

# Is gratitude a katastematic or kinetic pleasure?

Post by "Don" of October 26, 2023 at 12:12 AM

Searching the texts for mention of the pleasures Epicurus cites in *On Choices and Avoidances* is a good idea.

However, I would offer that it's important to search the Greek words and not the English translations. That said, I'm curious to look at your citations to see what words are used in the Greek text!

The words Epicurus uses are in DL 10.136 are:

καταστηματικά ἡδοναί (katastematikai hedonai) "katastematic pleasures"

- ἀταραξία (ataraxia)
- ἀπονία (aponia)

κατὰ κίνησιν ἐνεργεῖα βλέπονται (kata kinesin energeia blepontai) "(pleasures) consisting in motion and activity"

- χαρὰ (khara) "joy" (Hicks)
- εὐφροσύνη (euphrosyne) "delight" (Hicks)

Sometimes the English translation use "joy" or "delight" or similar words to translate hedone "pleasure" which obscures what the word used is. So, I'm really not trying to be difficult, but translations can really obscure what the actual text actually says sometimes.

Here's where I replaced words conveying katastematic and "kinetic" pleasures:

Post

**[RE: Modern Neuroscience And The Katastematic / Kinetic Debate](#)**

There aren't a lot of opportunities, but I decided to try and replace single words with either katastematic or kinetic pleasure.

It should also be remembered that the phrase "kinetic pleasure" isn't *actually* what Epicurus says. What he says is (as literally as I can make it):

"Peace of mind (ataraxia) and freedom from pain (aponia) are condition/state pleasures; joy (khara) and delight (euphrosyne) are seen in relation to (κατὰ) motion (κίνησιν) by means of activity (ἐνεργεῖα)."

ἡ μὲν...



Don

July 2, 2023 at 11:04 PM

εὐφροσύνη occurs in Diogenes Laertius, Book 10 in the 10.136, but also occurs in the μάλλον τε εὐφρανθήσεσθαι τῶν ἄλλων ἐν ταῖς θεωρίαις.

"He will find more delight than other men in contemplation/consideration/speculation."

See my website on the characteristics of the sage:

[Epicurean Sage - ...enjoy themselves more than others in contemplation](#)

Hicks: He will take more delight than other men in state festivals. Yonge: ...and he will find more pleasure than other men in speculations. Yonge appears to...

sites.google.com

The word is also used in another form as the title of the book that Timocrates wrote, Εὐφραντοῖς, to slander Epicurus, mentioned at DL 10.6.

A form is in VS48:

While you are on the road, try to make the later part better than the earlier part; and be equally happy when you reach the end.

πειρᾶσθαι τὴν ὑστέραν τῆς προτέρας κρείττω ποιεῖν, ἕως ἂν ἐν ὁδῷ ὤμεν· ἐπειδὴν δ' ἐπὶ πέρας ἔλθωμεν, ὁμαλῶς εὐφραίνεσθαι. (lit. to make merry, to cheer; so here "equally merry")

I've also found εὐφροσύνη in [the inscription of Diogenes of Oenoanda](#):

Fragment 215, column 1

[5 lines missing]

[- ca.6 -]ἀπελέν[χ]ε-

ται. □ vac. 1□ τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν

αἱ μὲν εἰσιν κεναί,

αἱ δὲ φυσικαί. □ vac. 1□ αἱ μὲν

οὔν φυσικαὶ τὰ τοσαῦ-

τα ζητοῦσιν ὅσα εἰς

τὴν τῆς φύσεως ἡμῶν

εὐφροσύνην ἐ[στίν]

<http://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3451-is-gratitude-a-katastematic-or-kinetic-pleasure/?postID=26834#post26834>

[ἀνανκαῖα, αἰ δὲ κεναῖ]

[5 lines missing]

[In English:](#)

Of the desires some are vain, others natural. Now those that are natural seek after such things as [are necessary] for our nature's enjoyment, [while those that are vain]  
.....

fragment 10, column 4

[τοσ]όν[δε προστίθημι].

[ἐπει]δὴ [ἄναρ] τελοῦμεν

τὰ ἀφροδεῖσια, ὡς καὶ ὕ-

παρ, οὐδέν ἐστι τὸ μά-

την ἀπ' αὐτῶν εὐφρο-

σύνην λαμβάνειν

ὅτι καθεύδομεν. □

...we perform sexual acts (ἀφροδεῖσια aphrodeisia), it is no good arguing that the pleasure we derive from them is unreal because we are asleep.

Those are the texts I had readily at hand this evening. I don't think I searched for euprosyne before, and I'm curious if there are more. I think khara (the other "kinetic" pleasure) has more references.

Getting back to the discussion, I find it interesting that Diogenes of Oenoanda uses euprosyne to describe the pleasures of sex. The famous fragment of Epicurus's includes sex:

67. I do not think I could conceive of the good without the joys of taste, of sex, of hearing, and without the pleasing motions caused by the sight of bodies and forms.

οὐδὲ γὰρ ἔγωγε ἔχω τί νοήσω τάγαθὸν ἀφαιρῶν μὲν τὰς διὰ χυλῶν ἡδονάς, ἀφαιρῶν δὲ τὰς δι' ἀφροδισίων, ἀφαιρῶν δὲ τὰς δι' ἀκροαμάτων, ἀφαιρῶν δὲ καὶ τὰς διὰ μορφῆς κατ' ὄψιν ἡδείας κινήσεις.

The "sight of bodies and forms" is actually ὄψιν ἡδείας κινήσεις, lit. "seeing pleasant movements" and that last word is kineseis, directly related to the word in DL 10.136: "(pleasures) consisting in motion and activity"

Could it be that pleasures, writ large, can be categorized as either katastematic and "those consisting of motion and activity" and within those, sub-categorized as either forms of ataraxia

and aponia or khara and euphrosyne? The Oenoanda inscription seems to imply that the pleasures of sex are a form of euphrosyne. Diogenes Laertius seems to imply that contemplation (or festivals if you take the other tack) consist of euphrosyne. VS48 implies one should have euphrosyne on the road of life.

I'm just throwing this out as food for thought for now. For now, it's after midnight so... 🌍🌙

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Morning Postscript...

In looking at my other post referenced above, I noticed that I said Epicurus also uses the word ἐνεργεία from DL10.136 in the Letter to Herodotus:

[37] "Hence, since such a course is of service to all who take up natural science, I, who devote to the subject my continuous \*\*energy\*\* (τὸ συνεχές \*\*ἐνέργημα\*\* (energēma)) and \*\*reap the calm enjoyment of a life\*\* (ἐγγαληνίζων) like this, have prepared for you just such an epitome and manual of the doctrines as a whole."

[37] "Ὅθεν δὴ πᾶσι χρησίμης οὔσης τοῖς ὠκειωμένοις φυσιολογία τῆς τοιαύτης ὁδοῦ, παρεγγυῶν τὸ συνεχές ἐνέργημα ἐν φυσιολογία καὶ τοιούτῳ μάλιστα ἐγγαληνίζων τῷ βίῳ ἐποίησά σοι καὶ τοιαύτην τινὰ ἐπιτομὴν καὶ στοιχείωσιν τῶν ὅλων δοξῶν.

The - let's call it - "kinetic/energetic" pleasure of \*studying\* natural science leads to ἐγγαληνίζων "the calm enjoyment" of life which to me sounds like a katastematic pleasure. ἐγγαληνίζων literally means "spend calmly." Which interestingly enough is related to γαληνός "calm, especially of the sea"! There's that ocean/sea metaphor again in relation to stable katastematic pleasure.

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, γαληνός](#)