

# The Archaic Smile

**Post by “Adrastus” of October 9, 2025 at 5:38 AM**

I was wondering if there was any connection between Diogenes of Oinoanda believing we ought to depict the Gods as smiling, with the [Archaic Smile](#).

I vaguely remember reading some scholarship that perhaps Epicurean Philosophy was a kind of pre-Socratic resurgence though I admit that I am not sure where I picked up that idea, and I remember reading in Bernard Frischer's book *The Sculpted Word* where Fischer paints a picture of Epicurean Philosophy not concerned with returning the world to some bygone Golden Age, but living in the present as if one were in the past Golden Age. I admit to not knowing much about the greater expanses of Greek history, but was curious if a more learned scholar here could speak to this sort of idea and if the idea of smiling statuary for Diogenes has anything to do with some kind of aesthetic sign from Greece in the Archaic age.

Thanks for any insights or commentary.

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**Post by “Kalosyni” of October 9, 2025 at 6:34 AM**

Thanks [Adrastus](#) for bringing this up. The Wikipedia link you included shows a few examples of sculptures, and really piques my interest.

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**Post by “Cassius” of October 9, 2025 at 8:11 AM**

Yes a good topic, and something to correlate with the observation that to my knowledge none of the statues of Epicurus or any other Epicurean shows them smiling, but rather more serious or, in the case of Epicurus, intense.

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**Post by “Kalosyni” of October 9, 2025 at 8:49 AM**

There was a lot going on during the Archaic period:

Wikipedia: [Archaic Greece](#)

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## Post by “Kalosyni” of October 9, 2025 at 10:51 AM

### [Quote from Cassius](#)

Yes a good topic, and something to correlate with the observation that to my knowledge none of the statues of Epicurus or any other Epicurean shows them smiling, but rather more serious or, in the case of Epicurus, intense.

We've discussed this elsewhere (will need to find the link)...there is a time and a place for everything...

Which Epicurus would you want at your Birthday party or Twentieth Celebration?



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Edit note: Oct. 9th, 2:12pm - the above graphic is digitally altered to highlight different emotions.

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## Post by “Martin” of October 9, 2025 at 11:01 AM

The Archaic Smile is shown and mentioned at the end of the thread

[Martin's Visit to Gottingen Archaeological Museum - Statues of Epicurus and Metrodorus - and a certain other person with outstretched hand - Member Life Events, Musings, and Condolences - Epicureanfriends.com](#)

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### Post by “Cassius” of October 9, 2025 at 11:46 AM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

Which Epicurus would you want at your Birthday party or Twentieth Celebration?

I would definitely want the one on the left - the real Epicurus - the way he was portrayed by the people who knew him best!

We ought to note for the record that the one on the right is a creative alteration, and not authentic! 😊

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### Post by “Kalosyni” of October 9, 2025 at 2:10 PM

Here is the photo to which [Martin](#) was referring to in post 6 above:



Quote

*The following is from a posting made by forum member Martin:*

...Gypsum copy of a statue of a dying (and smiling!) Greek warrior (Copies of this statue in other museums include the arrow in his chest which he appears to grab.)

"The smile features predominately on Archaic Greek statues from about 570 to 480 BC...

There have been many theories as to why this very distinct smile was depicted in Archaic sculpture."

Quoted from: <https://ancientart.tumblr.com/post/111696494...e-how-does-this>

Later statues usually do not show a smile.

The smile on the dying warrior might indicate a philosophy which did not see death as terrible at a time well before Socrates and then Epicurus came up with not to fear death.

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## **Post by “Kalosyni” of October 9, 2025 at 2:17 PM**

### [Quote from Cassius](#)

We ought to note for the record that the one on the right is a creative alteration, and not authentic!

Yes, thank you for making that clear (I have now added an edit note to that post (in post 5 above).

It is interesting to think about how smiles can hide inner emotions (such as in the dying warrior smiling) but perhaps a scowling expression appears like there is less emotion being covered up.