

Discussion of the Society of Epicurus' 20 Tenets of 12/21/19

Post by "Hiram" of January 6, 2020 at 11:52 AM

Concerning the idea that gods emit particles that we can perceive, this was part of one of our discussions on the gods and was dismissed by Alex because, in an expanding universe paradigm, we are getting further away from the intercosmia and therefore the particles would eventually no longer reach us. This is just another problem with the realist position. Are we content to state something knowing that we will remain forever without evidence for it?

[Quote from Elayne](#)

Just because O'Keefe says a thing doesn't make true. Idealism is a ridiculous position contradicted by reality. Allowing that into your definition of Epicurean stretches the meaning beyond comprehension. You can do that to any label you want to, of course, but it removes any claim to consistency or coherence.

I think we have to be careful to attack the label "idealist interpretation" without considering the substance attached, because the key issue here is whether contemplation on the gods is USEFUL for pleasure.

In other words, the difference between the atheist and idealist interpretation is that the atheist does not see the point of contemplating on the gods in any way, while the so-called "idealist" does (and Epicurus, as a realist, did).

So we should not rush to attack the label's name without considering the point being made. If someone wishes to write an essay claiming the label, or re-naming the label for the sake of clarity, I would be happy to comment on it and help to re-brand the so-called "idealist position". But the key here, let's not forget, has to do with the utility of pious practice to experience certain kinds of pleasures even if we do not believe in physical gods (and the problem addressed here is also the "naturalness" of religiosity, or the idea that humans are by nature religious and that we should "not force nature").