

The care of the self

Artemidorus *The interpretation of dreams*

- break down dream into constituent parts, decipher in context of the whole
- virtuous vs. ordinary individual - gods speak to former
- the more you understand dreams, the more complex they become (to hide behind images)
- wasting sperm is bad (with prostitute, fellatio - signifying loss of money), being passive is bad for man (tho sex with slaves or passive with older man is ok, the latter a promise of gifts)
- sex out of harmony with nature is bad - rift, enmity, death

- sex foretells destiny in social life. Ambiguity between sexual and business meaning
- victory for one side, defeat for the other. Assert status
- sexual rel'ns between men taken for granted, provided certain differences of age and status are respected

Self

- intensification of relationship to oneself, reduce anxiety from body/mind disturbances through austere regimen, self-respect (confine indulgences to marriage or procreation)
- paralleling weakening of political and social framework within which lives unfold. Less attachment to cities, more isolation between people, more self-reliance, more personal rules of conduct in philosophy. Social and political process detached individuals from their traditional affiliations. Life formerly more communal
- Socrates: concern with self and soul, not riches
- Epictetus: Zeus gave man reason to make free use of himself. Reason not a substitute for natural faculties, but one that enables us to use the other faculties. Reason is capable of "contemplating both itself and everything else." Care of self is privilege-duty
- set aside time in evening or morning for introspection, and in middle or at end of one's career. Not an exercise in solitude, but a true social practice.
- insidious about diseases of soul: they pass unnoticed, or one can mistake them for virtues (anger for courage, amorous passion for friendship, envy for emulation, cowardice for prudence)
- asceticism: not for its own sake, but to make one independent of presence/ absence of things

Epicureans: to find a fuller, purer, more stable pleasure

Stoics: preparation for possible deprivation. Learn what is absolutely essential so that even the worst misfortune will not deprive one of the things one absolutely needs. To keep a detached mind in midst of abundance.

-gain access to oneself and one becomes an object of one's pleasure, without relying on anything that is independent of ourselves and which escapes our control. Pleasures from outside are precarious, undermined by fear of loss, to which we are drawn by force of a desire that may (not) find satisfaction, violent, uncertain and conditional
-individual seen as weak and frail. Must discover the truth of what one is, what one does and is capable of doing. Enjoyment without desire and disturbance

Self and others:

1/ changes in marital practice - new way to conceive oneself in relation to wife, others, events, civic and political activities, and as the subject of one's pleasures

-marriage more in public sphere, with religious ceremony as intermediary between the private and public institution (formerly people generally didn't marry formally except related to status and property). For poor, marriage became a form of tie that owed its value to the fact that it established and maintained strong personal relationships, implying mutual aid. Becomes more voluntary union between two partners

-adultery condemned (man with married woman, woman with any man)

2/ modification of rules of political game - with decline of city-states, general withdrawal from political life. Status came to depend more on proximity to the prince, on a civil or military 'career', on success in 'business', more than an alliance between family groups => marriage freer in choice of wife, and decision to marry. More value placed on personal existence and private life. People in the grip of world powers. Philosophies of escape.

The reality constituted by the couple has a value greater than that of its component parts. More restrictive for spouses.

Formerly ethics implied a close connection between power over oneself and power over others => aesthetics of life that accorded with one's status. In Roman society existence was public, and large gulf separated very small number of wealthy people and very large mass of poor => accentuation of visible status symbols and, in reaction => defining what one is purely in relation to oneself.

Wife

- behaving too ardently with wife amounts to treating her as an adulteress.
- marriage combines two existences: pleasure and produces descendants (useful to city and human race). Pleasure not most important thing. Too intense a physical pleasure at outset of marriage may cause affection to be lost when this pleasure disappears.
- Plutarch *Dialogue on Love*: love of women (physical pleasure is integrable with spiritual relation) and love of boys (physical pleasure nonreciprocal and nonspiritual)
- in every art, the result is what's important: music - development of character and soothing of emotions, drinking (Dionysus) - kaif, sex (Aphrodite) - feeling of friendship and intimacy of souls.
- late Stoicism: no sexual relations outside marriage, intercourse not governed by pleasure, goal is offspring. Goal is not to violate one's natural and essential being, and to honor oneself as a reasonable being.

Boys

Maximus of Tyre lectures - opposition in male relations between true love (virtue, friendship, modesty, stability) and love that is only a simulation (excess, hatred, immodesty, infidelity). Former: take care of beloved, go to battle with him to the death, public. Latter: lover flees the sun and avoids being seen with the one he loves.

Plutarch *Dialogue on Love*: opposition between relation with boys (doomed but will find other ways of expressing itself in poetry and art) and women. Dialogue about older woman pursuing boy who has a male lover. Assumes two forms of the same love, only difference being object. In boy love, boy ruled by older man, in adult love, law rules. True love for boys could only be a pure love if free of sexual desire (eventually this caveat transforms into strict prohibition).

Boy love contrasts what is artificial about women (adornments and make-up) with naturalness of boys. Sex is natural appetite to draw the two sexes to each other for procreation, and excludes love. Love of boys is higher.

Critic: fancier of boys poses as philosopher and sage but really wants sex. Sex with boys => either rape or consent (=> effeminate). No possibility of uniting Eros and Aphrodite. Pederasty is a love that lacks grace.

Elaboration of a general erotics linking Eros (E) and Aphrodite (A) changes the terms of argument. A sans E is only momentary pleasure. E sans A is also imperfect, like drunkenness without wine (no fruit, no fulfillment from passion) cloying and quickly wearied of. With love of women, can link E and A => enduring friendship.

Pseudo-Lucian Affairs of the heart: nature as provident mechanic (sex for procreation) vs. world formed out of chaos (demiurgic Eros conquered primeval disorder by creating things with a soul (harmony and friendship). Love of boys is bond that triumphs over chaos (love of women merely circumvents extinction of race). Process of civilization is gradual release from primary necessities (not descent into depths of pleasure). The arts and skills make escape from these pressures possible. Weaver's art: use of animal skins ~ love of boys: intercourse with women. I.e., the higher, more abstract and perfect ideal. Women are ugly, unshapely, requiring make-up, indulging in secret cults.

To go on loving a boy past twenty means lover plays passive part (problematic but not necessarily to be condemned). Transform boy love to manly form when youth at last is capable of reason and can give love in return, obliterating erastes/eromenos distinction.

Critic: boy love not mutual (boy doesn't get pleasure (if he does, then he's effeminate)) vs. with woman. But there is "virtuous commonality" that is exclusive privilege of love of boys.

With Christianity sexual act considered evil. Only OK in marriage. Love of boys unnatural. Sex feared also because many connections with disease and evil. [Today, medicine and birth control (except for AIDS) has allowed relaxing of view of sex as evil/ diseased.] Emphasis on frail individual. Harness sex to nature and reason in more highly structured society. => self-renunciation and/or union with wife for spiritual fulfillment (vs. self-projection (with or without sex) in boy love).