

The Lamps are Going Out All Over the Imperium

Post by “Joshua” of October 15, 2020 at 6:40 PM

I'm workshopping an idea for a new poem—a monologue written from the perspective of an Epicurean, fleeing Alexandria after the murder of Hypatia—and a thought experiment occurred to me.

If you were in this unknown person's shoes, in the first half of the fifth century, flying for your life from a murderous and destructive Christian mob—where would you go?

To Rome, where a line of emperors have committed themselves to the destruction of paganism?

South into the Egyptian interior, at the outer rim of the Empire's power?

To Greece, under the control of other Bishops as rotten as Cyril (the 'Great!')?

To the country estate of a sympathetic friend in Italy, to run down the years wearing your cameo ring in a private library and 'under-the-sleeve', as it were?

As for the poem, it will be more effective to leave the destination uncertain. But the question has been chewing at me.