

Are You Epicurean Or Hieronymian?

Post by "Cassius" of March 5, 2021 at 11:24 AM

Thank you for your positive response to my last post 😊 If I recall correctly I woke up in the middle of the night and wrote that and I knew at the time I needed to be concerned about sounding too harsh 😊 It's a big world and I like every point of view to have a place in the sun --- unfortunately I find that not everyone shares that view. Maybe this forum is a version of "isonomia" -- not really striving for an equal number of people who focus on the "joy and delight" approach vs those who focus on "minimizing pain" --- but at least this forum is a step toward an "equitable distribution" so that there is a place for those in the J&D camp to have a place where their viewpoints prevail.

knowledge of their abode. He so interpreted the significance of infinity as to extend it from matter and space to the sphere of values, that is, to perfection and imperfection. In brief, if the universe were thought to be imperfect throughout its infinite extent, it could no longer be called infinite. This necessity of thought impelled him to promulgate a subsidiary principle, which he called *isonomia*, a sort of cosmic justice, according to which the imperfection in particular parts of the universe is offset by the perfection of the whole. Cicero rendered it *aequabilis tributio*, "equitable apportionment."⁷⁰ The mistake of rendering it as "equilibrium" must be avoided.

The term *isonomia* itself, which may be anglicized as isonomy, deserves a note. That it is lacking in extant Epicurean texts, all of them elementary, and is transmitted only by Cicero is evidence of its belonging to higher doctrine and advanced studies. Epicurus switched its meaning slightly, as he did that of the word *prolepsis*. To the Greeks it signified equality of all before the law, a boast of Athenians in par-

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ticular. It was a mate to *eunomia*, government by law, as opposed to barbaric despotism, a boast of Greeks in general. That Epicurus thought to make capital of this happy connotation may be considered certain. He was vindicating for Nature a sort of justice, the bad being overbalanced by the good. It is also possible that he was remotely influenced by the teachings of Zoroaster, well known in his day through the conquests of Alexander, according to whom good and evil, as represented by Ormazd and Ahriman, battled for the upper hand in mundane affairs.