

Is gratitude a katastematic or kinetic pleasure?

Post by “Pacatus” of November 4, 2023 at 5:13 PM

The more I think about (and we talk about) kinetic and katastematic pleasure, the more I am convinced that they are best described by example than by attempts at formulaic definition – and that descriptive definition ought to be treated only as aids to eliciting such experience in our personal lives (rather like the Zen concept of words as “fingers pointing to the moon”: let’s not get caught up worrying over the “fingers” – they are a useful, perhaps even necessary, pedagogical ploy, that’s all -- and enough).

A couple of illustrations:

1. I enjoy the kinetic pleasure of preparing and eating a meal (in terms of the aesthetic pleasure of preparing, the removal of hunger, and the gustatory pleasure of the taste – all of that). Afterward, I enjoy the lingering katastematic pleasure of satisfaction and contentment.
2. I enjoy the kinetic pleasure of a climactic sexual experience. Afterward, I bask in the lingering katastematic pleasure of contentment (often called “the afterglow”).
3. I enjoy the kinetic pleasure of a certain mental activity – such as playing a game of chess – and afterward enjoy the lingering memory (without necessarily trying to activate that memory: just letting it be).

Other than specific instances, I’d add a general feeling of good health and wellbeing as *katãstema* – as a lingering (more or less stable) background pathé of pleasure, no doubt the result of various kinetic pursuits of various pleasures.

At bottom, I think that hardline distinctions are not necessary – rather they can blend, one into the other. Anyway, that is the way I have come to think of it. 😊