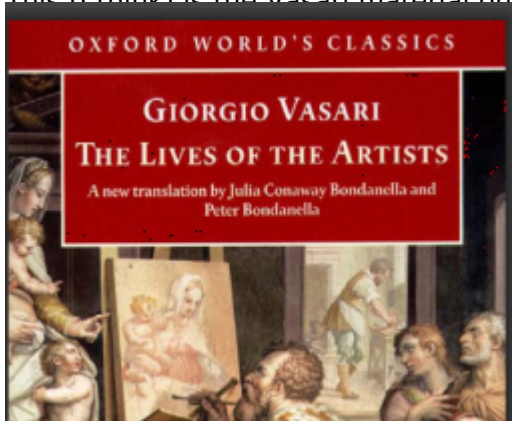


Where Is Epicurus In The "School of Athens"?

Post by "Cassius" of August 6, 2020 at 5:50 PM

This (I think) is the Vasari material on Raphael mentioned on the Wikipedia page. I do not see it



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depend on it. One Lady can be seen knitting, and the heads of all the other figures are most graceful in their grouping, particularly that of Saint John, who, with his hands clasped, leans his head in a way that would never be broken back to print. And to tell the truth, anyone who considers the coat, tunic, duff, and garter in this painting, has good reason to be amazed, for it would excite anyone looking at it because of the expression of its figures, the beauty of its garments, and, in them, the sweet excellence of all its elements.
When he completed his work and returned to Florence, the Duke family, Florentine citizens, commissioned him to do a panel to go in the chapel of their altar in Santo Spirito, to begin this and brought the notice to an excellent state of completion, and at the same time he painted a picture that he sent to Siena, which he entrusted to Roberto del Caccioppolo upon his departure to finish a blue drapery that was incomplete.⁴ And this drapery received because Bramante from Urbino, who was in the service of Julius II, both because of the chance knowing he had with Raphael and because he was from the same town, had written to Raphael, telling him that he had convinced the pope, who had some money built, to allow Raphael to demonstrate his worth in decorating them. This proposal pleased Raphael, for he abandoned the works in Florence and the unfinished panel for the Duke (the complete strength on that, later, Michel Baldassare de' Rossi placed it in the parish church of his city after Raphael's death and moved to Rome)⁵ where, upon his arrival, he discovered that a large number of the rooms in the palace had already been painted and were still being painted by various masters; and so it happened, as we have seen, that there was one room with a scene completed by Piero della Francesca; in another, Luca di Cione had brought one still to a good state of completion; and Don Piero della Latta, abbot of San Clemente in Anagni, had begun a number of works there. Leonardo, Bramante, Hans Baldung Goltzius, had painted numerous figures, which for the most part were being painted and considered exceptionally beautiful.⁶
Having been granted very affectionately by Pope Julius upon his arrival, Raphael began a scene in the Rooms of the

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Sistine depicting the theologian reconciling philosophy and theology with theology in which he portrayed all the wise men of the world pursuing different sciences.⁷ There are some analogies to one side who have drawn geometric and arithmetical figures and characters in various forms on some tables, and they read them by means of certain beautiful signs to the Evangelist, who explains them. Among them is a figure of Epicurus with his cap lying upon the table, a man pronounced and thoughtful figure, which for its beauty and the disposition of its garments deserves praise. Likewise, there are Aristotle and Plato, the latter with the Timone in his hand, the former with the Ethics, while around them a large school of philosophers form a circle. The beauty of these inventions and geometrical drawings numerous figures and characters on tables with their computers cannot be described. Among them, in the figure of a young man with a beautiful face who is throwing open his arms in amazement and bowing his head, is the person of Federico II, Duke of Calabria, who was in Rome at that time. Likewise, there is a figure who is leaning towards the ground with a pair of compasses in hand and making focus on a table, which is said to be the architect Bramante, whose portrait is so well done that he seems to live himself that it is very clear. Next to a figure who turns his back and holds a globe of the heavens in his hand is the person of Zoroaster, and next to him is the person of Raphael, the master of the work, who painted himself by looking in a mirror. He has a peaceful face and a very modest appearance coupled with a pleasant and gentle grace, and he is wearing a black tunic. Now could one describe the figures and positions that can be seen in the heads and figures of the Evangelist, in whose face Raphael has created a certain content and awareness which is very natural, especially in those who are writing. And behind him stands Matthew, who is copying characters out of the engraved tablet held by an angel and writing down from a book, an old man who has placed a sheet of paper on his knee upon all the words Saint Matthew is writing down. And while he remains silent in this uncomfortable position, a scene as if he is moving his mouth and his hand, following the movements of his pen.

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Besides the small details of the artist's plan, which are quite numerous, the composition of the scene seems to be arranged with such order and measure that it truly proved his self-worth and made it known that, among those who employ the brush, he wanted to hold his ground without opposition.
Raphael also adorned this painting with perspective and many figures completed with such a delicate and soft style that it caused Pope Julius to desire all the scenes painted by other masters from the past and present, so that Raphael alone would be honored above all those who had labored on the paintings which had been done up to that time. Although the work of Clever Antonio Solomeo da Venezia, which was above Raphael's scene, was to have been torn down by the pope's order, Raphael nevertheless wanted to see its arrangement and proportions, and in each of the four windows which were done he created a figure expressing the meaning of the same letters, towards which it turns. For the first, where he had depicted Philosophy and Aristotle, Geometry and Poetry being reckoned with Theology, he painted a female figure representing Knowledge who is seated upon a chair supported on each side by a figure of the golden Cybele, with the numerous breasts by which the ancient represented Diana Polvereana; her garment is composed of four colors representing the elements—from her head down the colour of fire; below her waist the colour of air; from her thigh to her knees the colour of earth; and from those to her feet the colour of water. And she is accompanied by some extremely beautiful pigs.
In a window named towards the window looking out on the Belvedere, Raphael depicted Poetry, in the person of Polydorus crowned with laurel, who, with her legs crossed, is holding an ancient musical instrument in one hand and a book in the other. With the expression and beauty of a heavenly face, she is raising her eyes towards heaven, accompanied by two lively and animated girls who, with her and the other figures, form various compositions, and on this side over the same window he first painted Michel Piccinino. In another window which is painted above the scene in which the Doctors of the Church are expounding the theory of the Arts,