

# Consequentialism & Moral Relativism within the context of Pleasure-filled Philosophy

Post by "Cassius" of March 14, 2020 at 1:40 PM

## [Quote from Elayne](#)

Eugenios, and I think this is an extremely important issue to understand, in order to thoroughly grasp this philosophy. Once you have fully gotten it, you won't have trouble recognizing when people aren't understanding it.

... and you will get lots of practice recognizing it! As for myself I have a harder time telling whether people don't *understand* it, or whether they just *refuse to accept it*. This I think is related to the widespread injection of "humanism" into Epicurean discussions. Everyone (me included) has personal preferences as to how we would like to see the world work, but the humanist seeks to universalize his or her conclusions into a single "best" system for everyone.

To be fair to Epicurus and to understand him, I think we need to recognize that Epicurus wasn't in the business of creating a political system.

Epicurus won't deliver a god-like pronouncement as to whether - to take a current example - the Greeks should fling open the gates to the Syrian refugees, or whether the Syrian refugees should even be trying to get into Greece. Epicurus was in the business of understanding the universe so that EVERYONE, Greek and Syrian, could - if they cared to - evaluate their personal situation according to reality and then act accordingly.

The point people don't like to hear is that the facts of nature don't take sides, and Greeks and the Syrians both could take exactly the same starting points as to philosophy and come to all sorts of different conclusions -- from coexistence to separation to all out war -- based on their own personal considerations.

And the fact of nature that we have to live with as to Epicureans is that Nature doesn't "care" about the result, and doesn't care whether the Greeks or the Syrians win or whether they all exterminate each other. There are no gods or "ideals of virtue" to look to either to tell us which side to root for, other than any we might choose to create for ourselves. We ultimately each as individuals have to look to our own feelings of pleasure and pain, and then act accordingly.

It's really hard to keep a clear distinction between our own personal preferences, and our understanding of what Nature and philosophy can answer for us. **Really** hard. But I think we can sense strongly in the surviving texts of Epicurus, especially in parts like [PD10](#) and the PD's stating that there is no absolute justice, that this individual contextual analysis is exactly what Epicurus was saying.