

Who are your Persians?

Post by “Matt” of February 5, 2019 at 10:20 AM

Who are your *Persians*?

For awhile now I've noticed that Epicurean adherents use the idea of *Persians* as the ultimate monolithic enemy. Clearly in reference to the Greco-Persian wars of antiquity.

But what about today? Who are your *Persians and why*?

Post by “Cassius” of February 5, 2019 at 10:23 AM

Great question. I've used that just as a general allusion to "enemies of Greece" such as in the phrase which is attributed to Epicurus by Diogenes of Laertius. But the concept of there being "enemies" who are working against our happiness is (in my view) beyond dispute, so it's great to consider who/what might fit into that category.

Post by “Hiram” of February 5, 2019 at 10:43 AM

Homophobes and theocrats in government.

Post by “Matt” of February 5, 2019 at 11:52 AM

Mine would be those who attempt to impose their will or ideologies on me (and others). Authority figures and so-called leaders that are actually just absentee landlords, bankrupt of actual power except through rhetoric, coercion and physical force.

Post by “Cassius” of February 5, 2019 at 11:54 AM

I think part of the term for that is "rent-seekers"!

Post by “Matt” of February 5, 2019 at 12:04 PM

Yes, everyone who is seeking way more than their pound of flesh. It's hard to escape all the vampires out there sucking the lifeblood out!

Post by “Cassius” of February 5, 2019 at 1:28 PM

Turning back to being more serious for a moment, that's one of the multitude of reasons that we can't just sit back and contemplate as being the best way to live. It's just a fact of nature that unless we act to learn, to study, and to protect our own interests, bad things are going to happen to us. Lots of those bad things are pretty basic like disease, bad weather, hunger, and the like, but there *are* other people out there who are just as likely as any virus or bacteria to upset our desire and ability to live happily, and taking the position that "we're all children of god" or "we're all brothers and sisters" doesn't solve the problem.

Post by “Matt” of February 5, 2019 at 2:07 PM

What you say is true. When it comes to the invaders and adversaries, you really have 3 choices:

- 1: Confront the adversary head-on.
- 2: Submit and conform.
- 3: Flee to where they are not.

Obviously the last option only buys you a little time. It's not a permanent solution for dealing with oppressive societies and adversaries, eventually they come to you.

Post by “Matt” of February 22, 2019 at 3:19 PM

Hi Oscar!

It's a pleasure to speak with you.

I have not heard of Michael Huemer, but I will certainly take a look at his work. Thank you for recommending it.

I'm sure you picked up on it, but my use of the term *Persian* is not an ethnically centered concept within this group, but rather one used by a few Epicureans here to denote someone who is an antagonist of the Epicurean philosophy or Hellenism in general. Obviously this idealism harkens back to the Ancient Greek and Persian conflict that no one alive today has any stake in, but it's used as a perjorative by Epicureans who consider the ancient Persians the archetypal monolithic enemy of Hellas and can be applied to any number of modern antagonists today.

I personally don't use the term in this specific context outside of this group, simply because it has no particular significance to anyone other than 300 movie fans. 😊

Matt