

Dead Reddit / The "Isms" Thread

Post by "Elli" of December 9, 2019 at 12:08 PM

I have some news. I read carefully the following ES 80 and I've noticed a particular greek word.

LXXX.(80) Νέω σωτηρίας μοῖρα τῆς ἡλικίας τήρησις καὶ φυλακὴ τῶν πάντα μολυνόντων κατὰ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τὰς οἰστρώδεις.

80. The first measure of security is to watch over one's youth and to guard against what makes havoc of all by means of maddening desires.

Here Epicurus for describing such desires he uses a greek word that is "οἰστρος-οιστρώδεις" [pron. oestros-oestrodes]. What meant in ancient greek this word? Mainly it has the meaning of the "horsefly" (*).

Who gave the characterization to himself as a "horsefly" in his "Apology" ? Well, Socrates did.



Anyone who has suffered from this insect, the horsefly, knows that there is nothing more annoying. Socrates was ironical, divisive and annoying, he declares that in his "apology" through Plato.

In the opposite, Epicurus with this ES 80 declares that we must be apart from such "horseflies", and he meant idealistic ideas by Socrates and the like. It is wrong that I read somewhere that Epicurus with this expression "oestrodes epithimies" i.e. maddening desires, he did mean the sexual desires. No, he meant that we have to go apart from mad people that produce madness. Yes, Epicurus, you are a great philosopher indeed, you used the right words since your philosophy is so clear and against the madness and illness of people!

From his letter to Pythocles : "But to assign a single cause for these occurrences, when phenomena demand several explanations, is **madness**, and is quite wrongly practiced by persons who are partisans of the foolish notions of astrology, by which they give futile explanations of the causes of certain occurrences, and all the time do not by any means free the divine nature from the burden of responsibilities". 👍

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