

(Mis)Quoting Epicurus--An Analysis of Language in Epictetus

Post by “Joshua” of January 27, 2023 at 6:33 AM

Thank you for the added context, Don! I certainly agree with you that Dr. Austin's book is excellent on this point. And Epicurus likely did have unconventional views on human society, which would be worth exploring *reasonably*. Epictetus takes Epicurus' views to the outer limits of the absurd and criticizes them there.

Lucretius on the other hand is insightful in more ways than one here.

Quote

Oft at some consecrated altar-side,
Where fragrant incense burns, a calf lies slain,
And from his breast breathes out the warm life-tide:
But the lone mother, o'er the grassy land
Far ranging, sees his cloven hoof-prints plain,
And leaves with roving eyes no spot unscanned
For her lost young, and fills with lowings wild
The shady wood; then tireless turns again
To the bare stall, sore stricken for her child.
Naught can the dewy grass, or tender leaf,
Or brimming river-bank, once fondly known,
Avail to bannish that o'er-mastering grief;
Nor by the sight of other calves, upgrown
In the fair fields, is her sad heart beguiled:
So deeply yearns she for her one, her own.

- De Rerum Natura, II, 352-366

translated by Henry S Salt

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Quote

For as physicians, when they seek to give
Young boys the nauseous wormwood, first do touch
The brim around the cup with the sweet juice
And yellow of the honey, in order that
The thoughtless age of boyhood be cajoled
As far as the lips, and meanwhile swallow down
The wormwood's bitter draught, and, though befooled,
Be yet not merely duped, but rather thus
Grow strong again with recreated health:
Proem to Book IV, William Ellery Leonard

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