

Aulus Gellius

Post by “Joshua” of November 14, 2023 at 9:52 PM

[Aulus Gellius](#) was a 2nd century Roman Grammarian who wrote a book called [Attic Nights](#). That source is a very readable web page, but the English transcription is incomplete. The text can also be found on [Perseus](#) and the PDF is available for download at the [Internet Archive](#).

A reference to Virgil's imitation of Lucretius can be found in the thread [here](#), and a passage on Plutarch's criticism of Epicurus quoted in the 201st episode of the podcast can be found [here](#).

There is also a reference to "Lucius Piso", that being an ancestor of our Piso.

Post by “Joshua” of November 14, 2023 at 10:00 PM

A mention of Mys.

Quote

There were not a few other slaves too afterwards who became famous philosophers. among them that Menippus whose works Marcus Varro emulated in those satires which others call "Cynic," but he himself, "Menippean." Besides these, Pompylus, the slave of the Peripatetic Theophrastus, and the slave of the Stoic Zeno who was called Persaeus, and the slave of Epicurus whose name was Mys, were philosophers of repute.

On the diversity of opinions on pleasure;

Quote

Diverse views of eminent philosophers as to the nature and character of pleasure; and the words in which the philosopher Hierocles attacked the principles of Epicurus. As to pleasure the philosophers of old expressed varying opinions. Epicurus makes pleasure the highest good, but defines it as σαρκὸς εὐσταθὲς κατάστημα, or "a well-balanced condition of body." Antisthenes the Socratic calls it the greatest evil; for this is the expression he uses: μανεῖν μᾶλλον ἢ ἡσθεῖν; that is to say, "may I go mad rather than feel pleasure." Speusippus and all the old Academy declare that pleasure and pain are two evils opposed to each other, but that what lay midway between the two was

the good. Zeno thought that pleasure was indifferent, that is neutral, neither good nor evil, that, namely, which he called by the Greek term ἀδιάφορον. Critolaus the Peripatetic declares that pleasure is an evil and gives birth to many other evils: injustice, sloth, forgetfulness, and cowardice. Earlier than all these Plato discoursed in so many and varied ways about pleasure, that all those opinions which I have set forth may seem to have flowed from the fountains of his discourses; for he makes use of each one of them according to the suggestion offered by the nature of pleasure itself, which is manifold, and according to the demands made by the character of the topics which he is treating and of the effect that he wishes to produce. But our countryman Taurus, whenever mention was made of Epicurus, always had on his lips and tongue these words of Hierocles the Stoic, a man of righteousness and dignity: "Pleasure an end, a harlot's creed; there is no Providence, not even a harlot's creed."

And finally, Gellius is at his wit's end with philosophers;

Quote

But the Stoics maintain that voice is a body, and say that it is air which has been struck. Plato, however, thinks that voice is not corporeal: "for," says he, "not the air which is struck, but the stroke and the blow themselves are voice." Democritus, and following him Epicurus, declare that voice consists of individual particles, and they call it, to use their own words, ῥεῦμα ἀτόμων, or "a stream of atoms." When I heard of these and other sophistries, the result of a self-satisfied cleverness combined with lack of employment, and saw in these subtleties no real advantage affecting the conduct of life, and no end to the inquiry, I agreed with Ennius' Neoptolemus, who rightly says: Philosophizing there must be, but by the few; Since for all men it's not to be desired.

Post by "Cassius" of November 15, 2023 at 4:57 AM

Thank you so much for these links!