

# Letter to Menoikeus translation by Peter Saint-Andre

Post by "Don" of May 30, 2023 at 7:40 AM

Thank you for that, [Elli](#) .

To be clear, I completely agree with you that Epicurus taught that we should enjoy pleasure within certain limits. He talked about limits and boundaries a lot.

I'm just unclear how you're saying this one phrase <τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας> in the ancient text can be translated as "those enjoyments that lie out of limits" when I'm just not seeing any "out of limits" in the actual words.

Let me go back to the text. Using my translation of the letter, I get:

## Quote

Therefore, whenever we say repeatedly that "pleasure is the τέλος," we do not say the pleasure of those who are prodigal and <τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας> like those who are ignorant, those who don't agree with us, or those who believe wrongly; but we mean that which neither pains the body nor troubles the mind. [132] For it is not an endless string of drinking parties and festivals, and not taking advantage of slaves and women, nor does an extravagant table of fish and other things bring forth a sweet life but self-controlled reasoning and examining the cause of every choice and rejection and driving out the greatest number of opinions that take hold of the mind and bring confusion and trouble.

Epicurus \*could have\* talked about "those enjoyments that lie out of limits" there but there are other slanders from "those who are ignorant, those who don't agree with us, or those who believe wrongly" that he could have wanted to emphasize.

I'm just trying to understand how you can interpret those specific words <τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας> the way you did. If I could ask Bailey and others how they interpreted them the way they did, I would. 😊 You just happen to be in the forum.

And I don't think I'm using some Platonic dialectical method. Epicurus advocated using words with their natural meaning, as I understand it, not to hide meaning or redefine words like Socrates/Plato did. Toward that end, I don't see "out of limits" expressed by <τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας> but I can see a natural literal meaning like Saint-Andre's "the enjoyment of sleep."