

Dead Reddit / The "Isms" Thread

Post by "Eikadistes" of December 8, 2019 at 9:10 PM

I'm looking for clarification on the following quotation by De Witt:

"...Epicureanism was primarily a cult of the founder..."

It goes without saying that any member of an Epicurean group who possessed the requisite self-confidence was at liberty to migrate elsewhere and undertake to organize a group of his own. In so doing, however, his relationship to prospective followers was predefined in a peculiar way, because Epicureanism was primarily a cult of the founder and his way of life and only secondarily a system of thought. Even more important than the so-called Principle Doctrines was this voluntary pledge (45, 8-11), "We will be obedient to Epicurus, according to whom we have made it our choice to live."¹ Underlying this is the tacit assumption that Epicurus had discovered the one and only true way of life, and that there could be only one discoverer; subsequent leaders could only guide and direct their followers along that road. In other words, the leaders were themselves followers, and their adherents were followers of followers. They differed from one another only in the degree of their advancement toward wisdom.

In discussions with Hiram and Charles about Reddit, I was re-reading a familiar passage which contradicts my assertion that Epicurus needs not to have existed for the canon of Epicurean philosophy to have been understood. Is De Witt saying this with regards to the specific behavioral norms that were set within the Gardens? [http://societyofepicurus.com/wp-content/upl...XR_-7-gLNK9bA9c]