

Epicureanism as an Ongoing Practice - Multiple Takes

Post by “Kalosyni” of February 19, 2024 at 8:00 AM

I read sometime in the last month regarding the idea that at a certain point there were various groups of Epicurean communities with differing beliefs (it was in a V.Tsouana book, but haven't been able to find it).

Below is a chart of possible "flavors" of Epicureans (but there could be more) and of course it could be that these are blended in various ways - and - what I write here is all conjecture, plus it could depend on one's circumstances what kind of lifestyle is pursued. The following are just a few ideas:

Emphasis	Goal	Activities
1. Sensation and Lifestyle	A delightful life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- emphasis on engaging in actively enjoyable activities- tending to live a lifestyle which reflects a higher level of wealth- emphasis on a simple framework of Epicurean core concepts but doesn't dive into the details of the philosophy (more activity and less time for study).- friendship engagement within the context of social activities

2. Therapeutic and Self-improvement	A content life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emphasis on study of ethics rather than natural science or epistemology - tending to live a very minimalist or simple lifestyle due to lower level of wealth or poor physical health - concerned with increasing one's inner happiness and actively working on applying therapeutic aspects, as a slightly eclectic mix of Epicureanism and Stoicism...for example the consideration of the role of virtue and vice as per Philodemus). - friendship engagement within the context of frank speech for the purpose of individual self-improvement (belief in idealized Virtue). - emphasis on the observation and understanding of the natural world and study of the canon of truth
3. Natural Science and Learning	An intelligent life filled with understanding the nature of things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - application of Epicurean ethics with regard to removing fear of gods and death, as well as a the true nature of justice. - interpretation or preservation of written works, with emphasis on the causes of things within the natural world (more studying and less time for other activities). - friendship within the context of sharing knowledge and understanding in the process of gaining deeper understanding of the natural world

I have an unconfirmed idea that back in the original Garden, Epicurus and his Garden were mostly of the flavor of "Natural Science and Learning", and that it was only in later Roman times that that the other two flavors developed. And was the Epicureanism of Philodemus influenced by the ideas of the Stoics?