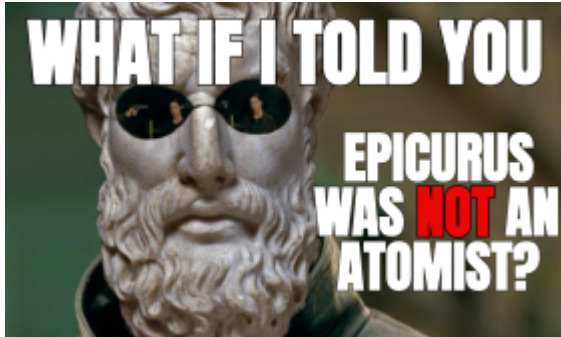


# Epicurus Was Not an Atomist (...sort of)

Post by "Eikadistes" of December 22, 2025 at 2:24 PM



Greetings, all! I [published some thoughts](#) about the limitations in our employment of the word "atomism" as an expression of ancient Epicurean particle physics. I'll admit that I might be splitting hairs here, and exploiting a post-structuralist position about the symbols and their context ... I read a lot of Derrida back in college. I apologize in advance. 😊

In a nutshell:

- The notions of "atomism" and "ancient Epicurean particle physics" can be contrasted for nuance.
- "Atomism" in its context can be understood as an artifact of Renaissance Latin (it carries *some* prejudices).
- For most of the modernity, "corpuscularians" rejected "atomism" as "Epicurean atheism" (...super confusing)
- Fun fact! The root of "atomism" (the "tomism" part) is *also* used as a synonym for "particles" (*without the "a-"*).
- Ancient "atoms" correspond better with "sub-atomic" particles than modern "atoms".
- Consider that all of the "atomists" are, *also*, technically "voidists" so far as they are "atomists".
- Particles are described like motes of dust, grains of cereal, and hooklets on flower seeds, not mathematical points.
- How about them *apeirons*, *microns*, and *ametabletons*?
- Avoid "ismizing" in the first place! We are students of "the true philosophy" who contemplate "invisible beginnings".

But, like always, no one gets penalty points for saying "atomists" (I've always been partial to the designation "atom-prophets"). Nor is it a party foul to employ "Epicureanism" instead of "Epicurean Philosophy" (though I try not to.) [Elli](#) some of our earlier conversations about language and context lead me down the path of these kinds of thoughts. 😊