

Practical exercises: PD4

Post by "Cassius" of July 14, 2021 at 1:42 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

They don't/can't exist as physical entities

[Quote from Don](#)

That can't exist in the physical world.

I think that Epicurus would qualify both of those statements by adding the words ...HERE IN THIS WORLD to the end of them.

That seems to me to be the reasoning involved in placing them in the "intermundia" where either (1) the environment is by nature fully supportive and not harmful to them or (2) the gods by some technology or system are able to control their environment with the same result.

Maybe that might appear to some of us as a rationalization merging into pure idealism, but I also think that Epicurus thought his physics of the infinite/eternal universe populated with many forms of life, and the theory of isonomia described in Cicero's "On the nature of the gods," impel the same conclusion in reality.

Quote

"These discoveries of Epicurus are so acute in themselves and so subtly expressed that not everyone would be capable of appreciating them. Still I may rely on your intelligence, and make my exposition briefer than the subject demands. Epicurus then, as he not merely discerns abstruse and recondite things with his mind's eye, but handles them as tangible realities, teaches that the substance and nature of the gods is such that, in the first place, it is perceived not by the senses but by the mind, and not materially or individually, like the solid objects which Epicurus in virtue of their substantiality entitles *steremnia*; but by our perceiving images owing to their similarity and succession, because an endless train of precisely similar images arises from the innumerable atoms and streams towards the gods, our mind with the keenest feelings of pleasure fixes its gaze on these images, and so attains an understanding of the nature of a being both blessed and eternal.

Moreover there is the supremely potent principle of infinity, which claims the closest and most careful study; we must understand that it has in the sum of things everything

has its exact match and counterpart. This property is termed by Epicurus isonomia, or the principle of uniform distribution. From this principle it follows that if the whole number of mortals be so many, there must exist no less a number of immortals, and if the causes of destruction are beyond count, the causes of conservation also are bound to be infinite.