

Another Tetrapharmakos Video Discussion

Post by “Pacatus” of May 9, 2024 at 5:46 PM

In my random surfing, I found the essay cited below, from which I include the following quotations:

“Our body enjoys doing what is healthy.” And this may be a key to Epicurus’ view. What Epicurus terms katastematic pleasure is much like Aristotle's unimpeded activity of a natural state; it is the natural pleasure experienced when the organism is functioning smoothly. It is the pleasure of being alive; living and functioning in a healthy way feels good because it is good.”

“Lack of disturbance does not mean lack of sensory perceptions, and lack of pain does not imply lack of feeling or pleasure. Since we are hylomorphic beings--beings of animate and sensate flesh--pleasure requires involvement of the body and senses. To enjoy sensory pleasure we need to have a healthy constitution; therefore, we can most enjoy sensory pleasures when we enjoy them in moderation.”

“To summarize, it is clear that Epicurus believed that the highest pleasure is the stable pleasure of complete calmness of soul and lack of pain. Human beings in that state can enjoy the kinetic pleasures that sweeten the senses: music, art, nature, sensory delights. Pleasure comes from sufficiency, not lack. ... However, Epicurean wisdom teaches that in fact we do not need much to live a rich and fulfilling life. When we experience a state in which we are satisfied and complete, we can enjoy all the variations that life brings.”

<https://cup.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Philosophies-of-Happiness-Appendix-6.pdf>

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The author seems to commit the same “higher pleasure” error mentioned by Cassius above – but does seem to succeed in arguing against the notion that a state of katastematic pleasure somehow obviates the natural, healthy desire for varying kinetic pleasures – on the contrary. And pleasure is pleasure.

Late Note: I found the author of the above -- Diana Lobel, associate professor of religion at Boston University. The above comes from her book *Philosophies of Happiness*.

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As a personal aside, re the italicized sentence above – A therapist friend once asked why I continued my particular indulgences in tobacco. I said: “Because I enjoy it.” His response: “Your body doesn’t.” 😞

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3839-another-tetrapharmakos-video-discussion/?postID=30299#post30299>