

Episode Eighty-One - Development of the Arts - The End of Book Five

Post by "Cassius" of July 22, 2021 at 9:45 PM

While I am working on the text of this episode one thing catches my eye: I see that Book Five ends with what I have observed to be mentioned several times as an interesting allusion that probably has deeper meaning that meets the eye - the "Shores of light" allusion. My bet is that this is some kind of allusion that derives from the Epicurean physics, and was a commonplace to them but unfamiliar to us, just like we mentioned recently how out of nowhere Lucretius referenced that the use of animals in warfare might seem more likely to have happened to another race of men on other worlds than this one.

Here's the reference in context; I know it appears at least one and probably several other places, but I don't have those cites at hand:

Munro: [1448] Ships and tillage, walls, laws, arms, roads, dress, and all such like things, all the prizes, all the elegancies too of life without exception, poems, pictures, and the chiseling of fine-wrought statues, all these things practice together with the acquired knowledge of the untiring mind taught men by slow degrees as they advanced on the way step by step. Thus time by degrees brings each several thing forth before men's eyes and reason raises it up into **the borders of light**; for things must be brought to light one after the other and in due order in the different arts until these have reached their highest point of development.

Bailey: [1448] Ships and the tilling of the land, walls, laws, weapons, roads, dress, and all things of this kind, all the prizes, and the luxuries of life, one and all, songs and pictures, and the polishing of quaintly-wrought statues, practice and therewith the experience of the eager mind taught them little by little, as they went forward step by step. So, little by little, time brings out each several thing into view, and reason raises it up into **the coasts of light**. For they saw one thing after another grow clear in their mind, until by their arts they reached the topmost pinnacle.

I have made the comment before that I frequently prefer the unique renderings of the 1743 edition over those of later additions. I've never focused on this variation before, but this may be another such time (it would be interesting to go back to find those prior references to see if the 1743 translated this phrase the same way then too):

1743: Use therefore, and the experience of an inquiring mind, led men by degrees into the knowledge of navigation, of agriculture; taught them to build walls, to make laws, arms, public ways, garments, and other things of the same nature; made them acquainted with poetry, painting, and statuary. Thus time gradually produces every thing into use, **and reason shows**

it in a clear light. One art, we observe, is refined and polished by another, till they arrive at the highest point of perfection.