

Welcome Al-Haakim!

Post by “Al-Hakiim von Grof” of January 12, 2025 at 11:32 PM

For no reason at all, throughout my entire journey of religious conversion, deconstruction, and philosophical inquiry, I had never given Epicureanism any thought or investigation until just a couple days ago. A combination of happenstance and sudden curiosity (the source of which I can't recall) led me to this website, and what a boon it's been. This weekend has been spent with every spare second consuming the treasure trove of posts, articles, conversations, and texts housed and linked here. It's as if the authors of the Epicurean works reached through time and accessed my inner-self to put into words - more succinctly and comprehensively than I ever could have - the views and ideas I've taken such a long and circuitous journey to formulate for myself.

I'd like to thank everyone who's contributed to this website, and acknowledge all the work that has gone into compiling and synthesizing what seems to be the whole of Classical Epicureanism. Such work is priceless.

A recent discovery (stumbled upon on this website, of course) that I've found quite intriguing is that Thomas Jefferson proclaimed himself an Epicurean. This led me down a brief rabbit hole where evidence of this was presented through a number of his personal writings. Given this knowledge, one can't help but notice the not-insignificant influence Epicurean philosophy has had on the formation of The United States, or at the very least some of its founding documents, like the Declaration:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,—That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.”

The emphasized portions seem to me most obviously influenced by Jefferson's Epicurean worldview:

- Equality among men (we're all made from the same stuff, trying to live a life of pleasure, making friends or at least not making enemies)
- life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness/pleasure (obvious principles of Epicurean philosophy from my very limited understanding. Life is good, we seek freedom from the violence and

oppression of evil men as it's deeply unpleasant, pursuing pleasure is self explanatory as its kind of the whole point)

- the purpose of government, at its core, being the promotion of mutual peace between men to allow the freedom to pursue a life of pleasure. Perhaps even an extension or a development off of PD6?

While parts of the Declaration are not Epicurean, and other parts may even be contradictory depending on one's reading of the text, the influence of Epicureanism is evident.

Let me know what you think.