

Epicurus vs Kant and Modern Idealism - Introduction

Post by “Eikadistes” of April 9, 2026 at 4:19 PM

These are by no means precise, just a general overview of some relevant comparisons:

Who?	Whatchamacallit?	What it is?	For real?	Like how?
Dēmókritos	(Skeptical) Atomism	Atoms & Void	Not bodies, just atoms.	Vaisheshika
Plátōn	Platonic Realism	Matter & Form	Formally, yes.	Vedanta
Aristotélēs	Immanent Realism	Hylomorphs	Hard "yes".	Nyaya
Pýrrhōn	Greek Skepticism	Good question.	Maybe?	Ajñana
Epíkouros	(Dogmatic) Atomism	Bodies & Void	Literally.	Charvaka
Descartes	Cartesian Dualism	Thought & Extension	Both Mind & Matter are.	Samkhya, Dvaita Vedanta
Spinoza	Substance Monism	God	In every way.	Bhedabheda Vedanta
Berkeley	Immaterialism	God's mind.	God's dream.	Advaita Vedanta
Kant	Transcendental Idealism	Thing-in-Itself	Some <i>Thing</i> is.	Vedanta
Fichte	Subjective Idealism	Absolute Ego	Our minds are.	Yogācāra Buddhism
Hegel	Absolute Idealism	Spirit	The spirit is.	Bhedabheda Vedanta
Schelling	Objective Idealism	Absolute	<i>Absolutely!</i>	Kashmir Shaivism
Schopenhauer	Pessimism, Voluntarism	Will	<i>Unfortunately...</i>	Advaita Vedanta
Emerson	Transcendentalism	Over-soul	<i>Naturally.</i>	Advaita Vedanta

Again, just a rough sketch, mixed with some loose parallels with Indian philosophy.

Note that some of those thinkers did not (and would not) use the words I provided for their own philosophies. (Fichte in particular wouldn't like the words I used for him, but he can deal with it). The Indian philosophies are pure approximations. I only mention them because the

Transcendentalists were heavily influenced by the recently-translated [Upanishads](#) and [Gita](#). (Perhaps *mistranslations* in some cases, but translations, nonetheless).

If a lot of it sound similar, it's because it is. The German Transcendentalists were directly inspired by the same branches of Indian philosophy that inspired Roman Neoplatonists. They also provide an example of a continuation of a Greek re-branding of Indian ideas (as with Pýrrhōn).