

Usener 163: Hoist your sail!

Post by “Don” of March 28, 2020 at 10:53 AM

παιδείαν δὲ πᾶσαν, μακάριε, φεῦγε τὰκάτιον ἀράμενος.

I really like this one! My own translation is "Flee from all indoctrination, O blessed one, and hoist the sail of your own little boat."

The "flee" φεῦγε is the same word that Epicurus uses as the title of his work commonly called "On Choices and Avoidances," and I've shared my thoughts on that word elsewhere in the forum.

μακάριε "blessed (one)" is the same word used in PD 1.

I've chosen "indoctrination" here for παιδείαν since that is what Epicurus seems to consider the prevailing system of education in his time to be, nothing more than indoctrination. I also like the image of the τ(ο) ἀκάτιον, "a small boat or skiff with a single sail." That's why I chose "little boat" instead of ship, for example, but didn't choose a specific kind of boat because who (other than one who sails) knows the difference among skiff, dinghy, skow, etc. It's just a small craft. My perspective is that this encapsulates the Epicurean concept of self-reliance perfectly! However, it doesn't include the idea of friendship. So, maybe we need to find our own path, our own art of living; but, once we've embarked, we'll find like minded individuals with whom to walk the path with us - to join our small flotilla to keep the metaphor of this saying. The journey comes first. We find companions along the way.

NOTE: DeWitt seems to back me up in Chapter 2 of his book: *There is extant a saying of Epicurus which may be rendered: "To sea with your swift ship, blessed boy, and flee from all education (paideia}." To Epicurus this meant the Platonic curriculum of education then in vogue, that is, geometry, rhetoric, and dialectic.*

Post by “Godfrey” of March 28, 2020 at 1:00 PM

I haven't seen this before, and I particularly like it as well!

[Don](#) you're creating a useful resource. Carry on!

Post by “Kalosyni” of December 7, 2022 at 10:00 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

I really like this one! My own translation is "Flee from all indoctrination, O blessed one, and hoist the sail of your own little boat."

From Monadnock:

163. Embark on your own course: steer clear of παιδείαν δὲ πᾶσαν, μακάριε, φεύγε τὰκάτιον
all culture. ἀράμενος.

Also, the following is an excerpt recently posted by [Don](#) in [this thread](#).

Quote

Plutarch, On Listening to Lectures, c.1, p. 15D: Shall we ... force them to put to sea in the Epicurean boat, and avoid poetry and steer their course clear of it?

Note: In L&S, under παιδεια - 2. training and teaching, education, opposite of τροφή,

τροφή: nourishment, food; that which provides or procures sustenance; a meal ; nurture, rearing, upbringing; education

II. nurture, rearing, bringing up, Hdt., Trag.; in pl., ἐν τροφαῖσιν while in the nursery, Aesch., etc.

rearing or keeping of animals

a place in which animals are reared

So it looks to me like τροφή has more of a connection to nature whereas παιδεία has more of a sense of acculturation, something imposed or overlayed on the individual.

On the word for boat:

ἀκάτιον Dim. of ἄκατος Note: τὰκάτιον = το + κατιόν e.g., ταγαθον

I. a light boat, Thuc., etc.

II. a small sail, perh. a top-sail, Xen., Luc.

Modern Greek = dinghy, small skiff

ἀράμενος middle masculine participle of "lift, raise" (for yourself with middle sense).

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[Don](#), I just want to double-check regarding the translation -- indoctrination vs. using the word "culture" since the word choice really affects the meaning. (I look at the Greek words and it is very confusing to me).

Post by “Cassius” of December 7, 2022 at 10:10 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

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Revisiting this thread reminds me that it is always good to see Don and Norman DeWitt on the same page! 😊

Post by “Kalosyni” of December 7, 2022 at 10:15 AM

So it is incorrect to translate it as "culture"? (as Monadnock does in above translation).

Post by “Don” of December 7, 2022 at 11:27 AM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

So it is incorrect to translate it as "culture"? (as Monadnock does in above translation).

The word is παιδεία which refers to the educational system that made one a "good citizen" of the polis, very pro-Platonic and pro- Aristotelian. So, acculturation and indoctrination are my

preferred translations.