

Confidence in Katastematic Pleasure

Post by “Don” of February 10, 2023 at 11:00 PM

This thread grows out of another thread, specifically [my "soapboxing" posts that were a response to @A Gardner and @Cassius where I "took a stand for ataraxia."](#)

For those who don't want too much review, my primary contentions were:

1. Epicurus advocates strengthening a quiet, calm, anxiety-free mind.
2. Equanimity/tranquility/ataraxia is available at all times, even under duress and trying circumstances.
3. IF we can cultivate ataraxia, we have a much better chance of making a good choice to remove, move around, or avoid the "obstacle to pleasure" than we would if we get anxious, feel "psychological unrest" or get agitated or fearful.
4. Tranquility / ataraxia are not the "goal of life" but Epicurus stresses over and over the importance of freedom from disturbance in the mind and "pain in the body" (I have a problem with this kind of translation of aponia, but we'll leave that for another time.) (Still not that time btw 😊)
5. PLEASURE is the goal, and tranquility is pleasure, freedom from anxiety is pleasure, but it is pleasure that is always available to us which is why Epicurus places such importance on it - NOT exclusionary importance as the ONLY pleasure we should pursue but of significant and paramount importance to give us the possibility of the best pleasurable life possible in addition to all the other pleasures we can experience.
6. My metaphor of what is meant by ataraxia / tranquility / calm is the picture of a musk ox, facing into the howling winter wind, legs braces, ice forming on its hair and face, knowing the disturbance will eventually pass ("Pain is short...") and it can then go on and paw the snow for luscious plants to eat. (Note: just a metaphor btw. Not saying musk oxen are Epicureans.)
7. My reading of katastematic pleasures, including ataraxia, are those that arise from within ourselves and that these are the only pleasures in life that we can be confident of at all times.
8. The kinetic pleasures arise from our interaction with external stimuli and phenomena.
9. Metrodorus stresses the importance of both kinds of pleasures, but he also wrote a book entitled "On the Source of Happiness in Ourselves being greater than that which arises from Objects."
10. [Cassius](#) raises the point that the following is a new assertion to him and he is not "aware of textual citations to support it": my reading of katastematic pleasures, including ataraxia, are those that arise from within ourselves and that these are the only pleasures in life that we can be confident of at all times.

11. [Cassius](#) countered with citing Diogenes Laertius quote about the wise man will "cry out and lament" when on the rack.
 - I countered his quotation with the quote just prior to that with "even if the wise man be put on the rack, he is happy (eudaimonia)."

And that is where we left it. I encourage anyone interested in the full context to go back and read the other thread. I'm starting this one so as not to further hijack the other thread. In this thread, we will inevitably talk about the katastematic/kinetic pleasure "controversy" but my primary goal at the beginning is to establish (IF I can establish) that katastematic pleasure... or pleasure primarily experienced in the mind as a stable state... is the one in which we can be more confident than pleasures resulting from external stimuli or phenomena.

Let the games begin...