

Marriage & children seem less pleasurable today: financial worry, relational problems, high rates of divorce. Are they worth the pain (tarakhē τάραχή) they entail?

Post by “Elli” of July 3, 2026 at 3:24 AM

Epicurus’ Political Revolution Without Bloodshed 😊

In *On the Education of Children*, Plutarch begins with a series of “moral” recommendations that Epicurus would immediately classify as empty beliefs. These are external social norms that have nothing to do with human nature, intimacy, or love, but with what society allows you to choose as a life partner. Plutarch says you must not marry a courtesan, must not marry a concubine, must not marry a woman of humble origin, and - most absurd of all - must not marry a short woman if you are a king. The example of Archidamus is telling: “If you are King Archidamus, do not marry a short woman, because you will produce little lizard-kings instead of real kings.” The Spartans fined Archidamus for marrying a short woman, believing her appearance would “pollute” the quality of his offspring. A great expert in DNA, Plutarch... what can we say. 😊

In other words, if you were a Spartan or an Athenian and dared to fall in love with a woman your social circle did not approve of ...watch out, because you’d get fined and socially bullied! 😊

Did you dare to love Aspasia, the courtesan? You will never become a statesman like Pericles, nor will you build a democracy... watch out, because you’ll get bullied! 😊

Did you choose the courtesan Leontion as your life partner? You will never become Metrodorus, nor will you teach philosophy in a school named as Garden... watch out, because you’ll get bullied! 😊

Are you the titan philosopher Epicurus, and you allowed courtesans, and slaves to attend your philosophical school - the Garden - in order to free them from ignorance, fear, and all the things that disturb human life? That’s not a philosophical school - that’s a filthy brothel... and watch out, because you’ll receive brutal and eternal bullying as a philosopher! 😊

These social norms - social class, origin, appearance, “what people will say,” height measurements, class moralizing, Platonic “virtue,” Spartan punishments - are exactly what Epicurus calls empty beliefs. They are external obstacles telling you which woman you are “allowed” to choose as your life partner and which one you are not. They have nothing to do

with happiness, friendship, and pleasure. They are social pressures that produce disturbance, not tranquility. And it is astonishing how easily these beliefs reappear in every era, just with new names.

Epicurus sets no such norms. He does not measure height, origin, class, or wealth. He does not say “whom you are allowed to love in order to marry.” On the contrary, we see him offering an exhortation: *“your wife must not be afraid of you, because you did not marry her to serve you, but to be your companion in life”*. We see that with this exhortation Epicurus does something deeply radical: he clearly rejects the idea that a relationship - whether marriage or friendship - is a relationship of power. For Epicurus, a relationship is a relationship of friendship. And in ancient Greek, the verb “to love” was the verb *“philein”* - from which the word *philia* (friendship) comes. Love is a form of friendship. Friendship is a form of love. And friendship is the highest form of human connection.

Lucretius states it plainly (DRN 4.1278–1287): love is not born from origin, appearance, social class, nor from the mythical “arrows of Aphrodite.” It is born from intimacy and daily interaction, like drops of water falling on a rock and slowly penetrating it over time. This is empiricism, not idealism. This is human nature, not social norm.

And here is the funny part: in the forum, our friend Raphael - without realizing it - fell into the same trap as Plutarch. Plutarch measured height, origin, social class. Raphael measures taxes, cost of living, politics, technology, demographic collapse, robots, migration, feminism, MGTOW, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, the decline of the West. In other words, modern empty beliefs. The same external obstacles, just with new names. Both forget the Epicurean criterion: love is born from intimacy, not from social norms.

So the real question is - “should you have children or not.” The real question is with which woman (or man) you will have children or not - and not with which social norms allow or forbid you to choose her as your life partner. Plutarch says: “with the one society approves.” Raphael says: “with the one the era, politics, and economy approve.” Epicurus says: “with the one you love.” Lucretius says: “with the one intimacy binds you to.”

From Diogenes Laertius’ description of the wise man: *“And indeed, the wise man will marry and have children, as Epicurus says in On Problems and On Nature, but only in accord with the circumstances of his life.”*

And now, we ask : What is the main circumstance? That you love her and she loves you, that you are friends - because we choose friendship for its own sake, but its beginning lies in mutual benefit.

Today, many people say they cannot find a partner to have children with. But Epicurus would smile gently and say: you cannot find friends. You cannot find *philia* (friendship). You cannot find the human warmth that makes love possible. What you call “a crisis of relationships” is simply a crisis of friendship - a crisis of intimacy that leads to loneliness, desertion, and depression. This is the weapon of tyrants: where tyranny exists, there is no friendship, no frank speech, no freedom. But when everything around us collapses, these are the only fortresses

that remain standing.