Eclectic Take on Epicurean Philosophy; Earlier Origin of Some Epicurean Concepts; Method of Loci

Post by “Don” of November 23, 2023 at 7:35 AM

In light of learning the "method of loci" is from ancient Greece, I read these excerpts below in a different light. I'm curious what the Greek is.

DL 10.12:

Among the early philosophers, says Diocles, his favourite was Anaxagoras, although he occasionally disagreed with him, and Archelaus the teacher of Socrates. Diocles adds that [Epicurus] used to train his friends in committing his treatises to memory.

DL 10.35+

(Epicurus to Herodotus, greeting.)

[35] "For those who are unable to study carefully all my physical writings or to go into the longer treatises at all, I have myself prepared an epitome of the whole system, Herodotus, to preserve in the memory enough of the principal doctrines,57 to the end that on every occasion they may be able to aid themselves on the most important points, so far as they take up the study of Physics. Those who have made some advance in the survey of the entire system ought to fix in their minds under the principal headings an elementary outline of the whole treatment of the subject. For a comprehensive view is often required, the details but seldom.

[36] "To the former, then--the main heads--we must continually return, and must memorize them so far as to get a valid conception of the facts, as well as the means of discovering all the details exactly when once the general outlines are rightly understood and remembered ; since it is the privilege of the mature student to make a ready use of his conceptions by referring every one of them to elementary facts and simple terms. For it is impossible to gather up the results of continuous diligent study of the entirety of things, unless we can embrace in short formulas and hold in mind all that might have been accurately expressed even to the minutest detail.

DL 10.84+

(Epicurus to Pythocles, greeting.)

[84] "In your letter to me, of which Cleon was the bearer, you continue to show me affection which I have merited by my devotion to you, and you try, not without success, to recall the considerations which make for a happy life. To aid your memory you ask me for a clear and concise statement respecting celestial phenomena ; for what we have written on this subject elsewhere is, you tell me, hard to remember, although you have my books constantly with you.

I was glad to receive your request and am full of pleasant expectations.