

Why Tranquility Should Not Be the Main Goal for an Epicurean

Post by “Joshua” of December 6, 2021 at 12:19 AM

I like the way Martin has put it.

Once you've got the core arguments right in your mind, there's room to relax. But minds are imperfect, and memory is frail---so that a certain degree of 'regular maintenance' is necessary to keep one's philosophy on a right heading.

The best way to preserve books from rotting away is to keep them in circulation, and to make new copies from time to time as the old ones fail. Papyrus crumbles, parchment fades---after a generation, nobody remembers anything. So it is with philosophy. We owe this much, I think, to our future selves---to keep the philosophical machinery of our minds in good working order: and perhaps we owe something more; something to those nameless millions as yet unborn, who have not heard the story of Epicurus of Samos. Who *will* not hear that story, unless we here and others like us are prepared to spend some small part of our own precious time in preserving it---to pass on that torch.

Because to strike a blow for Epicurus is in some measure to strike a blow against time itself, and forgetfulness. Consider--the whole history of our species up to this moment has transpired before the Milky Way galaxy has completed a tenth of one percent of its rotation! We bloom for a day, we lucky few; and in a flash our lives are gone, withered like grapes on the vine.

But though the vine wither, the Garden still has her secrets. By the end of a century no part of her is left unchanged. This plant dies, and that plant dies---

And the Garden remains. In what seems the bleakest winter, all of her hope lies hidden---tucked away in a seed.

Ah, but such seeds! In a monastery in Germany in 1417, a poem sprouted that had lain dormant for a thousand years, unfolding in its spreading leaves the knowledge of nature, and the way things are. Another of these, Italy held in her bosom; mouldering but not lost, buried under a hundred feet of volcanic ash, a cache of papyrus scrolls in 1750 sent forth green tendrils; fresh thoughts from long ago, winding their way through the dark tunnels of the lost villa toward living daylight. Then in 1884, in Turkey on the coast of Asia---where, knitted into cold barren stone, the very words of Epicurus himself were found to have taken root. Indeed, even the library of the Vatican itself came to bear this startling, alien and ancient fruit.

Who knows but that the hand of a child may not bury that acorn, whose growth comes to tower over every other oak. For a seed is so small a thing---and in the planting, it is *then* that we

strike our greatest blow. But how should we do this?

Something comes to mind;

Quote

[VS41](#). We must laugh and philosophize at the same time and do our household duties and employ our other faculties, and never cease proclaiming the sayings of the true philosophy.