

Competing Greek Words for Pleasure in the Epicurean Corpus?

Post by “Pacatus” of October 31, 2023 at 1:00 PM

Calling [Don](#) (Our linguistic El Greco!) 😊

The following is a quote from the Wikipedia article on Hedone:

“In the philosophy of Epicurus, *hēdonē* is described as a pleasure that may or may not derive from actions that are virtuous, whereas another form of pleasure, *terpsis*, is always virtuous. Another Epicurean reading, **which distinguished *hēdonē* from *terpsis***, referred to it as a feeling of pleasure that is episodic and might or might not be beneficial. According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Epicurus uses *hēdonē* in reference to only physical pleasures.” <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hedone>

Wiktionary has *terpsis* (τέρψις) as “full enjoyment, delight, gladness, pleasure” from a proto-Indo-European term meaning “fulfillment, satisfaction.” https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%CF%84%CE...2#Ancient_Greek

In the cited Stanford Encyclopedia, there is no reference to *terpsis*, rather to *khara* (χάρᾱ) – joy or exultation: **“There are also positive states of mind, which Epicurus identifies by the special term *khara* (joy), as opposed to *hēdonē* (pleasure, i.e., physical pleasure).”** [There follows a commentary on kinetic versus katasematic pleasures, the latter being (according to the author) associated with the pleasure of well-being (*eudaimonia*) as such.] <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/epicurus/#PsycEthi>

Are there sources in the Greek, among the Epicurean corpus, for **τέρψις** and/or **χάρᾱ**? And a distinction from ἡδονή?

(If this has already been the subject of previous threads, just send me there. On a very cursory skim of some other threads on pleasure, I didn't see anything. 😊)