

Is gratitude a katastematic or kinetic pleasure?

Post by "Don" of October 27, 2023 at 8:22 AM

I had further thoughts this morning on the importance of what's going on under the surface of DL 10.136. I think I've stumbled on this idea before but never explicitly formulated it.

In that citation from Epicurus's *On Choices and Rejections* (sorry, I really dislike "Avoidances"), he posits two kinds of pleasure:

A. "katastematic" pleasures which I think we agree has something to do with "stability," however we're defining that for the moment.

B. pleasures derived from motion by means of activity.

Here's my morning thought:

Pleasures of the B variety are initiated or are derived through motion by means of activity. I get the impression that *κατὰ κίνησιν ἐνεργεία* refers to motion initiated both by voluntary action of oneself and activity acting upon a person.

LSJ has *ἐνέργεια* defined, in part, as the opposite of *εξις* (exis): "a being in a certain state, a permanent condition as produced by practice (*πρᾶξις*)."

That *εξις* "a permanent condition as produced by practice" sounds a lot like what I and others have been trying to say about "katastematic" pleasures. Epicurus himself wrote that he produced the permanent condition of his calm life through his practice of studying natural science. And I interpret that "calm" as referring to his mind being calmed from fears, anxieties, etc. of gods, death, etc. by internalizing - by *knowing* - the natural explanation of phenomena.

So, my offering is that katastematic pleasure is the pleasure derived from slowing down and experiencing the "permanent condition as produced by practice." If we want to describe it as "background" that could work, but that seems now to me to shortchange the experience. Katastematic pleasure derives from practice, study, work, activity, *ἐνεργεία*, but once you have that stable foundation, no one can take it away.

I need to think about this more, but this is off the top of my head on a Friday morning.