

Request For Suggestions For Entries in This "Epicurean Figures of the Past" Forum

Post by "Cassius" of September 23, 2020 at 9:41 AM

I would like to gradually expand this forum to include more people, especially - and with emphasis on - those in the ancient world who we can with greater confidence label to be Epicureans.

The Caesar article by Frank Bourne contains some good names of Roman Epicureans, and I will go through and add as many from there as I can. Others of you (joshua) have suggested Plotina and possibly Hadrian and/or Trajan themselves. I haven't yet added the emperors as separate subforums because I am not sure the evidence is as strong for them as it is with Plotina.

I want to pay special attention to separate subforums for the ancients because back then they had the texts and true Epicureans available to them. Therefore if an ancient acted as, or claimed to be, an Epicurean, it seems to me that we have a greater degree of confidence that they knew what they were talking about. There are many, such as known leaders of the school in Athens, or Catus and Amifinus (sp?) who were Epicurean "missionaries" in Italy who definitely need their own section.

After the rise of Christianity, through the middle ages, and all the way through today, we have people who talked about Epicurus or were alleged to be Epicureans who may have held a couple of beliefs here and there that seem Epicurean, but in total they might have been very far from embracing the full system. Just because someone asserts that "happiness" is the goal of life, or rejects life after death, or rejects Christianity or religion does not in and of itself mean that they studied and specifically embraced Epicurus. People like that are good subjects of threads in this "general" forum, but probably not people we want to encourage too much discussion about lest we get too far from the purpose of the forum.

Thanks for your help in organizing and building out this section of the forum. Please post your suggestions in this subforum and then as we identify specific people who merit their own subforum we'll create a separate entry for each name.

Post by "Don" of September 23, 2020 at 12:41 PM

Have you ran across this before: [List of Epicurean Philosophers?](#)

Post by “Cassius” of September 23, 2020 at 1:39 PM

Good list to work from, and no I had not seen that -- thank you!

Post by “Don” of September 24, 2020 at 7:58 AM

I also saw this one yesterday: [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucius_Ca...s \(consul 58 BC\)](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucius_Ca...s_(consul_58_BC))

What caught my eye, in light of the recent discoveries about Julius C and Frances Wright et al, "reportedly a follower of a school of Epicureanism that had been modified to befit politicians, as Epicureanism itself favoured withdrawal from politics." which references "2. For a survey of Roman Epicureans active in politics, see Arnaldo Momigliano, review of Science and Politics in the Ancient World by Benjamin Farrington (London 1939), in Journal of Roman Studies 31 (1941), pp. 151-157."

Post by “Cassius” of September 24, 2020 at 8:09 AM

Thanks Don - that is going to be another productive source for names. Caesar's father in law seems clearly to have been an activist of sorts, and I gather there are references in Cicero that can be used to mine at least some details of his life and activities.

As to the wiki comment "a school of Epicureanism that had been modified to befit politicians, as Epicureanism itself favoured withdrawal from politics" - well we all have our own opinions as to the accuracy of that statement!

Because in fact "a school of Epicureanism that had been modified to befit politicians" is a much better description of the "quietist" version of Epicurus, since the "quietists" are much less of a threat to the political class than are more rigorous Epicureans like Jefferson, Wright, Caesar, or Cassius Longinus.

And speaking of the political If I can find the time to dig more out of Frances Wright, it seems she was extremely concerned about "chartered" monopolies and banks and such, segments of society closely related to the professional careerist political class that it seems most everyone agrees that Epicurus was truly warning against, at a minimum. That's a list composed of people

who would much rather see quietism taught than the kind of uncompromising search for honesty and truth represented by the Epicurean activists.

Post by “Godfrey” of September 27, 2020 at 5:57 PM

This article showed up in my inbox and may or may not bear fruit regarding this:

[The Popularity of Epicureanism in Late Republic Roman Society](#)

Post by “Cassius” of September 27, 2020 at 6:31 PM

Got it downloaded Godfrey - thank you!