

The Absurdity of Absurdism (?)

Post by "Cassius" of July 5, 2024 at 10:31 AM

Here's more commentary on what I perceive to be one of the larger problems this discussion brings up. I'm not criticizing Camus, because I don't know that he himself took these positions. But this is based on what I would expect the word "Absurdism" to convey to the average man-on-the-street in 2024 English.

The meaning I get from the term "absurdism" is:

"When I look at the world I see horror and injustice and sadness all around, sprinkled with a few dots of pleasure that are ridiculously insignificant in comparison with the pain. I don't think it's worth worrying about whether I can explore nature and understand the way the world works so as to reduce the pain and increase the pleasure. The horror and sadness are so overwhelming that there is no alternative but wall it off from my mind and paper over the wall with an attitude of considering everything to be "Absurd." That way I don't have to think about taking responsibility for my role in the problem, or for the fact that it is **my** assessment that the world is such a horrible place. I will just occupy my mind with thinking how useless and absurd the universe is and how insignificant I am and just do the best I can to survive."

If I were to rewrite that from what I would expect Epicurus to say, it would be something like:

"When I look at the world I see both terrible and beautiful things. I also see Nature as the originator of everything, and I see that nature has no intention to create things that I think are horrible. I see that Nature works through regular and understandable means, and that tells me that I can work **with** nature to increase the number of things that I see that are pleasing, and to reduce the number of things that I find to be sad. I do that because I see that the pleasing things in life are far more significant and important to me than the painful things, and I see that I can have an effect upon my world and that I have a limited time within which to experience and increase pleasure and minimize those parts that painful. The pleasure I get from the pleasing aspects of life so far outweighs the painful that I am more than happy to choose the painful, at time, so that my overall life contains more pleasure. I will therefore explore nature and work to understand the way the world works so as to reduce the pain and increase the pleasure that I find in it. The last thing I will do is close my mind to facts and laugh at the seriousness of my desire to obtain pleasure or eliminate pain. And since nature is what it is, and I have the power to assess it pleurably, even though some who call themselves "absurdists" assess it negatively, I will take responsibility for seeing that so long as I am alive and can experience life with more pleasure than pain, then I will see life as pleasurable to me, and do everything I can to stay alive to enjoy it as long as I can. I will do the best I can, not resigning that I have no hope to succeed, but confident that I do have the free will and ability to live happily even though I know I will encounter pain along the way. And I will hold in contempt those who are so "otherworldly" minded that they rebel against the way things are and label it

"absurd."