

# Characteristics of the Wise Man, 1-9 Rough Draft of Outline

Post by "Cassius" of May 31, 2020 at 11:02 AM

In the spirit of keeping it coming, I think:

(1) the view that it is important to "pursue" pleasure is pretty clear, we all agree on it, and stating it is not particularly controversial, at least in our circles.

(2) What is HUGELY controversial, has profound implications, and is probably NOT a consensus view, expect maybe in our smallest circle here, is the part where we say something like:

**"The only proper way of comparing pleasures is from the perspective. "I feel this pleasure is more pleasing to me than that pleasure."**

Huge numbers of people (almost Everyone outside our inner circle of people who are trying to interpret Epicurus rigorously) default to interpreting "virtue" as having objective content, and the worst offense in the world in their eyes is to suggest that the individual has any type of sanction from Nature to pursue "his/her own" pleasure apart from social/universal norms.

So therefore when we discuss issues like "... maximizing pleasure in our lives over time in the present and the future and talking about maximum pleasure of any one pleasurable event. The latter can't be measured by definition because we're talking about subjective phenomena."

Then we have at least a couple of levels of analysis ---

(1) The issue of being clear in our technical discussions about "ranking" and "divisions" and "types" of pleasure. Here we have a fascinating and important discussion that can be pursued with a wide variety of types of people (both inside and outside the Epicurean framework) without too much pressure from emotional issues.

But we also have :

(2) The issue of the apparent subjective/relativistic nature of pleasure, the acceptance of which is explosively rejected outside the Epicurean framework of Nature. In fact it is hard to even discuss personal attitudes toward pleasure without first coming to terms with the practical implications of concluding that people will disagree on how to pursue pleasure. That probably takes us off into the infrequently discussed issues such as the last ten PDs, and this issue (which might be the most important of which) has to be kept tightly tied to the Epicurean framework for us to make progress on dissecting it. Talking about this issue with people outside

the basic Epicurean framework is hardly even possible because you run into immediate and emotional issues about what "should" be the best pleasures, and if you can't agree that that "objective" framework makes no sense then you can hardly even get off the ground.