

"Epicurean Mission and Membership" - Very Interesting Article by MacGilivray On Ancient Epicurean Missionary Spirit

Post by "Cassius" of May 8, 2022 at 6:14 PM

Some of you will appreciate that i was particularly impressed by THIS analysis:

Quote

Where did Lucretius get this obstinate desire that he describes above to fashion his didactic poem in Latin? The answer, I believe, is to be found by noting Lucretius' strong belief that it was the format of his work that contained its effectual power and presumably its construction in Latin was also a carefully chosen part of this allure. If Epicureanism wished, it seems Lucretius had judged, to truly integrate itself into Roman society it must be expressed in Latin. If, as he says, he wanted to put Epicureanism before his reader's mind, he did so with the recognition that, though capable in Greek, they thought in Latin. If Epicureanism was to become a Roman, as well as Greek, philosophy (and we have seen his belief on the transcended reach of philosophy demonstrated above), then it would need to be translated into the language of the state. We should remember that Cicero provides similar reason as motivating his efforts to manufacture philosophy away from their traditional Greek language, and into his native Latin.

Also:

Quote

J. D. Minyard (1985) 46,87 also concluded that: 'Had his purpose been purely explanatory, didactic, and descriptive, purely philosophical, this is what he should have done. Greek was well*known to his oligarchic audience and the De Rerum Natura is nothing if not an oligarchic poem...[rather] he wants his poem to revaluatethe literary heritage and rearrange Roman culture, to reform the language itself and the society based on it...This cannot be accomplished by ignoring the language that reflects and embeds the inherited social form of thought and motivates a pattern of life it fossilizes and inspires...He clearly believed that if Epicureanism was to take root in society at large, specifically in Roman society, it must reach out to the wider audience in the form and on the terms to which that audience was used.

So we have to do both: study the details of the Greek and be sure we get the most accurate understanding of it, and then re-express the same thoughts in understandable English.