

## PD10 - Commentary on KD 10

Post by "Don" of March 18, 2020 at 6:03 AM

LOL I suspected you might have a different take, and I looked forward to reading your response



As previously, I don't think we're as far apart as some others reading this may think, I think. I certainly respect your passion, and I am looking forward to delving more into DeWitt.

I agree that Epicurus and his intellectual descendants were no wilting violets when it came to defending the school he founded. We just have to read the titles of their works in Diogenes L to see all the "Against" this school or "against" that Philosopher. I imagine Epicurus saying, anachronistically of course, "Come at me, bro! You don't stand a chance." Philodemus and Lucretius were doing the same with their works. Cannons/Canons were blazing until the Christian Juggernaut swept ALL before it. I highly recommend the fairly recent book **The Darkening Age: The Christian Destruction of the Classical World** by Catherine Nixey if you really want to weep for what might have been.

I find your point about the possible original narrative structure of the Kuriai Doxai interesting. That makes sense, especially when we have the Letters as examples of narrative epitomes. I have also seen Cyril Bailey's proposed division of the 40. He proposed that the KD can be grouped thus:

- CBi. 1-4: The tetrapharmakos, the four-fold fundamental principles necessary for a tranquil life
- CBii. 5: The relation of pleasure to virtue
- CBiii. 6, 7: Protection from external disturbances
- CBiv. 8-10: The selection of pleasures
- CBv. 11-13: The ethical value of physical science
- CBvi. 14-21: The wise man's life in relation to nature, his fellow men, and to true pleasure (can be sub-divided)
- CBvii. 22-26: The tests and standards of moral (i.e., truly pleasant) action
- CBviii. 27, 28: Friendship
- CBix. 29, 30: The classification of desires
- CBx. 31-38: Justice and injustice
- CBxi. 39, 40: The wise man's life in the Epicurean community

I'm not saying any of that is earth-shattering but I've found it interesting as an organizing principle which would lend itself whether in list or paragraph form.

I will say that when you wrote:

*Epicurus could not simply state a goal of "more pleasure than pain" without justifying that pleasure was in fact the goal.*

I have to say, in a small way, I disagree with you in emphasis. I think Epicurus DID justify pleasure as the goal in how he laid out the entire Canon, Physics, and Ethics. Lucretius does the same. It wasn't that Epicurus just "stated the goal" that pleasure was the goal. He built, from the ground up, a mighty fortress to defend that assertion with the flag of pleasure flying from the turrets! He continued to let fly arrows at his opponents through his writings until the Christian nuke ALMOST wiped him out. But eventually, "he" (as in his and his followers' works) could emerge from the underground bunker and begin some guerilla warfare.

And you thought YOU had a "too romantic an attachment to the Epicurean school,." 😊