

Thoughts On Alain de Botton

Post by "Cassius" of July 1, 2019 at 12:22 PM

Yes I completely agree that what is currently labeled today as "consumerism" fits under the category of unnatural desires that can't be satisfied. My main issue is not that this is invalid, but that it's pretty far removed from the heart of Epicurean philosophy and shouldn't be focused on as the exclusive target. Other issues such as the nature of the universe, the nature of true divinity, pleasure as the goal, the nothingness of death, etc are all much more significant, and I rarely if ever see those issues discussed by de Botton.

As to monasteries originally being gardens I agree that is not nearly as far fetched. If we were looking for possible Epicurean communities that would be a place to consider. On the other hand there is direct teaching about Epicurus not advising "communism" to his students, so aside from setting up "schools" (which certainly don't have to be based on common property) I'm just not aware of any evidence that would point to communal living. In fact of course the Garden itself was not common property at the time (Epicurus disposed of it in his will). As to teaching as a profession I think there are passages which you quote (Hiram) about accepting money for teaching, so again it seems to me that doesn't really point to "communal living" as much as it points to what we would see as a private school or college.