

Horace and Epicurean Philosophy; Will They Won't They?

Post by “Joshua” of September 20, 2023 at 9:47 PM

In another thread I made a post in which I compared a timeline of the Late Republic with Horace's literary output, and traced the inferred influence of politics on his Epicureanism;

Post

[RE: Let's Make a List of 1\) Major Causes of the Decline of Epicurean Philosophy after Lucretius and 2\) The Obstacles to its Revival Through Today](#)

[...]

Horace is devilishly difficult to pin down, unfortunately. But first, a chronology;

[Assassination of Caesar, 44 BC]

[Battle of Philippi, 42 BC]

[Lepidus Exiled, 36 BC]

Satires 1 (c. 35-34 BC)

[Battle of Actium, 31 BC]

Satires 2 (c. 30 BC)

Epodes (30 BC)

[Reign of Augustus Begins, 27 BC, followed by military adventuring. Returns to Rome 24 BC]

Odes 1-3 (c. 23 BC)

Epistles 1 (c. 21 BC)

Carmen Saeculare (17 BC)

Epistles 2 (c. 11 BC)

Odes 4 (c. 11 BC)

Ars Poetica (c. 10-8 BC)

Now then. Between Philippi and...



Joshua

August 21, 2023 at 8:40 PM

Since the post is very relevant to this subforum, I am linking to it here.

Post by "Don" of September 20, 2023 at 10:23 PM

The town mouse and country mouse appears to come down on the side of φιλαγρήσειν "to love the countryside"

Quote from Horace, excerpt Satire VI

"One day a country mouse in his poor home
Received an ancient friend, a mouse from Rome:
The host, though close and careful, to a guest
Could open still: so now he did his best.
He spares not oats or vetches: in his chaps
Raisins he brings and nibbled bacon-scrap,
Hoping by varied dainties to entice
His town-bred guest, so delicate and nice,
Who condescended graciously to touch
Thing after thing, but never would take much,
While he, the owner of the mansion, sate

On threshed-out straw, and spelt and darnels ate.
At length the townsman cries: "I wonder how
You can live here, friend, on this hill's rough brow:
Take my advice, and leave these ups and downs,
This hill and dale, for humankind and towns.
Come now, go home with me: remember, all
Who live on earth are mortal, great and small:
Then take, good sir, your pleasure while you may;
With life so short, 'twere wrong to lose a day."
This reasoning made the rustic's head turn round;
Forth from his hole he issues with a bound,
And they two make together for their mark,
In hopes to reach the city during dark.
The midnight sky was bending over all,
When they set foot within a stately hall,
Where couches of wrought ivory had been spread
With gorgeous coverlets of Tyrian red,
And viands piled up high in baskets lay,
The relics of a feast of yesterday.
The townsman does the honours, lays his guest
At ease upon a couch with crimson dressed,
Then nimbly moves in character of host,
And offers in succession boiled and roast;
Nay, like a well-trained slave, each wish prevents,

And tastes before the tit-bits he presents.
The guest, rejoicing in his altered fare,
Assumes in turn a genial diner's air,
When hark! a sudden banging of the door:
Each from his couch is tumbled on the floor:
Half dead, they scurry round the room, poor things,
While the whole house with barking mastiffs rings.
Then says the rustic: "It may do for you,
This life, but I don't like it; so adieu:
Give me my hole, secure from all alarms,
I'll prove that tares and vetches still have charms."

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Don: The sage will be fond of the countryside, enjoying being outside the towns and cities.
(120)

Hicks: He will be fond of the country.

Yonge: He will like being in the country,

I think it's wonderful that this characteristic is a single word in the original: φιλαγρήσειν "They will love the ἀγρός "fields, land, country as opposed to the town." "

Post by “burninglights” of September 21, 2023 at 9:46 AM

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Post by “Little Rocker” of September 26, 2023 at 7:54 PM

I've been wanting to read that Epicurean Ethics in Horace book, but it's checked out of the library and Oxford has listed the book at the price of your first born child.