

Does Happiness Require a Non-Epicurean Decision Procedure?

Post by "Pivot" of January 10, 2019 at 5:52 AM

Hiram: I think I would agree with you on all of those points. Interestingly, the Aristotelian measure of virtue as it relates to anger (and other emotions) is that the behavior is tempered to the situation. It also seems that tempering our behavior appropriately coincides with greater happiness in the long term.

Cassius: Sure - my post was a bit all over the place so I will try to distill it down to concrete premises and conclusions.

Issue 1: An Epicurean cannot have deep friendships and strong ambitions

1. An altruistic sacrifice is a sacrifice in which an individual gives up his own happiness for someone/something.
2. If an individual sacrifices his own happiness in order to eventually increase his long-term happiness, the sacrifice is not altruistic.
3. Deep relationships and strong ambitions require altruistic sacrifices.

4. Altruistic sacrifices are necessary in order to have the deepest sort of relationships and ambitions.

5. An Epicurean cannot rationally sacrifice his long-term happiness without the reward of greater happiness.

6. An Epicurean is not able to have the deepest sort of relationships and strong ambitions.

Issue 2: Horrible acts are considered permissible under Epicurean thought

1. A horrible act is a preventable action which severely harms another individual.

2. Injustice, as defined by Epicurus, is only an evil "... in consequence of the fear which is associated with the apprehension of being discovered by those appointed to punish such actions."

3. Horrible acts can be committed without apprehension of being discovered.

4. If a horrible act is done without apprehension of being discovered, it is not unjust.

5. Certain horrible acts are not unjust.

I think we already agreed on Issue 2, and then moved on, but I just thought I'd lay my two arguments out formally so it's more clear.