

Nuremberg Chronicle in real life

Post by “Don” of June 11, 2021 at 7:26 AM

Here's Epicurus's biography translated as it appears in the Chronicle:

Epicurus was, according to the testimony of Metrodorus, an Athenian philosopher. Heraclitus says that he was raised on Samos. He came back to Athens at the age of eighteen, when Xenocrates was teaching at the Academy, and Aristotle had his school at Chalchide. But after the death of Alexander, and with Macedonian and Greek affairs against king Perdiccas in a bad way, he went to his father at Colophon. There he gathered disciples and returned to Athens under Anaxicrates. After he, with others, had taught for some time, he originated the sect called after him. And although one called Epictetus (Epictetus) strove against him, all other philosophers were agreeable to him.*[Epictetus (c. 55-c. 135 CE) was a famous Greek Stoic philosopher who lived more than three centuries after Epicurus, so he could only in a metaphorical sense 'strive against' Epictetus. Perhaps the chronicler suggests that]* In his native land he was honored with bronze statues. Diocles says that Epicurus lived on a very scant diet. He was born seven years after the death of Plato, and died at Athens at the age of 72 years by a stone blocking the exit of his urine.*[Epicurus was born in 342 BCE on the island of Samos. At 18 he came to Athens, and there probably studied under Xenocrates, who at that time was head of the Academy. After a short stay Epicurus went to Colophon, and later resided at Mytilene and Lampsacus, in which places he taught philosophy for five years. At 35 he again went to Athens and established a philosophical school, called after him, the Epicurians. there he spent the remainder of his life with numerous friends and pupils. His mode of living was simple, temperate and cheerful; and the aspersions of comic poets and later philosophers opposed to him, describing him as a person of sensual pleasures, do not seem entitled to credit. He took no part in public affairs, and died at the age of 72 after a long and painful illness, which he endured with true philosophic patience and courage. He is said to have written 300 volumes, and of these the most important was , in 37 volumes. All his works are lost except some fragments of this one. He made ethics the most important part of his system, since he regarded human happiness as the ultimate end of all philosophy. Pleasure with him was not a mere momentary and transitory sensation, but he conceived it as something lasting and imperishable, consisting in pure and noble mental enjoyments, free from all influences which disturb one's peace of mind. Peace of mind was his sumum bonum.]*

<https://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi/t/text/tex...001.0004%3A7.30>

PS: Note that the Latin text ends after Epicurus's death. The italicized sections above are commentary of the translators, as far as I can tell. If anyone else has additional information on where that part comes from, please feel free to comment.