nate's observation is so important: YES, the ideas are available to everyone, in every society, and mixing them together is not so hard either -- but that manifestly has NOT been done by any other person, in any other society, than by Epicurus and the ancient Greco-Romans in their own circumstances. Nate's observation is proof of the statement made by Epicurus - not every nationality or "bodily constitution" is going to be fertile ground for the spread of numbers of people who follow Epicurean viewpoints.

That's not to say that there can't be individuals who adopt for themselves a mix of ideas very similar to Epicurus, but that for an Epicurean "movement" to flourish is going to take a very particular mix of people with cultural, educational, religious, and other characteristics to allow the sum total to spread.