

An Epicurean Study of Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics

Post by “Godfrey” of October 29, 2022 at 1:25 AM

[Don](#) 's posts here have inspired me to finally delve into the NE, and I'm finding it quite fascinating. I'm working my way through Book 1, where Aristotle at great length dissects various meanings of good in an attempt to determine the good. Even though I don't expect to come to the conclusion that he does, going through his process (which to my limited knowledge is considered the gold standard for this subject) is a good exercise to refine my own Epicurean ideas.

Along the way, various phrases pop out which Epicurus must have latched onto either to agree with or to refute. For me, the most prominent so far is the idea early in Book 1 that the greatest good must relate to the polis (politics) as that encompasses so many other endeavors. Of course Epicurus is often said to counsel against getting caught up in politics: this then becomes fundamental to his critique of Aristotle's analysis of the good. It would appear that rather than requiring his followers to avoid politics, he's telling them how to think about the good.