

Scientism, Atheism, And The Admissibility Of Spiritual Experience

Post by "Cassius" of April 12, 2023 at 4:38 PM

[Quote from Pacatus](#)

I have always been in the idealist camp. But I am trying to flesh out in my own mind the possibility of a naturalist realism that does not essentially "remove" the gods to distant, inaccessible intermundia in such a way as to make "theistic" realism - in practical terms - indistinguishable from an idealist view.

Lots to digest in your post and I should say my comment relates only to a small aspect of it. I am still thinking as of today that the bright line between "idealism" and "realism" is mainly in one direction. From my perspective there is no contradiction, and that the existence of [Epicurean gods](#) serves as both (1) as an "ideal" to which to aspire in the abstract (in terms of total pleasure combined with no pain) but also (2) as a firmly-held expectation of real existence. The analogy I would draw is that just like it appears to me that Epicurus held that if we could go far enough "out" in our rocket ships, we would pass by numberless additional solar systems and places between them with numberless additional life forms of which some of those life forms have succeeded in living deathlessly in pure pleasure.

So I have no problem from my perspective believing that gods are both real and ideal, but the division occurs in that some members of the "idealist" camp firmly object to the idea that any such deathless and painless beings really exist. I gather that they think that "modern science" has disproved their existence, which is a position I do not find persuasive, for the same reason that I do not personally find persuasive contentions that the universe as a whole is limited either in size or age.

I remain of the belief that Epicurus held that "the gods" both serve an important function as an ideal (in the same way that we reverence wiser men) but that "the gods" also really exist as part of the logical conclusions of Epicurean physics, for the same reason that many of us (I gather) have no problem believing that there are numberless planets in the universe both like and unlike Earth.