



Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World

Tim Whitmarsh

Download now

[Click here](#) if your download doesn't start automatically

Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World

Tim Whitmarsh

Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World Tim Whitmarsh

How new is atheism? Although adherents and opponents alike today present it as an invention of the European Enlightenment, when the forces of science and secularism broadly challenged those of faith, disbelief in the gods, in fact, originated in a far more remote past. In *Battling the Gods*, Tim Whitmarsh journeys into the ancient Mediterranean, a world almost unimaginably different from our own, to recover the stories and voices of those who first refused the divinities.

Homer's epic poems of human striving, journeying, and passion were ancient Greece's only "sacred texts," but no ancient Greek thought twice about questioning or mocking his stories of the gods. Priests were functionaries rather than sources of moral or cosmological wisdom. The absence of centralized religious authority made for an extraordinary variety of perspectives on sacred matters, from the devotional to the *atheos*, or "godless." Whitmarsh explores this kaleidoscopic range of ideas about the gods, focusing on the colorful individuals who challenged their existence. Among these were some of the greatest ancient poets and philosophers and writers, as well as the less well known: Diagoras of Melos, perhaps the first self-professed atheist; Democritus, the first materialist; Socrates, executed for rejecting the gods of the Athenian state; Epicurus and his followers, who thought gods could not intervene in human affairs; the brilliantly mischievous satirist Lucian of Samosata.

Before the revolutions of late antiquity, which saw the scriptural religions of Christianity and Islam enforced by imperial might, there were few constraints on belief. Everything changed, however, in the millennium between the appearance of the Homeric poems and Christianity's establishment as Rome's state religion in the fourth century AD. As successive Greco-Roman empires grew in size and complexity, and power was increasingly concentrated in central capitals, states sought to impose collective religious adherence, first to cults devoted to individual rulers, and ultimately to monotheism. In this new world, there was no room for outright disbelief: the label "atheist" was used now to demonize anyone who merely disagreed with the orthodoxy—and so it would remain for centuries.

As the twenty-first century shapes up into a time of mass information, but also, paradoxically, of collective amnesia concerning the tangled histories of religions, Whitmarsh provides a bracing antidote to our assumptions about the roots of freethinking. By shining a light on atheism's first thousand years, *Battling the Gods* offers a timely reminder that nonbelief has a wealth of tradition of its own, and, indeed, its own heroes.

 [Download Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World Tim Whitmarsh

From reader reviews:

Ruth Jones:

In this 21st centuries, people become competitive in most way. By being competitive today, people have do something to make these people survives, being in the middle of often the crowded place and notice by surrounding. One thing that occasionally many people have underestimated the item for a while is reading. Yes, by reading a guide your ability to survive improve then having chance to stand than other is high. In your case who want to start reading a new book, we give you this Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World book as starter and daily reading reserve. Why, because this book is greater than just a book.

Michael Alvarado:

As people who live in often the modest era should be revise about what going on or data even knowledge to make them keep up with the era which can be always change and progress. Some of you maybe can update themselves by studying books. It is a good choice to suit your needs but the problems coming to anyone is you don't know what kind you should start with. This Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World is our recommendation so you keep up with the world. Why, because book serves what you want and need in this era.

George Medrano:

Beside this Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World in your phone, it could possibly give you a way to get closer to the new knowledge or data. The information and the knowledge you may got here is fresh through the oven so don't become worry if you feel like an older people live in narrow community. It is good thing to have Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World because this book offers to you personally readable information. Do you occasionally have book but you seldom get what it's interesting features of. Oh come on, that will not end up to happen if you have this in the hand. The Enjoyable set up here cannot be questionable, just like treasuring beautiful island. Techniques you still want to miss the item? Find this book in addition to read it from at this point!

Christopher McCormick:

A lot of guide has printed but it takes a different approach. You can get it by net on social media. You can choose the most effective book for you, science, amusing, novel, or whatever by means of searching from it. It is known as of book Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World. You can include your knowledge by it. Without making the printed book, it might add your knowledge and make anyone happier to read. It is most critical that, you must aware about publication. It can bring you from one destination to other place.

**Download and Read Online Battling the Gods: Atheism in the
Ancient World Tim Whitmarsh #RTYHBLGZ9IW**

Read Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World by Tim Whitmarsh for online ebook

Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World by Tim Whitmarsh Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World by Tim Whitmarsh books to read online.

Online Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World by Tim Whitmarsh ebook PDF download

Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World by Tim Whitmarsh Doc

Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World by Tim Whitmarsh Mobipocket

Battling the Gods: Atheism in the Ancient World by Tim Whitmarsh EPub