

What Are The Possible Reasons (And Of These, The Most Likely) Why The List of 40 Principal Doctrines Does Not Feature A Statement Explicitly Stating Pleasure To Be The Goal of Life?

Post by "Cassius" of February 13, 2023 at 4:11 PM

Surely there are articles out there that make this comparison so I will see what I can find.

I would certainly not suggest that PDO1 is not of relevance to the gods, but if it in fact has wider application, then the aspect that relates to the gods would be only a part of the intended meaning, and maybe not the most important part.

Do not in fact every one of the other [principal doctrines](#) refer to human affairs? Maybe the primary Epicurean contentions about the gods are as stated in Herodotus and Pythocles as a matter of physics, the important aspect of which is that the gods are not supernatural and did not create the universe. If one sees PDO1 as only a statement about the nature of the gods alone, that would make it an exception to the subject of all the rest. Epicurus shows in the letter to Menoeceus that he very capable of being clear about the nature of the gods being different from what we think of them.

And I would relate this to another opinion that I think a lot of people here would share, especially when we consider Lucian's "True Story."

Can anyone here see Epicurus as being the kind of person who would say: "Humans do not have wings so they will never fly?" Lucian thought of humans going to the moon, so why would Epicurus lock himself into a position of declaring that it is "impossible" for beings elsewhere in the universe, even in other "worlds" to travel between them? We know that he accepting the idea that we receive images of the gods, apparently from the intermundia. I would say that the central important theme of Epicurean philosophy is that the gods are not supernatural and did not create the universe, and that Epicurus would not lock himself into stating flatly that beings on other planets/worlds, like Lucian envisioned as to the moon, might not be capable of traveling around between them.

So there are numerous ways of coming at this, but the bottom line is I see no reason not to interpret [PD01](#) as applicable to all life everywhere, of which both we and the gods are but natural parts, and not just a reference for not "fearing" the gods -- especially since the reverse - benefiting from their images - seems to be an important part of Epicurean philosophy but is not mentioned in [PD01](#).