

How To Convert A Neo-Epicurean Into A Classical Epicurean

Post by “Charles” of May 1, 2020 at 3:09 PM

The general consensus about Epicurean Philosophy and politics at least from what I've observed is that politics is considered a hands-off topic within a Garden, and that an Epicurean should only engage in politics if they are forced by some external factor like a brutal regime or an administrations policies directly interfering with their pleasure in life. To that we don't mean that an Epicurean should always avoid politics, I always took the "avoid all culture" quote in tandem with Epicurus' perspectives of marriage and politics, in that we should avoid trapping ourselves with current cultural influences, that we do not need to feel arbitrarily compelled to follow these customs and norms.

Take the last of the Principle Doctrines for example, they all deal with conceptions of Justice. Meanwhile in Diogenes Laertius, its noted that Epicurus wrote a book about Governmental Power (On Kingly Power).

I'm sure many of us here on this site have very different political opinions about the world that we more or less keep to ourselves. Yet we all get along as we share a common interest: pleasure.

What is considered "unacceptable" would be to extrapolate the ideas of Epicurus and translate them into explicit approvals of contemporary political ideals, such as claiming that Epicurus might be a communist because of the structure of Gardens, or that Epicurus would be a libertarian because Epicurean Justice is similar to the Non-Aggression Principle.

However the topic of what an "Epicurean State" might look like has long fascinated me and no extant works actually humor the idea, and for good reason, yet it remains a focal point of critique against us. I'm referring to Epictetus' Discourses, Book 3 Chapter 7.