

# Epicurus' Favorite Insults

Post by “Cassius” of April 29, 2021 at 1:20 PM

As to the **followers of Plato** being 'Flatterers of Dionysus,' we have this from DeWitt's EHP chapter fourteen:

Outside of the popular assembly *parresia* signified the expression of the speaker's opinion without regard for the feelings of others, and it might mean defiance. Epicurus was exemplifying it when he publicly assailed the Platonists, who in his youth were enjoying a monopoly of favor. He called them "flatterers of Dionysus," and the "deep-voiced."<sup>20</sup> The latter was a term of derision similar to "would-be Hamlets"; it was applied to second-rate actors who pitched their voices absurdly low in the performance of kingly roles. Insofar as they hung around hoping for such parts, they were "flatterers of Dionysus," the god of the theater, comparable to the flatterers of Alexander and his successors. The reference is rendered specific by the derisive language of Metrodorus, who dubbed the young Platonists would-be Lycurguses and Solons.<sup>21</sup> There was a temporary revival of law-giving because of Plato's dream of a philosopher-king, which opened court posts for graduates of the Academy.