

Would You Rather Live For A Week As (1) Epicurus During the Last Week of His Life or (2) An Anonymous Shepherd Laying In The Grass In The Summertime With No Pain At All?

Post by "Don" of September 13, 2023 at 8:13 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Possibly for present purposes we are coming near to exhausting the ataraxia angle

Agreed... But have we answered your question about Epicurus?

[Quote from Cassius](#)

the immediate issue of ataraxia not being a transcendent state of epiphany or a final destination that once achieved either justifies the effort to that point or describes a particular experience of a particular activity which can be equated to "seeing the Mona Lisa before you die" or something specific like that.

Agreed. Ataraxia is not some rarefied special "state of epiphany." I think I've outlined my position in this thread, but I would expand on that, however, to say that my interpretation is that Epicurus taught that we need both katastematic and kinetic pleasures for a complete life. I'm beginning to really like, if I may say, the formulation of something like "floating on the ocean, surfing on the waves" to convey that symbiotic relationship between katastematic and kinetic pleasures.

We've been concentrating on ataraxia but I wanted to add a word for aponia. To me, aponia is NOT "feeling no pain." To complement the sense of ataraxia as being taking joy in living with one's disturbance-free mind, aponia to me is taking delight in the smooth functioning of the body, being in the flow with your body functioning well. Taking this tack, I can see how katastematic pleasure can come and go. I certainly only have fleeting feelings of aponia. I'm better at experiencing feelings of ataraxia, albeit it's a work in progress.

I would agree that the common knowledge has become ataraxia is a special unique mystical state etc. Syncretism and conflation with other traditions is at play in my opinion. Additionally, I think Epicurus's philosophy is very practical and down to earth and open to all. People/academics don't want practical, down to earth. They want Ideal Forms, Essences, Prime Movers, the Logos, mystery, mysticism, and so on. Massie's paper gets us moving in a more practical, down to earth direction.