

Infinity and the Expanding Universe

Post by "Cassius" of July 24, 2020 at 11:37 PM

I've never really had any major issue with the idea of "multiverses" so long as the presumption is still there that everything is natural and there's no supernatural creeping in. In fact it's pretty clear in the letter the Herodotus that Epicurus was describing "worlds" as something like "star systems" and not just "planets," and that seems to me to be very compatible with what I understand to be the basic thrust of any "multiverse" theory (though I have certainly not studied them like Don has).

But at the same time I've also sensed that there was never any reason to transmute the word "universe" from meaning "everything" as it traditionally did to something less than everything. I've always sensed that there was an "agenda" of some kind in doing that, and that part of that agenda was to suspend all rules of extrapolating that what we observe here can be of any use in predicting what would be expected to exist elsewhere in the universe. Obviously there are great hazards in extrapolating like that, but there are also great hazards in taking an "anything goes" approach (such as opening the door to the supernatural).

There's not much to do with that concern other than to note it and move on, but I think the implications of accepting in the distant past that "maybe God lives on Mars and it's possible because we've ever been there" are pretty much the same as "maybe god lives in another part of the multiverse." There are always going to be people who use science in support of their agendas, and it's probably safer to say that every scientific theory should be presumed to have an agenda and examined for it at the beginning rather than to accept the alleged sincerity of every theory that comes down the road.

Even saying that, however, I am firmly convinced that most if not all people who really get into Epicurean philosophy are going to be keenly interested in "science" and never put aside that interest as long as they live - too much depends upon it to ever do that. I see the issue as kind of like the question of "logic" - we're always going to be "threatened" by people who use science and logic for their own agendas, and therefore a certain amount of training in it is essential for everyone for self-protection.