

DeWitt's "Organization And Procedure In Epicurean Groups"

Post by "Cassius" of March 19, 2019 at 8:39 AM

This article is important enough to have its own thread in this subsection. Here is the final paragraph as a summary: [the full text is here](#).

Image may contain: text

Post by "Cassius" of March 19, 2019 at 8:45 AM

The first sentence of that excerpt is a list of Greek words which describe the various functions within the framework. Could someone who knows Greek help us come up with a list of each Greek word and the corresponding English translation? It looks like they are probably arranged from most mature to newest. Thanks! I will get to work on it myself at some point but I still don't have a good system set up even for typing the Greek characters.

Post by "Elli" of March 20, 2019 at 2:36 PM

The greek words are :

Σοφός = wise

Φιλόσοφοι = philosophers

Φιλόλογοι = philologists in US and UK lexicons are the classical "scholars".

Καθηγηταί = guides.

Συνήθεις = laymen.

Κατασκευαζόμενοι = those in preparation.

According to the above by Philodemus, I would like to mention this Epicurean Doctrine 21 : "He who has learned the limits of life knows that that which removes the pain due to want and makes the whole of life complete is easy to obtain, so that there is no need of actions which involve competition". For this reason on Epicurus's Description of the wise man we read : "One wise man is not wiser than another".

IMO, and in the basis of gratitude for our teacher Epicurus, all we are agreed that the only WISE was him, so there is not any competition among the epicureans who is the wiser than another.

The newbies, irrespective of their age, are "those in preparation". The philosophers are called as "guides" or as "excellent of friends", and not "leaders" or any kind of such political terminology. And that is because the concept of the word "leader" and its meaning immediately leads our mind to the word "crowds" i.e. "the leader of crowds". Moreover, Epicurus' Description of the Wise Man we read that : "The wise man gather together a school, but never so as to become a leader of crowds". Thus, Epicurus understood how easily someone would fall into the trap to establish a school, and to become a leader of crowds. 😞

Moreover, those "guides" or "the excellent of friends" they are not psychiatrists, since psychiatry is a medical school and needs a university diploma, as well as many many hours of psychoanalysis, by another psychiatrist. So, the most important that those "guides" or "excellent of friends" should do is constantly speaking and acting well of each other whether they are present or absent, because they have to be the same whether are asleep or awake.

As for myself I'm just an Epicurean lady from Hellas, and I do not accept any title as philosopher, philologist, scholar, guide, leader, but I accept that I was among to "those in preparation". As for my mentors I recognize 4-5 as excellent of my epicurean friends, and please permit me to not mention their names, as they know who they are, because I have already expressed my feelings of gratitude and pleasure to them.

As far as concerns Philodemus, and his poetry makes me to think that from many ladies of our era, he will be considered as a little "sexist". And as an Epicurean lady that uses the methodology of the epicurean Canon, I can judge and Philodemus, and his poetry too. 🤔

Post by "Cassius" of March 20, 2019 at 2:53 PM

Thank you Elli! Is there an English-letter version of the greek too?

Post by "Elli" of March 20, 2019 at 4:46 PM

I found a good work that is a M.A. by a greek lady with the name : Ourania Moliviati Toptsi.

<https://macsphere.mcmaster.ca/bitstream/1137...si%20Urania.pdf>

Post by “Cassius” of March 20, 2019 at 10:10 PM

Great find - Elli, thanks for posting that! And I see that she cites Norman DeWitt in her article so she is clearly very perceptive! 😊

I will paste here several notes from it:

1 - A good list of other Epicureans of Cicero's time on page 15 of the PDF:

father-in-law of Caesar, a fact that allows us to infer that Epicureanism had expanded its influence among eminent political men. It is known that Caesar himself was affected by the Epicurean ideas, an many Romans in is circle of friends, such as Lucius Manlius Torquatus, Hirtius and Pansa,

Dolabella, Cassius the liberator, Trebatius the jurist, T. Pomponius Atticus, P. Paetus, C. Gallus, and others were Epicureans.

2 - I am not sure I have heard these names: "We know that the first Greek Epicureans at Rome, namely Alkios and Philiskus, were expelled by the

authorities, in 173 B.C. For an account of the first Epicureans in Rome, see Pierre Grimal, L' Epicurisme Romain, Association Guillaume Bude, Actes du VIII Congres, Paris, 1968, pp.139-168.

Post by “Elayne” of March 25, 2019 at 2:39 PM

Although I typically prefer a less hierarchical way of interacting in social life (I have no trouble taking charge in critical medical situations)-- more of a consensus based process-- I can see that this would not work in a group unless each member was thoroughly on board with the philosophy, understood it, etc. So in my local group, I have found it necessary to be in a leader role.

Post by “Cassius” of March 25, 2019 at 3:13 PM

Balancing the need to be rigorous, with also the need to have people actually attend and participate, is definitely tricky! I presume that likely it's mandatory to have a "lift-off" phase where people are given time to understand the ramifications for themselves before they are hit with the need for rigor.