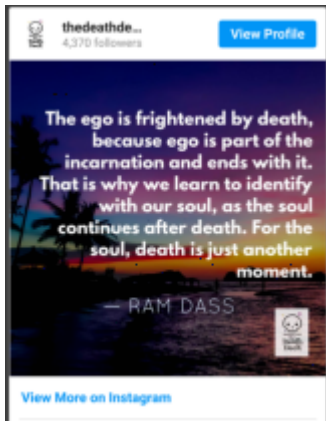


So, this is what we're up against...

Post by “Don” of August 8, 2021 at 2:39 PM

https://www.instagram.com/p/CSUeQ8CFQES/?utm_medium=copy_link



Post by “Don” of August 8, 2021 at 2:44 PM

This strikes me as a life-denying attitude.

"Don't worry. There's a second chance after you die."

No! *carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero.*

Pluck **the day (for it is ripe)**; trust in tomorrow as little as possible.

Horace, Odes, 1.11

Post by “Eikadistes” of August 12, 2021 at 5:10 PM

This immediately reminded me of something I came across in my research: an author's attempt to connect the dot of "Ram Dass" with the dot of "Epicurean Philosophy." I was nearly disturbed to have come across the following anecdote:

Quote

“Perhaps, like spiritual philosopher Ram Dass, a contemporary Epicurean would enjoin the truth-seeker to Be Here Now and Pay Attention.” (Mills, Epicurean Simplicity 22)

"Epicurean" has meant so many things to so many people, from the materialist piety of the ancient Greeks, to the hyper-political sensualists of Rome, to heretical medieval scholars, to Gassendi's "Christian Epicureans", to French libertines, and English atomists who overwhelmingly rejected the title of "Epicurean" to distance themselves from accusations of atheism. Here, author Stephanie Mills is using an American Vedantist, steeped in Indian Idealism, as a doorway to understand Epicurean ethics.

I do think that it is important to distinguish, as Cassius has pursued with commitment, "Epicureans" from "Neo-Epicureans" because there are **so many** heterodox interpretations that have obscured Epicurus' teachings. Gassendi saw Epicurus' atomist as being compatible with the revelation of Christ; the French libertines used "hedonism" as a justification for their lifestyle, but had little use for grounding their sense of morality in physics; the English materialists of the Reformation (who probably deserve the title of "Epicurean") did not want to associate themselves with *atheism*, which is antithetical to Epicurean philosophy, anyway.

We're up against 1,700 years of misinterpretation, largely (and *ironically*) attributed to self-alleged "Epicureans", themselves. As soon as we begin correlating Epicurean philosophy with the revelation of Christ, unrestrained pleasure-seeking, or, in this case, Ram Dass' interpretation of Hindu Vedanta, the teachings of Epicurus become an accessory to the modern ego.

Post by “Don” of August 12, 2021 at 5:58 PM

[Quote from Nate](#)

I was nearly disturbed to have come across the following anecdote:

a contemporary Epicurean would enjoin the truth-seeker to Be Here Now and Pay Attention.” (Mills, Epicurean Simplicity 22)

"Epicurean" has meant so many things to so many people

I don't have a major problem with the idea that an Epicurean practice could include "mindfulness" or other exercise to get us to "pay attention" to our lives. That could make us

better choosers and avoiders...

BUT to equate that to the woo of Ram Dass or other Eastern philosophies writ large, that goes down the syncretism road and is not helpful.

Post by “Cassius” of August 12, 2021 at 6:17 PM

Don is there a graphic in that first post in this thread that is referenced as "this is what we're up against"? Maybe it's just me who is not seeing it some reason but that would be strange if true. Could we try reposting it?

Post by “Don” of August 12, 2021 at 6:49 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

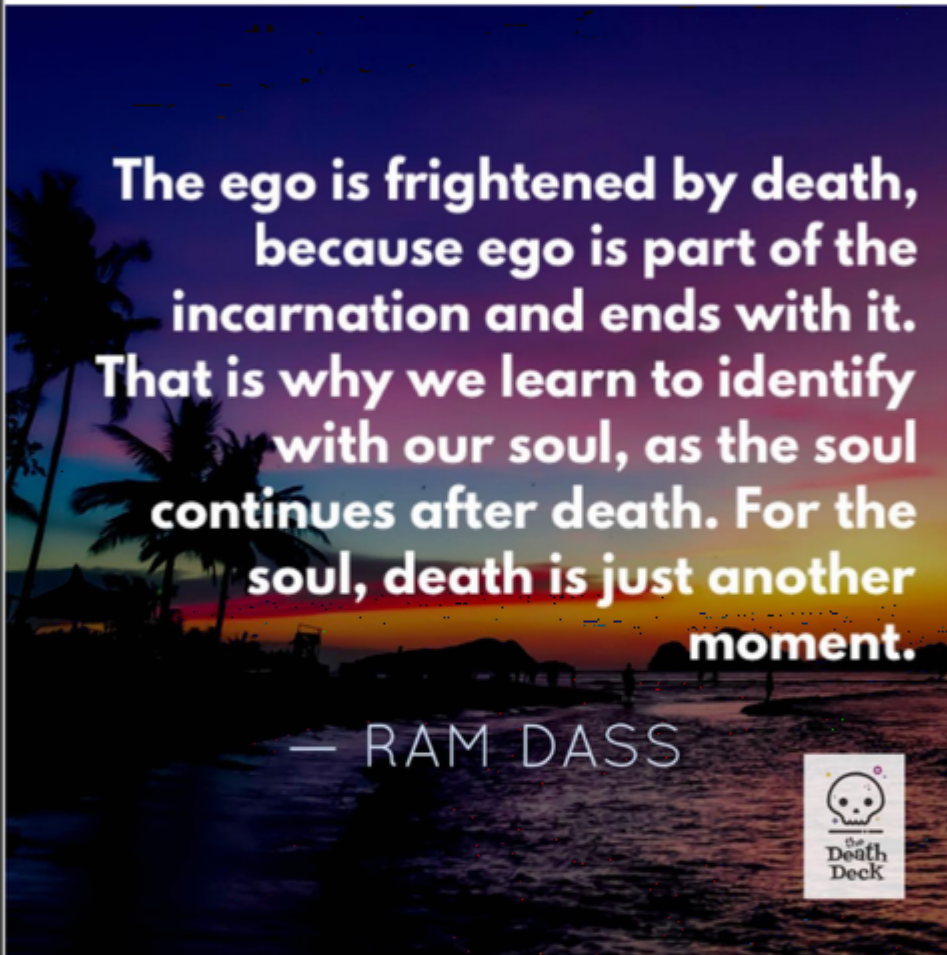
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thedeathde...

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Post by “Cassius” of August 12, 2021 at 9:09 PM

Ok now the luddites like me who don't have an instagram account will be able to see it. I am surprised that it didn't provide an error message or something - it just appeared to me as a totally blank post.

Actually I never signed up for instagram because I couldn't figure out the use case. What does it provide that Twitter and Facebook don't?

Post by “Godfrey” of August 13, 2021 at 1:07 AM

These provide great examples of things to choose (paying attention) and to avoid (mumbo jumbo). Personally I feel that paying attention to one's faculties is a key part of an Epicurean lifestyle. Mindfulness and meditation are potentially useful tools in that endeavor. There are occasional points of overlap between the traditions from which they come and EP, and these points can be useful to understand the tools. Of course the danger is that one ends up misunderstanding the overlaps and practicing an inconsistent mishmash of a philosophy, so one must pay attention 😊

Post by “Cassius” of August 13, 2021 at 7:21 AM

Now that I've finally seen the Instagram post long enough to absorb the text - ABSOLUTELY that is what we are up against. This calls to mind that passage in Nietzsche's Antichrist where he points out that this is what Epicurus / Lucretius had campaigned against even before Christianity emerged. It's a war to the very end and there is absolutely no hope of prevailing against it without returning to the essence of Epicurus and building cooperation, communication, and even organization on that foundation. And I also think that's why constantly following the eclectic tendency to blend aspects of Epicurus with other philosophers, rather than distill the core and work from the base, is the worst possible option and what dooms those "accommodationist" efforts to failure.