

The Neglect of Metrodorus' Economics

Post by "Hiram" of February 14, 2020 at 11:03 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

... so if you take up this issue and make the fundamental point then I really applaud the effort.

I will have to do it because I seem to be the only one who sees the lacuna in Epicurean doctrine concerning economics and wants to fix it.

I think you should challenge yourself, though, on your unwillingness to address Epicurean doctrines. The points you mention can easily be mentioned along with the doctrine. The ancient Epicureans are never seen avoiding the discussion of any subject with the excuse that "this or that could be misinterpreted by XYZ". Instead, what we always see is that words are defined clearly according to nature (as we saw with Philodemus when he mentions the prolepsis of a good property manager), and the discussion moves on and the matters can be addressed.

Concerning "natural measure of wealth", this is mentioned enough times that it clearly serves an important purpose in our evaluation of how to manage our estate using Epicurean principles. There is no reason whatsoever to confuse "absolute" for "natural", just as we don't confuse the terms when we speak of natural desires (we don't say "absolute desires"). I believe Metrodorus used this in his critique of cynics, but also that this is a fundamentally Epicurean understanding of oikonomia, and if you notice what is meant by natural (for health, happiness, and life / safety) measure of wealth, you will see that this relates to the BODY. It's a materialist philosophical concept that separates the endless whims of culture from nature. Which is, again, an Epicurean way of understanding things and calling things by their proper name according to nature.

The danger of seeing "a danger" at every corner and avoiding delving into what EP says about economics or any other subject, is that it gives the impression that we are armchair philosophers and that our philosophy is an impractical retreat from reality and from pragmatic matters.

The matter of economics and against limitless desires (which = anti-consumerism and related anxieties and false opinions) is a huge point where Epicurean teachings give moral guidance that is urgently needed in the modern world, as the Uruguayan ex-president has said before.