

What Epicurus Offers To The Modern World As Of April, 2024?

Post by "Don" of April 25, 2024 at 11:45 PM

Thanks, @Twentier !

It makes sense that there was a demarcation point in ancient Greece and Rome when someone declared themselves a member of the Garden and declared themselves an Epicurean and follower of Epicurus's philosophical School. There are numerous examples in the texts - Cicero and elsewhere - of people deciding to join or leave the Epicurean School. So, there had to be something "official" to mark the point in time when one joined the school, "forsaking all others" as the traditional marriage vows say.

It also strikes me that, since the Garden was open to all to attend lectures, there could have been any number of casual Epicurean-adjacent folks.

The schools did function as membership organizations and schools vied against each other for "converts" so to speak.

That said, we don't have any authorities or hierarchies or apostolic succession now. It seems to me that one could make a personal commitment to "obey Epicurus, according to whom we/I have chosen to live..." And the Philodemus does use *πειθαρχέω* "obey one in authority." This doesn't mean "blind faith" to me. It seems to me that that gets at the ideas that "I believe Epicurus knew what he was talking about." As modern Epicureans would not accept without testing against reality, the best findings of science, but to also withhold judgement if multiple explanations were available... Like how the universe came into existence or if it's eternal or eternally cyclical or... And so on.

I realize I've strayed is far from the main topic! Feel free to branch this discussion off to another thread. But I find this thread very interesting.