

Festivals or Contemplation??

Post by “Don” of January 27, 2023 at 4:49 PM

I have to ask a translation question since it came up in The Next Big Idea episode with Emily Austin.

Emily mentioned there that "Epicureans will enjoy themselves more at festivals than other people." While I like that sentiment, I've seen in some translation from Diogenes Laertius Book 10.120 the English word used is "contemplation" and similar words in place of "festivals." The Greek is θεωρία. My own take [on my website](#) was "The sage will also enjoy themselves more than others in contemplation, speculation, and theorizing,..." So, is it "festivals" vs "contemplation"?

I could see "festivals" if it referred specifically to state festivals like the Panathenaea or Mysteries since "only" the Epicureans practiced true piety and reverence for the gods. But the ancient Greek word doesn't seem to apply to that kind of festival, also including visits to oracles and the like.

I could also see "contemplation" since even Lucretius talks about Epicurus "traveling" in his mind through the cosmos and bringing back the truth of how things are.

Any thoughts are welcomed and appreciated!

The full notes on my translation are here:

[Epicurean Sage - ...enjoy themselves more than others in contemplation](#)

Hicks: He will take more delight than other men in state festivals. Yonge: ...and he will find more pleasure than other men in speculations. Yonge appears to...
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