

Confidence in Katastematic Pleasure

Post by "Cassius" of February 11, 2023 at 5:25 AM

I am together with all of this with the probable exception of post 3. That is not what Diogenes Laertius says about the two categories, is it?

And of course I also want the record to reflect that I agree with Boris [Nikolsky](#) that the whole "katastematic" question is an overlay of non-Epicurean analysis adopted from other schools, well apart from Epicurus, which is an artifact of Diogenes Laertius' well meaning but imprecise attempt to categorize Epicurus according to theories well known at DL's time.

As for mental pleasures being more significant than bodily ones at times I agree that makes sense as stated by Torquatus in his discussion with Cicero, so Metrodorus' book title would fit that well.

I also think it is useful to highlight the confidence of maintaining ones pleasures and the ability to experience pleasures mentally (including the memory of pleasures of the past) which is also well documented.

The only real problem that I have is that framing all this in terms of "katastematic pleasure" seems to me to be bound to be interpreted by those who are not so subtle as Don to be justification for their continuing focus on this term for their implication that katastematic pleasure is something higher than any other kind of pleasure, which I believe is not justified and is very harmful.

Of the points raised by Don, points 4 and 5 are lost on the "katastematic pleasure above all" crowd, and the difficulty is that the view of "Confidence in Katastematic Pleasure" will continue to crowd out and undermine the proper focus, which was as summarized by Torquatus more accurately as

"pleasures great, numerous and constant, both mental and bodily, with no pain to thwart or threaten them" (Reid)

Nothing there about "katastematic pleasure" being the primary goal," and to elevate it loosely as many do is to implicitly derogate all the rest.

So to me the task is to flesh out the benefits of the subject without confounding errors (which are in many cases intentional under the influence of Buddhism and Stoicism) even worse than before.

I have no doubt Don can do that here, but in general conversation about Epicurus elsewhere using this terminology is like hobbling oneself at the beginning by explaining "what's good is easy to get" and "what's terrible is easy to endure" to starving children. That's not a challenge

that any Epicurean has any need to undertake voluntarily, because those contentions phrased that way are not well founded in the core texts of Epicurus himself. To me, those phrasings are best considered to be innocent but harmful diversions from the main core and stream of Epicurean thought. "Easy" and "katastematic" are similarly troublesome, and I don't advise people to look for unnecessary trouble!