

Updated TimeTable of the Epicurean World

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 6, 2023 at 8:11 PM

[Quote from Joshua](#)

It is definitely useful to see these things in their context. For example;

In a letter scholars have dated to c. 355, Julian the Apostate was commenting on the political inaction of the Epicureans;

https://en.m.wikisource.org/wiki/Letter_to...the_philosopher

Another letter from the same advocates the Suppression of Epicurean texts;

https://en.m.wikisource.org/wiki/Fragment_...ter_to_a_priest

Quote

Let us not admit discourses by Epicurus or Pyrrho; but indeed the gods have already in their wisdom destroyed their works, so that most of their books have ceased to be. Nevertheless there is no reason why I should not, by way of example, mention these works too, to show what sort of discourses priests must especially avoid; and if such discourses, then much more must they avoid such thoughts. For an error of speech is, in my opinion, by no means the same as an error of the mind, but we ought to give heed to the mind first of all, since the tongue sins in company with it.

By edict of a pagan emperor in a letter to one of his priests, Epicureanism becomes *thought crime*. It is actually worse in his view to think about than to speak about it, because speech is vulnerable to correction and purgation while thought is not.

The 15th century Florentine iconoclast priest [Savonarolo](#) would be proud.

Quote

“Listen women,” he preached to the crowd, “They say that this world was made of atoms, that is, those tiniest of particles that fly through the air.” No doubt savoring the absurdity, he encouraged his listeners to express their derision out loud: “Now laugh, women, at the studies of these learned men.”

A few decades after the reign of Julian came St. Augustine's survey of the situation -- "The ashes of Epicureanism are so cold that not a single spark can be struck from them."

Within two centuries of Diogenes Laertius, there was almost nothing left.

Display More

Julian is an interesting figure (as I've recently found), in being a refreshing, polytheistic alternative to the growing, mystical Christian cult, who was equally Platonic, and therein anti-Epicurean in his education. This is particularly interesting, in that at least four early Church Fathers, as recognized by the Catholic and Orthodox churches, were admitted Platonists who not only rode the wave of Plutarch's Middle Platonism, but positively inhaled the Neoplatonism of Saccas, Plotinus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus, who derived their adaptations based off explicitly Indian forms of super-natural, supra-mental, or ascetic expressions of religious devotion. It's an interesting period.