

How Do The Concepts of "Agreement" and "Harm" Work In Epicurean Justice?

Post by "Cassius" of June 11, 2019 at 10:09 AM

E: I think putting all the PDs together, both agreement and mutual advantage apply, and "advantage" I don't know how to read as other than net pleasure. So consented surgery, etc, could fall under the category of a just contract.

But not all agreements would be under the umbrella of justice-- if they do not provide mutual advantage/ net pleasure. It appears to be a very specific term as Epicurus uses it. That doesn't mean a situation is wrong if it falls outside the umbrella-- it can be "not applicable", I think. I would save the term unjust to use as he did, for when contracts are broken or --the way I'm reading it-- if laws are imposed AS IF they were agreements but are not mutually advantageous (coercion can often fall in this category). These are the occasions when our intuition of injustice rises up, so that we desire to obtain our freedom, or, as he says, when we know we've broken a contract and live in fear.

K, or anyone, do you disagree with what E just wrote? I agree that *both* concepts apply: these PD's specifically reference "agreement," and "harm" has to be consisted in context with what we know from many other Epicurean references:

(1) "harm" of "evil" or "what is bad" must ultimately be tied to "net pain for the person involved."

(2) "advantage" or "benefit" or "what is good" must ultimately be tied to "net pleasure for the person involved."

And the reason I think "for the person involved" is important is that even though the person involved might not realize the full effects at the moment, the ultimate calculation is HIS/HER personal calculation.

It isn't an "absolute" or "objective" calculation by some outsider who wants to substitute their definition of "harm" for that person for that person's own experience.

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