

Epicurus' Warning To the Young Man Who Was "Too Prone To The Pleasures Of Love"

Post by "Cassius" of February 11, 2019 at 2:12 PM

For comparison and for future study, here is the part of Tusculan Disputations where Cicero criticizes Plato in particular, and seemingly the Stoics, and seems to praise Epicurus' position:

<https://archive.org/details/cicero...ceuoft/page/156>

XXXIII. However, we may allow the poets to trifle, in whose fables we see Jupiter himself engaged in these debaucheries: but let us apply to the masters of virtue—the philosophers who deny love to be anything carnal; and in this they differ from Epicurus, who, I think, is not much mistaken. For what is that love of friendship? How comes it that no one is in love with a deformed young man, or a handsome old one? I am of opinion that this love of men had its rise from the Gymnastics of the Greeks, where these kinds of loves are admissible and permitted; therefore Ennius spoke well:

The censure of this crime to those is due
Who naked bodies first exposed to view.

all the rest.

XXXIV. Now we see that the loves of all these writers were entirely libidinous. There have arisen also some among us philosophers (and Plato is at the head of them, whom Dicaearchus blames not without reason) who have countenanced love. The Stoics, in truth, say, not only that their wise man may be a lover, but they even define love itself as an endeavor to originate friendship out of the appearance of beauty. Now, provided there is any one in the nature of things without desire, without care, without a sigh, such a one may be a lover; for he is free from all lust: but I have nothing to say to him, as it is lust of which I am now speaking. But should there be any love—as there certainly is—which is but little, or perhaps not at all, short of madness, such as his is in the Leucadia—

Should there be any God whose care I am—
it is incumbent on all the Gods to see that he enjoys his amorous pleasure.

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/735-epicurus-warning-to-the-young-man-who-was-too-prone-to-the-pleasures-of-love/?postID=2142#post2142>