

Eat Drink and be Merry!

Post by "Cassius" of September 29, 2023 at 8:20 AM

FYI and FWIW, when I wrote my long post 16 I had not seen Godfrey's 15 - we crossposted.

I would say that in looking for a definition of katestematic this would be a very good time for anyone who has not read it to re-read what Boris [Nikolsky](#) has to say, including:

"Besides all these problems and contradictions there is yet another, quite remarkable fact. As it happens, most sources make no mention whatever of any differentiation between kinetic and static pleasures but rather convey Epicurus' doctrine in such a way as to suggest that pleasure was to him a unified and unambiguous concept. This group comprises sources that are rightly considered to be the most reliable: these are texts by Epicurus himself, as well as by Lucretius and Plutarch. On the other side, besides Cicero, only Diogenes Laertius and Athenaeus mention two kinds of pleasure."

Gosling and Taylor make the same points in much more detail, but [Nikolsky](#) states it concisely and traces the issue of how this came to be a question in the first place. The full article is available wherever [Nikolsky](#) is clickable here at the forum, or directly [here](#).

So my current view is I think we have some separate things going on here:

1 - It is critically important to extent the label of pleasure to the normal non-painful state of being alive and doing and thinking whatever is not painful. And "whatever is not painful" includes every kind of mental or bodily pleasure you can name, whether kinetic or katestematic or any Greek word starting with "k" you prefer to use.

2 - It is critically important for the mind to go through the process of understanding how life in the absence of pain is pleasurable, and how the gods and death and the prospect of pain do not prevent us from leading happy lives.

3 - Once 1 and 2 are established, then people can choose among "kinetic / active" or "resting / static / katestematic" pleasures as fits their personal situations and as various activities and pursuits are available to them. But they need to understand that contrary to those who argue that katestematic pleasures are the ultimate goal, there is no "authentic" or "higher" or "noble" or "worthy" ranking that makes one pleasure intrinsically and for all people at all times "better" than another. No such ranking exists that tells everyone to target "katestematic" pleasure as the ultimate goal of life. If you play with definitions and divide up "Pleasure" into types, and pit one type against the other as better for everyone at all times, then you create a war among pleasures and you imply that god or idealism or virtue or geometry or numerology is needed to tell you which is the "best." And we all know what happens to a house divided against itself.