

New Sedley Chapter On Ancient Greek Atheism

Post by "Cassius" of April 11, 2022 at 3:48 AM

It would be a joke to suggest that what Epicurus meant about not being able to receive the images of the gods without harm was that he foresaw "Don't go near cosmic rays without radiation shielding!"..... But before we consider that the whole field of "spectres" is nonsense I think it would be prudent to retrace the reasoning steps and recognize that our knowledge of physics even today has a very long way to go. Is it really unreasonable to suspect that predictions that might admittedly be based on overly simplistic views of "atoms flying through space" might still in the end lead to fruitful discoveries? Maybe Epicurus was "sensing" and describing in too rudimentary a form a mechanism that exists, but that we are misinterpreting because we are trying to force it to fit within the "supernatural religion," paradigm which Epicurus never suggested (and indeed denied) was his framework.

Plus - We always seem to go back to the complicated issues of "methods of inference" and which theories are rational to entertain and which are not. That's probably where OUR personal contribution can come, rather than through study of migratory birds or cosmic rays (since we personally are probably not in those occupations).