

Free Will Again

Post by “Mathitis Kipouros” of August 20, 2021 at 7:38 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I interpret opposition to authority to be the essence of anarchism. Can you give me something to explain that?

I guess you're not completely wrong; I think you're right to assume that anarchism as an ideal, by definition, is an opposition to authority as a default; it's implicit in its name too; this probably has led some to believe it is an ideal that promotes full chaos and permanent rebellion without a cause; and probably has led some to act according to that interpretation of the ideal, probably not conducing to much pleasure for them or the ones around them; but, since we as Epicureans know better, we know that not all abstractions and ideals are wrong in and of themselves, but rather in their capacity to provide for us pleasure or pain; so, I don't ascribe to the ideal for the sake of it, much less ascribe to the common and caricaturized interpretation of it, but rather, after putting it to the test, I think it has potential as being useful for our pleasure, as its main argument is not only based on material grounds, but also disposed to dismantle other commonly accepted ideals or superstitions, which I think goes in line with our disposition to learn more about nature with the final objective of dispelling false beliefs (or probably test an anticipation, like the one I wrote about lines above); in this case: that there's no supernatural/unquestionable authority of some over others.

It's not an idealistic position that all authority is bad, but rather a materialistic position that tries to draw attention and create awareness of something we usually accept blindly or take for granted but that perhaps is not particularly good for us.

So, given that we can accept that authority doesn't exist, because this is an idealization and no ideal form does exist, it follows that any and all authorities or manifestations of authority should be permanently and from the start questioned/tested (so long as this questioning/testing doesn't create an imbalance of long term pleasure/pain on the side of pain to the testers).

Now that we're talking about real, material, practical issues, we can go a bit further and talk about what the test should be, and there is where I think it can fully connect with Epicureanism: The authority should be good for you, in terms of providing for you the most pleasure, the most opportunity to achieve pleasure, the most stability for you to seek pleasure on your own (like [Don](#) said), etc.

Pragmatically speaking, it is a point of view that doesn't necessarily go against any form of government or political system as long as they've proven to be useful to your pleasure. And it's useful for you to manage the common anticipation that you need to abide to some leader.

I don't have this fully formed in my head yet, but your questions [Cassius](#) have been great to think about this topic (political systems) that has always been pleasurable for me to think about.