

Article by Voorhoeve: Epicurus on Pleasure, A Complete Life, and Death: A Defense

Post by "Cassius" of March 4, 2022 at 9:57 AM

Not surprising he cites Warren, and not surprising that he tends toward the conclusion that the Epicurean, once he has become a tranquil sage, has no motive to regard death as a comparative evil. (KD 20-1, in Long and Sedley 1987, p. 150)

My proposal is, then, that Epicurus takes those pleasures to be 'greatest' that are constitutive of a best and complete life (see Warren 2004, pp. 130-5). Indeed, the pleasures of near-invulnerability and the notion of a complete life are intimately connected. For, as we have seen, a person who enjoys Epicurean peace of mind cannot have strong, central desires that they believe are likely to be thwarted by death. It is therefore a precondition for attaining and maintaining tranquillity that one believes that there is no more than a low chance that death will make one's life as a whole worse than it otherwise would have been. One part of the Epicurean strategy for meeting this condition is to structure one's aims so that,

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Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Vol. CXVIII, Part 3
doi: 10.1093/arisoc/aoy018

once one has become a tranquil sage, one has no motive to regard death as a comparative evil. This involves limiting one's future-oriented desires to those things for which one's continued survival