

Music Theory And Epicurean Philosophy

Post by "Cassius" of May 26, 2019 at 8:14 PM

[Quote from Godfrey](#)

I got completely derailed by the untranslated Greek in the piece.

That is maddening, isn't it? These academics could SO easily translate the word, but instead they keep it in the original as if to keep the meaning to themselves! I feel exactly the same way. 😊

No doubt my explanation could be tweaked and improved, but it's probably going in the right direction. Godfrey I can't recall at the moment if you said you had finished reading DeWitt, but to me that is why he is so good. He looks for logical explanations consistent with the core theory, rather than acting as if there's no possible reasonable explanation and making himself look superior to Epicurus.

Your example is right on point too. Epicurus, who reveled in the public festivals, and can't imagine the good without the pleasures of smooth motion and similar, dislikes music and poetry???? How ridiculous, but that is exactly what the commentators lead you to believe.

I think you can trace this line of thinking in many directions through Epicurus. He's against the construction of Platonic idealism - of things that don't have a real existence - but he is 100% in favor of those things that DO have a real existence as revealed to us through our senses. Many of these seeming contradictions can be explained that way, but you won't find most modern commentators suggesting that, because they too "buy in" to the Platonic abstraction method and can't imagine that someone could sincerely challenge it.