

Is Every Breach of Every Agreement "Unjust"?

Post by "Todd" of October 19, 2019 at 6:16 PM

Quote

Epicurus referred to justice as an agreement to avoid harm, but does that necessarily mean it is the inverse -- to maximize pleasure? As you observe later in the post justice is a small part of a circle encompassing "pain." Does reducing pain in that area necessarily lead to maximized pleasure? I will have to think further about that.

I guess I should have made a distinction.

In some of my references to maximizing pleasure, I'm thinking of explicit agreements. I see no reason to limit the scope of our agreements to avoidance of harm. If you want to say agreements to increase our pleasure are strictly outside the scope of justice, I won't object, but I don't really see much of a difference.

Also, I have in mind that maximizing pleasure should be the ultimate aim of ALL our actions, including how we think of justice, and the specific agreements we make regarding it. Again, I won't argue if you want to define the scope of justice more narrowly.

The distinction between avoidance of harm and maximizing pleasure is more important in relation to tacit agreements, because in that context we often have very limited information about the other person's preferences, and we want to avoid making incorrect assumptions (inadvertently causing pain for both of us).