

Welcome Camotero!

Post by “Martin” of June 12, 2020 at 3:06 AM

Here are Epicurean answers to 2 of the items which you perceive as unappealing and confusing:

We feel empathy with the less fortunate and the downtrodden. If we did not care at all for them, we would feel pain. Helping some of them where we can with reasonable effort increases our pleasure.

Moreover, caring for the less fortunate and the downtrodden may make it less likely that our security and thereby pleasure is threatened by violent revolutions or crimes committed under the pretext of justice for the less fortunate and the downtrodden.

The swerve is not evidence for the existence of free will but a precondition for the existence of free will in the sense of agency. In a materialistic universe, some kind of swerve is necessary to avoid determinism. Pursuing pleasure as the goal makes only sense if we have agency to deviate from a deterministic path.

Epicurus' swerve has modern analogies in quantum indeterminacy and in the measurement uncertainty in classical physics. Instead of the impossible mechanistic description of every particle involved, thermodynamic properties or emergent properties are used to describe reality as we perceive it and do not exclude agency.