

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

Post by "Cassius" of March 21, 2024 at 6:47 AM

[Quote from Peter Konstans](#)

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.

I don't think that is quite correct. There is no reason to consider that the particles that make up the gods are different from any other particles. The difference is that the gods "replace" their particles in such a way that their pseudo-bodies never deteriorate like ours do. That's not supernatural - that's working within nature to continue their preservation, and that requires effort on their part (as per fragments discussed by Dewitt).

[Quote from Peter Konstans](#)

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.

Certainly contemplation could be a part, but if you are suggesting that that is *all* that they do, I see no reason for that conclusion, and it might well contradict the position stated above that the gods must act to maintain their deathlessness.

[Quote from Peter Konstans](#)

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.

This is totally fail to follow as a reasonable suggestion and see no hint of it in the way that Epicurus constructed his view of the eternity of fundamental particles.

[Quote from Peter Konstans](#)

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.

They are not observed, they are *deduced* from what we do see, as explained in more detail by Lucretius, so I would disagree here as well.

[Quote from Peter Konstans](#)

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.

Again I wonder why you switch the term from "supernatural" to "divine." Do you mean to imply a difference? As to the point that modern cosmologists tend to go off in that direction, that's probably correct, and why I recommend people avoid them like the plague. I think Epicurus' deductive logic about an eternal and infinite universe, based on observations of what we do see every day around us makes much more sense than postulating a one-shot deal that violates that which we do see.