

Did Epicurus Create a Finished Product?

Post by "Joshua" of August 4, 2019 at 1:31 PM

I've been listening to Isaac Asimov's *Second Foundation*, and am nearly at the end of the trilogy. I came across an interesting idea;

Quote

So he created his Foundations according to the laws of psychohistory, but who knew better than he that even those laws were relative? **He** never created a finished product. Finished products are for decadent minds. His was an evolving mechanism, and the Second Foundation was the instrument of that evolution.

This got me thinking about something that has bothered me since high school; if ideology is nearly always a problem in societies (and the ideology could be nearly anything; religion, nationalism, fascism, communism, scientism, etc.), then is it any good to select ideology as the antidote?

I suspect that it was this paradox that drove me initially to Thoreau (who positively delights in paradox), and through him to the East, where men like Lao Tzu have been speaking in ironic contradictions for millennia. Christopher Hitchens encountered the same problem; he was a Trotskyist agitator at Oxford, and much later an ally of the Bush Administration. He eventually concluded that

Quote

The synthesis for which one aimed was the Orwellian one of evolving a consistent and integral anti-totalitarianism.

Did Epicurus create a "finished product," and we are merely "decadent minds" rifling the dry scrolls of the past? Did he create an "evolving mechanism," and we are the means of its modern evolution?

NB; both Asimov and Hitchens were anti-religious; thought well of pleasure; and wrote reverently of Lucretius. It's an intriguing cluster of men and ideas.