

Episode Two - The Achievement of Epicurus

Post by "Cassius" of October 3, 2020 at 4:38 PM

[Quote from Susan Hill](#)

The Garden! Organization is not the offence.

I agree that organization is not the offense, and I agree with the implication that aspects of the organization and/or rituals that the Epicureans probably developed would be hard to distinguish from a "religion."

It seems to me that Epicurus is clearly holding that "gods" of a certain type exist, and that it is important to have a correct understanding and attitude and approach toward them, so if someone wants to call that "understanding and attitude and approach" a "religion" then that might be understandable, the way we use the term "religion" today.

So i put this issue in the category of issues for which Epicurus is using a word in a way that we aren't familiar with today, so we just have to approach it carefully. I forget where the reference is but I recall that one of the Cicero texts documents that people complained about Epicurus doing that even in his own time (at least Cicero's time). Surely he's doing the same thing with "gods" and he's probably doing the same thing with "virtue," and most of all he seems to be doing the same thing with "pleasure" and even "pain" when he starts with his two categories of feelings that include all the individual types of feelings.

Since words are not held to be "magical" or connected to platonic ideal forms in Epicurean theory, and Epicurus was taking a different position on issues of the method of approaching "definitions" there's nothing "wrong" with Epicurus doing that, but it means we have to be very careful because we're used to using those words in different ways.