

Article: "Lucretian Pleasures" by Sedley

Post by "Don" of October 18, 2023 at 8:08 AM

I think this line is good:

Quote from Sedley

Pleasure, that is, consists not in mere lack of pain, but in perceiving in a painless way. When it comes to the specifically mental supreme pleasure, freedom from anxiety, then, its attainment will lie, not in the mere absence of worry, but in perceiving the world with an entirely tranquil and worry-free frame of mind.

As I've mentioned elsewhere, I still intensely dislike the word "static" for καταστήματικός *katastematic* and even Sedley uses *stable* at the end of this section:

Quote from Sedley

We need be in no doubt that this godlike pleasure is a 'static pleasure', in the technical Epicurean sense of *hēdonē katastēmatikē*. Epicurus himself, if he enjoyed his voyage of discovery as we must assume he did, will have been enjoying a mental kinetic pleasure, the process of freeing himself from his previously painful fear and incomprehension about what the universe might threaten. Lucretius is silent about that kinetic pleasure of discovery, and sticks instead to a single Epicurean tenet: it is not the kinetic thrill of eliminating pain, but the resultant stable pleasure of peace of mind, that can make our own state fully equal to that of the gods.

I also like this:

Quote from Sedley

Epicurus' excellent point, that a tranquil life depends on the absence of anxiety around the clock, whether awake or asleep, is one that Lucretius takes to heart.

In the end, this paper seems to me to have a narrow (and somewhat disjointed) focus; but there are some good points.