

Epicurean philosophy vs. Stoicism in public popularity

Post by “Matteng” of December 13, 2021 at 6:09 PM

Hi,

I come from the stoic camp and cross over not as an scout but as an deserter 😊 (based on a Senece quote)

I think these are the main points for the popularity:

- There is a divine rest in nature (like in the deep respect of Einstein (see Einsteins God, natural forces/laws, string theory, M theory)
- Success of modern Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Rationality science friendly
- Social, Connection of all humans, nature, political responsibility

But I think 1. all these aspects are even in Epicurean philosophy but more realistic/naturalistic/scientific.

For example

- a deep respect for nature but without divinity/God/fate/plan;
- taking reason to question thoughts/actions/judgments and using psychologic techniques when useful for pleasure etc. not everything is an opinion (like in CBT);
- Rational (+ importance of empirism/sense data) and social (friendly, justice is important, but not metaphysical, so more realistic)

And 2. It is so good that Epicurus binds pleasure and virtue together, with pleasure as the end:

Example:

Say there is a competion between a Stoic and Epicurean in staying out in the cold in winter.

Why does the Stoic this ? -> For the sake of virtue (courage, moderation)

Why does the Epicurean do this ? -> Maybe for better health, sustain pleasure and choose a little pain for it.

So let's say after 2 hours a medical practitioner would come and says, that a longer stay would risk your health, you should stop that.

=> The Epicurean uses his prudence/wisdom to choose that it's enough for the pleasure of health and stops it.

=> The Stoic: Health ? It's a preferred indifferent, to train virtue like (courage/endurance/moderation) is the highest value (Stoic wisdom). But when to stop ?

Only when virtue can't be trained any further, maybe by fainting, losing consciousness ?

Or dying because of freezing ? But ok life/death is even an indifferent..... Virtue is the highest goal.

So the Stoic would be irrational ?

Stoic: "But not so fast : Even the Epicurean has to use prudence/wisdom/virtue for his decision to stop because it is in complete control, pain / pleasure / health are not... And pain will not say you when it is enough freezing, so why concentrate on any other in life as virtue ?."

Epicurean: "Yes, but my prudence values life/pleasure/health as goods, not virtue, because virtue as an instrument has no limit to calculate on, it is never enough it is abstract. I have trained endurance, the virtues and my health, you can lose everything if you freeze to death for virtue, on pleasure/pain and related goods you can calculate your optimum and limits".

= > So to live pleasantly you need to live virtuously and vice versa.

What do you think ? Have I understood it right ?