

Thoughts and Discussion on Organizing Epicurean Community

Post by "Cassius" of September 16, 2022 at 9:16 PM

Social engagement and personal friendships in "real life" are the first and most desirable goals, because all of us need that in real life.

Secondarily, it is in my case something I get great enjoyment out of to hope to be making a small contribution to the continuance of Epicurean philosophy as a real world presence. And as part of that it is my firm conviction that Epicureanism's continuance as more than a shell of it's former self will never happen until and unless there is such real world engagement. As long as Epicureanism is perceived mainly as a self-help treatment for anxiety issues, no one will ever consider it worthy of being opposed or suppressed as it was in the past. But what that means in reality is "as long as it seems to apologize for pleasure and remain a shell of its former self...". The intensity of a Lucretius or a Diogenes of Oinoanda or even a Lucian will never be "allowed" to break through as a mainstream position on religion, life after death, or even epistemology, and will always be considered to be the ravings of cantankerous cranks, in polite society in our major nations of the world.

Most of us are old enough that we have lived in a time and in a country (the USA) where "free speech" has been considered the norm, but as I see it that period is fast drawing to a close. Even if we maintain our current ability to talk about Epicurus in terms of "happiness" for a while longer, the kind of rebelliousness seen in Lucian and the others is likely going to get harder to secure. Hopefully we won't have another "fall of Rome" where religion (or it's humanist variants) makes it impossible to promote the core Epicurean worldview positions, but it doesn't make sense to take that chance. Because if something like that does begin to happen, technology will allow suppression of dissenting minority views in ways never thought possible. And it would be unrealistic to expect that Epicurean views will ever be more than a small minority in our lifetimes.

I doubt there can or should be a "centralized" Epicurean organization, but setting up ways for people "locally" to find and support each other would be highly desirable.