

The "Non-Aggression Principle" And Its Relationship To Epicurean Philosophy

Post by "Cassius" of July 21, 2021 at 9:52 AM

[Here is a paper](#) which appears very relevant to this topic, because it apparently focuses on how Epicurus' philosophy does not lead to universalization as does that of Kant. I have not had a chance yet to read beyond the first page, and I expect to disagree at least in part with the writer's summary in which he says that Epicurus' system propounds happiness **for all.**" (I agree that the goal of all is the happiness or themselves and their friends, but if the author asserts that each individual has the happiness of everyone living in the world as his/her goal, then I will say he is mistaken. Yes the practical and actual happiness of "others" is relevant to ours, but I would strongly dispute that "others" means "everyone" for a variety of practical and theoretical reasons. I would assert there is a scale of relevance in which the happiness of those closest and dearest to us is most important, and the further away from us and our acquaintance, the less generally relevant that person's happiness will be of concern to us.)

But let's read the article and see if it sheds any light on our issue. 😊

EPICURUS AND KANT:
A COMPARISON OF THEIR ETHICAL SYSTEMS
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September 2018, 131 pages

In this study, the empiricist ethical system of Epicurus and idealist ethical system of Kant will be compared. Kant maintains that as Epicurus' ethics regards morality as a means for the attainment of happiness, it is nothing but a self-love ethics. He, for this reason, calls Epicurean morality "selfishness." According to Kant, the maxims of happiness can be known only through experience but he says, experience can never produce a law which is universal and necessary. He contends that as Epicurean ethics has happiness as its ultimate goal (i.e., the highest good), it cannot be able to produce an objective morality, valid for all rational beings. Kant, on the other hand, tries to found his ethical system on an a priori moral law of pure reason which borrows nothing from experience. This study would, in a sense, be a defense of Epicurean ethical system against Kant's claims. The main argument of the thesis is that Epicurean ethics is not a self-love ethics, but rather a system which propounds happiness for all. I will be arguing that for Epicurus, one's own happiness is necessarily bound up with the happiness of others, and that his system is sound and consistent. I will also try to show that Kant is not successful in deducing a transcendently ideal (a priori) law of reason and that his system has some inconsistencies.