

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

Post by "Bryan" of March 21, 2024 at 8:44 PM

(Aetius "Pseudo-Plutarch" *Placita Philosophorum* 1.7.34) "In the judgment of Epicurus, all the Gods are anthropomorphites, or have the shape of men; but they are perceptible only by reason, for their nature admits of no other manner of being apprehended, their parts being so small and fine that they give no corporeal representations. The same Epicurus asserts that there are four other natural beings which are immortal: of this sort are (1) atoms, (2) the vacuum, (3) the infinite, and (4) the similar parts; and these last are called Homoeomeries and likewise elements." (Goodwin trans.)

"Ἐπίκουρος ἀνθρωποειδεῖς μὲν πάντας τοὺς θεοὺς, λόγῳ δὲ πάντας τούτους θεωρητοὺς διὰ τὴν λεπτομέρειαν τῆς τῶν εἰδώλων φύσεως: ὁ δ' αὐτὸς ἄλλως τέσσαρας φύσεις κατὰ γένος ἀφθάρτους τάσδε, [1] τὰ ἄτομα [2] τὸ κενὸν [3] τὸ ἄπειρον [4] τὰς ὁμοιότητας: αὗται δὲ λέγονται ὁμοιομέρεια καὶ στοιχεῖα."

Philodemus makes similar statements that the gods are "constituted by similarity" in his books on the gods. Epicurus argued against Homoiomereia as the constitution of objects in world systems -- and objects in world systems are corruptible in part by the intrusion of matter that is alien to the constitution of that object.

The finite amount of matter that is bound up in world systems has its natural equilibrium (isonomia) in the infinite amount of matter that freely exists in the spaces between the worlds!

(Cicero, DND 1.37.105) "Nor should there ever cease to be an addition of like bodies from the infinite." "Neque deficiat unquam ex infinitis corporibus similibus accessio"

By taking up the matter that is similar to them and excluding what is alien, the gods easily but actively continue their existence.