

Discussion of the Society of Epicurus' 20 Tenets of 12/21/19

Post by "Elli" of January 3, 2020 at 7:54 AM

The chief goods [kyriotatai] by Philodemus are the means to live a virtuous life, above all ?! The means are transferred to an end by themselves and for themselves to become a "virtuous life" as a goal ? But in reality of life whoever is preaching like this, everything else than a "virtuous" life wants to live or he lives or he had lived.

From the same source of "Φ" on "chief goods" [kyriotatai] we read a paragraph: **"In relation to these chief goods, men must have a clear understanding that externalities are only secondary and firm confidence that they can not affect our happiness in the way that the eary to procure chief needs can. This is clarified in Column XV, and mentions things like beauty, marriage, wealth, luxury, and the like".**

And now, I would like to say boldly to Philodemus that everything else he taught except what he really lived.

Do you want to see evidence of Philodemu's thoughts on beauty, marriage, wealth, luxury and the like? Read carefully his poems that are as follows :

"On beauty" : Philodemus the "philanderer" who was searching in his life the "perfect beauty" in women as we read in two of his poets e.g. :

1. Charito has completed sixty years,

but still black is her long wavy hair

and still upheld those white, marble cones of her bosom stand firm without encircling by a brassiere.

And her skin without a wrinkle, still ambrosia,

still fascination, still distills ten thousand graces.

But you lovers who shrink not from fierce desires,

come hither, forgetting of her decades.

2. Philaeniōn is short and rather too dark, but her hair is more curled than parsley, and her skin is more tender than down: there is more magic in her voice than in the girdle of Aphrodite, and she never refuses me anything and often refrains from begging for a present. Such a Philaeniōn grant me, golden Cypris, to love, until I find another more perfect.

"On marriage" : Does he mean, for cheating your husband or wife occasionally? Yes, this is what does he mean.

By midnight, eluding my husband,
and drenched by the heavy rain, I came.

And do we then sit idle, not talking and sleeping, as lovers ought to sleep ?

"On wealth and luxury":

First of all, his school was a huge luxurious villa sponsored by Piso that was the father-in-law of Julius Ceasar. Moreover, as everyone can see, there is a copy-paste building of the Villa of Papyri with the "Getty Villa" in Malibu! As for the Symposia not only a piece of bread and a glass of water the participants were enjoying, since in another poem by Philodemus we read :

Artemidorus gave us a cabbage, Aristarchus caviar, Athenagoras little onions, Philodemus a small liver, and Apollophanes two minas of pork, and there were three minas still over from yesterday. Go and buy us an egg and garlands and sandals * and scent, and I wish them to be here at four o'clock sharp.

...and **"on the like"**:

1. The stone has place for three immortals ;

for the head clearly shows me to be goat-horned Pan,

the breast and belly tell I am Heracles,

the rest of the thighs and the legs are the portion of wing-footed Hermes.

Refuse me not a sacrifice, stranger, for your one sacrifice will earn the thanks of the three gods.

2. Seven years added to thirty are gone already like so many pages torn out of my life ;

already, Xanthippe, my head is sprinkled with grey hairs, messengers of the age of wisdom.

But still I care for the speaking music of the lyre and for revelling, and in my insatiate heart the fire is alive.

But O Muses, my mistresses, bring it to a close at once with the words " Xanthippe is the end of my madness."

Conclusion : I have no objection to Philodemus and on how he had lived, and where he had lived since, as we see clearly in his poems, he lived a pleasant life, and as he liked it.

However, I have objections to him or anyone like him giving me lists with "chief goods" or "lower goods" on how I should live for leading me so deviously to a purpose as a "virtuous life" ?!

No, Philodemus, Epicurus said the purpose is a **pleasant life "hedeos zen"** and not any "virtuous life".

Moreover, I subjectively and prudently, am able to judge and measuring what brings to me pleasure and what pain according to the circumstances and consequences of MY EXPERIENCES that are getting evolved in a space-time and in a society that I live or any other society I like to live with my like-minded friends, since we commonly have declared and accepted that our common goal is to live **a pleasant life!** So, simple !