

"Metakosmos" in Ancient Texts

Post by "Eikadistes" of December 29, 2024 at 1:58 PM

To be transparent, here's how my mind is working:

I am speculating that the notions of *Space Sanctuaries* ("between worlds") filled with *Majestic Void Dwellers* were poetic innovations of Lucretius and perhaps Philodemus (both poets who took liberties, personifying natural forces, appropriating myths, and publishing prayers).

It's not so much a matter of mutual exclusivity: I believe, hypothetically, at least, the concepts seem compatible. It's more of a question of *focus* and *intention*. Did the Greek Epicureans *actually care* about the dwelling-place of the deities? Was that query on their radar? *Or was it a moot point?*

Here's what Lucretius has to say about the (forgive my mockery) *Cosmic Retirement Centers*:

Quote

"[T]heir tranquil abodes which neither winds do shake nor clouds drench with rains nor snow congealed by sharp frosts harms with hoary fall: an ever-cloudless ether overcanopies them, and they laugh with light shed largely round" (DRN 3.18-22)

"This too you may not possibly believe, that the holy seats of the gods exist in any parts of the world: the fine nature of the gods far withdrawn from our senses is hardly seen by the thought of the mind; and since it has ever eluded the touch and stroke of the hands, it must touch nothing which is tangible for us; for that cannot touch which does not admit of being touched in turn. And therefore their seats as well must be unlike our seats, fine, even as their bodies are fine." (Ibid. 5.146-154)

"[N]or will you approach the sanctuaries of the gods with a calm breast, nor will you be able with tranquil peace of mind to take in those idols which are carried from their holy body into the minds of men as heralds of their divine form." (Ibid., 6.76)

Some authors, like Cicero, gives us this idea that the [Epicurean gods](#) are essentially *Space Ghosts*—invisible-to-translucent humanoid figures with objective existences that are composed of a spirit-like substance who dwell far away from the natural disasters of the stormy, terrestrial sphere—and their visual forms emanate through the universe like radio waves to the receiver that is the human mind. We observe their reality from an incredible distance, even more distant than the stars: as our eyes observe the evolution of a dying star as it goes supernova, so our minds document the movement of *Epicurean Void Dwellers* as they breathe, speak with friends, and laugh about jokes.

Lucretius helps us visualize these sorts "holy sanctuaries" that are "cloaked in ether". Even then, I internally debate whether or not he was referring to *Cosmic Spirit-Bodies* living in *Metacosmic Paradise Compounds* versus something like "Beings that exist in the same spatial dimension as the Earth, but cannot interact with Earth matter (except for the minds of rational animals)".

Either way, given that Lucretius used *On Nature* as his source to structure *De Rerum Natura*, were these ideas *his*? Or were they truly poetic imaginings from *Epicurus'* actual propositions? Similarly, while I consider Cicero a completely unreliable and dubious source, he did attend lectures by an Epicurean scholar, and was trained under, and among other Epicureans. He has reason to exaggerate their claims as "a former friend who just 'didn't get it' and misunderstood everything", or, he could be faithfully representing their claims. I'm willing to swallow either pill.

I really want more fragments from the Kathegemones, Demetrios of Lakonia ([Bryan](#) that's why I tagged you), and Philodemos that make explicit claims about the God or gods or divine nature. Most of our fragments from the Kathegemones are preserved in Philodemos' *On Piety*, which is great, yet not only is it, itself, fragmented, but also, the quotations are few, and limited, and completely intermixed with Philodemos' personal extrapolations and paraphrasing. I *believe there is a line hiding in a P.Herc. somewhere that will fit the gap in this puzzle.*

It would be really telling if Epicurus dropped a line or two that incontrovertibly demonstrate that he had curiosity regarding the question of "What does a *Space Ghost Apartment* look like?" versus (what I'd like to consider, more and more), "The gods are unique, mental phenomena."

(...though, now that I think about it, Philodemos records Epicurus as having described four classes of beings in the universe: 1. **Void** (*empty space*) 2. **Simple Bodies that are Indestructible** (particles) 3. **Bodies Arranged in Indestructible Configurations Made from Similar Kinds of Simple Bodies** (*i.e. the bodies of the gods*), 4. **Bodies Arranged in Destructible Configurations Made from a Variety of Simple Bodies** (*molecules, organs, animals, etc.*) ... hereagain, did he mean to describe the biology of *Space Ghosts*? Or was he doing his best to describe ***the neurology of spirituality?***