

"Facts don't care about your feelings."

Post by "Cassius" of November 6, 2020 at 11:58 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

One thing that attracts me to him is his penchant for assembling information and research from as many sources as possible. From what I know, he invented entire fields of science, especially biology. That appeals to me: the research-oriented aspect of Aristotle. He based a lot of his "science" work on observation.

And that very aspect I think bleeds over into what Frances Wright was characterizing as "pedantry" / excessive attention to detail.

It's interesting to compare that to the drift of the statement - where is it? the letter to Herodotus? - to the effect that we don't need a general theory of everything, but a theory that allows us to live happily. I don't want to overgeneralize here, but I can see the outline of a response to Aristotle in that remark, to the effect that the important thing is to grasp "the big picture" rather than pursuing details so doggedly that you don't seem to ever assemble the details into a correct view of the big picture.

No doubt (at least from what I have read) that Epicurus' views were a lot closer to Aristotle than to Plato, but I get the general sense, especially in reading Cicero's "On Ends," that the ancients themselves saw Aristotle as derivative from Plato and essentially a continuation of the Platonic school, rather than as a profound leader of his own school.

But as with you Don I am certainly no expert on Aristotle so my thoughts are necessarily of limited value, limited to what we can draw on as the impressions we have of him, which may not be at all accurate to the facts.

But its interesting to think about whether Epicurus might have held that Aristotle's "idea that eudaimonia is largely dependent on luck and one's station in life is elitist and not much help to society at large. His focus on virtue and fulfilling your telos seems ill-suited to people finding his philosophy useful" in fact may have resulted from his "excessive attention to detail" at the expense of processing the big picture from the details that were readily at hand when he started.