

Modern Neuroscience And The Katastematic / Kinetic Debate

Post by “Don” of July 2, 2023 at 12:43 PM

[Quote from Godfrey](#)

Upon further percolating



I like that! From now on, I will no longer cogitate or "meditate on these things," I'm going to "percolate on these things." 👍

[Quote from Godfrey](#)

Would it be that kinetic pleasure is a condition of a change of state and katastematic pleasure is a condition of being in a state? This actually seems like the simplest and most accurate definition.

Yes, I agree with the following addenda: I think this line gets to the heart of Epicurus's recognizing these two categories of pleasure... and his and others saying we can have more confidence in the katastematic pleasure. There's not only the "state" of feeling katastematic it is also the "stability" of katastematic pleasure. We can have confidence in the availability of katastematic pleasure because it is a "stable condition" of the mind or a "background or foundational" condition of the mind. This, to me, is also connected to the characteristic of the sage in that "once the sage has become wise, they will no longer fall back into ignorance." Once incorrect ideas are rooted out, they can't grow back. This is where ataraxia comes from: The mind being in a stable condition of not being worried about death, the gods, etc. Once the incorrect views are rooted out, we achieve a stable tranquil condition of the mind that is no longer troubled by these views.

I don't think the "motion of the atoms" has anything to do with Epicurus's categorization of pleasure into katastematic or kinetic. As Godfrey points out, the atoms are moving all the time. I don't see any way to have the atomic motions be concerned with the kinetic/katastematic distinction.

[Quote from Godfrey](#)

Is there anything in the Greek that would support the idea that Epicurus was referring to change, not motion, if/when he used the terms kinetic and katastematic?

I'll use that as a jumping off point to look at the Greek and Latin (I rarely need much provocation to return to dictionaries and etymologies 😊) κατάστημα literally means "condition, state, not necessarily permanent: bodily or mental condition, "τὸ εὐσταθὲς σαρκὸς κ." Epicur.Fr.68, Metrod.Fr.5, cf. Diog.Oen.29" Check out the post above where I shared those references to Epicurus, Metrodorus, and Diogenes Oenoanda.

I found this interesting article online: <https://cup.columbia.edu/wp-content/upl...-Appendix-6.pdf>
and this one: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/14932622.pdf>

There' also Hiram's article: <https://societyofepicurus.com/on-the-standar...tatic-pleasure/>

I admit I have not read these yet but was intrigued by the abstracts. I'll try to read them soon-ish but if anyone beats me to it, please share thoughts!