

Is the art of fashion worthy of the attention of an epicurean?

Post by "Joshua" of June 5, 2019 at 10:29 AM

This will, of course, depend on culture. But there's an interesting corollary question regarding the ostentation of simplicity. This is wonderfully expressed by a story I once read, doubtless apocryphal, about Diogenes the Cynic. In any case I can't find it just now, but I recall it going like this; He went about Athens in the humblest of garb, browbeating citizens for their finery. Why should a man care what he wears? When he was at the public baths one day, his ratty cloak was stolen and replaced by fine robes. He refused these, and demanded from the young men standing by that they return his cloak.

"Ah," one of them responded, "but you have said that a wise man should take no care of what he wears. But we see now that you do care; here is YOUR pride and ostentation!"

And what do I think of this story? The cynic, fearing that he should be misunderstood by men, cannot take fine clothes. It would be the end of him as a cynic, for to be a cynic is nothing more than to be a reactionary to culture. The Epicurean, who follows a path of principles and not merely one of apposition, will not refuse the clothes because he will not fear to be misunderstood. Being misunderstood is, for him, *de rigeur*. And so he dons the finery, thanks his new friends for their gift, and perhaps invites them to dine that evening. 😊