



Contra to Dr Sadler's thesis, Stoic values are impossible in an Epicurean Universe.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PtZY4yC7dbk>

You cannot have right reason as the only good in an irrational universe.

Dr Sadler quotes Marcus.

"It's an ordered world or a mishmash. But regardless of which it is, it's still an order".

Here is the full passage,

"The universe has either been put into order, or it's a cocktail the ingredients of which have been jumbled together but which still form an ordered universe. Can there be order within you, but disorder in the universe at large? Especially seeing that all things are distinct, interblended, and interactive"
Meditations 4.27; Waterfield

It has been remarked by several modern commentators that it cannot be "not an order" and still "be an order".

Here, as in 6.44, Marcus does not actually re-affirm the validity of the Stoic world-view, but still seems to see himself as justified in having confidence in the power of his own mind and the ethical principles he maintains (formulated in 6.44 in clearly Stoic terms). Scholars have interpreted this puzzling stance in various ways:

- 1. Marcus was intellectually confused*
- 2. He thought ethical principles could be uncoupled from accounts of the natural order.*
- 3. Stoicism had become a kind of religion or quasi-existential stance for Marcus, rather than a fully argued philosophical system*

For these views, see, respectively,

- 1. Annas, J. (2004), 'Marcus Aurelius' Ethics and Its background', Rhizai 2: 103–19*
- 2. Asmis, E. (1989), 'The Stoicism of Marcus Aurelius', Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt II , v. 36.3: 2 228–52.*
- 3. Cooper, J.M. (2004), 'Moral Theory and Moral Improvement: Marcus Aurelius', in J.M. Cooper, Knowledge, Nature and the Good: Essays on Ancient Philosophy. Princeton. 335–68.*
- 3. Rist, J.M. (1982), 'Are You a Stoic? The Case of Marcus Aurelius', in B.F. Meyer and E.P. Sanders, eds., Jewish and Christian Self-Definition. Philadelphia. 23–45. Christopher Gill: Marcus the Philosopher Christopher Gill: Van Ackeren. Companion to Marcus Aurelius:*

So to this question

"And consequently if the cosmos is not ordered then how can a person be ordered?"

The answer is they cannot;

"Especially seeing that all things are distinct, interblended, and interactive (sympathon)"

Cosmic sympathy.

In brief, In the absence of cosmic logos, virtue, orthos logos, in a human cannot be a thing, it is an idea of correspondence of the microcosmic nature with macrocosmic nature, the nature of the part reflects the nature of the whole.

Marcus needs this to have Stoic values;

Always keep the following points in mind: what the nature of the whole is, and what my own nature is; and how my nature is related to that of the whole, and what kind of a part it is of what kind of a whole; and that no one can prevent you, in all that you do and say, from always being in accord with that nature of which you are a part"
Meditations 2.9



Dr Sadler says:

“We're not simply, because things are random, just random things.”

That is missing an explanation. To repeat from above, it is an idea of correspondence of the microcosmic nature with macrocosmic nature, the nature of the part reflects the nature of the whole. Human reason, and human virtue reflects Cosmic reason and Cosmic goodness.

It is a question of the relationship between parts and wholes ;

This is Stoic.

“that I have a relationship with other similar parts and with that in mind I have no right as a part to complain about what's assigned to me as as a whole”

That is scrapped in an atomic universe, there is no parts to whole relationship of any value, because everything is buckshot flying about with no rhyme nor reason. .

This is it.

Either (a) a cocktail of ingredients that interlock and disperse, or (b) unity, order, and providence. If (a), why would I even want to spend time in a world like that, a random compound and a confused jumble? Why would I care about anything except how at some point to “turn into earth”? And why should that even trouble me? I'll end up being dispersed whatever I do.

If (b), however, my response is reverential awe, I have a stable place to stand, and I place my trust in the power that directs the universe.

Meditations 6.10 Waterfield

There it is:

- if it is atoms, there is no point to anything, no value to anything “Why would I care about anything?”
- If it is providence, there Marcus can justify his values.

it is as simple as this

**No logos, no cosmic sympathy, no normativity of reason no virtue, no values, no goal to life,
no Stocism**

Marcus needs this.

The world as a living being—one nature, one soul. Keep that in mind. And how everything feeds into that single experience, moves with a single motion. And how everything helps produce everything else. Spun and woven together.

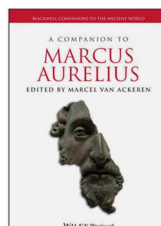
Meditations 4.40

What follows coheres with what went before. Not like a random catalogue whose order is imposed upon it arbitrarily, but logically connected. And just as what exists is ordered and harmonious, what comes into being betrays an order too. Not a mere sequence, but an astonishing concordance”

Meditations 4:45

Everything is interwoven, and the web is holy; none of its parts are unconnected. They are composed harmoniously, and together they compose the world. One world, made up of all things. One divinity, present in them all. One substance and one law—the logos that all rational beings share. And one truth ... If this is indeed the culmination of one process, beings who share the same birth, the same logos

Meditations 7.9



[A Companion to Marcus Aurelius](#)