

Toward A Better Understanding of Epicurean Justice And Injustice (With Examples of "Just" and "Unjust")

Post by "Cassius" of March 23, 2021 at 1:21 PM

Right I see your last comment as accurate about humanism, and I think you are correct it conflicts with Epicurus.

Now as to "don't worry...." I don't think he would go that far. Epicurus would have been very familiar with Persians and other enemies of Greece with whom no treaties had been possible (arguably) so yes I think that he is saying that with enemies with whom war is possible, "justice" is not going to be a relevant concept. On the other hand of course you would have to "worry" about them because the Persians were very capable of doing great harm to the Greeks, so it was necessary to deal with them with knowledge of that fact.

I think you're on the right track that he is separating (1) the practical (yes you do have to worry about your enemies lest they kill or harm you, so you better be prepared to respond and/or protect yourself), from (2) the philosophical (in such a relationship where no agreements have been deemed possible, "justice" is not a relevant concept, any more than it is a relevant concept in how you treat the hungry cobra or the lion or the bear. Certainly they deserve lots of respect, and we even get pleasure from seeing them in the wild, but we don't analyze our relationship to them in terms of "justice.")