

New Christos Yapijakis Article: "The Philosophical Management of Stress"

Post by "Todd" of January 8, 2023 at 7:05 PM

[Quote from Little Rocker](#)

The 'with whom' gives away my decision to go with 'persons,' but basically, you would have reason to translate it either way. That said, the opening construction is loosely the same in KD 40, and it does seem pretty clear there he's talking about people. So who knows, really?

For me, your mention of the opening construction of [PD40](#) reinforces my opinion that [PD39](#) & 40 on are really a continuation of the justice discussion, and social relations more broadly: not all "things", but also not really friendship either.

[PD39](#) & 40 both start off with a reference to security from threats. I suspect those refer to threats from other people, which is precisely the aim of justice, but there is no need to assume that. I'm happy to concede that Epicurus is talking about any type of threat to our enjoyment of pleasure. However, it does suggest that these two PDs are closely related.

[PD39](#) is about social relations. I *am* assuming that most of [PD39](#) is talking about people.

- 1) "Homophyla" and "Allophyla" have too many "people" connotations to ignore without a good reason
- 2) It just makes a lot more sense of the rest of the PD, in my opinion
- 3) Several translators seem to agree, though not all

If you accept that [PD39](#) is talking about people, then there are strong suggestions of references to justice.

Epicurus says we should try to treat as many people as possible like kin. "Like kin" implies more than mere justice. It would include justice, of course, but goes beyond. I'd call it something like active cooperation. The "as many people as possible" part of that doesn't sound like friendship to me though, because we are advised to extend it to as many people as possible. Our friends would be a subset of these relationships.

There are some people with whom we can't productively cooperate. But we also prefer not to make enemies of them. I would say these are the people we deal with by simply agreeing not to harm each other. Justice, and nothing more.

And then there are the people who won't even agree not to harm us. Or they do agree, but then harm us anyway. Epicurus says we should avoid them. Good advice, whether or not that is what Epicurus meant. And the fact that it *is* good advice is yet another point in favor of this interpretation.

Finally, [PD40](#) describes the benefits of following the above procedure: the ability to live pleasantly with friends.

An important point about my interpretation of [PD40](#) is that the friends with whom you live pleasantly are (probably) not the same people from whom you had to secure protection!

Some translations of [PD40](#) make it sound like you obtain confidence and security by being friends with everyone around you. That might work if it was possible, but few of us are in a position to carefully curate our neighbors, classmates, co-workers, etc. Epicurean philosophy is supposed to work for everyone, not just an elite few.

My view of [PD40](#) is more like, "Being confidently secure from your neighbors (those around you), now live pleasantly with your friends."

Epicurus never uses *philia* in [PD39](#) or 40, only above in [PD27](#) & 28. That was the "section" on friendship, IMO.