

[Musonius Rufus - suite]

Auteur : Foucault, Michel

Présentation de la fiche

Coteb028_f0300

SourceBoite_028-3-chem | Musonius.

LangueFrançais

TypeFicheLecture

RelationNumérisation d'un manuscrit original consultable à la BnF, département des Manuscrits, cote NAF 28730

Références éditoriales

Éditeuréquipe FFL (projet ANR *Fiches de lecture de Michel Foucault*) ; projet EMAN (Thalim, CNRS-ENS-Sorbonne nouvelle).

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MUSONIUS RUFUS

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mention better philosophers than these. Crates, although homeless and completely without property or possessions, was nevertheless married; furthermore, not having a shelter of his own, he spent his days and nights in the public porticoes of Athens together with his wife. How, then, can we, who have a home to start with and some of us even have servants to work for us, venture to say that marriage is a handicap for philosophy? Now the philosopher is indeed the teacher and leader of men in all the things which are appropriate for men according to nature, and marriage, if anything, is manifestly in accord with nature. For, to what other purpose did the creator of mankind first divide our human race into two sexes, male and female, then implant in each a strong desire for association and union with the other, instilling in both a powerful longing each for the other, the male for the female and the female for the male? Is it not then plain that he wished the two to be united and live together, and by their joint efforts to devise a way of life in common, and to produce and rear children together, so that the race might never die? Tell me, then, is it fitting for each man to act for himself alone or to act in the interest of his neighbor also, not only that there may be homes in the city but also that the city may not be deserted and that the common good may best be served? If you say that each one should look out for his own interests alone, you represent man as no different from a wolf or any other of the wildest beasts which are born to live by violence and plunder, sparing nothing from which they may gain some advantage, having no part in a life in common with others, no part in cooperation with others, no share of any notion of justice. If you will agree that man's nature most closely resembles the bee which cannot live alone (for it dies when left alone), but bends its energies to the one common task of his fellows and toils and works together with his neighbors; if this is so, and in addition you recognize that for man evil consists in injustice and cruelty and indifference to a neighbor's trouble, while virtue is brotherly love and goodness and justice and beneficence and concern for the welfare of one's neighbor—with such ideas, I say, it would be each man's duty to take thought for his own city, and to make of his home a rampart for its protection. But the first step toward making his home such a rampart is marriage. Thus whoever destroys human marriage destroys the home, the city, and the whole human race. For it would not last if there were no procreation of children and there would be no just and lawful procreation of children without marriage. That the home or the city does not depend upon women alone or upon men alone, but upon their

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