

# HEDONISM

# FEATURES OF HEDONISTIC PHILOSOPHY

- Atheism
- Materialistic
- Empiricists

**CYRENAICS**

# ORIGINS

From “Cyrene” in today’s Libya



## CYRENAICS WERE SENSUAL HEDONISTS

The highest good is one's own pleasure, especially bodily pleasure.

Everything that is valuable is only so because it is an instrument to one's own pleasure. Pleasure on the other hand is intrinsically valuable.

## CYRENAICS WERE EGOISTIC HEDONISTS

When Cyrenaics speak of 'pleasure' as the highest good, they don't mean general pleasure, so that the aim of human conduct is to increase the overall amount of pleasure in the world. Rather they mean pleasure for oneself, which is valuable, because this is what each one of us seeks for oneself.

## CYRENAICS ADVOCATE MOMENTARY PLEASURES

They do not worry about pleasures of the future, so they do not suggest that you must plan or rationally manage yourself in such a way that you will acquire maximum pleasure *overtime*.

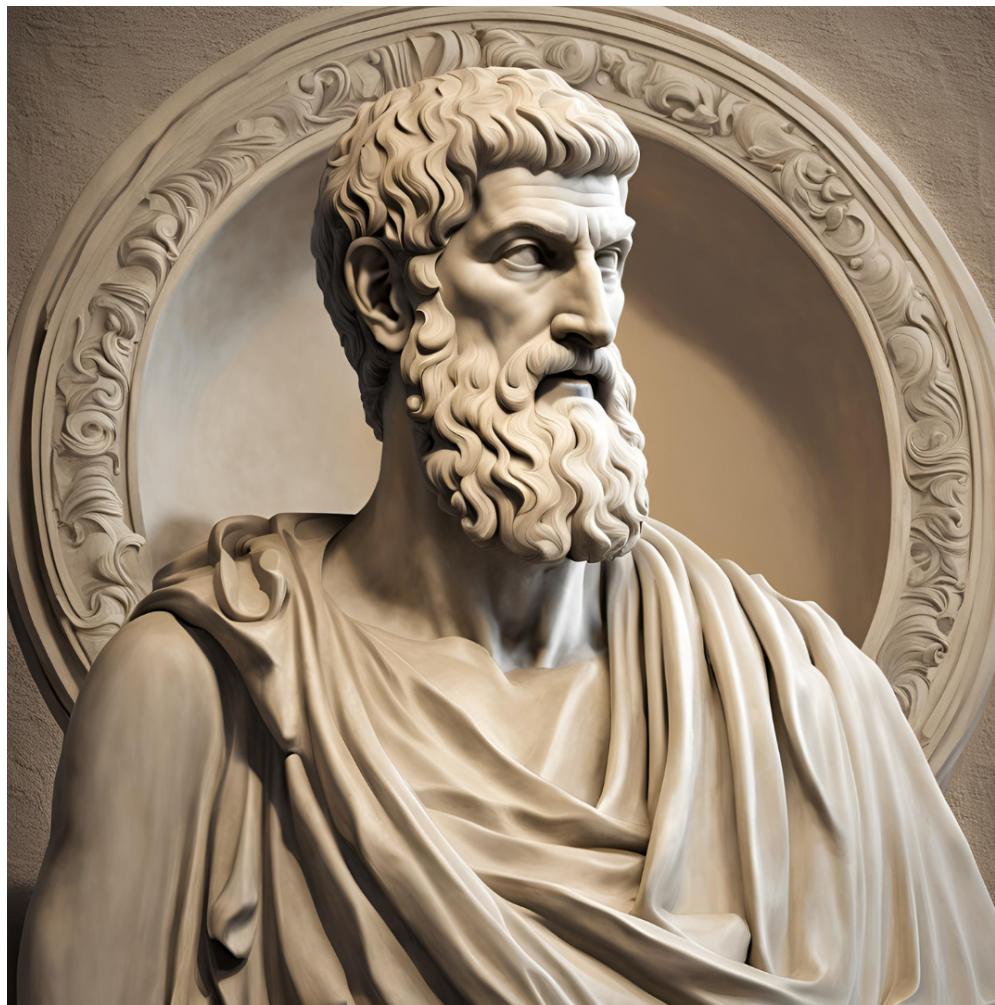
## ARGUMENT FROM EVIL PLEASURES

1. If hedonism is true, then pleasure that comes from evil deeds is as good as happiness than comes from kind and decent actions.
2. In fact, pleasure that comes from evil deeds is not as good as pleasure that comes from kind and decent actions.

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Therefore, hedonism is false.

# EPICURUS



## **PSYCHOLOGICAL HEDONISM**

Humans are motivated to maximize their own pleasure and minimize their own pain.

## **ETHICAL HEDONISM**

We ought to act so that we might maximize pleasure and minimize pain.

## TWO KINDS OF PLEASURES

- **Dynamic** - Such as the process of eating a pizza
- **Static** - Satisfaction of having eating a pizza

## **THE HIGHEST PLEASURE IS ATARAXIA**

The state of no longer having a desire is ataraxia, or tranquility.

## THREE KINDS OF DESIRE

1. Natural and necessary desires. (food and shelter)
2. Natural and non-necessary desires. (iPhone)
3. Vain and Empty desires. (wealth, power)

# **CRITICISMS**

## **NOZICK'S LESSONS FROM EXPERIENCE MACHINE**

1. We want to *do* things, not merely *experience* them.
2. We want an identity
3. We want to experience real reality.

## PROBLEM WITH EPICUREANISM

Epicureanism prescribes withdrawal from social involvement. Since an effort to make the world a better place is not likely to induce tranquility, Epicurus would recommend against trying to make the world better.

# **FURTHER READINGS/RESOURCES**

- The Matrix, 1999