

The Neglect of Metrodorus' Economics

Post by "Cassius" of February 13, 2020 at 1:33 PM

I also find these sections in red borderline ridiculous, and this emphasizes to me that it is useless and counterproductive to keep talking about "measure of wealth" without defining what we mean. How is this "measure of wealth" any different from any other measure of any other tool for happiness in the Epicurean perspective? I don't think it is, so why imply that there is some magic here? (talking to the writer, not to you, Hiram).

For the sage manager, Philodemus recommends a "measure of wealth" (*On Property Management* col. 12.17–19), which, when obtained easily from a grateful patron, frees one from troubles and, through the recipient's generosity, strengthens the bonds of friendship. Perhaps with the concerns of his Roman audience in mind, in *On Property Management* Philodemus carefully expands Epicurus' defense of poverty by arguing that "natural wealth" (col. 14.19: ὁ φυσικὸς πλοῦτος), which affords more benefits than the trouble involved in having it (col. 14.9–23), is preferable to a "life of little means" (col. 14.21–22: τῆς ἀπ' [ὀλιγίων ζωῆς]).¹³ He later qualifies this striking assertion by placing emphasis on the sage manager's disposition toward poverty: although he is by no means afraid of or distressed by the thought of poverty (col. 15.45–16.3) because he understands that nature is easily satisfied (col. 16.3–4), he nevertheless "inclines in his wishes toward a more affluent way of life" (ῥέματα δὲ τῆς βουλήσεως μᾶλλον ἐπὶ τὴν ὑψηλοτέρην, col. 16.4–6).