

Episode 151 - "Epicurus And His Philosophy" Part 07 - "The New School In Athens"

Post by "Cassius" of December 3, 2022 at 3:36 PM

Welcome to Episode One Hundred Fifty-One of Lucretius Today. This is a podcast dedicated to the poet Lucretius, who wrote "On The Nature of Things," the only complete presentation of Epicurean philosophy left to us from the ancient world.

Each week we'll walk you through the ancient Epicurean texts, and we'll discuss how Epicurean philosophy can apply to you today. If you find the Epicurean worldview attractive, we invite you to join us in the study of Epicurus at EpicureanFriends.com, where you will find a discussion thread for each of our podcast episodes and many other topics.

We're now in the process of a series of podcasts intended to provide a general overview of Epicurean philosophy based on the organizational structure employed by Norman DeWitt in his book "Epicurus and His Philosophy."

This week we are going to speed through the early development of the school before we turn to detailed treatment of individual philosophical topics:

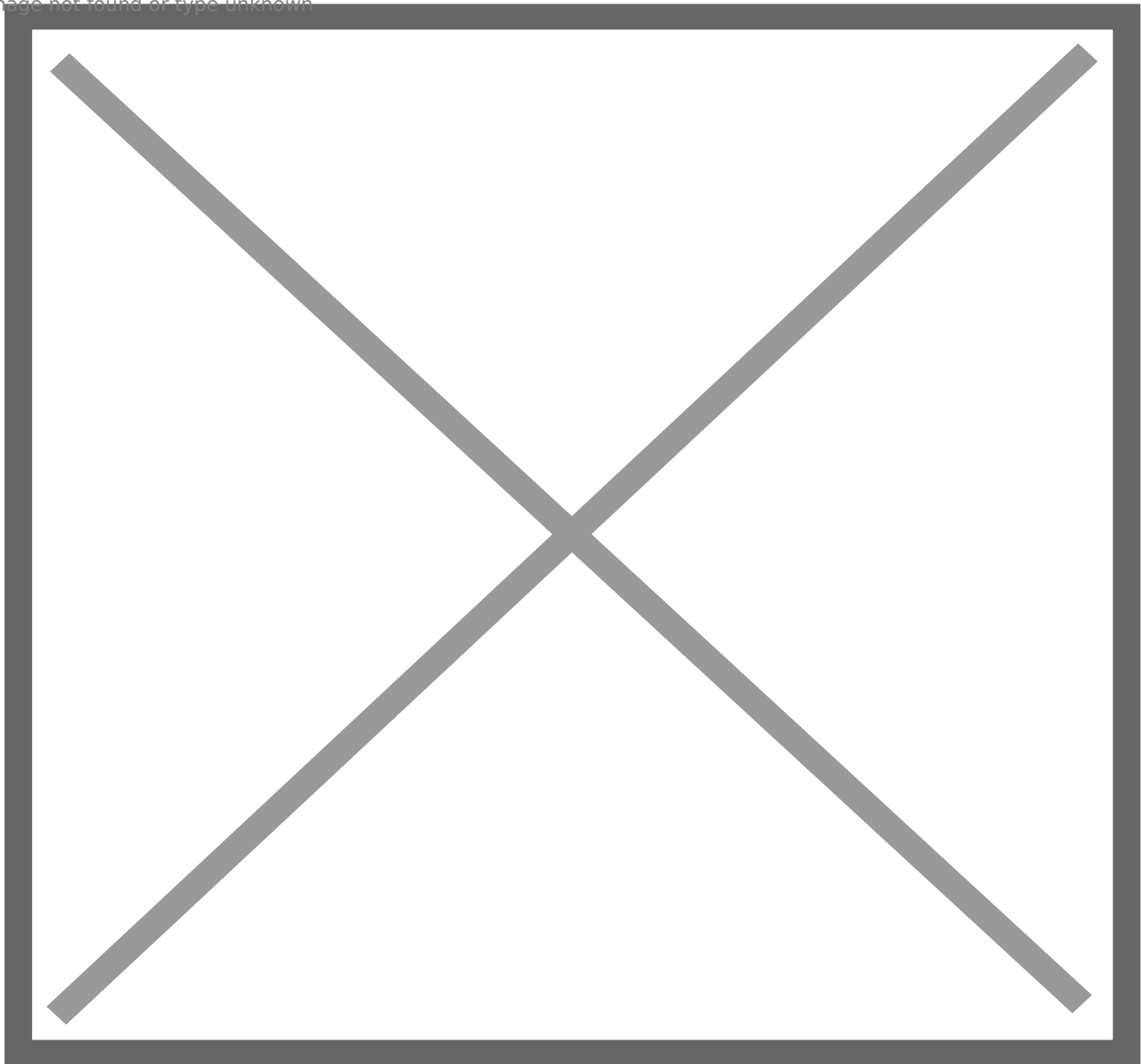
Chapter V - The New School In Athens

- The School Property
- Ranks And Titles
- Personnel And Students
- Reverence
- Images
- Friendship

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/52150643>

Post by "Joshua" of December 3, 2022 at 8:27 PM

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[7 Oldest Paintings of Jesus in the World - Oldest.org](http://www.oldest.org)

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In Chapter 5 DeWitt notes that many of the earliest images of Jesus portray him beardless, which you can see in some of those in this link. There are others as well which you can find easily by searching. DeWitt then makes the claim that Jesus began to be depicted with a beard at about the time when Epicureanism was declining and Christianity was permeating the culture.

Post by “Don” of December 3, 2022 at 9:02 PM

I had commented on this very topic quite some time ago when I was sharing my thoughts on DeWitt's book. Here's the pertinent excerpt from that earlier post:

p.101 of Epicurus and his Philosophy has:

Quote

There is, however, still something to be added. During the first three centuries of Christianity the representations of Christ exhibit a youthful and beardless face, not unlike that of Apollo. The bearded portraits began to appear at a later date and simultaneously with the absorption of the Epicurean sect into the Christian environment. These new pictures of Christ exhibit a similarity to those of Epicurus, then growing obsolete. This similarity is such as to be manifest to the most disinterested observer.

No, I don't buy this, and it's not "manifest to the most disinterested observer." For one glaring difference, the earliest "portraits" of a bearded Jesus have very long hair. [The Wikipedia article on the depiction of Jesus](#) shows one of the earliest bearded images from the late 4th century. The long flowing locks are quite visible. That's not Epicurus. The article does a fairly good job of outlining the various theories of where this bearded depiction comes from, and it's not copies of Epicurus. The references in that article, too, also point to numerous options for where the bearded depiction comes from.

Post by “Joshua” of December 3, 2022 at 9:33 PM

Under the second heading of Chapter 6, we get an interesting look at the meditative practice of "touring the cosmos" in thought. I've collected several quotations that express the sentiment, and finally a passage from Horace contrasting the limitless ambitions of the mind with the brief span of human life.

A Greek it was who first opposing dared

Raise mortal eyes that terror to withstand,

Whom nor the fame of Gods nor lightning's stroke

Nor threatening thunder of the ominous sky

*Abashed; but rather chafed to angry zest
His dauntless heart to be the first to rend
The crossbars at the gates of Nature old.
And thus his will and hardy wisdom won;
And forward thus he fared afar, beyond
The flaming ramparts of the world, until
He wandered the unmeasurable All.*

-Lucretius, translated by William Ellery Leonard

*Therefore superstition is now in her turn cast down and trampled underfoot, whilst we by the
victory are exalted high as heaven.*

--Lucretius, from the Loeb Classical Library

Life piled on life

*Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.*

- Ulysses, Alfred, Lord Tennyson

*"You who measured the sea, the earth, and the numberless sands,
You, Archytas, are now confined in a small mound of dirt*

Near the Matine shore, and what good does it do you that you

Attempted the mansions of the skies and that you traversed

The round celestial vault — you with a soul born to die?"

—Horace, Odes I.28; transl. Peter Saint-Andre

This is the Horace who has abandoned his earlier Epicureanism in favor of a piety more palatable to the new Emperor's of Rome. In Ode 1.34 we catch the repudiation by reference to Lucretius, who in book 6 around line 140 maintained that "Jupiter's" thunder was never heard when the skies were clear.

Horace;

Once I wandered, an expert in crazy wisdom, a scant and infrequent adorer of gods, now I'm forced to set sail and return, to go back to the paths I abandoned. For Jupiter, Father of all of the gods, who generally splits the clouds with his lightning, flashing away, drove thundering horses, and his swift chariot, through the clear sky, till the dull earth, and the wandering rivers, and Styx, and dread Taenarus' hateful headland, and Atlas's mountain-summits shook. The god has the power to replace the highest with the lowest, bring down the famous, and raise the obscure to the heights. And greedy Fortune with her shrill whirring, carries away the crown and delights in setting it, there.

--Translated by A. S. Kline

Post by "Joshua" of December 3, 2022 at 9:55 PM

Yes, [Don](#), that was my response as well. They also show Jesus' hair parting very differently, and long individual strands in place of Epicurus' undifferentiated locks on both head and beard.

But it is interesting to see early portraits of Jesus without a beard. Of the early Emperors, Nero had a beard. This went out of fashion again until Hadrian, who "brought back the beard", you might say. Between Hadrian and the Crisis of the Third Century, the only Emperors portrayed beardless were boys and young men, all murdered by the age of 26.

Post by "Joshua" of December 3, 2022 at 10:17 PM

Quote

According to art historian Paul Zanker, the bearded type has long hair from the start, and a relatively long beard (contrasting with the short "classical" beard and hair always given to St Peter, and most other apostles);[39] this depiction is specifically associated with "Charismatic" philosophers like Euphrates the Stoic, Dio of Prusa and Apollonius of Tyana, some of whom were claimed to perform miracles.

-from the Wikipedia article cited by [Don](#) above

Post by “Joshua” of December 3, 2022 at 10:25 PM

Euphrates the stoic:

<https://alchetron.com/cdn/euphrates-the-stoic-7d4399af-bf1b-41bc-bf86-718f14ad022-resize-750.jpg>

Apollonius of Tyana:

https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQLcwBpVwmTz4Rvc8_viQ47qPQ6UrUAHpgjHA&usqp=CAU

Post by “Cassius” of December 4, 2022 at 8:56 AM

Course correction: I think we have plenty to discuss in Chapter 5 for this episode, so we will stick with 5 for this one and we'll move Joshua's comment (and any others) as to chapter 6 when we set that one up.

Post by “Kalosyni” of December 4, 2022 at 10:37 AM

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2768-episode-151-epicurus-and-his-philosophy-part-07-the-new-school-in-athens/>

The question of what the Garden was actually like came up. And I found this interesting overview regarding gardens in ancient Greece:

Quote

In the city states (*poleis*) which developed in Greece during the early part of the first millennium BC, the municipal centres left space for religious ceremonies and public meetings, but the residential areas had very little green space. Sacred gardens or public sacred groves were mainly located outside the actual housing areas. According to traditional belief, sacred beings dwelt in such places – be they gods, nymphs or heroes. A sacred grove (*alsos*) was generally a place in open natural surroundings with a cluster of trees, a brook, a field or a grotto. It was marked by a ritual figure and mostly enclosed by a wall, so that the designated plot was called a *temenos*. However, unlike the Near Eastern royal gardens, it remained accessible to all. Its fundamental features were its communal religious aspect and its untamed natural character, located at the transition to civilisation. Sacred groves were thus protected against uncontrolled intervention (Thuc. 3.70.4; Callim. *hymn.* 6.24–60). In Athens the sacred olive trees dedicated to Athena were generally protected from being felled or dug up (Lys. 7).

Moreover, private vegetable and fruit gardens (*kepoi* and *orchatoi*) are attested for the Greek *poleis* at an early date. Homer (*Od.* 7.112ff.) describes a garden surrounded by hedges for the palace of Alcinous, the ruler of Phaeacia, where everything flourished and there was no want; it included an orchard with apples, pears, figs and olives, a vineyard and a vegetable garden, so that it was designed and irrigated without decorative plants or flowers, purely for utility (*Od.* 7.129). Laertes too, the father of Odysseus, lived in seclusion and cared for his garden, where fruit and olive trees, grapes and vegetables grew (*Od.* 24.244ff., 340ff.). In the reality of the urban residential areas of the *poleis*, house gardens were relatively rare. Greek houses had a courtyard or a peristyle (arcade) without gardens. Gardens were often located at the city walls, or formed a green belt around the city, near the rivers.² Here too were the garden-like graveyards, such as the Kerameikos in Athens (Fig. 7). The profession of gardener is attested as early as the fifth century BC (Athen. 9.372b–c; Theophr. *hist. plant.* 7.5.2). In this context Theophrastus lists a broad range of garden vegetables and seasoning plants.³

In the Athens of the late classical and Hellenistic periods, new ‘philosophers’ gardens’ were created, which provided a landscaping enrichment of the city's surroundings. These included Plato's Academy, Aristotle's Lyceum and Epicurus’ Kepos – which can be translated as ‘garden’. Theophrastus, a pupil of Aristotle's, had a garden near the Lyceum; his works include a comprehensive botanical study (*De causis plantarum*; Diog. Laert. 5.46, 51ff.). These ‘gardens of learning’ were in private hands, and could, in connection with older public institutions, provide a philosophical and athletic

education. They included an assemblage of parks, shrines and sports facilities, and such buildings as gymnasia and palaestras (courts for wrestling matches) as training areas, together with pathways, statues and sacred groves, such as for the Heros Akademos, or shrines such as for Apollo Lykeios. Theophrastus' Lyceum also had an altar for the Muses.

<https://erenow.net/ancient/an-env...-and-rome/9.php>



Here's an image that likely colored my earlier perceptions about Greek life, from a city-building video game my friends and I played extensively in high school.

Post by "Joshua" of December 4, 2022 at 11:46 AM

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2768-episode-151-epicurus-and-his-philosophy-part-07-the-new-school-in-athens/>

[Greek garden - Wikipedia](#)

This page is interesting.

Quote

Archaeologists have not identified planted courtyards within the palaces of Mycenaean culture nor in Greek houses of the Classical period. When the editors of a symposium on Roman gardens[10] included a contribution on the expected Greek precursors, Brunilde Sismondo Ridgway's article prompted a reviewer[11] to observe, "For all practical purposes there appear to have been no gardens of any sort in Greek city homes, beyond perhaps a few pots with plants."

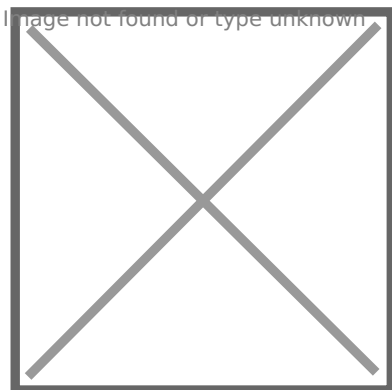
Quote

Though Harpalus, Alexander's successor at Babylon, grew some Greek plants in the royal palace and walks,[20] mainland Greece, mother of democracy and Western cultural traditions, was not the mother of European gardens.

This is interesting stuff. It might explain why Greek Historians like Herodotus remarked on the lavish gardens they found in their travels, if the practice was not widespread at home. It also reinforces the power of the pastoral ideal of the Greek countryside, where pasture, vineyard, and grove dominate the poetic landscape.

Post by "Don" of December 4, 2022 at 12:12 PM

[Kalosyni](#) and [Joshua](#) inspired me to poke around, too. Found this one:



[Kepos: Garden Spaces in Ancient Greece: Imagination and Reality](#)

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2768-episode-151-epicurus-and-his-philosophy-part-07-the-new-school-in-athens/>

A number of images have been removed from the electronic copy of this thesis for copyright reasons. A list of the removed images is available below.

www.academia.edu

Note: Only 1 mention of "Epicurean" but remember that The Garden was just outside the Dipylon Gate in the Kerameikos district... And lots on that!

Post by "Cassius" of December 10, 2022 at 6:55 AM

Passing note while editing: We make comments in this episode as to how far to carry the analogy of a "garden" and I made the comment that Diogenes Laertius says that Epicurus held that the wise man will be fond of "the country." It occurs to me that I may have that wrong in thinking that this is an urban vs rural reference, and that this is saying that the wise man will be fond of "HIS country" almost in a patriotic way. That latter interpretation might actually be supported by other comments such as calling someone (the Cynics ?) an "enemy of Hellas." I am not sure which is the right meaning so this is something to clarify.

Post by "Don" of December 10, 2022 at 7:00 AM

The sage will be fond of the countryside, enjoying being outside the towns and cities. (120)

Hicks: He will be fond of the country.

Yonge: He will like being in the country,

I think it's wonderful that this characteristic is a single word in the original: φιλαγρήσειν (philagrēsein) "They will love the ἀγρός" "fields, land, country as opposed to the town."

Note: This is the same construction that gives us φιλοσοφία (philosophia "philosophy") and φιλάνθρωπος (philanthrōpos "philanthropy").

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, ἀγρός](#)

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, Φ φ, , φι^δ-ίτι^ον , φι^λαγρ-έω](#)

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, Φ φ, , φι^δ-ίτι^ον , φίλαγρ-ος](#)

Also used in Lucian

[Lucian, Lexiphanes, section 3](#)

οἶσθα δ' ὡς φίλαγρός εἰμι. "You know how I dote on the country!"

PS. Turns out there is a word for "loving one's country/city-state, patriotic" Φιλόπολις (philopolis)

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, Φ φ, , φι^λοπευστ-έω , φι^λόπολις](#)

Post by “Cassius” of December 10, 2022 at 7:36 PM

Episode 151 of the Lucretius Today Podcast is now available. This week we continue to discuss early development of the Epicurean school in the chapter "The New School In Athens."

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/52150643>

Post by “Don” of December 10, 2022 at 11:23 PM

On Leontion, see Diogenes Laertius Book X:

Quote

Metrodorus,³⁴ the son of Athenaeus (or of Timocrates) and of Sande, a citizen of Lampsacus, who from his first acquaintance with Epicurus never left him except once for six months spent on a visit to his native place, from which he returned to him again. [23] His goodness was proved in all ways, as Epicurus testifies in the introductions³⁵ to his works and in the third book of the Timocrates. Such he was : he gave his sister Batis to Idomeneus to wife, and himself took Leontion the Athenian courtesan as his concubine.

Post by “Don” of December 10, 2022 at 11:27 PM

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2768-episode-151-epicurus-and-his-philosophy-part-07-the-new-school-in-athens/>

The daughter of Leontion/Leontium:

[Athenaeus, The Deipnosophists, Book XIII., chapter 64](#)

Quote

And Sophron the governor of Ephesus had a mistress, Danae, the daughter of Leontium the Epicurean, who was also a courtesan herself. And by her means he was saved when a plot was laid against him by Laodice, and Laodice was thrown [p. 947] down a precipice, as Phylarchus relates in his twelfth book in these words: "Danae was a chosen companion of Laodice, and was trusted by her with all her secrets; and, being the daughter of that Leontium who had studied with Epicurus the natural philosopher, and having been herself formerly the mistress of Sophron, she, perceiving that Laodice was laying a plot to murder Sophron, revealed the plot to Sophron by a sign. And he, understanding the sign, and pretending to agree to what she was saying to him, asked two days to deliberate on what he should do. And, when she had agreed to that, he fled away by night to Ephesus. But Laodice, when she learnt what had been done by Danae, threw her down a precipice, discarding all recollection of their former friendship. And they say that Danae, when she perceived the danger which was impending over her, was interrogated by Laodice, and refused to give her any answer; but, when she was dragged to the precipice, then she said, that "many people justly despise the Deity, and they may justify themselves by my case, who having saved a man who was to me as my husband, am requited in this manner by the Deity. But Laodice, who murdered her husband, is thought worthy of such honour."

Post by "Cassius" of December 11, 2022 at 1:01 AM

Thanks Don! Wow as to that story of Danae, it is amazing what details are preserved from antiquity when so much is also lost.

And in this case the detail seems to show that she was cut from the same mold as her illustrious parents!

A female name for the future to keep in mind as something to be proud of!

Post by "Don" of December 11, 2022 at 7:09 AM

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2768-episode-151-epicurus-and-his-philosophy-part-07-the-new-school-in-athens/>

Quote from from Epicurus's will

"And let Amynomachus and Timocrates take care of Epicurus, the son of Metrodorus, and of the son of Polyaenus, so long as they study and live with Hermarchus. Let them likewise provide for the maintenance of Metrodorus's daughter,³² so long as she is well-ordered and obedient to Hermarchus; and, when she comes of age, give her in marriage to a husband selected by Hermarchus from among the members of the School

It's intriguing to consider if Danae is a daughter of Metrodorus and Leontion, or whether Danae is a daughter of Leontion from after Metrodorus died, or whether Danae is the daughter referenced in Epicurus's Will and she didn't like who Amynomachus and Timocrates were going to marry her off to so she ran away with her dowry to Sophron, the governor of Ephesus. So many possible storylines!

Post by "Cassius" of December 11, 2022 at 7:19 AM

Do we know that Sophron was not an Epicurean, even though he was governor?

I guess we have never discussed what that phrasing "member of the school" really means. Somehow officially enrolled, or just loosely Epicurean which might have included someone in agreement but not physically present - especially if we don't lock ourselves into thinking that everyone was living essentially in a commune.

You have to think that Danae would not fall in love with someone who didn't share her general views - although strange things happen in love, and it's hard to say what mistress or courtesan entails.

Edit: Actually I find that story confusing on first read as to the relationships so I am not sure who Danae was enamoured with!

Also I thought Sophron was a name for a character in AFDIA but now I don't see it. I was wondering if the name of the Hedonae character in AFDIA might have come from Danae cause they sound like similar personalities. If I recall in AFDIA it's not clear whose daughter Hedonae really is.

Post by "Don" of December 11, 2022 at 7:27 AM

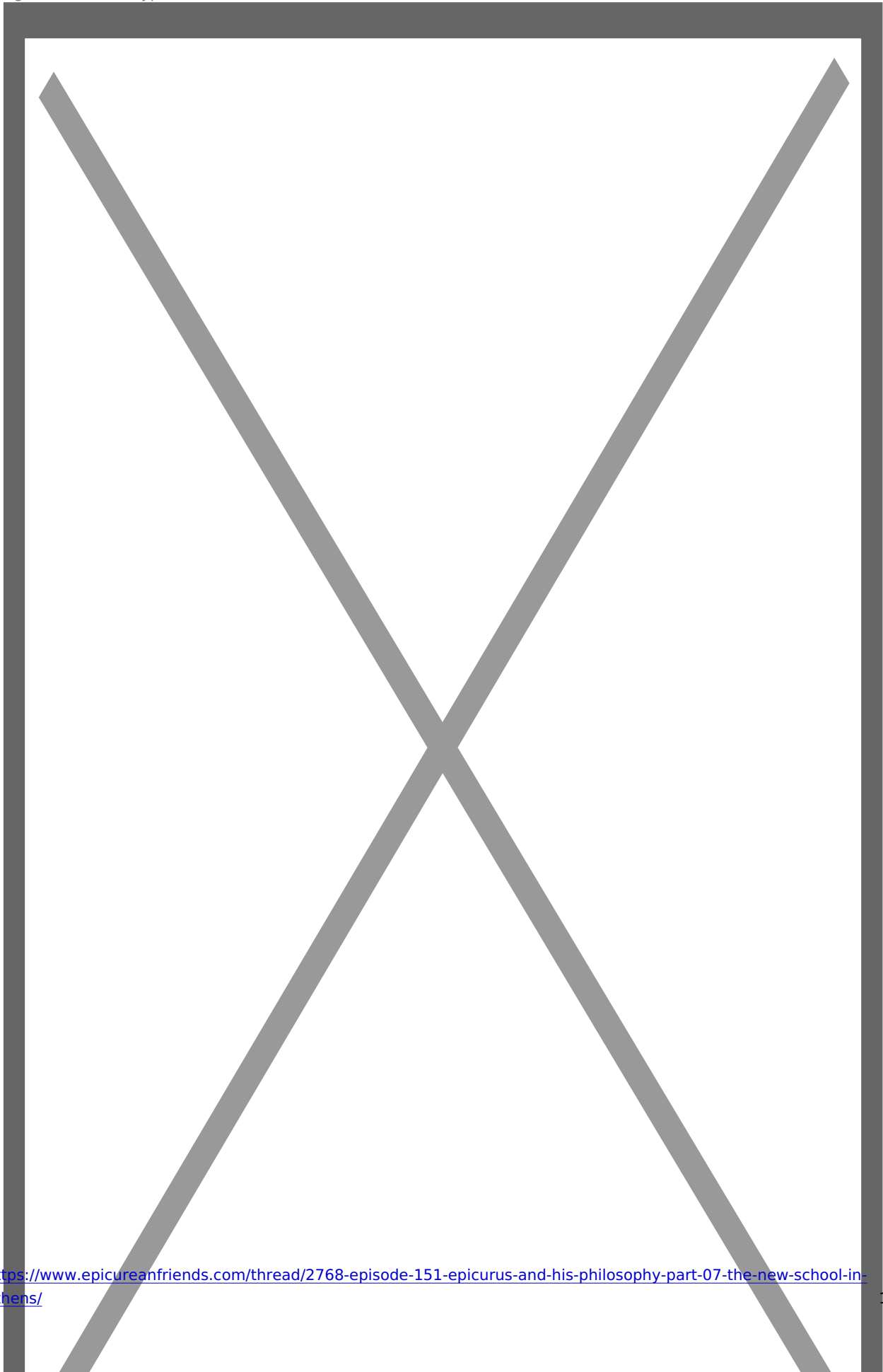
<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2768-episode-151-epicurus-and-his-philosophy-part-07-the-new-school-in-athens/>

Well, Danae was the "companion" of Sophron, not his (legally/technically) wife. The word used is ἑταιρίζω hetairizō "to be a hetaira" usually translated as "courtesan."

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, ἑταιρ-ίζω](#)

Looks like mention of Sophron is only in Deipnoshists, but possibly here:

Image not found or type unknown



[Battle of Andros \(246 BC\) - Wikipedia](#)

en.wikipedia.org

PS: Another translation or version of the Danae story:

Philarchus remembers one Sophron of Ephesus to have had in his delights Danae,* daughter to Leontius, of the Sect of the Epicures, a man well seen in the speculations of Philosophy.

To her trust were all the domestick affairs of the house committed, even by the consent of his wife Laodice; who at length perceiving his love to encline to Danae, she purposed at her next best opportunity to make away with her husband. This being found out by Danae, and in great secrecy revealed to Sophron, he gave at the first no credit to the report; yet at her importunacy, he promised within two daies to consider of the matter, and in that time to deliberate what was best to be done in the prevention of such a mischief, and in that interim conceals himselfe in the City: by which, Laodice finding her purpose to be discovered, she accused Danae for his murther, and instantly (without further process) by the help of her friends and servants, hurried her to the top of a high Promontory, from thence to throw her headlong; who seeing imminent death before her eies, fetching a deep sigh, she thus said: *I marvell not now that the gods have so small honour done to them, in regard of their injustice, since I am thus punished for saving the life of my friend, and this Laodice is thus honoured, that would have took away the life of her husband.*

*That last quote of Danae's reminds me of the "the sage would die for a friend."

[The generall history of vvomen containing the lives of the most holy and prophane, the most famous and infamous in all ages, exactly described not only from poeticall fictions, but from the most ancient, modern, and admired historians, to our times / by...](#)