

Welcome Philia!

Post by "Cassius" of August 8, 2021 at 7:52 AM

Also in this thread I think it would be good to point out that [Cicero's "On Duties"](#) would be an important point of reference that will help compare and contrast the view I am suggesting is in common between Stoicism and Humanism against that of Epicurus. [Don](#) I cannot remember if you and I have discussed whether you read that. Years before I converted over to Epicurus, "On Duties" was one of my favorite classical works, and now in retrospect I think my affection for it made it a lot easier for me to come to terms with the dramatic difference between the "mainstream Greek" approach vs. Epicurus.

Although i don't recall that very much of it explicitly names Epicurus, views such as those of Epicurus are clearly the target. if I recall correctly you could pretty much characterize the whole think as "The Anti-Epicurean" almost as much as you could consider Nietzsche's "AntiChrist" to be anti-Christian.

Quote

Now, among the many important and useful subjects in philosophy that have been discussed by philosophers with precision and fulness of statement, their traditions and precepts concerning the duties of life seem to have the widest scope. [4]Indeed, no part of life, whether in public or in private affairs, abroad or at home, in your personal conduct or your social relations, can be free from the claims of duty; and it is in the observance of duty that lies all the honor of life, in its neglect, all the shame. This, too, is a theme common to all philosophers. For who would dare to call himself a philosopher, if he took no cognizance of duty? Yet there are some schools of philosophy that utterly pervert duty by the view which they propose as to the supreme good, and as to the opposite extreme of evil. For he who so interprets the supreme good as to disjoin it from virtue, and measures it by his own convenience, and not by the standard of right, — he, I say, if he be consistent with himself, and be not sometimes overcome by natural goodness, can cultivate neither friendship, nor justice, nor generosity; nor can he possibly be brave while he esteems pain as the greatest of evils, or temperate while he regards pleasure as the supreme good. These things, though too obvious to need discussion, I yet have discussed elsewhere.¹ Those schools, therefore, can, if self-consistent, say nothing about duty; nor can any precepts of duty, decisive, immutable, in accordance with nature, be promulgated, except by those who maintain that the right is to be sought solely,² or chiefly,³ for its own sake. This [5]prerogative belongs to the Stoics, the Academics, and the Peripatetics; for the opinions of Ariston, Pyrrho, and Herillus¹ were long since exploded, though they might fittingly have discussed subjects pertaining to duty, if they had left any ground for the preference of one thing over another, so that there might be a way open for the ascertainment of duty. In this

treatise I shall follow the Stoics, not as a translator, but drawing from their fountains at my own discretion and judgment, as much, and in such way, as may seem good.