

# Book: "Theory and Practice in Epicurean Political Philosophy" by Javier Aoiz & Marcelo Boeri

Post by "Cassius" of April 1, 2023 at 6:55 AM

More enticement to read this book, from the introduction:

## Quote

As aforementioned, chapters 4, 5 and 6 are more 'informative' and 'doxographical' in character, although, as will be seen, they provide historical and doctrinal data that help reinforce our view that the Epicureans were not indeed averse to political life. Chapter 4 faces a well-known subject: how Epicurus and Epicureanism were received already in antiquity. There we dispute the reading that three prominent ancient writers made of Epicurus and his followers. Our struggle is against the interpretive procedures employed by Cicero, Plutarch and Lactantius – who were very hostile to Epicureanism – while examining Epicurean views. Our purpose is to show how decisive these ancient writers were in forging the traditional negative image of Epicureanism, as well as how their version of Epicureanism contributed to demoting Epicurean political reflection. These writers share several characteristics that demonstrate clearly their destructive intentions as well as the harmfulness of their account of Epicurus: (i) the reconstruction of Epicurean views drawing from the absolutization of decontextualized or mutilated slogans, or through the omission of certain views; (ii) the consideration of Epicurean assertions based on the supposed 'germs of danger' they contain and their repercussions at the level of social practice; and (iii) the banalization of Epicurus' hedonism. Indeed, these are the three interpretive resources most frequently used by Cicero, Plutarch and Lactantius when disparaging Epicureanism. At any rate, the important point in chapter 4 is that if our knowledge of Epicurean philosophy depended *exclusively* on people like Cicero or Plutarch, we would practically be unaware of the political component of the Epicurean study of nature, and of its contribution to the grounds of the Epicurean way of life.