

ΠΡΟΦΗΤΑΣ ΑΤΟΜΩΝ - "Atom-Prophets"

Post by "Eikadistes" of June 13, 2021 at 11:52 AM

There's a characterization from the 2nd/3rd-century CE Greek grammarian Athenaeus of Naucratis of Epicureans as being "**atom-prophets**".

I can dig it. 😊

Quote

Instead, for Athenaeus, Epicurus provides only the sharp contrasts with the Odyssey: Homer gives us the context for a symposium and stipulates who is to be invited; in contrast, Epicurus launches into the symposium without a prologue and thus presents a scene with no place or time. Furthermore, Epicurus' *Symposium* is un-Homeric in that the gathering is attended solely by philosophers, whom Athenaeus dubs '**atom-prophets**' (προφήτας ἀτόμων, Ath. 5.187b; cf. 5.177b). While Epicurus' symposiasts are flatterers and Plato's are caustic, Homer's dinner guests temper their speech (The Learned Banqueters 5.182a). - The Invention and Gendering of Epicurus, 45-46

ἔτι δὲ ὁ μὲν Ὅμηρος ἡλικίαις εἰσάγει διαφέροντας καὶ ταῖς προαιρέσεσι τοὺς κεκλημένους, Νέστορα καὶ Αἴαντα καὶ Ὀδυσσεά, τὸ μὲν καθόλου σύμπαντας τῆς ἀρετῆς ἀντεχομένους, εἶδει δὲ διαφόροις ὁδοῖς ὠρμηκότας ἐπ' αὐτήν. ὁ δ' Ἐπίκουρος ἅπαντας εἰσήγαγε '**προφήτας ἀτόμων**' καὶ ταῦτ' ἔχων παραδείγματα τήν τε τοῦ ποιητοῦ τῶν συμποσίων ποικιλίαν καὶ τὴν Πλάτωνός τε καὶ Ξενοφῶντος χάριν. ὦν ὁ μὲν Πλάτων τὸν μὲν Ἐρυξίμαχον ἰατρόν, τὸν δὲ Ἀριστοφάνη ποιητήν, ἄλλον δ' ἀπ' ἄλλης προαιρέσεως σπουδάζοντας εἰσήγαγεν, Ξενοφῶν δὲ καὶ τινὰς ἰδιώτας συνανέμιξε. πολλῶν τοίνυν κάλλιον Ὅμηρος ἐποίησε καὶ διάφορα παρατιθέμενος συμπόσια. πᾶν γὰρ ἔξ ἀντιπαραβολῆς ὁρᾶται μᾶλλον. ἐστὶν γὰρ αὐτῶ τὸ μὲν τῶν μνηστήρων οἶον ἂν γένοιτο νεανίσκων μέθαις καὶ ἔρωσιν ἀνακειμένων, τὸ δὲ τῶν Φαίακων εὐσταθέστερον μὲν τούτων, φιλήδονον δέ. τούτοις δ' ἀντέθηκε τὰ μὲν ἐπιστρατιᾶς, τὰ δὲ πολιτικώτερον τελούμενα σωφρόνως. καὶ πάλιν αὖ διεῖλεν τὰ μὲν δημοθιοιᾶν ἔχοντα, τὰ δ' οἰκείων σύνοδον. Ἐπίκουρος δὲ συμπόσιον φιλοσόφων μόνων πεποίηται. (Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, 5:3) <<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?do...erseus-grc2:5.3>>

I couldn't find an English translation of *Deipnosophistae*. 😞