

Episode One Hundred Four - More Torquatus and a Question: Was The Ancient Epicurean Movement A Cult?

Post by "Cassius" of January 11, 2022 at 7:26 AM

Couple of quotes that come to mind more as Epicurus' Birthday material than anything else, but touched upon in this episode:

This is the opening to Book Three, comparing Epicurus to a father figure. I think we mentioned this on the podcast episode and it is a good reflection of what I think is a healthy attitude of respect and appreciation without crossing the line into cultism. Is it "enthusiastic"? Yes. But is it over the line into cultism, or unjustified given the prominence he achieved? I don't think so.

Quote

THOU, who out of deep darkness didst first avail to raise a torch so clear, shedding light upon the true joys of life, 'tis thee I follow, bright star of the Greek race, and in thy deepset prints firmly now I plant my footsteps, not in eager emulation, but rather because for love I long to copy thee; for how could a swallow rival swans, or what might kids with trembling limbs accomplish in a race to compare with the stout strength of a horse? Thou art our father, thou discoverer of truth, thou dost vouchsafe to us a father's precepts, and from thy pages, our hero, even as bees in flowery glades sip every plant, we in like manner browse on all thy sayings of gold, yea, of gold, and always most worthy of life for evermore.

Seems like one of the sections somewhere makes the point that Epicurus' fame had spread much wider after his death than when he was alive. Maybe I am thinking of this from Book 6, or just of another translation that says it differently (this is Bailey):

Quote

IN time gone by Athens, of glorious name, first spread among struggling mortals the fruits that bear corn, and fashioned life afresh, and enacted laws; she, too, first gave sweet solace for life, when she gave birth to the man gifted with the great mind, who once poured forth all wisdom from his truthful lips; yea, even when his light was quenched, thanks to his divine discoveries his glory, noised abroad of old, is now lifted to the sky.