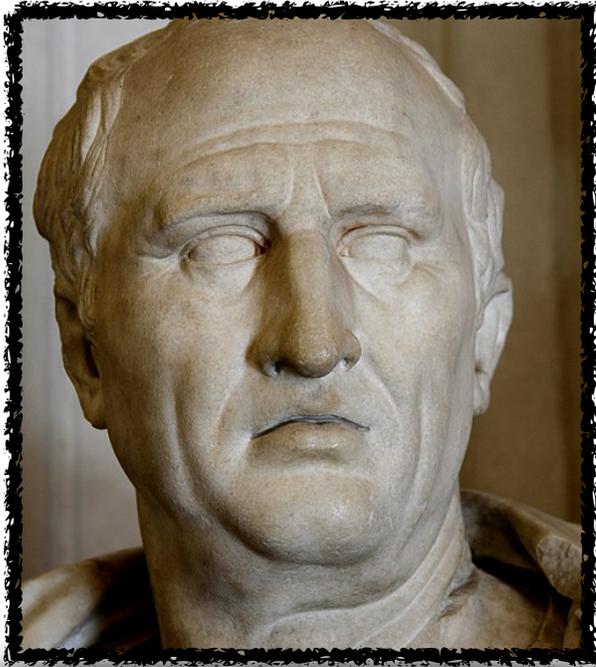


The Nature of the Gods

Cicero on the Stoics



Marcus Cicero

**Roman Statesman, Orator,
Writer, Philosopher**

106-43 B.C.E.

“**Zeno** proposes that the law of nature is divine, with the power to prescribe what is right and of forbidding the opposite ... He also says elsewhere that the upper air is god, but can we fathom a god which is without feeling, a god which never confronts us in our prayers. . .?”

“In other books he states his belief that there is a kind of reason which pervades the whole of nature and is endowed with divine power.”

“He does not regard Jupiter, Juno, Vesta or [other deities] as among the company of the gods, but teaches that these names, by a sort of symbolism, have been pinned on things without life and speech.”

“As for **Cleanthes**, [a disciple of Zeno], at one point he states that the universe itself is god.”

“As for **Chrysippus** [another disciple of Zeno], he states that divine power lies in reason, and in the soul and mind of the natural world as a whole; that the universe itself is god, together with its soul which pervades everything; that its guiding principle, at work in the intellect and the reason, is also god ... Chrysippus also claims that the one whom men call Jupiter is the air ...”

The Nature of the Gods, Book I