

The Use of Negation in Epicurean Philosophy Concepts

Post by "Cassius" of April 20, 2025 at 4:19 PM

Yes, Don thanks, that is a comment by Diogenes Laertius, who is consistent with Cicero and Athenaeus (if [Nikolsky](#)'s comments below are correct). To make it easier on those who have not read [Nikolsky](#)'s full article, here is his abstract explaining how he takes the clues set out by Gosling & Taylor and then explains how these three men may have come to make their commentary. For those who can go down the rabbit hole without being distracted and turned off, it's a fascinating subject.

G&T really do a great job of tracking down all aspects of "The Greeks on Pleasure" from the earliest days, through Epicurus, and through the original and later uses of these terms. I've read it all through once, but can't say I have a command of it at all. It's a bear to try to dive in and then come up for air.

Quote

ABSTRACT

The paper deals with the question of the attribution to Epicurus of the classification of pleasures into 'kinetic' and 'static'. This classification, usually regarded as authentic, confronts us with a number of problems and contradictions. Besides, it is only mentioned in a few sources that are not the most reliable. Following Gosling and Taylor, I believe that the authenticity of the classification may be called in question.

The analysis of the ancient evidence concerning Epicurus' concept of pleasure is made according to the following principle: first, I consider the sources that do not mention the distinction between 'kinetic' and 'static' pleasures, and only then do I compare them with the other group of texts which comprises reports by Cicero, Diogenes Laertius and Athenaeus. From the former group of texts there emerges a concept of pleasure as a single and not twofold notion, while such terms as 'motion' and 'state' describe not two different phenomena but only two characteristics of the same phenomenon. On the other hand, the reports comprising the latter group appear to derive from one and the same doxographical tradition, and to be connected with the classification of ethical doctrines put forward by the Middle Academy and known as the *divisio Carneadea*. In conclusion, I argue that the idea of Epicurus' classification of pleasures is based on a misinterpretation of Epicurus' concept in Academic doxography, which tended to contrapose it to doctrines of other schools, above all to the Cyrenaics' views.