

# The Neglect of Metrodorus' Economics

Post by "Cassius" of February 13, 2020 at 1:45 PM

Ok this is the final paragraph, which seems to me to summarize that nothing new is being added: the ultimate point is that wealth is to be judged just like any other choice, by the amount of pleasure and pain that it brings:

One may certainly be tempted to read *Satires* 1.1 within the context of Aristotle's doctrine of the mean or the roughshod tradition of Cynic philosophy. An interpretation that incorporates the tenets of Epicurean economics as communicated by Philodemus, however, helps to reveal the consistency of Horace's approach to the problems of false desires and their effect on wealth administration in a poem hitherto regarded as inept and inconsistent. Despite the lack of detail regarding economics in Epicurus' extant remains, his followers—especially Philodemus—provide a rich and uniquely Epicurean account of virtuous wealth administration, and one that deserves much more than a simple acknowledgement of the hedonic calculus or a citation made in passing. It has been the purpose of the preceding study to provide a more nuanced examination of the Epicurean underpinnings of Horace's financial advice. In addition to revealing the poet's consistent application of such doctrine throughout, these underpinnings may also help to articulate further something that scholars in previous generations have noted, namely, the unity of one of Horace's more vigorous satiric portraits.

I don't have anything really negative to say about the article, and all the detail is certainly interesting from many points of view. But what I do have a problem with is essentially the same as the Epicurean criticism of Socrates: **Don't hide the ball.** Make your point and explain at the outset where you are going and the ultimate point so that the reader can process the information efficiently. There is nothing strange about the "Epicurean measure of wealth" any more than that there is an "Epicurean measure of ice cream." To me, it is distracting and disconcerting to go on and on with details about translations and what other people argued without being clear what the ultimate point is.

And in fact in this closing point, the writer is actually DISMISSING the ultimate point as if there is some reason not to keep that front and center.

OK with all that being said there is a lot of good material here for discussion as an example of the Epicurean calculus of action, but NOT toward the direction of poverty that the writer seemed to want to plant in the reader's mind as Epicurus' viewpoint!