

Gosling & Taylor, The Greeks on Pleasure.

Post by "Godfrey" of June 25, 2020 at 5:35 PM

Indeed there is a lot in there! This book is a complicated web of arguments and counter-arguments. I've tried to keep my quotes and paraphrasing accurate and in context but may not have fully succeeded.

As to 18.1.5, that was my paraphrase. Here is the complete paragraph:

"18.1.5 When it comes to assessing various degrees of pleasantness, Epicurus seems to have thought that pleasures are of two sorts, those of change (kinetic) and those of stable condition (katastematic) and perhaps that either sort could be primarily bodily or mental. (DL X.136, 144). Those associated with motion seem to be those which accompany a change from pain to its removal, whereas those of a stable state are those of conditions where pain is absent, and with it any cause of change (DL X.128-9). Quite generally, pleasures cannot increase in degree beyond the point of removal of pain (PD 3, DL X.139). With bodily pleasures this limit is reached when the need that is causing pain is removed. Mental pain is largely caused by such things as grief and fear, and so is only to be removed by reflections on the sources of these emotions (PD 18, DL X.144). In either case there is no possibility of increase past the point of the removal of pain, only of variation. There is no need, therefore, to get into complexities of comparative intensities or other methods of assessing the comparative pleasantness of different activities. A life free from pain *ipso facto* wins over one not so free."

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I am pretty sure the book contains good material somewhere supporting the view that kinetic implies ANY KIND of change, even moving the focus of the mind from one thought to another, so if someone comes across that reference and can pull it out and highlight it so we can find in the future I would appreciate it.

In chapter 19: [Gosling & Taylor, On Katastematic and Kinetic Pleasure](#)

"19.3.4 It is perhaps worth emphasizing that any view on this subject owes us an account of Epicurus' choice of terminology. On the more traditional view one has to suppose that 'kinetic' is chosen because Epicurus has an account of perception in terms of the movement (*kinesis*) of atoms. The trouble with this is that Epicurus' account of the organism quite generally is in terms of the movements of atoms, so that it is difficult to know what 'katastematic' is referring to. This might tempt one to Merlan's version of the contrast in terms of stable (katastematic) as against passing pleasures. There is no evidence that we can find for this in the original context of Epicurus' writings, though it has to be admitted that perusal of Cicero, and acceptance of his translations, does give some colour to the view. On the other hand, there is evidence in the

background to Epicurus for the kind of contrast which we are suggesting, and it fits very well with a view which relieves Epicurus of the awkwardness mentioned earlier in this chapter."

[Cassius](#) Not sure if this is what you were referring to, but it's a start....