

Two Types?

Post by “Hiram” of January 10, 2020 at 10:27 AM

So if the realist and idealist positions do not exist outside of this forum, I guess my question is what do you make of all the sources cited in the Epicureanism piece on Wikipedia, for instance?

The manner in which the [Epicurean gods](#) exist is still disputed. Some scholars say that Epicureanism believes that the gods exist outside the mind as material objects (the realist position), while others assert that the gods only exist in our minds as ideals (the idealist position).[\[36\]](#)[\[37\]](#)[\[38\]](#) The realist position holds that Epicureans understand the gods as existing as physical and immortal beings made of atoms that reside somewhere in reality.[\[36\]](#)[\[38\]](#) However, the gods are completely separate from the rest of reality; they are uninterested in it, play no role in it, and remain completely undisturbed by it.[\[39\]](#) Instead, the gods live in what is called the *metakosmia*, or the space between worlds.[\[40\]](#) Contrarily, the idealist position holds that Epicurus did not actually conceive of the gods as existing in reality. Rather, Epicurus is said to have viewed the gods as just idealized forms of the best human life,[\[37\]](#)[\[41\]](#) and it is thought that the gods were emblematic of the life one should aspire towards.[\[37\]](#) The debate between these two positions was revived by A. A. Long and David Sedley in their 1987 book, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, in which the two argued in favor of the idealist position.[\[37\]](#)[\[38\]](#) While a scholarly consensus has yet to be reached, the realist position remains the prevailing viewpoint at this time.[\[37\]](#)[\[38\]](#)

(and here are sources for notes 36 through 41:)

- ^ [Jump up to: a b c](#) O'Keefe, Tim (2010). *Epicureanism*. University of California Press. pp. 155-156.
- ^ [Jump up to: a b c d e](#) Sedley, David (2011). "Epicurus' theological innatism". In Fish, Jeffrey; Sanders, Kirk R. (eds.). *Epicurus and the Epicurean Tradition*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press. pp. 29-30.
- ^ [Jump up to: a b c d](#) Konstan, David (2011). "Epicurus on the gods". In Fish, Jeffrey; Sanders, Kirk R. (eds.). *Epicurus and the Epicurean Tradition*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press. pp. 53-54.
- ^ Mansfeld, Jaap (1993). "Aspects of Epicurean Theology". *Mnemosyne*. **46** (2): 176-178.
- ^ Buchheit, Vinzenz (2007). "Epicurus' Triumph of the Mind". In Gale, Monica R. (ed.). *Oxford Readings in Classical Studies: Lucretius*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. pp. 110-111.
- ^ O'Keefe, Tim (2010). *Epicureanism*. University of California Press. pp. 158-159.