

Epicurean versus deceptive (“modern”) Stoic decision making

Post by “Julia” of August 13, 2024 at 8:14 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

[...] It is impermissible to them to think that when someone says "all pain is gone" that the kitchen is then FULLY STOCKED [...]

I think I get it now – thank you for your patience! 👍

Noting that it is seen as the absence of a *negative* along with using the analogy of physical objects helped me (in establishing an understanding of the erroneous view). Indeed, I can see how "the absence of shortage" might be commonly mistaken for an in-between state instead of being correctly identified as synonymous with "fully stocked". To me, pain has never been a negative; instead:

I view both the pleasures and the pains as things in their own right – like two bacteria strains. Both strains live in the same petri dish (my mind), which is fully covered (no uncolonised space left). The two strains compete for space, such that whenever one is reduced for any reason, the other expands, and vice versa. This way, any would-be empty space is immediately covered by the other colony. In this analogy, the absence of one is *not* by itself a synonym for the other – it only becomes a synonym because *it just so happens that* both live in the same dish, all space is covered, and they compete for it.

The root cause and justification for "absence of one is synonymous for the other" lies within neither player; it lies instead within the rules of the game.

[Quote from Cassius \(emphasis added by me\)](#)

Any hypothetical that seeks to be a true analogy has to stipulate that there are only two classes of items possible, and that if you don't have items from class1 then you by definition have items from class2, and vice versa.

That leaves me wondering whether my model is in contradiction with the texts, because it identifies the rules of the game – not the categories of pleasure and pain themselves – as the cause for the validity of the synonym...?

(1) To work using a negative (kitchen analogy: shortage vs food) instead of making pleasure & pain things in their own right (competing strain analogy);

(2) and also to identify a negative-positive duality (shortage and food extinguish each other *by their nature*) as the cause of an *inherent* synonymy of absence of one for the presence of the other, instead of identifying the game's rules and playing field (not *per se* competition against each other, but for limited and exhausted space) as the cause of a *de facto* synonymy of such same kind;

each of these two aspects (1) and (2) would be in such stark contradiction to my experience that - dare I say it - I don't see myself ignoring the evidence my life's path gathered in their regard...

Luckily, we seem to agree that regarding (1) my model is congruent with the Epicurean view; but what about (2)?

In my view, it is *not* necessarily a pleasure which eliminates a pain, or vice versa; both pleasures and pains may come and go for any number of reasons. It is *merely* the case that whatever space is available to hold experience will in fact be holding experience. For example: a single pain may be superseded by a mixture of numerous pains and pleasures of various qualities and quantities, none of which was necessarily a part of the cause for the previously existing single pain to disappear - all provided that the space available to hold experience is, in fact, utilised and holding experience.