

Do Pigs Value Katastematic Pleasure? (Summer 2022 K / K Discussion)

Post by "Don" of July 10, 2022 at 12:06 AM

I knew I'd hit a nerve with Cassius on this whole katastematic/kinetic topic. I'm still digging through all the posts from today, and I'll have to go back and read [Nikolsky](#), G&T (not gin and tonic, unfortunately), et al. I'll have more to say over the next few days. Plus I'm digging into the original texts as well. *That's* the most important task in my opinion.

For the record, however, there is no doubt that Epicurus divided up pleasures into at least 2 different but related kinds. No matter what, we have to account for:

DL X.136. ὁ δ' Ἐπίκουρος ἐν τῷ Περὶ αἰρέσεων οὕτω λέγει: "ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἀταραξία καὶ ἀπονία καταστηματικά εἰσιν ἡδοναί: ἡ δὲ χαρὰ καὶ ἡ εὐφροσύνη κατὰ κίνησιν ἐνεργεῖα βλέπονται."

And Epicurus, in his *On Choices*, says this, "For freedom from disturbance ("ataraxia") and freedom from suffering ("aponia") are katastematic pleasures, and joy and delight are viewed as kinetic and active." (trans. Inwood & Gerson)

Epicurus is quoted, directly dividing pleasures into at least 2 katastematic ones and at least 2 kinetic/active ones. He made the distinction. He used the terms. Note, however, that he is NOT quoted as putting them in a hierarchy that I can see, but the words are there.

Plus this is the passage directly before Epicurus's *On Choices* quote:

Metrodorus in his *Timocrates*, whose actual words are : "Thus pleasure being conceived both as that species which consists in motion and that which is a state of rest."

Metrodorus's quote is:

νοουμένης δὲ ἡδονῆς τῆς τε κατὰ κίνησιν καὶ τῆς καταστηματικῆς.

Right there, again, is κίνησιν (kinēsin) and

καταστηματικῆς (katastēmatikēs).

Metrodorus is also quoted as saying (I'm paraphrasing, don't have it in front of me) that we can be more confident of the pleasures arising from states than from those of objects or activities outside of ourselves. To me, this points directly to the katastematic/kinetic debate plus seems to point to the importance of autarkeia/self-reliance.

So, even if by some chance Epicurus and Metrodorus were responding to criticism from another philosopher (and I don't think they were, but for the sake of conjecture), the two katastematic

quotes show both Epicurus and Metrodorus accepted the terms and the categories as useful. We have to understand why, taking into account:

- All pleasure is good.
- The feelings are two: pleasure and pain.

Also for the record, I don't accept, as some academic commentators appear to, that ataraxia and aponia are "negative" or "not sensed". That makes no sense to me just because there's an a- "un-" prefix on the words. One can take pleasure in being in a state one can describe as being "undisturbed" or in a state one can describe as "pain-free." I simply don't accept that ataraxia and aponia are not "sensed."