

Reasoning through the Letter to Menoecus' On the Gods

Post by "TauPhi" of October 22, 2025 at 11:46 AM

My current understanding of the issue is as follows. Feel free to point out any problems you see with my line of thinking.

Non-evident things must be proved by means of apparent things. To do this, confirmatory testimony and lack of contrary testimony is required to claim that something is true. The lack of confirmatory testimony and contradictory testimony indicate that something is false. That's, in a nutshell, an Epicurean theory of knowledge for non-evident phenomena.

Epicureans, as far as I'm aware, claimed that gods existed because:

- 1) images of gods could be detected directly by human mind
- 2) principle of isonomia
- 3) pre-conceptions of gods were incorporated into human nature

To Ancient Epicureans these were confirmatory testimonies of non-evident gods and these testimonies were not contradicted in ancient times (at least not contradicted according to Epicureans).

If "*we actively construct our own conception of a 'god' rather than discovering pre-existing beings.*" and "*we naturally tend to imagine beings that represent our own ideals of happiness and tranquility*", Epicureans wouldn't be able to epistemologically claim that gods existed. Actively constructed subjective imagination cannot be confirmed nor contradicted. 'I imagined it therefore it is', is not compatible with Epicurean system.