

Have PD35 and Vatican Saying 7 been straw-manned?

Post by "Eikadistes" of April 18, 2026 at 10:50 AM

Quote

"Who that is wise practices that which the laws forbid, knowing that they will escape notice? A simple-minded accusation is easy to pass." (Usener 18, from *Against Kolótēs*.)

Epíkouros stops short of saying, 'don't ever break the law'.

This reflection seems poignant in times of lawlessness and collapse, when "**someone establishes a law**" that "**no longer possesses the nature of the just**" (*KD* 37), or when many "**things appear not to fit the definition of what is considered to be just**" (*KD* 38).

When this is the case, I think the wise person would continue using comparative analysis to determine which options are most profitable (including potential law-breaking). In the case of betraying a friend versus breaking the law, the suffering one commits to the soul is greater with betrayal:

Quote

"And so the wise tortured on a rack [suffer] no [more] pain than the torture of a friend, and in defense of them will die. For if one betrays a friend everything through one's life will become frustrated by doubt and strained" (*Vatican Sayings* 56-57)