

Graphic By Elli On Epicurus vs Plato On Creation of the Universe

Post by "Cassius" of July 31, 2022 at 9:11 AM

Responses at Facebook:

Rasul Mammadov Before Einstein and Heisenberg, Epicureanism in physics was relevant. In modern physics, the platonic interpretation has won rather.

"Modern physics opposes the position of Democritus, Epicurus and takes the side of Plato, the Pythagoreans."

Heisenberg, "Physics and Philosophy."

Martin Huehne Admin

I downloaded the book from

<http://www.naturalthinker.net/.../Heisenberg,%20Werner%20...>

and did not find the quote in there. Whereas Democritus is discussed in detail, Epicurus is not even mentioned.

Can you more precisely locate the quote?

From my memory of reading Heisenberg's memoirs 30+ years ago, I remember that Heisenberg saw indeed a stronger analogy between Plato's symmetries and modern physics than between Democritus' atomism and modern physics but stated as well that seeing these analogies is subjective because there are big differences in both cases.

I guess that Heisenberg did not even know where Epicurus differed from Democritus. The analogy between Epicurus' swerve and Heisenberg's uncertainty principle appears to be more obvious than the analogy between Plato's symmetries and the symmetries in modern physics.

Plato's philosophy rejects the scientific method on principle whereas Epicurus' philosophy anticipates it and is open to revision when observations refute older ideas.

Modern science has its roots in several of the ancient philosophical schools:

There is indeed an analogy between Plato's forms and mathematical models in physics as much as there is an analogy between Democritus' atoms and elementary particles of modern physics.

Skepticism is an inherent part of scientific progress.

By the way, I am a modern physicist and consider Epicurus' philosophy closest to modern physics among the ancient schools.