

Why Tranquility Should Not Be the Main Goal for an Epicurean

Post by "Cassius" of December 1, 2021 at 4:34 AM

OMG YES this is so true from my point of view too! --->

treatises about tranquillity and about the happy life, makes this point explicitly several times. So for example at *vita* 15.2 he says: "Not even the joy that arises out of virtue, though a good, is a part of the absolute good itself, no more than serenity or tranquillity . . . these are goods indeed, but consequences of the highest good, not constituents of it."¹⁰

YES!!!!

And handy for many modern writers for the same reason!!!

Tranquillity came in handy for the Stoics, I think, because on the one hand they wished to ban pleasure from the good life, since the Stoic sage was supposed to be immune to emotion; on the other hand, they had to account for the Platonic and Aristotelian requirement that the good life should be enjoyable for the happy person.¹¹ Here they could appeal to tranquillity as a state of mind that would appear desirable to most people. And having set aside pleasure, together with the most common term for it (*hēdonē*, Lat. *voluptas*), they went on to say that the virtuous person's life actually contains its own joys – not ordinary pleasures, but moral or spiritual ones.

To repeat - I would contend that In the minds of many modern writers (many, not all), THAT is the reason they push "tranquility" and seek to ignore "pleasure" by redefining it as "absence of pain" - because they want to ELIMINATE pleasure from the entire discussion!

...Which means that every emphasis on tranquility and similar concepts should be rigorously and vigorously scrutinized to determine whether the writer is in fact explaining an aspect of pleasure as taught by Epicurus, or is seeking to overturn and rewrite the entire system of Epicurus to conform to Stoic principles.

And outside of Epicureanfriends.com and other contexts and writers who explicitly make this point early and often (like this Striker article), I would say that a large segment of modern "Epicurean" commentary in fact undermines and would destroy what Epicurus in fact taught.