

Gosling & Taylor, The Greeks on Pleasure.

Post by "Godfrey" of June 23, 2020 at 3:31 PM

Quote

Maybe even the concept of a "pleasant life" is so much of an abstraction as to be misleading to talk about as a single concept, just like it can be hazardous to talk about a single "greatest good?"

Quote

Is this the same as the "highest good" or what Torquatus describes in "On Ends" as "We are inquiring, then, what is the final and ultimate Good, which as all philosophers are agreed must be of such a nature as to be the End to which all other things are means, while it is not itself a means to anything else."

The first quote brings up an excellent point as to the "greatest good" being an abstraction. It reminds me of an ongoing debate back in architectural school.... El Lissitsky wrote in Russia: An Architecture for World Revolution that the square is the basic element of all design. A friend and I started pushing the idea for fun, and people were arguing over it for months. Just as each design has its own basis, so does each life.

Part of the genius of Epicurus is that he incorporated pleasure into the Canon and thereby made it a criterion rather than an abstraction.