

Is 'happiness' a proper translation of the term eudaimonia?

Post by “Kalosyni” of March 30, 2024 at 10:35 AM

Regarding other philosophies in ancient Greece, here is an excerpt from a class description: "CLASSICS 35: The Good Life: An Introduction to Ancient Greek Ethical Philosophy" [Stanford.edu](https://www.stanford.edu)

Quote

The ancient Greeks longed for happiness, but life often led to suffering and anxiety. In ancient Greece, the traditional value system focused on gaining honor, wealth, power, and success - external goods that could be taken away at any time. The Greek philosophers Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle set forth ethical theories designed to alleviate suffering and anxiety. They rejected the traditional Greek value system, focusing on inner goodness rather than on external rewards. Developing inner goodness was the only way to live a happy and fulfilled life.

Most importantly, Epicurus restores back into the eudaimonia-well-being-happiness equation the physical world, both in understanding the natural world as arising due to natural causes rather than due to the gods, --and-- in experiencing the pleasure that the natural world easily gives us in day-to-day experiences (food, friends, and sensory experiences which bring enjoyment). Epicurus labels wealth and fame as "unnatural and unnecessary". Also, Epicurus does not narrow down everything to inner goodness, rather he says (in PD5) "living wisely and beautifully and rightly" is for the sake of creating a pleasurable life.