

My 2024 Resolution: Get A More Accurate Picture of Epicurean Pleasure To The World Rather Than "Tranquility" or "Live Unkown"(Comment on Irish Times Article)

Post by "Eikadistes" of January 1, 2024 at 12:28 PM

[Quote from BrainToBeing](#)

What happens if you interpret "Live Unnoticed" within the framework of life experience of Epicurus? Is it to live like the wild flower of the meadow that strives to grow gracefully, a source of pollen for a visiting bee? Is it to live like a tree of the forest that gathers sun, gives shade to its neighbors, and nurtures a place for growth? Is it to live like the quiet craftsman who builds a home for a family? We can imagine many ways where being unnoticed was quiet strength. Could he have meant that?

One story about Epicurus that contextualizes his warnings against participating in government is tempered by his treatment of Mithres. After the move to Lampsacus, Epicurus befriended (*correct me if any of these details are inaccurate, this is a ball-park reflection and I might be missing up some of my facts, but...*) a man named Mithres, who served on a royal court in modern-day Turkey. Fast-foward to Epicurus' Garden in Athens. Mithres becomes relegated to a political refugee. Notes are exchanged, and Mithres is set to flee to Athens and seek asylum in the Garden. However, as soon as he arrived, he was arrested as a fugitive. Epicurus discovers this, and immediately sends Metrodorus to the jail to post his bail. Mithres briefly lives in the the garden, until he could preserve an independent life for himself without fear of being re-arrested as a fugitive of a State.

I think that recommendation to *lathē biosas* is occasionally misinterpreted as being a complete withdrawal from all forms of human society so completely that they are unwilling to take a stand when an existential threat arises due to politics. Contrary to that, Epicurus invited slaves to learn in his Garden, he went out of his way to personally pay for the freedom of political refugees, and he offered amnesty to international fugitives. When moving to Lampsacus, he immediately tried to befriend members of government to ease scrutiny on his tradition, and it worked. I think *lathē biosas* might be better seen to us in the modern era as something like ... " *keep your head low and your mouth shut*", which follows Epicurus' proposition that the Sage *may* occasionally break the law, but only if doing so improves their circumstances and they cannot be convicted.

To wrap this back around to the main topic, one-way-or-the-other, *lathē biosas* is a good, and, in particular, an instrumental good, but not, itself, the goal, which is resolutely **pleasure**.

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3619-my-2024-resolution-get-a-more-accurate-picture-of-epicurean-pleasure-to-the-worl/?postID=28374#post28374>