

Episode 195 - Cicero's On Ends - Book Two - Part 05

Post by "Godfrey" of October 10, 2023 at 2:34 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Maybe quantity applies at the macro level but at the micro level that is where you have duration, intensity, and location?

I've actually been wondering for a while if magnitude/quantity was describing the same thing as condensing/intensity, but I think you're going in a better direction. Here's my latest thinking:

Magnitude/quantity simply comprises intensity, location and duration. This can occur at any intensity at any location for one moment, or at many locations for a long period of time. The limit of the magnitude/quantity is the absence of pain throughout the organism, for the life of the organism. But, practically speaking, we can work with intensity, location and duration of individual pleasures (through reasoning about our desires and comparison with our experiences of pleasure and pain) in order to maximize the pleasures available to us. This is exactly what Epicurus did on his deathbed: there wasn't much physical pleasure available to him, so he maximized his mental pleasures, through recollection of his most intense pleasures, in the time that he had left.

A question is "why is absence of pain throughout the organism (macro) the limit of magnitude, whereas a more localized pleasure (micro) can increase beyond mere absence of pain?"

- Macro pleasure, by definition, can't increase in location. A micro pleasure can.
- Can macro pleasure can increase in duration? Or is it specifically "godlike"? A micro pleasure can increase in duration.
- Can a macro pleasure increase in intensity? Epicurus is apparently saying that it cannot, that it's limit is the absence of pain. From experience it seems that a micro pleasure can increase in intensity.
- Intensity the actual Feeling of pleasure or pain, right. Location and duration are simply where and when that Feeling occurs.

Is there something special about intensity at the macro v the micro level? Is Epicurus' description of the limit of magnitude/quantity as a type of homeostasis? Could the latter case be a situation where there are no pains anywhere, ever, to overcome so that there is no need to pursue a pleasure in one place to offset a pain in another place?