

Toward A Better Understanding of Epicurean Justice And Injustice (With Examples of "Just" and "Unjust")

Post by "Don" of April 6, 2021 at 10:33 PM

That brings up a question: Is there a "natural" agreement among humans to neither harm nor be harmed, or does that have to be mutually agreed upon?

I'm thinking if a culture/society/community made a law that it was legal to kill people with red hair, would that law then be just for that society? It would be legal, but would it be just for members of that society?

My answer would be "no, it is not just" because a red-haired person would constantly live in fear of harm. That's what I'd say Epicurus meant by justice is the same for all people ... But what does he mean when he says if circumstances change. We're back to mutual benefit then. The red-hair murder law does not mutually benefit those with red hair in that society.

I'm not saying any of this is easy, but I do think Epicurus gave us a framework and some basic criteria to decide if acts were just. Why else would he bother to talk about living justly etc. if there was no way to know what that meant.