

What if *Kyriai Doxai* was NOT a list?

Post by “Don” of July 26, 2023 at 6:47 PM

[Quote from Pacatus](#)

(Do we know the historical development of these texts? I had thought not.)

As far as I know, "details" are sketchy at best. There is such a gap between Epicurus and Diogenes Laertius (lived after 200 CE), but I *think* there are other mentions of either the book title *Kyriai Doxai* or individual quotes from the book in earlier authors. Lucian of Samasota (c. 125 - after 180 CE) mentions them in *Alexander the Oracle Monger*...

Quote from Lucian

In this connection Alexander once made himself supremely ridiculous. Coming across Epicurus' Accepted Maxims (Ἐπικούρου κυρίας δόξας, *Epikourou kyrias doxas*), the most admirable of his books, as you know, with its terse presentment of his wise conclusions, he brought it into the middle of the market-place, there burned it on a fig-wood fire for the sins of its author, and cast its ashes into the sea. He issued an oracle on the occasion: "The dotard's maxims to the flames be given." The fellow had no conception of the blessings conferred by that book upon its readers, of the peace, tranquility, and independence of mind it produces, of the protection it gives against terrors, phantoms, and marvels, vain hopes and insubordinate desires, of the judgment and candor that it fosters, or of its true purging of the spirit, not with torches and squills and such rubbish, but with right reason, truth, and frankness.

Edit:

Philodemus (c. 110 - prob. c. 40/35 BCE) mentions *Kyriai Doxai* as well. He mentions it by title and refers to / quotes KD/PD1 in *On Anger*, 43:14-41.

We then at least have a trail that leads from Epicurus to Laertius:

Epicurus 341-270 BC

Philodemus (c. 110 - prob. c. 40/35 BCE)

Lucian of Samasota (c. 125 - after 180 CE)

Diogenes Laertius (fl. after 200 CE)