

Titus' personal outline

Post by "Titus" of September 29, 2022 at 2:20 PM

Original intended for a commentary on the Lucretius Today podcast, episode 140. I think this suits better here. As always, this is my personal interpretation, even while I think in ultimate terms.

It's a pleasure to me, that the discourse on the letter to Menoikeus in episode 140 of Lucretius Today is leading to the acknowledgement of the "blessed life" or "eudaimonia", as this has always been close to my understanding of Epicurean philosophy. There is even more to say about the differentiation of pleasures. This has also been of quite importance to me but has also evolved over time. In my opinion, a common misunderstanding is interpreting the natural and necessary desires as simply "bread and water" or frugality. This might be the yogi's or monk's interpretation, but they dismiss the context as the modern reader doesn't grasp the meaning of "Peace and Safety!" in the bible. There's also the implied message of being focused on your body, which also means being focused on your senses, your perceptions. This is what is in the centre of life. You're a corporal being, so prioritizing on the very voices of your body satisfies best. Arguing in a short run, having satisfied the needs of the body (aponia) and having accomplished a state of resilience against fear and bad influences (ataraxia) opens the path for the realizing of maximum pleasure (hedone) and accomplishing the good live (eudaimonia) all folks on Earth are seeking for.

The yogi and the monk may think they have gained inner calm, strength and happiness through focusing on whatever teaching they follow. But in reality, they just have entered the sphere nature is calling everyone for. Their philosophies work, albeit their proper message is only a side effect. The real forces working might never reach their recognition.

But this is just the starting point. Reconnected with my senses and perceptions, I skip the world of ideas, as one could call the neither natural nor necessary desires. What is of importance to me is feeling. Recognizing my stomach's fullness, the warmth of the sun on my skin. Breathing fresh air. Enjoying a tasteful and varied meal. All these pleasures poured into my cup to its fullness! I do enjoy this while my body is freed from pain and my mind is freed from fear and anxieties. I try to build up friendships and have my life organized, according to the rules and customs of the area I live in. Finally, I end up living the life of a blessed being, men calls a god.

Excursus: If the Stoics feel truly happy, they do so because they are "Epicureans in disguise". What's finally in their power are their senses, their natural needs. They conclude these via second hand abstractions, not realizing which realm they are entering. They are endangered to distract-thinking, focussing too much on the mind and being the mastermind, while nature holds all the cards in the game.