

Epicurus, gods and God

Post by "Cassius" of October 13, 2019 at 7:25 PM

Yes it is lots to digest and I hope you will continue the discussion. This reminds me of the current thread on "justice" that we are talking. We have strong preconceived notions of what we "should" be talking about in terms of both "justice" and "divinity." But at this point in studying Epicurus we ought to be cautioned that we need to re-examine virtually everything we have been told about Epicurus, and try to approach him from as unbiased view as possible, always starting back at the fundamental observations about the atomistic/eternal/boundless nature of the universe, and how mankind (all life, really) fits into it.

And without going too far off beam i think a related question arises from "pleasure." What IS pleasure and where did it "come from?"

My own admittedly radical answer to such questions is that we have to consider the possibility that Epicurus was going in the direction of concluding that "life" (not individual lives, but 'life' as a natural development of nature) is just as "eternal" as any other aspect of nature. In fact I am pretty sure that that is demanded by the physics -- so that while it might be correct to entertain that "life" developed on Earth at a particular moment from non-life, we would expect that that process had happened over an over an infinite number of times for an eternity up to this point.

While I would not think that planet-to-planet or "cosmos-to-cosmos" movement of life is a necessary conclusion, it is probably at least a "possible" conclusion that Epicurus would have entertained in the same way he entertained numbers of alternative theories that could not be proven to be uniquely correct, but which do not necessarily conflict with what we do observe.

Remember one of Lucian's satires involved alien life forms and interplanetary travel too. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_True_Story

But to repeat I am not advocating any of this as required either by scientific evidence today, or by the surviving Epicurean texts. But I think we have to open up just about any possible theory that we do not *know* to be impossible, if not as something that we think ourselves, but at least as something that the Epicureans might have entertained.