

Pros and Cons Of Considering Epicurean Philosophy To Be A "Religion"

Post by "Peter Konstans" of March 21, 2024 at 5:10 AM

We are in agreement that there have always been atoms or particles in some form just as we are in agreement that there are infinite cosmoi. But it doesn't go against any Epicurean position to suggest that each particular cosmos is finite. As long as we accept that the universe doesn't ever run out of cosmoi, no Epicurean position is violated.

Epicurus writes:

'First believe that god is a living being immortal and blessed, according to the notion of a god indicated by the common sense of mankind; and so believing, thou shalt not affirm of him aught that is foreign to his immortality or that agrees not with blessedness, but shalt believe about him whatever may uphold both his blessedness and his immortality.'

Following Epicurus we affirm that gods are a part of nature and as such not 'supernatural' but since they are immortal we also affirm that they are 'supernatural' in the sense that the matter that makes them up doesn't dissolve.

Epicurus encourages us to believe about the Gods whatever upholds their blessedness and immortality. The idea that gods are engaged in contemplative activity similar to prayer is an idea that doesn't violate the notion of their blessedness in itself.

The idea that reality has a divine foundation (i. e. that space and time are not the whole of reality but simply a part of it) is the only way to support the notion that the universe has existed forever and always will exist and it is the only way to counter cosmological nihilism.

Immortality and indestructibility are not observed anywhere in space and time. If the cosmos has no divine foundation then both the place of the gods in it and the notion of infinity run into logical problems.

That's why modern cosmologists tend to believe in a finite, one-shot, once-in-an-eternity universe that came from nothing i. e. 'quantum fluctuations'. I am not saying they are correct but if you assume that the universe has absolutely no divine foundation then it makes sense to think this way.