

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

Post by "Godfrey" of March 23, 2024 at 5:39 PM

Thanks for the DeWitt section, [Cassius](#) ; it helps a lot to read it again.

Now I'm beginning to understand the sources of my bafflement with isonomy:

- Isonomy appears to be simply a logical formula, not a natural principle, and therefore is subject to fallacies and misuse. The formula is fine, but each premise must be evaluated for validity.
- In this way, the principle of isonomy can create conclusions which conflict with the conclusion reached by thinking through the implications of a fully material universe.
- The idea of perfection in a fully material universe is problematic to me. To my understanding, in an infinite universe there can be no "perfect" just as there can be no boundary or limit.
- "Perfection" seems to be getting uncomfortably close to Plato's ideal forms. If there must exist a perfect mirror of a human, using the principle of isonomia, mustn't there exist a perfect dolphin? Elephant? Fruit fly? &c....
- A similarly disturbing conclusion reached through isonomia might be this: "the number of living beings must be equal to the number of dead beings." This is to offset the imperfection of death with the perfection of eternal life, another logical leap of monotheistic religions.
- An interesting conclusion that follows from isonomy is that the gods must be shaped like humans. In this way they are of the same class, and logically consistent.

Quote from DeWitt via Cassius

By this time three aspects of the principles of isonomy have been brought forward: first , that in an infinite universe perfection is bound to exist as well as imperfection; that is, "that there must be some surpassing being, than which nothing is better"; second, that the number of these beings, the gods, cannot be less than the number of mortals; and third, that in the universe at large the forces of preservation always prevail over the forces of destruction.

To the best of my understanding (which may be wrong), I disagree with all three of these conclusions.

1. *"in an infinite universe perfection is bound to exist, that there must be some surpassing being, than which nothing is better"*. This, to me, is an erroneous proposition in that it describes a finite universe, not an infinite one.

2. *"that the number of these beings, the gods, cannot be less than the number of mortals"*. If there is no perfection, then this is erroneous in that it's comparing two different classes of beings, such as great apes and humans.

3. *"in the universe at large the forces of preservation always prevail over the forces of destruction."* This seems to conflict with the idea of isonomia: shouldn't the forces of preservation and destruction be equal in the universe at large? Isn't their equality a basic principle of modern science as well?