

Is gratitude a katastematic or kinetic pleasure?

Post by "Cassius" of October 26, 2023 at 5:03 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

In any case, just saying "kinetic vs katastematic" masks a whole lot of stuff going on under the surface.

That's my thought too, and that's why I also think that the ultimate crux of the issue is that Epicurus is extending the word "pleasure" to cover both the exciting/stimulative type of activities that everyone acknowledges to be pleasure, plus what I would call - if I were German - EveryOtherExperienceOfLifeThatIsNotPainful.

It's the sweeping inclusion of normal everyday healthy non-painful existence (which is what is being referenced in response to Chrysippus' hand argument) under the word "pleasure" that is the revolutionary issue and which makes "a life of pleasure" an attainable goal.

Within that sweeping overall term there are all sorts of pleasurable experiences, including (referencing Don above) "ataraxia ... the tranquility of mind that results from ridding one's mind of fears of death and the gods and obtaining a proper understanding of natural phenomena, and so on." Within that big picture framework I can see the usefulness of discussing k/k matters as a means of being sure we understand every detail. But the big picture is not established by the k/k detail, and any valid interpretation of a k/k distinction is going to have to fit within the big picture that all non-painful life experience is "pleasure."

I think we're all in agreement as to the importance of the Epicurean focus on the importance of freedom from fear of the gods and fear of death. What I don't know that we are all together on is that (1) if there are only two feelings, and (2) if someone is alive they are aware of feeling something(s), and (3) each and every one of those feelings is *either* pleasure or pain but not both in the same part of the person's body or mind.

I actually think most all of us *are* together on that last paragraph, but we're not together on the ramifications of what that last paragraph means. Cicero wouldn't accept that pleasure can embrace both stimulative pleasures and normal ordinary healthy feelings of proper functioning, and I am not sure that we (like Cicero) are all together in accepting it either. It would be surprising if all of our readers here, new and old, *were* all together, because it's a dramatic redefinition of the normal use of the word.