

Welcome Susan Hill!

Post by “Susan Hill” of September 26, 2020 at 6:13 PM

Thank you, Cassius. This is all very useful and I love that you have already anticipated many of my questions. My copy of DeWitt's book is ordered, and I already have a few of the others in my library that I have yet to read. I am well motivated to begin.

I might as well add my Facebook reply to your Facebook post, if it is appropriate. I was feeling a bit impassioned when I wrote it, but perhaps that can be forgiven:

"[Cassius Amicus](#), thank you for your very kind and thoughtful welcome. I am a bit dismayed to admit that I have left Epicureanism as virtually the last philosophy on the planet for study and consideration. Why did I assume it would be “lightweight”? Why was I always drawn to severe, ascetic beliefs: Eastern Orthodox Christianity, Classical Vedanta and Yoga, Stoicism and Cynicism... And I was “all-in” too. I have a lot to divest myself of to go the Epicurean route; namely, the whole ideology that teaches that pleasure = desire = attachment = suffering/samsara = endless misery: Therefore nix pleasure at all costs. There is an awful lot of that out there, but if you actually fully imbibe it, and get good at rejecting natural pleasures, I don't think you end up with ananda (bliss), but a rather nasty condition called anhedonia. In other words, I'm going into detox. (I may have actually even enjoyed a little music this morning.) I have a lot of reading to do, but luckily, that is still a pleasure for me. I look forward to finding some respite, in the Garden!"

I am beginning to get a sense of how very different Epicureanism from other philosophies. It really doesn't fit into many of the usual categories and descriptors, does it? One thing I am keen to get a better handle on is how Epicureanism approaches questions regarding consciousness and identity/self. I am coming out of a deep-dive into Vedanta, Yoga and Samkhya, where the nature of consciousness, and its various states, is the foundation of the entire metaphysics and soteriology. To jump from that to "atoms and void" has me thinking - "oh ok - so atoms are Prakriti and the void is Brahman or Purusha..." Lol. Not exactly a good approach, I know, but consciousness has to fit in there somewhere, no? I guess I am going to be hard pressed to find a Vedantin who can clarify the differences for me. Epicurianism does not seem to be as simple as the basic materialist theories I am familiar with.

At any rate, I am sure you will be the first to agree that I should do some more reading before I jump in with these kind of questions. So I will get right to it!

Cheers,

Susan Hill