

An Epicurean "Sanity Check"

Post by "Cassius" of February 3, 2019 at 7:32 AM

Eilli wrote:

[Cassius](#) I totally agree of what you said above, and I would like to add some words in this : "if the Persians invade our city"... Imo this is not the real danger if some people want to invade our city... No, the real danger is when WE that live in our city IF we live like strangers already, and if we see and feel our country as a disgusting, miserable and strange issue separated from ourselves already. If we are not living in pleasure in our country, and we live like miseries already. If we see our neighbors with jealousy and in vengeance already, so then whatever miserable thing would happen to us, it is just an addition to our misery. This is the whole issue, I suppose. If we have and feel the NOTHING, we prefer to lose EVERYTHING.

And here is how right Pericles (through the historian Thucidides) points out it in his Epitaph.

<<The freedom that we enjoy in our government extends also to our ordinary life. There, far from exercising a jealous surveillance over each other, we do not feel called upon to be angry with our neighbor for doing what he likes. Yet freedom in our private lives does not make us lawless as citizens. We obey and respect our legislators and our laws, particularly those that protect the injured, whether these laws are actually on the statute books, or belong to that code which, although unwritten, yet cannot be broken without acknowledged disgrace.

Our city also provides means for the mind to refresh itself from labor. We celebrate games and sacrifices all the year round, and the elegance of our homes and businesses forms a daily source of pleasure. Our city draws the produce of the world into our harbor, so that to Athenians the fruits of other countries are as familiar a luxury as those of their own.

If we turn to our military policy, there also we differ from our antagonists. We throw open our city to the world, and never by alien acts exclude foreigners from any opportunity of learning or observing, although the eyes of an enemy may occasionally profit by our liberality. In education, where our rivals from their very cradles by a painful discipline seek after military manliness, at Athens we live exactly as we please, and yet are just as ready to encounter every legitimate danger>>.