

Book: "Theory and Practice in Epicurean Political Philosophy" by Javier Aoiz & Marcelo Boeri

Post by "Matteng" of September 9, 2024 at 12:36 PM

I've finished the book, but I still have to digest it a bit.

What I like is:

- How he shows that Cicero, Plutarch and co. leave out certain teachings of Epicurus and reinforce their prejudices against his teachings or even start them in the first place
- Epicurus' teachings highlight how important laws and a social/political order are in order to meet natural/necessary needs, keyword security (contrary to the prejudice that Epicurus' teachings are against good morals and that he is an enemy of laws).
- It is shown that a political community contains both: security and danger and that motivation and circumstances are important when it comes to the question of political participation (yes for security, no for fame, empty ideas/needs)
- Epicurus' teachings go beyond what is socially necessary, Philia (friendship) is highlighted and that for a happy life the Epicureans emphasize that one should live honorably (which includes philanthropy, compassion, helpfulness, i.e. all social feelings and character traits).
- The fear of punishment exists to protect the Epicurean sage, he does not act virtuously out of fear but out of insight because it contributes to a happy life.
- What I am not yet sure about and although according to the book it did not represent a challenge for the Epicureans, I do feel that way is the **story of Gyges' ring** that makes you invisible.

Would someone who follows Epicurus' teachings commit injustices if they were never seen?

In the Stoic Oikeiosis doctrine (which Hermachus was inclined towards) one sees others more and more as belonging to oneself and wants their happiness too. But that is another topic,

perhaps more theoretical.

It is often said that injustice towards others is more likely to arise from non-necessary needs, which the Epicurean sage does not have.

But what about natural/necessary needs? But this also includes ataraxia. This is also important to the Stoics. Needs for the body or "life" are less important to Stoics than to Epicureans.

But in the end it is always a matter of weighing things up and I still have to think about it a bit.