

# Welcome Susan Hill!

Post by “Susan Hill” of September 27, 2020 at 7:29 AM

Thank you, Joshua. This is just the sort of thing I was looking for! Outstanding.

## [Quote from JJElbert](#)

Epicurus believed that we are *all* sprung from celestial seed. Our minds emerge spontaneously from indestructible matter.

Here is an example of what I mean when I say that Epicureanism seems to be a bit different from garden-variety materialism (to address your question, Godfrey). My brother, for example, is devoted to a materialism/scientism that in no way allows for the existence of anything that is presently mysterious to science. But there are rather a lot of things that science can measure now that it once could not. Supernatural is simply defined as “(of a manifestation or event) attributed to some force beyond scientific understanding or the laws of nature.” Now Epicurus wrote of a lot of things that would fit that first definition, didn’t he?: gods, visions, effluences.. And there was much more natural stuff that the science of his day did not understand, but he did not deem supernatural. Finally getting to a point where a supernatural event (or being!) can be described in natural terms does not radically change its nature or existence to me, unless you are talking about something wholly contrived like the tooth fairy.

Here is an interesting point in case. Even the void is more than “just void”:  
<https://www.newscientist.com/article/219208...-send-messages/>

Space has structure and can contain information. That could explain a host of things that are presently deemed supernatural.

Getting back to Indian philosophy, the Gods are not even considered to be immortal in what I have been reading, e.g. the “Yoga Vasistha”, but of course, they do have reincarnation, like the rest of us. Even that would not be ruled out by Epicurean physics. (I know he does not accept any immortality of the soul). His description of the soul as super-subtle light atoms could be the subtle body of Samkhya that reincarnates and moves about like any other effluence. Sure, no bodily senses, but effluences do not have senses either. They still carry information.

But I’m going down the rabbit hole without a map here.. I have books to read and podcasts to listen to before I can discuss these things cogently.

Charles, thanks so much for the references to similar Indian schools of thought! As they will be

using terminology (Sanskrit definitions) that I will be familiar with, this could really help me bridge the divide. I am also very interested in these parallels due to the work of Thomas McEvilley (“The Shape of Ancient Thought”), and others showing the extraordinary extent of cross-fertilization of Greek and Indian thought during the relevant time period. You simply cannot say that Epicureanism was born solely from Greek philosophy. It should not surprise me that Charles has already identified similarities for me.

Best regards,

Susan