

# **A Call For Links On The Relationship of Mathematics and Geometry to Reality (and Epicurus' view of the issue)**

**Post by “Cassius” of August 1, 2019 at 9:23 PM**

Martin K. posted:

Hartry Field is the best modern exponent of the fictional nature of maths. He has written extensively on it. The monograph *Science Without Numbers* [Oxford University Press: 2016] being the best.

I'd also politely point out Aristotle was the first person in human recorded history to expressly adopt this position. He is the original anti-Platonist. Another talking point between the Epicurean and Aristotelian we have in common.

“The next point to consider is how the mathematician differs from the student of nature. For natural bodies contain surfaces, volumes, lines and points, and these are the subject-matter of mathematics. Now the mathematician, though they too treat of these things, do not treat them as the limits of a natural body. Nor do they consider the attributes indicated as the attributes of such bodies. That is why they separate them. For in thought they are separable from change and it makes no difference nor does any falsity result if they are separated. The holders of the theory of the forms do the same, though they are not aware of it.”

[Natural Puzzles 2:2, 193b 23-36]

Maths is abstracting real qualities from physical items “by supposing separate what is not separate.”

[After the *Of Nature*, 13:3 couched in an extended discussion at 1077b21-1078a31]

It is an interpretative tool helpful for solving problems — not the study of a distinct realm of real non-physical phenomena.