

Epicureanism as the spiritual essence or 'religion' of an entire community

Post by “Peter Konstans” of October 1, 2023 at 5:29 AM

Godfrey. Of course

[Quote from Godfrey](#)

Interesting. Are you saying that you would raise young members to entertain the possibility of idealistic myths such as an afterlife? I'm curious to hear your reasoning in this regard.

Of course not. But remember that ancient Epicureanism did resemble an ancient mystery religion or what we would today call a cult. There were Epicureans who carried images of Epicurus with them and referred to him as a god even though they didn't think of him as an immortal being. Calling a human you venerate a god is not possible today but in the world of antiquity it was something you could easily do. Today we are compelled to draw inspiration from our modern environment and modern religions. For example we can have people recite the tetrapharmakos in the original in the same way Muslims are required to recite the shahada in Arabic upon conversion and we could also require them to undergo foreskin restoration if they were circumcised at birth. This would symbolize our rejection of Abrahamism as well as our devotion to pleasure since the foreskin is actually an organ with important sexual functions. Remember that in Greek antiquity the body was considered literally holy and any deliberate mutilation of it was an abomination. There should also be rituals and feasts that an outsider would recognize as religious, not just mere celebrations. An Epicurean wedding for example should not just involve an exchange of vows and a party. It should have a character that resembles a religious ritual. This is intended to give Epicureanism a strong communal identity so that it can successfully compete with well-established religious traditions. Most common people crave a strong identity that gives their life meaning and structure. Maybe that's not true for you or me but for most people it is and any spiritual movement that wants to have any hope of escaping the fringes of society must provide that. This need is precisely why people are so prone to becoming 'polarized' and partisan fanatics. Political ideologies are at least partly religious movements. However the adherents of 'political religions' (see the current ideological struggles between woke and anti-woke people) have a high degree of neuroticism that admittedly tends to exceed that of most traditionally religious people. That suggests to me that political religions suck at being religious and giving people the comfort, security and meaning they require. They provide at best half-assed versions of those things. Traditional religions in contrast, particularly the Abrahamic - have shown themselves to be highly competent in providing this. So my vision for Epicureanism is to give it a form that allows us to tell people: 'this is your holy literature, these are your rituals, these are your norms and codes of conduct,

these are your symbols, dress and accessoires, these are your mores and customs, you don't owe tolerance to anyone who opposes your views, have a nice life'. Remember that Christianity did copy something from Epicureanism. Spreading your creed in the form of epistles and the early Christian vision of an 'agapetic community' were definitely inspired by Epicureanism which in the earliest days of Christianity boasted a significant following in the areas of Judea where Greek had been widely adopted.