

Episode One Hundred Eleven - Torquatus Summarizes The Significance of the Epicurus

Post by "Don" of March 6, 2022 at 10:31 PM

παιδείαν δὲ πᾶσαν, μακάριε, φεῦγε τᾰκάτιον ἀράμενος.

I really like this saying! 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 in choices and *rejections" and I've shared my thoughts on that word elsewhere in the forum. 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.

In LSJ, under παιδεια one finds the definition "training and teaching, education, opp. τροφή" and that word, the opposite of παιδείαν, is defined as:

- nourishment, food; that which provides or procures sustenance;a meal
- nurture, rearing, upbringing
- education
- II.nurture, rearing, bringing up, Hdt., Trag.; in pl., ἐν τροφᾰίᾰσιν while in the nursery, Aesch., etc.
- rearing or keeping of animals
- a place in which animals are reared

So it looks like τροφή has more of a connection to nature and rearing and not indoctrination, whereas παιδεία has more of a sense of acculturation, something imposed or overlayed on the individual.

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.

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.