

Episode Seventy-Two - Alternative Explanations in Science, and The Size of The Sun

Post by “Cassius” of May 20, 2021 at 2:14 PM

I just posted a link to an [article on Leonardo da Vinci and Epicurus/Lucretius](#), and this reference is relevant to this week's text:

was being studied in Florence.

Epicurus is referred to more than once by Leonardo in his reflections on astronomy and the size of the planets. The passage that interested him, from Epicurus' *Letter to Pythocles* (91), reads:

«The size of the sun [and moon] and the other stars is for us what it appears to be; and in reality it is either [slightly] greater than what we see or slightly less or of the same size: for so too fires on earth when looked at from a distance seem to the senses».²³

Leonardo's comment on this can be found in *Lawe del Sole*:

«But I cannot forbear to condemn many of the ancients, who said that the sun was no larger than it appears; among these was Epicurus, and I believe that he founded his reason on the effects of a light placed in our atmosphere equidistant from the centre of the earth. Any one looking at it never sees it diminished in size at whatever distances».²⁴