

Letter to Menoikeus translation by Peter Saint-Andre

Post by “Kalosyni” of May 27, 2023 at 9:15 AM

I was looking at line 131 of this translation and noticed that it included "the enjoyment of sleep" as a type of pleasure not to be pursued. [Don](#) what is your take on this? I looked at [your translation](#) and didn't see anything referring to sleep.

Here is the text from Peter Saint-Andre:

"So when we say that pleasure is the goal, we do not mean the pleasures of decadent people or the enjoyment of sleep, as is believed by those who are ignorant or who don't understand us or who are ill-disposed to us, but to be free from bodily pain and mental disturbance. For a pleasant life is produced not by drinking and endless parties and enjoying boys and women and consuming fish and other delicacies of an extravagant table, but by sober reasoning, searching out the cause of everything we accept or reject, and driving out opinions that cause the greatest trouble in the soul."

[Letter to Menoikos, by Epicurus](#)

Post by “Don” of May 27, 2023 at 10:38 AM

Short response: By Zeus, [Kalosyni](#) !! Saint-Andre is correct!! Thanks for picking up on that.

Longer response: I appear to have become so interested in τὰς τῶν ἀσώτων ἡδονὰς that I completely overlooked καὶ τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας in 131.

τὰς τῶν ἀσώτων ἡδονὰς is the "pleasures of the prodigal." I admit I got so caught up in the implications of ἀσώτων that I *missed* that whole next phrase. Egads! Mea maxima culpa! I'll need to upload a new version of my translation.

καὶ τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας:

ἀπολαύσει

I. act of enjoying, fruition

II. result of enjoying, pleasure,

κειμένος < κείμαι

- to lie, lie outstretched
 - to lie asleep, repose, lie idle, lie still
 - to lie sick or wounded, lie in misery
 - to lie dead
 - to lie neglected, uncared for, unburied
 - (of wrestlers) to have a fall

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, κείμαι](#)

So, that's all a bit embarrassing, but I greatly appreciate your finding that.

Post by “Cassius” of May 27, 2023 at 10:46 AM

Kalsoyni asked me about that and every other translation I can find (Bailey, Hicks, Yonge, Epicurus Wiki) focuses on prodigal and sensuality.

If it is correct that "sleeping" or "idleness" should be in here, that places a much different spin on the advice and will be very helpful in fighting back the slant that "tranquility" means that Epicureans just want to lay around and do nothing. It would almost be a mirror of [VS63](#) warning against opposite extremes of luxury and frugality.

Also: [VS11](#). For most men rest is stagnation, and activity is madness.

I wonder if the word translated as "stagnation" there is relevant?

How could the standard translations be incorrect on this? Are they bringing to the table what they expect to see?

Post by “Cassius” of May 27, 2023 at 10:48 AM

An admonition against sleeping or idleness would remind me of this from Jefferson's letter to William Short:

Quote from Thomas Jefferson to William Short

I take the liberty of observing that you are not a true disciple of our master Epicurus, in indulging the indolence to which you say you are yielding. One of his canons, you know, was that “that indulgence which prevents a greater pleasure, or produces a greater pain, is to be avoided.” Your love of repose will lead, in its progress, to a suspension of healthy exercise, a relaxation of mind, an indifference to everything around you, and finally to a debility of body, and hebetude of mind, the farthest of all things from the happiness which the well-regulated indulgences of Epicurus ensure; fortitude, you know is one of his four cardinal virtues. That teaches us to meet and surmount difficulties; not to fly from them, like cowards; and to fly, too, in vain, for they will meet and arrest us at every turn of our road. Weigh this matter well; brace yourself up;

Post by “Cassius” of May 27, 2023 at 11:26 AM

Don is this commentary from Bailey about the section we are examining? As usual Bailey spins hard for minimalism...

4. *The character of true pleasure* (§§ 131, 132).

Having now explained clearly what in effect is meant by making pleasure the end of life, Epicurus is able to refute false conceptions. He is not encouraging gluttony or sensuality, which bring with them greater pains, but the higher pleasure of a simple life, which satisfies the needs of the body and keeps the mind free from trouble and therefore able to devote itself to the study of philosophy. It is interesting to see that even apparently among contemporaries there were calumnies abroad concerning the nature of 'Epicureanism'.

9. καὶ τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας. The MSS. have καὶ τὰς τῶν : τῶν is rightly excluded by Usener and must have come from τὰς τῶν ἀσώτων just before.

ὡς τινες . . . νομίζουσιν : notice the three classes of persons who make misrepresentations (1) those who do not know the true doctrine ; (2) those who know it, but do not agree with it, philosophical opponents ; (3) those who cannot comprehend it—another piece of careful writing. Bignone points out that under (2) Epicurus is thinking primarily of the Cyrenaics who regarded ἀπονία as a purely neutral state ('the condition of the dead') and only the starting-point of true pleasure. The doctrine of the 'limit of pleasure' is the really essential feature of Epicurus' own theory.

§ 132. 1. ἀπολαύσεις : there seems no reason for Usener's change to the singular ἀπόλαυσις : it means individual acts of ἀπόλαυσις.

4. νήφων λογισμὸς, 'sober reasoning', a rather strong metaphorical use : cf. Arist., *Metaph.* 984 b 17 οἷον νήφων παρ' εἰκῆ λέγοντας. Notice that Epicurus is here surreptitiously introducing a new point. The characteristic pleasure of the mind, freed from fear, is philosophical study.

5. τὰς δόξας, 'opinions', are in particular of course mistaken opinions about the gods and about death : Epicurus is here working back to the two fundamental principles laid down at the outset of the letter.

ἐξ ὧν : preserved only by B : its omission in the other MSS. has led to the filling out of the construction by ἀφ' οὗ or ἀφ' ὧν in the earlier printed texts.

Post by "Don" of May 27, 2023 at 11:42 AM

Yes.

Post by "Don" of May 27, 2023 at 12:36 PM

I'm taking a closer look at κειμένας (now that I'm *consciously* aware of its existence!) Thinking out loud and working on a draft of my revision ...

There is the embedded prepositional phrase ἐν ἀπολαύσει "in enjoying; in taking pleasure; in enjoyment"

The whole phrase τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας could be interpreted as something like "the κειμένας in enjoying; the κειμένας in enjoyment" So, the meaning hinges on κειμένας

I see EpicurusWiki translates that as "we do not mean the pleasure of debauchery or sensuality,"

Bailey has "When, therefore, we maintain that pleasure is the end, we do not mean the pleasures of profligates and those that consist in sensuality,"

I don't see where they're getting "sensuality"

κειμένας is the feminine accusative plural of κείμενος (because of the fem. acc. pl. definite article τὰς in the phrase). κείμενος is the present middle participle of κείμαι (...-ing)

As linked above for κείμαι, [LSJ has](#) (changing the verbs to participles with -ing)

- lying down to rest, reposing; lying idle; lying still
- lying sick or wounded (Note: This one doesn't seem to fit)
- lying dead; lying buried; freq. of a corpse
- being laid up, in store, of goods, property

For discussion purposes, I'm going to try replacing those participles literally in our phrase. So, Epicureans, per Epicurus, when they say pleasure, "they don't say the pleasures of the prodigal nor..."

- the lying down to rest or sleep, reposing, in enjoyment
- the lying idle in enjoyment
- the lying dead in enjoyment
- the being laid up, in store, of goods, property, in enjoyment

I don't get "sensuality" from any of that nor from the LSJ's extensive definitions. The one I find most intriguing is "the lying buried in enjoyment." Is this a reference to those who take pleasure in imagining a pleasure in the afterlife? Is that also a potential crack at the Cyrenaics who called "calm" like being dead?

I'm going to use Saint-Andre's translation to provide context around that phrase:

Quote from Epicurus' Letter to Menoikeus via Saint-Andre (emphasis added)

So when we say that pleasure is the goal, we do not mean the pleasures of decadent people or [the enjoyment of sleep], as is believed by those who are ignorant or who don't understand us or who are ill-disposed to us, but to be free from bodily pain and mental disturbance.

He does bring up rivals and enemies who are ignorant, don't understand, and are ill-disposed to the Epicurean school. My uncontroversial contention would be that those two phrases - τὰς τῶν ἀσώτων ἡδονὰς and τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας - are direct references to the positions of those rivals and enemies. That "being dead" connotation continues to intrigue me. I'm not saying that's correct - due to my rudimentary Greek and that no one else seems to pick up on it. However, if we can see translations as diverse as "sensuality" and "the enjoyment of sleep," I'm going to throw my hat in the ring with a "being dead" connotation! However, the last possibility of laying up a lot of goods and property has some potential, too.

Thanks again, [Kalosyni](#) , for jump-starting this discussion!!

Post by “Don” of May 27, 2023 at 2:34 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Also: [VS11](#). For most men rest is stagnation, and activity is madness.

I wonder if the word translated as "stagnation" there is relevant?

[VS11](#)

τῶν πλείστων ἀνθρώπων τὸ μὲν ἡσυχάζον ναρκᾶ, τὸ δὲ κινούμενον λυττᾶ.

My translation is:

For the majority of people, to be at rest is to be bored stiff; but to be active is to be raving like a rabid dog.

ἡσυχάζω I. to be still, keep quiet, be at rest

νάρκη I. numbness, deadness, Lat. torpor

So, fwiw the letter doesn't use the same word as [VS11](#), but I think Cassius may be onto something.

Post by “Little Rocker” of May 28, 2023 at 6:46 PM

Interesting. I guess I'm reading it as something like: 'Whenever we say pleasure is the goal, we don't mean the pleasures of the profligate or those pleasures that lie in consumption,' reading κειμένος as indicating the source or location. But I'll look at it more closely because it would be interesting if it instead addressed charges of sloth or indolence!

Post by “Elli” of May 29, 2023 at 2:22 PM

Hello to all the epicurean friends. 😊

"Όταν οὖν λέγωμεν ἡδονὴν τέλος ὑπάρχει, οὐ τὰς τῶν ἀσώτων ἡδονὰς καὶ τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας λέγομεν"

<τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας>.

Yes, indeed, in this phrase there no the greek word "αἴσθησις" or "αισθησιακός" in english as "sensual".

If we translate "τας εν απολαύσει κειμένας" as "sensual enjoyments" or "sensual pleasures", it seems to be that the philosopher who glorified the senses, he rejects the senses. 😬

Note: the verb "κείμαι" has a similar meaning with another greek word as "τίθημι" that means: "I put /find myself/be located".

From my understanding of the text <τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας> Epicurus means "those enjoyments that lie out of limits".

My translation in the above phrase is:

"So when we say that pleasure is the end of life, we are not speaking of the pleasures of the profligates and those in the enjoyment (that lie out of limits). i.e. he means if we will pass the limits in the enjoyment we get sick or miserable.

And then Epicurus continues to describe what makes a pleasurable life for someone with prudence and sober reasoning for putting the proper LIMITS in : "drinkings and feasts, and enjoyments with boys and women, and luxuries dinners with fish etc".

Post by “Cassius” of May 29, 2023 at 2:36 PM

Thank you Elli! So it looks like you would disagree with both the standard English translations (Bailey for example) and with Peter St. Andre and his reference to sleep or slothfulness.

Post by “Elli” of May 29, 2023 at 2:39 PM

Yes, I do not agree with those translations and meanings in this text of LTM. Both do not judge according to the whole of our philosophy. 😊

Post by “Don” of May 29, 2023 at 3:04 PM

[Elli](#) : I'm curious where you're getting the meaning of "limits". I don't see that sense in LSJ:

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, Κκ , κεδρ-ίς , κείμαι](#)

I'm getting the sense of lying down in one place.

I do see this in the Homeric dictionary at Perseus:

3 sing. κέσκετο, fut. κείσομαι: lie, be placed or situated, of both persons and things, and often virtually a pass[I've]. to τίθημι, as κείται ἄεθλα, prizes 'are offered,'

[Georg Autenrieth, A Homeric Dictionary, κείμαι](#)

but I don't see any sense of "limit" in τίθημι either:

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, τίθημι](#)

I'm not saying I disagree with the sentiment you're expressing, but I'm not seeing how you get from <τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας> to "those enjoyments that lie out of limits". Just trying to learn and understand.

Post by “Elli” of May 30, 2023 at 5:02 AM

[Don](#) first of all : hello and joy! 😊

With frankness of speech and sorry, but you give me the impression that you use the platonean methodology of " dialectic" searching out in the greek words endless definitions using the lexicons in which there are the greek words according to the texts by Homer, Aristotle, Plato, Sophocles, Thucydides et.al. And one word used by them in a text has another meaning for someone else in another text. That is the greek language that is rich, but the danger is hidden, as said by Epicurus, to not use empty words without meaning. In the opposite I use the methodology of epicurean Canon for the translating and renditions in the phrases by Epicurus i.e. I grab the meaning of the words immediately, since I use my ability that the greek language is my native language and at the same time, I know (since I have studied properly) and seeing clearly the whole picture of epicurean philosophy.

Behind a phrase by Epicurus there is always a structure that is based on the whole of his philosophy and his thoughts. When he uses the phrase with the words "τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας" he does not mean something (i.e. the enjoyment) that lies in sleep or dead or the sensual enjoyments, this meaning does not make any sense according to the whole of Epicurean philosophy.

In this excerpt in LTM, Epicurus has to make clear to others (i.e. the slanders) and describe to them that when we epicureans mean pleasures we are not speaking of the enjoyments of the profligates, i.e. the enjoyments that lie out of limits. Epicurus in the most of his PDS concerning the feelings of pleasure and pain puts the limits in the basis of prudence that is higher than philosophy. Do you think that a profligate is prudent enough to set limits in the enjoyment and teaching us the LIMITS in the desires that produce pure pleasures? The answer is NO, since Doctrine 10 says also this: << If the things that produce the pleasures of profligates could dispel the fears of the mind about the phenomena of the sky and death and its pains, and also teach the LIMITS of desires (and of pains), we should never have cause to blame them: for they would be filling themselves full with pleasures from every source and never have pain of body or mind, which is the evil of life.>>

Post by “Elli” of May 30, 2023 at 5:55 AM

In the basis of feelings what is the situation that a profligate is? Is he dead, is he sleepy? No he is in fears and he feels pains, and pains provokes to himself and others next to him. Since a profligate is in a situation of oblivion [λήθη], because he does not know the truth [α+λήθεια] about the phenomena in the sky, the Universe, and the death and the god etc etc. In the basis of empathy who is a profligate, usually? He is a kind of a narcissist, he feels enjoyment in the sake of himself, he does not provoke pleasure, enjoyment and benefit to others. Since the profligate has no prudence and without prudence we are not able to put the proper LIMITS in pleasure and pain and with this behavior we are not friendly with others in our society and the worse is that we are not such kind of citizens to be free, self sufficient and autonomous to judge the laws and the powers. Usually in the powers (political and religious) there are such kind of persons: narcissistic-profligates who are holding each other by "the balls" i.e. there is a silent blackmailing if they are not obedient in their "silent agreements" then, their "dirty laundry" will be revealed in public. 😊

BUT : VS81. The disturbance of the soul cannot be ended nor true joy created either by the possession of the greatest wealth or by honor and respect in the eyes of the mob or by anything else that is associated with or caused by unlimited desires. (again here Epicurus speaks about the limits). 😊

Post by “Don” of May 30, 2023 at 7:40 AM

Thank you for that, [Elli](#) .

To be clear, I completely agree with you that Epicurus taught that we should enjoy pleasure within certain limits. He talked about limits and boundaries a lot.

I'm just unclear how you're saying this one phrase <τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένους> in the ancient text can be translated as "those enjoyments that lie out of limits" when I'm just not seeing any "out of limits" in the actual words.

Let me go back to the text. Using my translation of the letter, I get:

Quote

Therefore, whenever we say repeatedly that "pleasure is the τέλος," we do not say the pleasure of those who are prodigal and <τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένους> like those who are ignorant, those who don't agree with us, or those who believe wrongly; but we mean that which neither pains the body nor troubles the mind. [132] For it is not an

endless string of drinking parties and festivals, and not taking advantage of slaves and women, nor does an extravagant table of fish and other things bring forth a sweet life but self-controlled reasoning and examining the cause of every choice and rejection and driving out the greatest number of opinions that take hold of the mind and bring confusion and trouble.

Epicurus *could have* talked about "those enjoyments that lie out of limits" there but there are other slanders from "those who are ignorant, those who don't agree with us, or those who believe wrongly" that he could have wanted to emphasize.

I'm just trying to understand how you can interpret those specific words <τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένους> the way you did. If I could ask Bailey and others how they interpreted them the way they did, I would. 😊 You just happen to be in the forum.

And I don't think I'm using some Platonic dialectical method. Epicurus advocated using words with their natural meaning, as I understand it, not to hide meaning or redefine words like Socrates/Plato did. Toward that end, I don't see "out of limits" expressed by <τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένους> but I can see a natural literal meaning like Saint-Andre's "the enjoyment of sleep."

Post by "Cassius" of May 30, 2023 at 7:45 AM

Elli so you do not see any possibility too that a reference to sleeping or slothfulness would not also be a reference to someone "out of limits" in the sense of [VS63](#) referring to errors of seeking too much or too little?

I think I understand your point as to the limits of dictionaries and the associations that come when languages are used natively, so the only other point to clarify would be that the words used do not in some way mirror [VS63](#) in referencing sleep or inaction as a mirror image of the error of profligacy.

If it's not there then it is not there, but St Andre generally does a reasonable job with his translations, so it seems reasonable to ask if he saw something that other non-Greek speakers might have missed, especially since you also disagree with the "sensuality" term that most other translators are using.

Thanks for your comments so far!

Post by "Cassius" of May 30, 2023 at 7:49 AM

Just for the record Don and I crossposted and we had not seen each other's posts first. It's fascinating to have access to someone who is both a native Greek speaker and well read in Epicurus of whom to ask these questions!

Post by “Cassius” of May 30, 2023 at 8:26 AM

This probably doesn't help the discussion much, but I think it is a good idea to look for parallels in other texts, as we have done in [VS63](#) and [VS11](#), and I would add to those this from Torquatus in Book 1 of On Ends. I have underlined below the part that I see these same two errors (which using Elli's terms could be seen as failure to adhere to the limits and go overboard in either luxury or minimalism). So it seems to me that it is reasonable to look for such contrasts being made, even if we don't find it in this particularly phrasing of the letter to Menoecus:

Quote from Torquatus

[32] X. But that I may make plain to you the source of all the mistakes made by those who inveigh against pleasure and eulogize pain, I will unfold the whole system and will set before you the very language held by that great discoverer of truth and that master-builder, if I may style him so, of the life of happiness. Surely no one recoils from or dislikes or avoids pleasure in itself because it is pleasure, but because great pains come upon those who do not know how to follow pleasure rationally. Nor again is there any one who loves or pursues or wishes to win pain on its own account, merely because it is pain, but rather because circumstances sometimes occur which compel him to seek some great pleasure at the cost of exertion and pain. To come down to petty details, who among us ever undertakes any toilsome bodily exercise, except in the hope of gaining some advantage from it? Who again would have any right to reproach either a man who desires to be surrounded by pleasure unaccompanied by any annoyance, or another man who shrinks from any pain which is not productive of pleasure?

[33] But in truth we do blame and deem most deserving of righteous hatred the men who, enervated and depraved by the fascination of momentary pleasures, do not foresee the pains and troubles which are sure to befall them, because they are blinded by desire, and in the same error are involved those who prove traitors to their duties through effeminacy of spirit, I mean because they shun exertions and trouble. Now it is easy and simple to mark the difference between these cases. For at our seasons of ease, when we have untrammelled freedom of choice, and when nothing debars us from

the power of following the course that pleases us best, then pleasure is wholly a matter for our selection and pain for our rejection. On certain occasions however either through the inevitable call of duty or through stress of circumstances, it will often come to pass that we must put pleasures from us and must make no protest against annoyance. So in such cases the principle of selection adopted by the wise man is that he should either by refusing certain pleasures attain to other and greater pleasures or by enduring pains should ward off pains still more severe.

Post by “Cassius” of May 30, 2023 at 8:43 AM

One more quick thought -- We (at least I) don't often express the problem of excessive minimalism or excessive frugality as a problem of being "out of limit," but I would say when you think about it yes it's exactly the same issue involved in pursuing certain desires for excitement beyond their natural limit.

It makes sense to me that there is a natural limit of how long we can live, and how much action and pleasure we can try to engage in, and also a natural limit as to how little action we can try to engage in. Lying down indefinitely in the pursuit of tranquility is as against the limits of what nature requires as would be jumping off a mountain for the thrill of the experience. Nature's limits aren't written in stone but in the consequences that will follow certain behaviors if carried to an extreme.

Post by “Elli” of May 30, 2023 at 8:49 AM

<τας εν κειμένας απολαύσεις> = <those that lie in enjoyments> [those enjoyments that are out of limits] and this is what Epicurus means. 😊

1) "Κείμεναι" is one greek word and means "I am, be located, I find myself, I lie around".

2) "Κοιμάμαι" is another greek word that means "I'm sleeping".

Please, observe that there is a difference between them of one letter the first has an "ε" and in the second has an "ο".

both have the same root describing a situation in which I am, I find myself, I be located somewhere, but the second word means clearly and literally that "I'm sleeping".

Sorry, but I do not agree that Epicurus means the pleasures of the profligates are the enjoyment of one who sleeps or is dead. He means the enjoyments (of the profligates) that lie out of limits.

A profligate fears and is FEELING pain, he is not dead and he does not sleep. He has no prudence to make the hedonic calculus, but this does not mean that he does not FEEL.

CANON is the methodology that we measure with the senses and feelings.

Sorry guys, but it is not needed to be so scholastic with the meaning of the words. We grasp the meaning immediately and without mistake since we use our faculties and as we have studied properly the whole of our philosophy.

Thanks

Post by “Elli” of May 30, 2023 at 9:09 AM

We can connect the whole issue on "the enjoyments of the profligates" with the VS 11 (see photo) the word "ναρκά" that used by Epicurus means "lethargy". However, a profligate is not in a situation that he is not doing anything, he is just prone to the pleasures with motion (like the Cyreanics) the second word that is used by Epicurus that is "λύττα" [mania] is a proper one to describe the enjoyments of the profligates.

Post by “Don” of May 30, 2023 at 10:25 AM

Epicurus is writing about two mistaken ideas about his philosophy here: he does not mean the pleasures of the profligates *nor* τας εν κειμένας απολαύσεις. He is refuting two mistaken understandings of his philosophy. He could very well to my eye be contrasting the mistaken views that Epicureans indulged the wild pleasures of the profligate *and* the exact opposite of indolence or laziness.

[Quote from Elli](#)

<τας εν κειμένας απολάσεις> = <those that lie in enjoyments> [those enjoyments that are out of limits] and this is what Epicurus means. 😊

I still don't see how you're going from <those that lie in enjoyments> to getting [those enjoyments that are out of limits]. That seems to me to be reading meaning into the words that isn't there from what I can see. To me, Epicurus wrote what he meant and meant what we wrote. I'm not seeing that meaning in the literal words.

Epicurus uses a related word (κεμαι with a prefix) in Fragment 207:

Fragment 207. Better to lie serene upon a bed of straw than to be full of troubles on a golden chair at an overflowing table.

κρείσσον δὲ σοι θαρρεῖν ἐπὶ στιβάδος κατακειμένω ἢ ταραττεσθαι χρυσῆν ἔχοντι χλίνην καὶ πολυτελῆ τράπεζαν.

It seems to me that Saint-Andre was generally correct in using the meaning of "lie down to rest, repose."

Post by “Cassius” of May 30, 2023 at 11:15 AM

Just for the record too, I guess we could consider asking Peter St Andre directly about his thoughts. I have never had any communication with him in the past so I am not aware whether he is reachable or not.

Post by “Don” of May 30, 2023 at 11:37 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Just for the record too, I guess we could consider asking Peter St Andre directly about his thoughts. I have never had any communication with him in the past so I am not aware whether he is reachable or not.

I'll be happy to email him even though the Epicurus texts were posted on 2011. Hopefully he'll remember 😊

PS: Emailed.

Post by "Elli" of May 30, 2023 at 11:37 AM

[Don](#) You wrote: "I still don't see how you're going from <those that lie in enjoyments> to getting [those enjoyments that are out of limits]".

And I do not see how you're going from the feelings (enjoyments) and interpret them - metaphorically - to getting them onto the bed because they are sleepy! 🤔

Post by "Elli" of May 30, 2023 at 12:28 PM

κειμένων απολαύσεις = naughty enjoyments or lethargy enjoyments or (I found you a new greek word for "sleepy" "εγύπνιες" [enypnies] enjoyments. 😊

No, dear friends the enjoyments are enjoyments, and the only they have are LIMITS.

A profligate would laugh with this conversation, since his enjoyments are not sleepy, they are the awoken, and are those that are constantly in motion i.e. in a few words, a profligate is taking all the pleasures for himself, he is going to bed with many women or boys, he has the luxurious tables with luxurious foods, and he left for us, the suckers, a piece of bread and cheese and some figs for living in a cave.

And this fragment 207 ? Wow I'm astonished ! 🤔

"to be better to lie serene upon a bed of straw than to be full of troubles on a golden chair at an overflowing table".

See the cunning: if you have a desire to buy a golden chair i.e to have a little luxury in your life... Alas, you will have troubles. So, you have to chose the bed of straw getting there and your enjoyments and feeling good. No, this gnomicon, alone, smells of stoicism.

And what a stoic/platonean idea is this really to use metaphors for the feelings? [Cassius](#) what do you say for the issue on the enjoyments are they OUT or IN of LIMITS? How we measure according to hedonic calculus ? Are there limits or not which are PERSONAL of course, and why is needed to use metaphorical terms for speaking and describing the FEELINGS? Feelings are our faculty, from the day we were born, we feel them immediately and without mistake in

accordance with the circumstances (place and time) and are unique for everyone! 😎

Post by “Don” of May 30, 2023 at 12:40 PM

[Quote from Elli](#)

And I do not see how you're going from the feelings (enjoyments) and interpret them - metaphorically - to getting them onto the bed because they are sleepy! 🤔

The construction of the two phrases is very similar:

1. τὰς τῶν ἀσώτων ἡδονὰς

καὶ "and"

2. τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας

which Epicurus seems fond of doing in pairs.

τὰς ἡδονὰς "the pleasures"

τῶν ἀσώτων "of the prodigal"

τὰς κειμένας "the lying down (to lie idle, to rest, to lie still)"

ἐν ἀπολαύσει "in enjoyment"

The second phrase to me implies lethargic inactivity while the first, the profligate one, implies wild activity. Epicurus is saying both are wrong understandings of his philosophy.

Post by “Don” of May 30, 2023 at 12:46 PM

[Quote from Elli](#)

A profligate would laugh with this conversation, since his enjoyments are not sleepy, they are the awoken, and are those that are constantly in motion

From my reading, The two phrases joined by καί are describing two different misunderstandings that Epicurus is trying to refute.

Post by “Cassius” of May 30, 2023 at 1:04 PM

[Quote from Elli](#)

And what a stoic/platonean idea is this really to use metaphors for the feelings? Cassius what do you say for the issue on the enjoyments are they OUT or IN of LIMITS? How we measure according to hedonic calculus ? Are there limits or not which are PERSONAL of course, and why is needed to use metaphorical terms for speaking and describing the FEELINGS? Feelings are our faculty, from the day we were born, we feel them immediately and without mistake in accordance with the circumstances (place and time) and are unique for everyone! 😊

Elli I wonder here if you are saying that "limits" apply more to "desires" than to "feelings"? That would be an interesting direction to go, with desires being intellectual and requiring intellectual limitation (?)

Post by “Little Rocker” of May 30, 2023 at 3:47 PM

Epicurus does seem to use the standard philosophical ἄπειρος whenever he wants to talk about the unlimited (see KD 20, for example), so while I think it's definitely true that Epicurus wants to correct the misunderstanding that Epicureans pursue unlimited pleasure, like Don, I'm inclined to render that specific passage without appeal to the unlimited. I find the idea that it concerns sloth appealing because that does seem like a proper contrast to profligacy, though I admit I had never read the passage that way myself.

Post by “Don” of May 30, 2023 at 4:08 PM

To me, upon further reflection, this seems to echo the contrast in [VS11](#):

τῶν πλείστων ἀνθρώπων τὸ μὲν ἡσυχάζον ναρκᾶ, τὸ δὲ κινούμενον λυττᾶ.

For the majority of people, to be at rest is to be bored stiff; but to be active is to be raving like a rabid dog.

(My translation)

Post by “TauPhi” of May 30, 2023 at 4:13 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Kalsoyni asked me about that and every other translation I can find (Bailey, Hicks, Yonge, Epicurus Wiki) focuses on prodigal and sensuality.

There's a new translation of 'Lives of the Eminent Philosophers' by Pamela Mensch which was published in 2018 by Oxford University Press. I find her translation of the fragment in question much more on point than all the 'sensuality' attempts or 'the enjoyment of sleep' one.

[...] But when we say that pleasure is our goal, we do not mean the pleasures of the prodigal or the self-indulgent, as the ignorant think, or those who disagree with or misinterpret our views. [...] (page 535)

I don't know any Greek so I can't add much to the argument but taking into consideration context of the whole paragraph of the letter, 'the enjoyment of sleep' translation makes as much sense to me as 'the enjoyment of collecting snails by the river on Sunday afternoon'.

Post by “Don” of May 30, 2023 at 4:49 PM

I'm leaning towards an interpretation of Epicurus making a contrast between the frenzied pleasures of profligates and lazy indolent (maybe "self-indulgent") pleasures... Maybe?

Post by “Cassius” of May 30, 2023 at 5:03 PM

Thanks Tau Phi, good to see that there is another variation out there in the "standard" versions.

Post by "Don" of May 30, 2023 at 6:58 PM

FYI

Original text

Ὅταν οὖν λέγωμεν ἡδονὴν τέλος ὑπάρχειν, οὐ τὰς τῶν ἀσώτων ἡδονὰς καὶ τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει
κειμένους λέγομεν,

Saint-Andre

131: So when we say that pleasure is the goal, we do not mean the pleasures of decadent people or the enjoyment of sleep, ...

Don

131: Therefore, whenever we say repeatedly that "pleasure is the τέλος," we do not say the pleasure of those who are prodigal [and those who are lying about in enjoyment] like those who are ignorant, those who don't agree with us, or those who believe wrongly; [NOTE: Still working on mine!]

Mensch

[...] But when we say that pleasure is our goal, we do not mean the pleasures of the prodigal or the self-indulgent, as the ignorant think, or those who disagree with or misinterpret our views. [...] (page 535)

Hicks

"When we say, then, that pleasure is the end and aim, we do not mean the pleasures of the prodigal or the pleasures of sensuality, as we are understood to do by some through ignorance, prejudice, or wilful misrepresentation.

Elli

"So when we say that pleasure is the end of life, we are not speaking of the pleasures of the profligates and those in the enjoyment (that lie out of limits).

Epicurus Wiki

"we do not mean the pleasure of debauchery or sensuality,"

Bailey

"When, therefore, we maintain that pleasure is the end, we do not mean the pleasures of profligates and those that consist in sensuality,"

When we say that pleasure is the goal, we are not talking about the pleasure of profligates or that which lies in sensuality, as some ignorant persons think, or else those who do not agree with us or have followed our argument

badly; rather, it is freedom from bodily pain and mental anguish ([source](#))

So when we say that pleasure is the goal we do not mean the pleasures of the profligate or the pleasures of consumption, as some believe, either from ignorance and disagreement or from deliberate misinterpretation, ([source](#))

Pamela Gordon

[So whenever we say that pleasure is the telos [the fulfillment or end], we do not

mean the pleasures of degenerates and pleasures that consist of physical enjoyment, as some assume (out of ignorance and because they disagree, or because they misconstrue our meaning), but we mean the absence of pain in the body and the absence of distress in the spirit.]

Post by “Godfrey” of May 30, 2023 at 7:26 PM

Stephen White

"So when we say that pleasure is the end, we do not mean the pleasures of the dissolute or those of indulgence, as some mistakenly maintain, whether out of disagreement or malicious distortion."

Noting that I'm completely ignorant of the Greek, I could see how pleasures of "indulgence" in this translation could refer to being out of limits.

Post by “Little Rocker” of May 30, 2023 at 8:00 PM

Not to lead us astray here, but is it possible this could be a reference to sex? I mean, if we did follow the idea that we're talking about the kinds of things a person might enjoy while lying in bed.

Post by “Don” of May 30, 2023 at 8:07 PM

[Quote from Little Rocker](#)

Not to lead us astray here, but is it possible this could be a reference to sex? I mean, if we did follow the idea that we're talking about the kinds of things a person might enjoy while lying in bed.

Ah!! Maybe the other translations "sensual" was a circumlocution for sex! That *is* food for thought! Well done, [Little Rocker](#) !

Post by “Don” of May 31, 2023 at 7:32 AM

I can't seem to let this go. I searched this morning for other uses of κείμενας in Diogenes Laertius plus I found 2 uses of the specific phrase τὰς κειμενας in Demosthenes and Diogenes Laertius:

τὰς κειμένας

1. (those) deposited (Demosthenes, Against Olympiodorus 48:17)

2. (those) deposited (Diogenes Laertius 5:3:64)

ἐν ᾧ κείμενα θεωρεῖται

"where they are seen to be." (ie, stars) (Diogenes Laertius 10:112; letter to Pythocles)

τὰ αὐτὰ δίκαια κείμενα, (Diogenes Laertius 10:153; [PD38](#))

"for the same things *as they are*" (see http://wiki.epicurism.info/Principal_Doctrine_38/)

And ἐν ἀπολαύσει consistently means "in pleasure"; "enjoyment" whether in Ancient Greek pagan texts or Biblical references.

In that light of day, I don't know if I'm as persuaded by [Little Rocker](#)'s conjecture. (Sorry) Although I may now be more confused than before!

I do think some translators skip over the ambiguity of the line and simply put it what they want to see or expect to see with their preconceptions of Epicurus's philosophy.

Post by “Cassius” of May 31, 2023 at 7:37 AM

I am sure that *I* am more confused so I am glad you have not let it go. Looking for the word in other settings would seem to be the best approach.

Post by “Little Rocker” of May 31, 2023 at 9:53 AM

Yeah, I admit I still think it's 'the pleasures that lie in consumption,' but now I'm intrigued to look at other uses.

Post by “Don” of May 31, 2023 at 11:04 AM

[Quote from Little Rocker](#)

Yeah, I admit I still think it's 'the pleasures that lie in consumption,' but now I'm intrigued to look at other uses.

That's the weird thing to me on the grammar. The pleasure phrase "in enjoyment, in pleasure" is between the definite article τας and κειμενας. So, paraphrasing your line, it seems to me like it's "those that lie in pleasure" and not "those X that lie in consumption". The preposition is attached to pleasure/enjoyment.

Post by “Pacatus” of May 31, 2023 at 1:10 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

The construction of the two phrases is very similar:

1. τὰς τῶν ἀσώτων ἡδονὰς

καὶ "and"

2. τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας

which Epicurus seems fond of doing in pairs.

Just some speculative thoughts:

κεῖμαι has apparently also been used to mean “ to lie sick / lie in misery / lie in ruins” - in context that could refer to the profligate, who take pleasures beyond the limits, and [καὶ] as a result lies in misery. That would support Elli’s interpretation. But, since the profligate would already be understood as one “in the enjoyment of pleasures out of limits”, that particular phrasing would seem redundant.

Both in light of fragment 211 and the pleasure that I take in a sweet afternoon nap, I would not take to κεῖμαι simply meaning the enjoyment of sleep! 😊

Post by “Don” of May 31, 2023 at 1:34 PM

[Quote from Pacatus](#)

Both in light of fragment 211 and the pleasure that I take in a sweet afternoon nap, I would not take to κεῖμαι simply meaning the enjoyment of sleep!

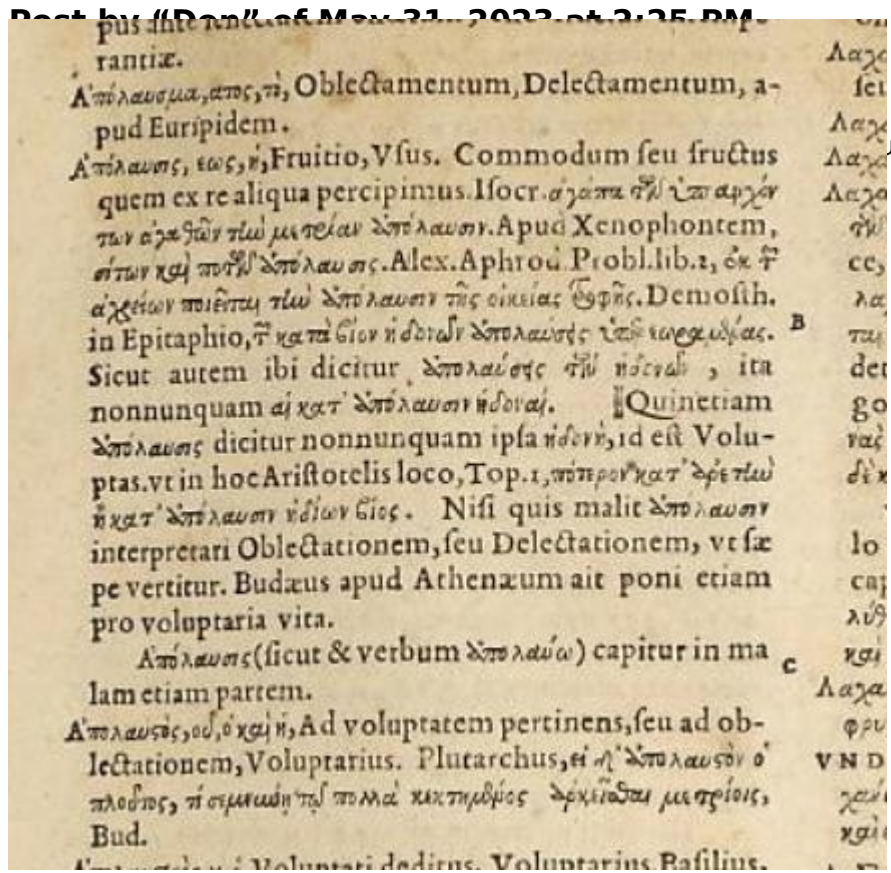
If we do interpret it with the "sleep" connotation, I take that as a dig against the Cyrenaics who equated the state between pain and pleasure as merely sleep or death. And κειμαι has both the sleep and death connotations. And Epicurus was adamant that there was only pain and pleasure and included the pain free state as pleasure.

Post by “Little Rocker” of May 31, 2023 at 1:34 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

That's the weird thing to me on the grammar. The pleasure phrase "in enjoyment, in pleasure" is between the definite article τὰς and κειμενάς. So, paraphrasing your line, it seems to me like it's "those that lie in pleasure" and not "those X that lie in consumption". The preposition is attached to pleasure/enjoyment.

Granted, I'm just eyeballing it, so I should take some time to give it closer attention, but I'm reading the second τὰς as a reference back to τὰς ἡδονὰς, with the ἡδονὰς understood, so taken together 'the pleasures of profligates or the [pleasures] lying in consumption.'



analysis and just found this:

Will try to find a better scan! From Henri II Estienne — 1572

Running the last part through Google translate:

"Unless one prefers ἀπολαύσιν to be interpreted as Pleasure (Oblectationem) or Delectation (Delectationem), as it is sometimes translated."

Delectation is "great pleasure, particularly of the senses."

Post by "Don" of May 31, 2023 at 11:49 PM

Okay, last thoughts for today...

I continue to suspect that the phrases in question τὰς τῶν ἀσώτων ἡδονὰς καὶ τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας are digs at the Cyrenaics but not for the reason I said earlier (the being dead/asleep part). With the Latin synonyms of ἀπολύσει being Oblectatio and Delectatio, and those being based, it appears, on delighting *primarily* in the senses, in sensual pleasures; I think Epicurus is still talking about the Cyrenaics' only accepting "kinetic" sensual pleasures as pleasure. They don't include the mental, katastematic pleasures in their definition of pleasure. They are "those who don't agree with us, or those who believe wrongly." The prodigals are "those who are ignorant." So, the whole section could be something like:

*Therefore, whenever we say repeatedly that "pleasure is the τέλος," we do not say the pleasure of those who are prodigal **and those who are lying in sensual delight* like those who are ignorant, those who don't agree with us, or those who believe wrongly; but we mean that which neither pains the body nor troubles the mind.*

He's talking in those last lines about aponia and ataraxia. ταραττεσθαι κατὰ ψυχὴν "troubles the mind" uses tarattesthai which is related to a-taraxia.

Post by "TauPhi" of June 1, 2023 at 8:52 PM

[Don](#) I really like your last idea about the Cyrenaics. Epicurus could, indeed, be addressing them in this passage. Your post got me wondering if I could come up with something that simultaneously captures most of the arguments and translations in this thread:

- the Cyrenaics who trapped themselves in a nightmare of a limitless pursuit due to their failure of capturing the substance of pleasure

- Peter Saint-Andre's 'the enjoyment of sleep'
- @Elli's 'those in the enjoyment (that lie out of limits)' - which I personally agree with
- Pamela Mensch's 'the self-indulgent' - which I personally find the simplest and best translation
- multiple translations of 'sensuality'
- [Don](#)'s latest attempt of 'those who are lying in sensual delight'

My proposition is rather more poetic than literal translation; more in the style of Lucretius than Epicurus and purely for entertainment purposes.

Here it is: 'those who are sleepwalking in boundless, sensual indulgence'.

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 1, 2023 at 9:36 PM

[Quote from TauPhi](#)

My proposition is rather more poetic than literal translation; more in the style of Lucretius than Epicurus and purely for entertainment purposes.

Here it is: 'those who are sleepwalking in boundless, sensual indulgence'.

This brings up a further idea...and just wanting to mention, that sensation and sensual indulgence naturally has a limit when one is paying attention to the underlying feeling of pleasure or pain. So when we are paying attention then we naturally stop doing things which are painful. It is only things like fame and fortune (and other "groundless" desires) that do not have limits (maybe because they exist in an abstract sense beyond pleasure and pain).

(There is nothing "wrong" with sensual experiences).

Post by “Don” of June 1, 2023 at 11:57 PM

The issue/concern I have with the limits notion is that, from Epicurus's perspective, the Cyrenaics were limiting their pleasure too much by not accepting mental pleasure into their definition.

The prodigals were giving into unlimited desires.

The Cyrenaics were limiting their sources of pleasure.

Post by “Elli” of June 2, 2023 at 7:31 AM

And yet, finally, the translation by Bailey is right "τας εν απολαύσει κειμένας" Epicurus means "sensual pleasures" because he has to clarify: " when we are speaking for pleasures we do not mean the "sensual pleasures" as the slanderers accuse us e.g. like Timocrates, the brother of Metrodorus that accused Epicurus that "he used to vomit twice a day in consequence of his self-indulgent";

Moreover, when we say pleasures we do not mean the Cyrenaic pleasures, those pleasures in motion and as they are the same that do not have empathy (i.e. the narcissistic pleasures); and as today there is a new greek idiom: "whatever we eat and drink today, and we do not give a damn for tomorrow, and for the feelings of others" or as the english say with an idiom: "eat, drink, and by merry".

So, Epicurus clarifies: When we are speaking about pleasures we do not mean that we suffer of [chose the right english word as prurience or salacity or carnality or lubricity].

Epicurus clarifies finally: that epicureans, based on their philosophy, they have acquire such prudence that is able to measure the LIMITS of ALL pleasures for reaching the qualified pleasures with the highest psycho-spiritual state: the joy, the bliss and calmness of the body and soul that Epicurus tells us about, ending his letter to Herodotus. In Lucretius also the word "voluptas" has a range of semantics: from physical pleasure to the most ecstatic divine pleasure.

Doctrine 3. The limits of quantity in pleasures is the removal of all that is painful. Wherever pleasure is present, as long as it is there, there is neither pain of body nor of mind, nor of both at once.

Doctrine 20. The flesh perceives the limits of pleasure as unlimited, and unlimited time is required to supply it. But the mind, having attained a reasoned understanding of the ultimate good of the flesh and its limits and having dissipated the fears concerning the time to come, supplies us with the complete life, and we have no further need of infinite time: but neither

does the mind shun pleasure, nor, when circumstances begin to bring about the departure from life, does it approach its end as though it fell short in any way of the best life.

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 2, 2023 at 12:42 PM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

Here is the text from Peter Saint-Andre:

"So when we say that pleasure is the goal, we do not mean the pleasures of decadent people or the enjoyment of sleep, as is believed by those who are ignorant or who don't understand us or who are ill-disposed to us, but to be free from bodily pain and mental disturbance. For a pleasant life is produced not by drinking and endless parties and enjoying boys and women and consuming fish and other delicacies of an extravagant table, but by sober reasoning, searching out the cause of everything we accept or reject, and driving out opinions that cause the greatest trouble in the soul."

So when we say that pleasure is the goal, **we do not mean over-indulgence or indolence**, as is believed by those who are ignorant, who don't understand correctly, or who oppose our school.

Post by “Elli” of June 2, 2023 at 2:06 PM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

So when we say that pleasure is the goal, we do not mean over-indulgence or indolence, as is believed by those who are ignorant, who don't understand correctly, or who oppose our school.

Dear Kalosyni Hello and Joy ! 🥰

IMO that "OR" between over-indulgence /indolence leads to aristotles' logic with the excluded middle and dilemmas of "either this or that". In this paragraph Epicurus puts the word "KAI" ["AND"] that means he speaks for one and the same issue.

Translation by Bailey : When, therefore, we maintain that pleasure is the end, we do not mean the pleasures of profligates AND those that consist in sensuality, as is supposed by some who are either ignorant or disagree with us or do not understand, but freedom from pain in the body and from trouble in the mind.

Translation by Norman DeWitt : When therefore we say that pleasure is the end we do not mean the pleasures of profligates AND those that consist in high living, as certain people think, either not understanding us and holding to different views or willfully misrepresenting us; but we mean freedom from pain in the body and turmoil in the soul.

Well, we forgot the translation by the great Norman DeWitt that I find it more accurate and clear! 😊

"high living" means: a luxurious lifestyle involving lots of fine eating, drinking, parties, etc

Just putting one proper word i.e. "high living" and now see HOW DeWitt connects these two paragraphs by Epicurus as he explains what means "οι ηδονές των ασώτων ΚΑΙ τας εν κειμέναις απολαύσεις" : "For it is not protracted drinking bouts and revels nor yet sexual pleasures with boys and women nor rare dishes of fish and the rest - all the delicacies that the luxurious table bears - that beget the happy life but rather sober calculation, which searches out the reasons for every choice and avoidance and expels the false opinions, the source of most of the turmoil that seizes upon the souls of men".

Post by “Don” of June 2, 2023 at 3:28 PM

I'm using my translation with addition of "those situated in sensual pleasures" but I'm not 100% sold on that phrasing. I just had to get it in there. Still working on a revision of the full document before uploading a new version.

I wanted to break this down into its embedded phrases to see, and I am proposing this is how the argument goes when its all disentangled and re-arranged:

"Therefore, whenever we say repeatedly that "pleasure is the τέλος," we do not say (1) the pleasure of those who are prodigal and (2) those situated in sensual pleasures like (A) those who are ignorant, (B) those who don't agree with us, or (C) those who believe wrongly; but we mean that which neither pains the body nor troubles the mind. [132] For it is not (i) an endless string of drinking parties and festivals, and (ii) not taking advantage of slaves and women, (iii) nor does an extravagant table of fish and other things bring forth a sweet life but self-controlled reasoning and examining the cause of every choice and rejection and driving out the greatest number of opinions that take hold of the mind and bring confusion and trouble."

Breaking it down:

Those ignorant or opposed to the philosophy of Epicurus:

(1) those who are prodigal

(A) (are) those who are ignorant

(2) those situated in sensual pleasures

(B) (are) those who don't agree with us

(C) (and) those who believe wrongly

Activities of those ignorant or opposed:

(i) endless strings of drinking parties and festivals

(ii) taking advantage of slaves and women

(iii) extravagant tables of fish and other things

What does Epicurus mean when he says "Pleasure is the telos"?

...whenever we say repeatedly that "pleasure is the τέλος," we mean that which neither pains the body nor troubles the mind, bringing forth a sweet life, and self-controlled reasoning and examining the cause of every choice and rejection and driving out the greatest number of opinions that take hold of the mind and bring confusion and trouble.

Post by "Elli" of June 2, 2023 at 4:18 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

Therefore, whenever we say repeatedly that "pleasure is the τέλος," we do not say (1) the pleasure of those who are prodigal and (2) those situated in sensual pleasures like

Dear Don hello and joy! 😊

Does "sensual pleasures" by Bailey is the same wording with "high living" by DeWitt" ?

I do not think so. 🤔

With this "sensual" we're going against to this which says: ALL pleasures are good (and those that are kinetic and the spiritual ones which, the spiritual, are just more intense).

I found to my english lexicon: sensual pleasure (physical, sensuous enjoyment). And an example in a sentence: "He often experienced a sensual pleasure when eating a chocolate cake". It is not an evil thing eating a chocolate cake i.e. the kinetic pleasures lead to the spiritual ones and vice versa. So, all pleasures are good!

Let's see again two photos with two phrases by Epicurus in which we realize that he agrees on the issue for the "sensual pleasures" that are the kinetic pleasures, the pleasures in motion. So, for this, in my previous comments I used to say for "the enjoyments/pleasures that lie out of limits". 😊

Post by "Don" of June 2, 2023 at 4:35 PM

[Quote from Elli](#)

With this "sensual" we're going against to this which says: ALL pleasures are good (and those that are kinetic and the spiritual ones which, the spiritual, are just more intense).

I found to my english lexicon: sensual pleasure (physical, sensuous enjoyment). And an example in a sentence: "He often experienced a sensual pleasure when eating a chocolate cake". It is not an evil thing eating a chocolate cake i.e. the kinetic pleasures lead to the spiritual ones and vice versa. So, all pleasures are good!

I agree: All pleasures are good. The problem is when people like the Cyrenaics limit themselves to **only** the pleasures experienced from the senses. They are denying themselves the "spiritual" ones, as you call them.

Of course, it's not evil to eat chocolate cake! I'll be the first to agree to that. However, it would be unfortunate to deny that the memory of that chocolate cake is pleasure, too.

I don't see any justification for DeWitt's "high living" other than if we take it to be a paraphrase of **only** taking pleasure in "endless strings of drinking parties and festivals, only taking advantage of slaves and women, and only eating at extravagant tables of fish and other things." Epicurus calls us to the FULL spectrum of pleasure, including those of the senses AND those of the mind/soul/spirit.

Post by “Elli” of June 2, 2023 at 4:45 PM

Activities of those ignorant or opposed:

(i) endless strings of drinking parties and festivals

(ii) taking advantage of slaves and women

(iii) extravagant tables of fish and other things

there is also a fourth that is very important:

(iiii) spreading around false opinions i.e. spreading myths and absolute imaginative ideas (that is the source of most of the turmoil that seizes upon the souls of men).

The fourth is a real polemic against Plato. Plato is to blame for all the ignorants that are moving/acting among two things either they are ascetics or they are profligates. Between "either this or that" there is the third (tertium datur) which is US THE EPICUREANS. 😄

Post by “Cassius” of June 2, 2023 at 4:53 PM

As someone totally ignorant of Greek I will just interject here that in my view, since no pleasure is bad in itself, the emphasis should always be on the "limitless" or "without limit" aspect in a discussion of why a particular pursuit at a particular time might be ill advised. I personally do not think the words fame, power, money, or any of the similar types of pleasures where it is tempting to pursue them as ends in themselves would ever be labeled as negative in and of themselves by Epicurus.

I would expect him *always* to say that the issue in any pursuit is whether that pleasure is pursued as an end in itself, without limit. The reason (and only reason) that the unlimited pursuit of an activity, even virtue, is the problem, is that when we do so we take our eye off of pleasure itself and therefore suffer pain or less pleasure than we would otherwise.

ANY activity in human life is to be praised if it indeed leads to more pleasure than pain. So I personally would judge my confidence in any translation as whether it reinforces that view, and if a translation tends to indicate that there is a "type" or category of pleasure that is to be avoided in itself, I would say that is wrong. The issue seems to me to always be in the "unlimited" pursuit of that pleasure.

And I would say this with the same confidence (even dogmatism) as I would say "the absence of pain is pleasure" or "the total absence of pain is the greatest pleasure" without a thought as to the specific activities involved, because I know from the premises with which we started out that "true reason" compels this to be the case, and therefore I do not *need* to know the particular desires or circumstances involved. And yes I know that Cicero will say that, like Velleius, I sound like I just visited the intermundia.

Post by “Don” of June 2, 2023 at 5:13 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

no pleasure is bad in itself,

... Yes, but some pleasures are not choiceworthy.

Post by “Cassius” of June 2, 2023 at 5:13 PM

Important caveat to post 59:

While I am comfortable dogmatically stating that the absence of pain is pleasure, and the total absence of pain is the greatest pleasure, and that there is nothing bad in any pleasure or virtue in itself except the *unlimited* pursuit of that activity, I would never walk up to the man on the street or stand on the street corner and shout that out like a street preacher.

To me it is necessary to always say - except when we are certain to be speaking to people who know what we mean - that "Yes I believe that pleasure is the absence of pain, and yes I believe that no pleasure is a bad thing in itself, but let me explain to you now *why* I believe that.

I think Epicurus gave his explanations in his other writings besides Menoecus, and I think that Torquatus would have given a much longer explanation if Cicero had allowed him.

Post by “Cassius” of June 2, 2023 at 5:18 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

... Yes, but some pleasures are not choiceworthy.

I would say yes, but that is a subsidiary point, and should never be used to dilute the effect of the prior more fundamental statement that "no pleasure is a bad thing in itself." Just as Epicurus did, you start with the basic that no pleasure is bad in itself, and then state that sometimes some pleasures bring more pain than pleasure, and that *for that reason alone* some pleasures are not choiceworthy. You lead with the theorem and then give an application of it, but to me it's essential to hammer home the theorem since that is what everyone wants to fight about, and it chokes in the mouth of the Platonists and Stoics.

Let's make them choke again: "Choiceworthiness" means ONLY that it brings more pain than pleasure.

As usual I think we are in agreement 😊

Post by "Elli" of June 2, 2023 at 6:14 PM

It is similar as we say:

VS23. All friendship is desirable in itself, though it starts from the common benefit.

All pleasures are desirable in themselves, though they start from the one that does the hedonic calculus. 😊

Post by "Don" of June 2, 2023 at 7:17 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

there is nothing bad in any pleasure or virtue in itself except the *unlimited* pursuit of that activity,

I don't know if I agree with your implying there is only one exception: "the *unlimited* pursuit of that activity"

And I really don't think I agree with with your addition of "or virtue" there. Can't articulate my objection right now, but it's there.

As for pursuit, I go back to the measure of natural justice being "to neither harm nor to be harmed." If something that gives you pleasure that you do harms others, it would be better not to pursue that desire. Your community will sanction you for that.

There's also the continuing push-pull of pleasure vs desire. All pleasure may be good in itself, but that's definitely not true at all for every desire for pleasures. I think we have to be very careful of whether we need to use "pleasure" or "desire" in these kinds of discussions.

Post by “Cassius” of June 2, 2023 at 7:45 PM

I agree that there is a distinction to be made between desire and choice and avoidance and pleasure and it's probably time to go back into that subject, because I am not sure we ever clarified it, and I agree that would help. How does "desire" differ from "choose to pursue" or even just "choose?"

Post by “stpeter” of June 2, 2023 at 8:06 PM

Hi all, it's good to have discovered this discussion forum. And thanks to [Don](#) for inviting me!

Upon reflection, I think [Little Rocker](#) is onto something with his suggestion that τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένους might mean "lying down in pleasure" - i.e., an oblique reference to the kinetic pleasures of sex. Recall that contemporaries accused the denizens of the Garden of indulging in wild orgies simply because Epicurus allowed women into his philosophical community.

I'll continue to ponder the matter and reply further in this thread once I look more closely at the Greek.

Post by “Cassius” of June 2, 2023 at 8:08 PM

Good to have you Peter! Just to clarify the "edit" in the post, I removed the "color" attribute in the text so that it would be readable on dark themes.

Post by “stpeter” of June 2, 2023 at 9:33 PM

Preliminary and somewhat poetic modification: I think I'll change "the enjoyment of sleep" to "lying in a bed of desire", which echoes the roundabout wording in the original Greek.

Thanks to [Kalosyni](#) for raising this issue!

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 2, 2023 at 10:19 PM

[Quote from stpeter](#)

Preliminary and somewhat poetic modification: I think I'll change "the enjoyment of sleep" to "lying in a bed of desire", which echoes the roundabout wording in the original Greek.

Thanks to Kalosyni for raising this issue!

[stpeter](#) thank you for coming on to the forum to help us out. You can see we have had quite a bit of discussion going on here over the past week, stemming from this particular passage.

I greatly appreciate your translations of Epicurean texts and how easy they are to access on the internet. I use your translations from your website all the time in my study and referencing. And when I first started studying I actually printed them out for reading off-line as well. So I have been referring to your translations for several years now because they are my favorite.

Thanks again for coming onto the forum...and as it was said that on the sign above the ancient Epicurean Garden door, it was written: "Here you will do well to tarry. Here our highest good is Pleasure!"

Hope you decide to hang out here awhile 😊

Post by "Don" of June 2, 2023 at 10:49 PM

[Quote from stpeter](#)

Preliminary and somewhat poetic modification: I think I'll change "the enjoyment of sleep" to "lying in a bed of desire", which echoes the roundabout wording in the original Greek.

In going back - again - to the Greek wording and the text itself, I can see how this is a viable solution.

I find it interesting that the two groups singled out specifically would be the prodigals and those who "lying in a bed" among sensual pleasures. The one of the specific activities is ... (looks at screen... looks back at line 131... looks at line 132....)

I JUST SAW THIS... BY ZEUS!! I've completely overlooked the key!!! Just now, I went back to look at the Greek...

Here's what it says in 131:

οὐ τὰς τῶν ἀσώτων ἡδονὰς καὶ τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας

"not the pleasures of the prodigals AND (nor) [our *&%#@ mystery phrase here!]

THIS is what it says in 132...

οὐδ' ἀπολαύσεις παίδων καὶ γυναικῶν

nor ἀπολαύσεις of boys/children/slaves and women (I prefer to use the "slaves" connotation)

Anything look similar in those two phrases!!!!????

οὐδ' ἀπολαύσεις is usually translated as "nor the act of enjoying, nor the taking pleasure in..."

THE SAME WORD is used in both places in the Greek! They have to be connected!

I have to process this. I can't believe I overlooked this until right now!! For now, here is the section in my translation/commentary on the mention in 132:

ἀπολαύσεις

In translations of the Letter I have seen, οὐδ' ἀπολαύσεις is always given a straightforward sexual meaning:

"not sexual love" (Hicks)

"sexual enjoyment" (Epicurus Wiki)

"enjoying [boys and women]" (Saint-Andre)

"enjoyment (of female society)" (Yonge)

"sexual pleasures (with boys and women)" (DeWitt)

"satisfaction of lusts" (Bailey)

ἀπολαύσεις, according to LSJ, doesn't have this sexual connotation by itself. I'll admit that it could be here within the context of this passage. My contention is that Epicurus is getting at a deeper, more nuanced point. ἀπολαύω does have to do with enjoying something (or someone, in this case), but it seems to also include a sense of taking advantage or taking benefit from something (or someone). I can't necessarily vouch for the authority of [a website by Georgios Babiniotis](#), but the etymology he gives of the word implies something taken as booty. Translated into English, Babiniotis states "it is a delight that comes from an acquisition that has been preceded by conflict, an exercise of violence that offers the joy of fruition and power." So that idea of taking enjoyment in something you feel entitled to or that you can take advantage of with impunity underlies the word Epicurus decided to use. It's not just a sexual meaning. So, in light of all that, I would advocate translating that phrase as "not taking advantage of slaves (or boys) and women," Admittedly, it's most often likely advantage for sex, but the translation for which I'm advocating expands that sense. For me, this fits into the egalitarian ethos of the Garden in which slaves and women took active roles in the life of the school. People who took advantage of these members of society - who were most often seen by ancient Greek society as the lowest, least important members - would be going against the equality of opportunity that the Garden professed. From my perspective, this also seems to fit with the characteristic of the sage shared by Diogenes Laertius: γυναικί τ' οὐ μιγήσεσθαι τὸν σοφὸν ἢ οἱ νόμοι ἀπαγορεύουσιν "The wise one will not establish a sexual relationship in a way that is against the law or forbidden by custom." Now, I know ancient "law or custom" is a wide spectrum, but I'm using that as the translation for νόμοι. In the end, my perspective is that ἀπολαύσεις - yet again - demonstrates the inadequacy of relying on a single translator or translation and not digging into the original Greek.

Post by “stpeter” of June 2, 2023 at 10:55 PM

[Kalosyni](#) Thanks for the kind words. I had no idea this forum existed, so I'll definitely tarry awhile.

Post by “stpeter” of June 2, 2023 at 10:58 PM

Quote from Don

the inadequacy of relying on a single translator or translation

Oh yes indeed! Translators can never be completely trusted, and I say that as a translator myself. 😊

Post by “stpeter” of June 2, 2023 at 11:19 PM

[Don](#) You are spot on about the recurrence of ἀπολαύσει[s] in sections 131 and 132. This leads me to change one other word in my translation: from "enjoying boys and women" to "bedding boys and women". This picks up on my "lying in a bed of desire" and has a tinge of your "taking advantage" without committing wholeheartedly to that etymology of ἀπολαύσει, which it feels somewhat far-fetched at first glance.

Post by “Elli” of June 3, 2023 at 6:56 AM

Hello and Joy to all epicurean friends! 😊

For interpreting the greek word "απολαύω" that means: "I enjoy", and giving meanings as "I took advantage" or "I fight for" or "taking benefit" from someone (women, and boys) or something (fish and luxurious food), it is not proper to go straight to paragraph LTM. 131-132 without seeing first the paragraph 130 in which the same word "απολαύω" is used by Epicurus. For this, I repeat again that that great Norman DeWitt gave the right translation and meaning in the phrase "τας εν απολαύσει κειμένας" is the high living/luxurious living and nothing more. Since DeWitt understood deeply all the structure that exists in the LTM.

In the LTM from the paragraph 130 we read : Καὶ τὴν αὐτάρκειαν δὲ ἀγαθὸν μέγα νομίζομεν, οὐχ ἵνα πάντως τοῖς ὀλίγοις χρώμεθα, ἀλλ' ὅπως ἐὰν μὴ ἔχωμεν τὰ πολλὰ, τοῖς ὀλίγοις χρώμεθα, πεπεισμένοι γνησίως ὅτι ἥδιστα πολυτελείας ἀπολαύουσιν οἱ ἥκιστα ταύτης δεόμενοι,

Translation by DeWitt: And self-sufficiency we believe to be a great good, not that we may live on little under all circumstances but that we may be content with little when we do not have plenty, being genuinely convinced that they enjoy luxury most who feel the least need of it;

That is imo: I am self-sufficient, I practice to be self-sufficient when I have not plenty. I do not go after as a maniac for the luxurious living if I have not the money to have luxury in my life; and that is because this will bring me PAIN. But when it happens I do not deny it, I ENJOY luxury to the fullest! And it happens: long live the father in law of Ceasar, that was named Peison, who offered a luxurious living to Philodemus in the villa of Papyri. And long live Diogenis of Oinoanda who gave such a huge amount for the construction of the huge (100 m2) inscription in Oinoanda. And long live Epicurus and his last Will in which we read that had plenty of money for the marriages, the pensions of the old friends etc etc. So, that famous phrase that was by Epicurus/Metrodorus "τον σοφόν πλούτου μελητέον" [ton sofon plouton meliteon] means the wise man has to care/interest to asquire and maintaining estate and wealth, as long as it does not bring to him pain, since this is a harmonious strategy, as Metrodorus said, i.e. the wise man has not to be obliged for being hired as a servant for working under someone else in the future.



PS1. The word "**απολαύω**" [apolávo] "I enjoy" has AND this meaning, as we use this word in greek vocabulary in nowadays:

e.g. I enjoy special privileges. ~ I enjoy of great esteem / I enjoy trust - I am well esteemed, I am highly respected.

Thus, there is no need "to fight" to enjoy of being trusted and well esteemed!

The fact is that : Epicurus enjoyed trust, respect and was well esteemed among his friends. 😊

Moreover, we have the VS 27 that Epicurus uses the same word "απολαύω" for philosophy !!

XXVII.(27) Ἐπὶ μὲν τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιτηδευμάτων μόλις τελειωθεῖσιν ὁ καρπὸς ἔρχεται, ἐπὶ δὲ φιλοσοφίας συντρέχει τῇ γνώσει τὸ τερπνὸν οὐ γὰρ μετὰ μάθησιν **ἀπόλαυσις**, ἀλλὰ ἅμα μάθησις καὶ **ἀπόλαυσις**.

Translation : In the case of other occupations the fruit (of one's labors) comes upon completion of a task while (in the case) of philosophy pleasure is concurrent with knowledge because enjoyment does not come after learning but at the same time with learning.

P.S.2 When Epicurus speaks about "boys" does not mean "slaves" actually. He means literally "to have company and sleeping with boys". Sleeping with boys was the Socratic/Platonean tactic as well as the tactic of the powers, and the wealthy elite with which, both Socrates and Plato had company with them! So Epicurus with this "sleeping with boys" is attacking Plato et.al. 😊

Moreover, on the issue with boys and women, Epicurus saw how the choice of luxurious living and IF this was reaching the extravagance, it was something that brought PAIN. From historical facts: "Demetrius I of Macedon or the "Poliorcetes" - the Besieger, among his outrages was his courtship of a young boy named Democles the Handsome. The youth kept on refusing his attention but one day found himself cornered at the baths. Having no way out and being unable to physically resist his suitor, he took the lid off the hot water cauldron and jumped in. His death was seen as a mark of honor for himself and his country. In another instance, Demetrius waived a fine of 50 talents imposed on a citizen in exchange for the favors of Cleaenetus, that man's son. He also sought the attention of Lamia, a Greek courtesan. He demanded 250 talents from the Athenians, which he then gave to Lamia and other courtesans to buy soap and cosmetics". 😞

Post by "Don" of June 3, 2023 at 8:12 AM

I just realized Epicurus also uses ἀπολαυστὸν in the letter in line 124:

ὄθεν γνώσις ὀρθὴ τοῦ μηθὲν εἶναι πρὸς ἡμᾶς τὸν θάνατον ἀπολαυστὸν ποιεῖ τὸ τῆς ζωῆς θνητόν,

I've translated that was simply:

"So, correct understanding is that death is nothing for us, and this is what makes the mortality of life enjoyable:"

But it's not just "enjoyable", it's fully taking advantage of the time that is available between birth and death.

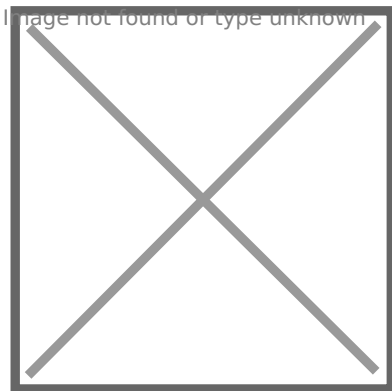
So, 124, 130, 131, and 132 all need to be read in relation to each other to get at the meaning in 131. Which both complicates the process and makes it more interesting.

Post by "Don" of June 3, 2023 at 8:27 AM

Quote

Slaves were often called pais ('boy'/'girl') and its diminutives paidion, paidarion and paidiskē. These words express paternalistic views of slaves and their equivalence to minors in the family, but the slaves thus described are not necessarily children (e.g. Lysias 1.12). Therefore, these words too must be studied in context. The pais-words, especially the vocative form, 'pai', often have a demeaning shade. As words referring to the domestic scene they are most frequently used in comedy (Mactoux 1980: 156-157). In Graeco-Roman Egypt these words were used mainly in private documents, whose addressees knew the legal status of the persons so called; in official documents other terms are generally found.

11 12



[Greek and Roman Terminologies of Slavery](#)

The Greeks had no single generic term for 'slave', but a variety of terms for diverse relations of dependence and unfree people, many of which were also used...

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Post by "Don" of June 3, 2023 at 8:54 AM

Still VERY much a work in progress but...

I'm seeing απολαυσις and its derivatives as:

- Taking pleasure or enjoyment in something to which you feel entitled to do so since you have "worked for it," in the broadest sense.

Or something like that.

This, to me, dovetails with what Elli is saying the modern sense of the word is:

[Quote from Elli](#)

e.g. I enjoy special privileges. ~ I enjoy of great esteem / I enjoy trust - I am well esteemed, I am highly respected.

Thus, there is no need "to fight" to enjoy of being trusted and well esteemed!

Post by “Elli” of June 3, 2023 at 9:13 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

"So, correct understanding is that death is nothing for us, and this is what makes the mortality of life enjoyable:"

But it's not just "enjoyable", it's fully taking advantage of the time that is available between birth and death.

In this paragraph, there is also continuity : not because it adds to it an infinite span of time, but because it takes away the (πόθος) i.e. craving or lust for immortality.

The correct understanding (that [death is nothing to us](#)) makes the mortality of life enjoyable ...and that is BECAUSE this enjoyment does not lead to the **consequence** which is the **desire** (a desire which is out of limits) the desire "**pothos**"- lust - craving, for immortality (immortality is something out of limits). And this another attacking to Socrates & Plato! 😊

And then, [Don](#) , you continue: But it's not just "enjoyable", it's fully taking advantage of the time that is available between birth and death.

Sorry, I do not agree putting to the word, enjoyable, quotation marks and then connecting the word, enjoyable, with "fully taking advantage of the time". Since **the life is enjoyable as itself!** Because as it concerns "on the issue of time", we have concluded finally and for this issue: "**And just as with food he (the wise man) does not seek simply the larger share and nothing else, but rather the most pleasant, so he seeks to enjoy not the longest period of time, but the most pleasant!!!**

The process for understanding the LTM is a complicated process? I do not think so. 😊 We have the great Norman DeWitt who uncomplicated the whole issue in LTM making it **clear** and **simple** for all the english speaking friends!

Post by “Don” of June 3, 2023 at 11:20 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I agree that there is a distinction to be made between desire and choice and avoidance and pleasure and it's probably time to go back into that subject, because I am not sure we ever clarified it, and I agree that would help. How does "desire" differ from "choose to pursue" or even just "choose?"

We can choose to pursue or reject a desire.

We cannot choose whether or not something feels good, ie, evokes pleasure.

Post by “Elli” of June 3, 2023 at 12:01 PM

VS 71. Every desire must be confronted by this question: what will happen to me if the object of my desire is accomplished and what if it is not?

imo the desire is connecting with a vision or as an imagination to the future on how we could be/exist and whatever we have along with our existence for the future, are something (vision/imagination) that only humans are able to have (*).

Pleasure and pain are instinctive feelings/emotions that both humans and animals have.

A humans' desire as a vision to the future has to be connected harmonically with the instinct of pleasure, since pleasure is something good (and as any good has value) and pain is an evil, but sometimes we choose the pain (evil) because we want to return back again to the good (that has value) and that is a greater pleasure.

(*) vision and imagination to our future: and here lies that interference and the obstacle that is the fear of death (since we have consciousness and subconsciousness about death) and it is the same fear of death that creates another obstacle that is the image of gods. Both are the obstacles that interfere to our fullest enjoyment of life. Both obstacles are what Epicurus starts speaking in his LTM. This is the structure in his letter: first we say what is the ultimate good that is eudaemonia/ bliss, then we point out what are the obstacles to our pleasurable living, then we make the algorithm on the desires (natural, necessary and not necessary), and then we conclude with the epilogue, as we have started in the prologue which is the same thing: eudaemonia or living like god among men or the divine pleasure as Lucretius said. 😊

Post by “Don” of June 3, 2023 at 7:40 PM

All of these use some form of ἀπολαύσεις, and, from my perspective, have to have similar connotations among themselves. I've used the English gloss "enjoy" but am not satisfied with that as any kind of best solution. I've also added some inline commentary, basically thinking out loud...

Letter to Menoikeus 124

A correct understanding that [death is nothing to us](#) makes the mortality of life ἀπολαυστὸν (enjoyable).

(We enjoy all that life has to offer, we are grateful for the benefit we gain from being alive.)

Letter to Menoikeus 130

firmly persuaded that those who need luxury the least ἀπολαύουσιν (they enjoy) it the most,

(They can get enjoyment from having the benefit of partaking in luxuries)

Letter to Menoikeus 131

So when we say that pleasure is the goal, we do not mean the pleasures of decadent people and those in ἀπολαύσει κειμέναι (lit., those lying in enjoying),

(I find the 'lying in repose in enjoyment' intriguing, but I'm still not entirely sold. Especially now in light of the other uses. "those embedded in enjoying..." I don't know.)

Letter to Menoikeus 132

and ἀπολαύσεις (enjoying) boys/slaves and women

(enjoying the benefits of boys/slaves and women??)

VS27

Whereas other pursuits yield their fruit only to those who have practiced them to perfection; in the love and practice of wisdom, knowledge is accompanied by delight; for here ἀπόλαυσις (enjoyment) does not follow learning; but learning and ἀπόλαυσις (enjoyment) occur at the same time. (A more literal translation)

It's also instructive to see where Epicurus uses the word positively and where he gives it a negative connotation:

LM124, 130, and VS27 are positive statements (i.e., ἀπολαυσις should be pursued)

LM131 and 132 are negative statements (i.e., απολαυσις should be avoided)

Why is απολαυσις not what Epicurus means by pleasure when it's paired with κειμενας?

What is negative about ἀπολαύσεις with boys/slaves and women?

Per LSJ: απολαυω has the connotation of "enjoy," but more specifically "have enjoyment of a thing, have the benefit of it"

Also, I remain unconvinced that παίδων necessarily refers to "boys." In the plural, it can mean "children" in general but is also a common word for "slave." Enslaved people and women were members of Epicurus's school, in contrast to other philosophical schools. I need to resolve the ambiguity of ἀπολαύσεις before I'll be satisfied with simply accepting the translation sense of "having sex with boys and women." That sounds anti-sex, and Epicurus couldn't comprehend "The Good" without the pleasures of sex, etc.

P.S.: I may have to accept the ambiguity... but I'm not willing to throw in the towel quite yet. Although, I recognize this has taken on a slight tinge of obsession here. 😊

Post by “Elli” of June 4, 2023 at 8:46 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

P.S.: I may have to accept the ambiguity... but I'm not willing to throw in the towel quite yet. Although, I recognize this has taken on a slight tinge of obsession here. 😊

Dear friend Don, hello and joy! 😊

Please, if you would like to permit me to eliminate your pain saying to you this known **“follow the money”** and then, maybe, you'll realize what Epicurus meant for the enjoyment with “boys” and “women”. In this passage of his LTM for having the enjoyable company with boys and women, Epicurus means simply: spending your money for sleeping and having intercourse with them, and nothing else. In the opposite, having company with boys and women and be united with them as **friends** and members of your school-Garden, you do not spend your money, but if and whenever you spend some of your money for offering to them their natural and necessary, indeed, you do not spend your money in vain, and **“scattering them to the five winds”**, as a newgreek idiom says too. 😊

Since, for the wise man when he has accommodated himself to straits knows better how to give than to receive, so great is the treasure of self-sufficiency which he has discovered. Thus for Epicurus - above all **-is friendship**, and friendship is a value without value, it is an **invaluable**

value, it is a precious and of **high quality value**! And Epicurus always speaks for high quality values and as he calls them **immortal goods**. So simple is the issue, I suppose. 😊

Post by "Elli" of June 4, 2023 at 1:18 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

Letter to Menoikeus 132

and ἀπολαύσεις (enjoying) boys/slaves and women

(enjoying the benefits of boys/slaves and women??)

Well, please replace the word "benefit" with the word "self-interest" and you will conclude what is going in such kind of relationships, and what Epicurus had in mind, as this issue is timeless (see my epilogue as a conclusion).

IF there is a self-interest without the existence of a common enjoyable benefit...that is in this enjoyment there is only one EGO who is NOT united with another EGO essentially and in the basis of human values, and this means also that both use each other in the basis only of the self-interest, i.e. the one uses/manipulates the other one for the purpose to gain something, and both believe that this is enjoyable...but, this enjoyment is not real and pure pleasure, it is not eudaemonia, it's just ephemeral, fake and illusionary enjoyment, indeed.

Since when the self-interest is lost any relationship is lost too and any enjoyment. And this is something that brokes also and the social coherence.

So Epicurus in a way, in the basis of his ethics, yes, he is doing and politics. Because he makes us wondering: who are those that approaching each other in the basis of a self-interest? Only STRANGERS that the mean among both of them is the money or things, and not real feelings of friendship or any kind of virtues. So the prudence that is the root of all virtues does not exist between such kind of relationships as well as any pure pleasure does not exist.

In the opposite "παίδες" as "boys" or slaves as you name them, and women as "hetairai" were maintaining and some strong bonds with their masters i.e they became as friends, since and between them the human values were existing and these feelings were exist after the familiarity. And this is what Epicurus wants to point out too OR to remind to Menoecus to not loosing his credence in the real relationships/friendships OR whatever he saw in his society as an invasion of strangers maybe (?) why not since after the great Alexander, the invasion of strangers was a real fact.

However, imo Epicurus does not want to speak disparagingly for persons i.e. boys as "slaves" and women as "hetairai", but for situations that is the exploitation of man by man, when there is only a self-interest and the mean is - in the majority of these relationship - is the money, the waste of money and a mania for high-living.

So dear friend Don, yes, we do not disagree actually, but keep also in mind, that the relationships that Epicurus points out here is in accordance with the motive which is: "the sexual intercourse", and the gun which is: "the money" and the offender that is: "the profligate".

Since Epicurus has not any interest to mess up with the laws, and the masters, because he was a master too. As he had "παίδες", boys i.e. servants and women "hetairai" who lived next to him all of their life in the Garden. So, the only thing that he mentions here is the consequence of a choice that is "ασωτεία" i.e. "debauchery". Since, he speaks for the one that he is not the master of himself, and if someone is not the master of himself, he has no self-temperance or self-sufficiency, so he is the one that does not deserve to have servants and hetairai or a woman as a real companion in life, and real friendships in general.

Conclusion: So, here Epicurus describes a situation - as a choice - out of limits. He describes the opposite of prudence, self-sufficiency and sober reasoning. He describes situations of the powers and such kind of leaders, in the basis from historical facts (see the passage with Demetrius the Besienger). He describes what means to have an ephemeral "enjoyment" with boys and women and spending money for having company and sleeping i.e. have intercourse with them due to the fears. Since making sex (and not love/eros) in such a way is when someone wants to cover his fear of death. So, again here, the great Epicurus points out the cause of the causes that is fear of death. And of course Epicurus thoughts hide and politics, because he describes common affairs/relationships and narcissistic phenomena that exist in our era, which are timeless and painful.

Dear friend Don, my sincere thanks because, you gave me inspiration for making more fruitful thoughts on what exists between the lines and Epicurus thoughts in his LTM. 🙏

Post by "Don" of June 4, 2023 at 1:36 PM

The specific activities Epicurus calls out in the letter as saying he doesn't mean these when "we say" pleasure are:

- (i) endless strings of drinking parties and festivals
- (ii) ἀπολαυσεις of slaves/boys and women

(iii) extravagant tables of fish and other things

Unfortunately, I don't see anything about paying money to have sex with those two groups. There's not necessarily money involved in the other two activities, it's the attendance at endless parties, festivals, and feasts that appears to be the problem.

PS. I cross posted with Elli, so I didn't have a chance yet to read her post directly above. On a first glance, there looks to possibly be some good topics brought up. I'll respond later. Promise.

Post by “Elli” of June 7, 2023 at 7:59 AM

ES 54. We must not pretend to study philosophy, but study it in reality, for it is not the appearance of health that we need, but real health.

ES 74. In a philosophical discussion he/she who is defeated gains more, since he/she learns more.

With frankness of speech: All these days, I read again and again this passage 130-131 from LTM, and as I read again all of our comments, I've realized clearly that I am the one that I was defeated, so that I'm the one that I learned more, and especially from our friend Don! 🤔

Epicurus with the phrase “enjoyments with boys and women” does not speak for “sexual pleasures” indeed!

When he speaks for “paides”, he does not speak for “paiderasty”.

When he speaks about “women”, he does not simply speak for them as “hetairai” that having sexual intercourse with men. He speaks clearly for those enjoyments of a self-interest person who takes advantage from the labor of another person.

Epicurus speaks clearly for <<the exploitation of man by man>>.


So that in this passage with the word “paides” Epicurus means “slaves” and is proved that is against <<slavery>>. Because, for Epicurus when a man had the misfortune for living as a slave and when that slave becomes **THE FRIEND** and member of his school, so then, this man is not considered as slave anymore for Epicurus.

Moreover, Epicurus with the word “women” points out the situation of women in general, and how men had considered them as low level human beings and in his era (see Hesiod, Plato, Aristotle, Xenophon et.al). So, Epicurus in this passage, is proved that he is against <<patriarchy>> and he is proved as a feminist and the harbinger of that movement that is

called as <<feminism>>, though I have to note (as woman) here, that when I say “feminism”, I mean that woman who enjoys her advantages of her sex and her important role in a society. And that means she is next to a man in terms of equality and complimentary to each other, and not of that "feminism" that wants woman to be transformed and behave as man and vice versa.



Conclusion: Epicurus is a genuine rebel of his era, and YES, he DOES POLITICS.

A fruitful rebellious politics that is considered timeless 

Yes indeed, Epicurus is the Master of all masters in politics that - as every political idea has in its basis a way of thinking - i.e. a philosophy, the epicurean philosophy is connected with REALITY, and has nothing to do with imaginative “ideas”.

Epicurean philosophy cares for the “eudaemonia” of the Human being in reality of life, and it points out all the timeless phenomena of life as (social, political, religious, finance etc etc) that are against humans' eudeamonia, and pleasurable living. Epicurean philosophy is real as it gives and real solutions on every issue that concerns every real relationship among the people.

Long live Epicurus ! (*)

And again: my sincere **THANKS** to our friend Don! Frankly Don, for me and from now on, you are such a precious, genius and inspirative epicurean friend !

36. Epicurus' life when compared to other men's in respect of gentleness and self-sufficiency might be thought a mere legend.

(*) Diogenis Laertius book X - Epicurus

[9] But these people are stark mad. For our philosopher has abundance of witnesses to attest his unsurpassed goodwill to all men--his native land, which honoured him with statues in bronze ; his friends, so many in number that they could hardly be counted by whole cities, and indeed all who knew him, held fast as they were by the siren-charms of his doctrine, save Metrodorus of Stratonicea, who went over to Carneades, being perhaps burdened by his master's excessive goodness ; the School itself which, while nearly all the others have died out, continues for ever without interruption through numberless reigns of one scholarch after another;

[10] his gratitude to his parents, his generosity to his brothers, his gentleness to his servants, as evidenced by the terms of his will and by the fact that they were members of the School, the most eminent of them being the aforesaid Mys ; and in general, his benevolence to all mankind. His piety towards the gods and his affection for his country no words can describe. He carried deference to others to such excess that he did not even enter public life. He spent all his life in Greece, notwithstanding the calamities which had befallen her in that age; when he did once or twice take a trip to Ionia, it was to visit his friends there. Friends indeed came to him from all parts and lived with him in his garden.

Post by “Don” of June 7, 2023 at 9:01 AM

You are too kind, Elli. This discussion continues to be both pleasurable and enlightening for me as well.

Post by “Elli” of June 7, 2023 at 11:07 AM

From Aristotle on his treatise "for animals": "Of molluscs the sepia is the most **πανουργιότατον** (that means the most: clever, invetive, ingenious, and resourceful) only species that employs its dark liquid for the sake of concealment".

The words as "περιμήδης/πανούργος, πολύτροπος & πολυμήχανος" were the characteristics for Odysseus by Homer, that means the ingenious, invetive, and resourceful. So, Epicurus for greeks could be considered **invetive** like a sepia, and like the man Odysseus, or as the english say : "a sly old fox" (?)

In this passage from LTM Epicurus writes a letter (only to one person Menoeceus) but in the same time he is throwing his dark liquid - ink- to all of his rivals and leaving them aside, like a sepia. And they, as ignorants, think that he speaks about "the sexual enjoyments" and the like. Actually the fact is that Epicurus speaks for them so disparagingly and called them all as "profligates" that means also "frauds" and "dishonests".

Epicurus is not an ideologue and a dreamer that wants to be the leader of crowds and the mobs for leading people to a revolution with blood and strife. Epicurus is invetive on how to blind that great monster called as Polyphymus.

For this, Epicurus is adressed to each person one by one exhortating how to live free and be the real master of him/herself in every era. Epicurus hits slowly like the sea water on the rock that has the power to tranform the shape of rock, and in every era.

In this phrase, it is like hearing him: Hey, hypocrites, when we say pleasure we do not speaking of what you have in your mind and what you are doing all the time and this is the reason that you accuse us epicureans. 😊

P.S1. And even that great DeWitt did not take a clue what Epicurus point out in this passage.

Bravo Don that is a really good catch that is done by you on the translations. You make me so happy!

PS2 And now, this good catch has to become known to our greek epicurean friends.

- Dear Greek epicurean friends, what does Epicurus mean with the phrase "enjoyments with paides and women"? HA 😄

Post by “Elli” of June 7, 2023 at 12:11 PM

The translation of the text in the photo that is circulated on the internet is as follows:

Philodemus "on wealth":

You write, Xenophon, that the slave's procreation is a sign of loyalty to his master. Are there no other reasons for procreation?

Is the slave's loyalty to the master the only reason? And why should it be the loyalty to the master and not some uncontrollable love passion?

Hesiod you write that in order for the house to prosper I must marry a woman who must be a virgin. Why definitely a virgin? Are the virgins better at financial management than others?

In financial management, Aspasia was "more scientific" than Socrates. None of you is able to compete Aspasia (for whom we don't know if she was definitely a virgin - my comment - George Kaplanis). 😄

Post by “Elli” of June 7, 2023 at 5:34 PM

What is the appropriate way to call a waiter in a restaurant?

The french say: "garçon" that means literally "boy" and this has a bad meaning if we read the etymology of the word:

Garçon (n.) c. 1300, "a boy, a youth" (early 13c. as a surname), from Old French garçon "menial, servant-boy, page; man of base condition," ["in jocular use, 'lad'" - OED]; objective case of gars (11c.; Modern French garçon "boy, bachelor, single man; waiter, porter"). This comes, perhaps via Gallo-Romance, from Frankish *wraġjo- or another Germanic source, from Proto-Germanic *wraġjon (source also of Old High German recko, Old Saxon wrekkio "a banished person, exile;" English wretch). From c. 1400 as "young male servant, squire, page."

Meaning "a waiter" (especially one in a French restaurant) is a reborrowing from 1788.

How the greeks do call a waiter in a taverna?

The greeks call a waiter in a taverna as "paidi"/boy...

- Paidi, would you bring me another glass of wine please? oh my goodness, greeks call the waiters as slaves! 😊

How the english do call a waiter in a restaurant ?

An english speaking person gave the following answer:

catching the waiter's eye and smiling

politely saying "Excuse me" when he is nearby or "Excuse me, when you have a moment" if he is busy with another table

Raising my hand and nodding or smiling if he is some way away.

What I do not recommend is what my brother-in-law's father did in a fancy French restaurant in London: snapping his fingers and bellowing "Garçon!" - eliciting the response: - **"Monsieur, I am not a dog!"** 😊

Another english speaking person gave this answer:

It depends on where you are and what the service is actually like. In the West a polite beckoning motion may have the appropriate effect, do that in Thailand and you will probably get punched... that beckoning motion? It's very rude in Thailand. In China the expected form is simply to bellow for a server something which would probably get you punched in America. I would tend to observe what others around me do and follow their lead if I were unsure.

How the japanish do call a waiter in a restaurant?

A person who been living in Japan for about 20 years now... he points out the attached photo :

the japanish just press a button! LOL 😊

Post by "Martin" of June 7, 2023 at 6:49 PM

"Garçon" is nonsense taught in obsolete French lessons.

Decades ago, this word was already considered as impolite to call a waiter in France.

Post by “Elli” of June 8, 2023 at 11:02 AM

To all epicurean friends, have a nice day! 😊

Post by “Cassius” of June 8, 2023 at 12:20 PM

Those are great Elli!

I see those as very similar to:

The sun IS the size that it appears to be!!

Post by “Elli” of June 9, 2023 at 9:28 AM

Dear epicurean friends hello and Joy! 😊

"Enjoyments with paides and women...and fish".

For our epicurean issues, this good catch that was done by Don, it has to be considered as **the first really quite a find!** 👍

Dear friend [Don](#), I found more material in the basis of the etymology of the greek words, and for the further strengthen on your argument on what the above sentence means really, and as is written by Epicurus.

1. The word **“paides”** does not mean “boys” indeed. It means **“slaves”**.

Epicurus in his last Will (which was an official document and it had to be written according to official terms) writes and ending it with the freedom of his slaves:

Ancient Greek text: <<ἀφήμι δὲ τῶν παίδων ἐλεύθερον Μῦν, Νικίαν, Λύκωνα· ἀφήμι δὲ καὶ Φαίδριον ἐλευθέραν.>>

Translation: And of my **slaves**, I hereby emancipate (or I set free) Mys, and Nicias, and Lycon: I also give Phaedrium her freedom (or I set free Phaedrium).

2. And now, my dear epicurean friends, stand up from your chairs, your sofas and your beds to see clearly what means the word “women”, as used by Epicurus! ☐☐

Ancient Greek text: Δημοσθένης, Κατὰ Νεαίρας [122] Τὸ γὰρ συνοικεῖν τοῦτ' ἔστιν, ὃς ἂν παιδοποιῆται καὶ εἰσάγη εἷς τε τοὺς φράτερας καὶ δημότας τοὺς υἱεῖς, καὶ τὰς θυγατέρας ἐκδιδῶ ὡς αὐτοῦ οὔσας τοῖς ἀνδράσιν. **Τὰς μὲν γὰρ ἑταίρας ἡδονῆς ἕνεκ' ἔχομεν, τὰς δὲ παλλακὰς** τῆς καθ' ἡμέραν **θεραπείας** τοῦ **σώματος**, **τὰς δὲ γυναικας** τοῦ **παιδοποιεῖσθαι** γνησίως καὶ **τῶν ἔνδον φύλακα πιστὴν ἔχειν**.

The above passage is from **Demosthenes** “against Neaira” (that was a Hetaira) and was one of his speeches for use in private legal suit inside a court. The translation was made by **Norman W. DeWitt and his son Norman J. Dewitt**.

Demosthenes was a politician and a lawyer and of course some of his speeches were presented to judges inside the court and in the city of Athens. Demosthenes died 19 years before Epicurus was born. So, the words that used by Demosthenes had same meaning and in the era of Epicurus. Thus, we read in this paragraph something that is remarkable, and the translation in English as follows:

Translation by Norman W. DeWitt and his son Norman J. DeWitt, [122] “For this is what living with a woman as one's wife means—to have children by her and to introduce the sons to the members of the clan and of the deme, and to betroth the daughters to husbands as one's own. Mistresses we keep for the sake of pleasure, concubines for the daily care of our person, but women to bear us legitimate children and to be faithful guardians of our households”.

My translation [122] : “Because this is what living with (a woman) is - to have children (by her) and to introduce the sons to the members of the phratry (i.e. brotherhood or kinfolk) and of the deme, and to betroth the daughters to husbands as one's own. Because, **we have the hetairai/courtesans for the sake of pleasure**, the **concubines for the daily care of our body**, but **women to bear us legitimate children and to be faithful guardians of our households**”.(*)

(*) My note: And that is because we, the greeks - and not only greeks- we have them ALL (hetairai/courtesans, concubines and women i.e. wives) for our enjoyments taking advantage from them as to be subjects and things. Please, remember the phrase by Epicurus in LTM : **“enjoyments with slaves and women... and fish”!**

Thus, it is not a coincidence “why”, greeks, made such wars among them. Because, for maintaining and having at the same time not one, not two, but (3) three women with children (legitimate or not legitimate) in their life, they have to be rich! How else?

So that Epicurus when he writes “**women**” he means literally “**wives**”. Women that have to be pathetic accepting this kind of choices of their husbands, and treating them ALL as to be subjects without free will! That’s how so oppressed were women in ancient Greece and in the

basis of what is called **“patriarchy”** that this word means: man in the house was the alpha man, the “pater” i.e. “father” that means a Despotic and a Ruler who decided for all the issues concerning in the house and in the city! And are same narcissistic-despotic behaviors and phenomena that exist in our era too!

Yes indeed, Epicurus was a real liberator for his era and for every era. A real savior and a healer that gave the remedy to mankind. And as Norman DeWitt points out somewhere:

[...**“I prefer to agree with Plato and be wrong than to agree with those Epicureans and be right,”** wrote Cicero, and this snobbish attitude was not peculiar to him. Close to Platonism in point of social ranking stood Stoicism, which steadily extolled virtue, logic and divine providence. This specious front was no less acceptable to hypocrites than to saints. Aptly the poet Horace, describing a pair of high-born hypocrites, mentions “Stoic tracts strewn among the silken cushions.” Epicureanism, on the contrary, offered no bait to the silk cushion trade. It eschewed all social distinction. The advice of the founder was to have only so much regard for public opinion as to avoid unfriendly criticism for either sordidness or luxury. This was no fit creed for the socially or politically ambitious. Yet this similarity is apt to be obscured by more conspicuous differences.

[...(Epicureanism allied itself instead with the Ionian tradition of medicine, which was philanthropic and independent of political preferences. Just as all human beings, men, women and children, slave and free, stand in need of health, so all mankind, according to Epicurus, stands in need of guidance toward the happy life. This view of things tinged his philosophy with the color of a gospel and bestowed upon it a pragmatic urgency, which is lacking in Socratic thought. With the leisurely meanderings of dialectic he had no patience. Truth, he believed, must possess immediate relevance.

[...**“Love goes dancing round and round the inhabited earth, crying to all men to awake to the blessedness of the happy life.”** About the identity of this Love there can be no doubt; it is the Hippocratic love of mankind, which to true members of that craft was inseparable from the love of healing. In this teaching Epicurus displayed his originality. His new design for living was applicable everywhere, irrespective of country or government. He had emancipated himself from the obsessions of his race, political separatism and the exclusive faith in political action. The whole world was a single parish. It is mere justice that other original features of the new philosophy should receive recognition.

[...Cicero, a crafty trial lawyer, in his last years employed the tricks of the courts to discredit Epicureanism with his contemporaries and with posterity. Among other false charges he upbraided Epicurus for neglecting methodical partitions of subject matter, classifications and definitions. Yet the pragmatic partition of knowledge that was standard in Cicero's own day and through out the greater part of ancient time was the invention of the despised Epicurus. His division was three headed:**The Canon, Physics and Ethics...**] 😊

Post by "Don" of June 10, 2023 at 12:05 AM

I'm glad Elli brought up Diogenes Laertius (DL) 10.21. I had been meaning to check that line. This is where Epicurus himself also uses the word παίδων and where it explicitly means "slave" because he is freeing Mys, Nicias, Lycon, and Phaedrium:

DL 10.21.b, Epicurus's Will: παίδων = "slaves" (male and female enslaved people)

ἀφίημι δὲ τῶν παίδων ἐλεύθερον Μῦν, Νικίαν, Λύκωνα: ἀφίημι δὲ καὶ Φαίδριον ἐλευθερίᾳ.

Of my slaves, I manumit Mys, Nicias, Lycon, and I also give Phaedrium her liberty.

Epicurus also uses the word to mean girl and children (girl & boy) in his Will. Nowhere does he use the word to mean exclusively "boys" as most translators want to do in the Letter to Menoikeus, DL 10.132. I see no compelling reason to require the "having sex with boys and women" route there.

DL 10.20, Epicurus's Will: παιδίω = "girl" (female child)

τὴν δὲ προῖκα τῷ θήλει παιδίω, ἐπειδὴν εἰς ἡλικίαν ἔλθῃ, μερισάτωσαν Ἀμυνόμαχος καὶ Τιμοκράτης ὅσον ἂν ἐπιδέχεται ἀπὸ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων ἀφαιροῦντες μετὰ τῆς Ἑρμάρχου γνώμης.

And when the girl comes of age, let Amynomachus and Timocrates pay her dowry, taking from the property as much as circumstances allow, subject to the approval of Hermarchus.

DL 10.21.a, Epicurus's Will: παιδία = "children" (girl and boy)

Ἐὰν δέ τι τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων περὶ Ἑρμαρχον γένηται πρὸ τοῦ τὰ Μητροδώρου παιδία εἰς ἡλικίαν ἐλθεῖν, δοῦναι Ἀμυνόμαχον καὶ Τιμοκράτην, ...

And if anything should happen to Hermarchus before the children of Metrodorus grow up, Amynomachus and Timocrates shall give from the funds bequeathed by me,...

DL 10.22, Epicurus's Will: παίδων = "children" (boy and girl)

σὺ δ' ἀξίως τῆς ἐκ μαιρακίου παραστάσεως πρὸς ἐμὲ καὶ φιλοσοφίαν ἐπιμελοῦ τῶν παίδων Μητροδώρου.

But I would have you, as becomes your life-long attitude to me and to philosophy, watch over the children of Metrodorus."

DL 10.132, Letter to Menoikeus: παίδων (καὶ γυναικῶν)

οὐδ' ἀπολαύσεις παίδων καὶ γυναικῶν

I also find Elli's suggestion that we should take γυναικῶν as "wives" and not simply "women" intriguing as well.

I'm still working on the *exact* connotation of ἀπολαύσεις.

To review, Epicurus is saying in 10.132, that when he says pleasure, he does not mean:

- an endless string of drinking parties and festivals
- ἀπολαύσεις παιδῶν καὶ γυναικῶν
- an extravagant table of fish and other things

I *remain* leaning toward the sense of not taking advantage of slaves and women/wives, but now Elli has planted the idea in my mind that... Could the phrase means something like "not enjoying the benefits of children and wives" to go along with an ambivalence toward marriage and children. It seems to harsh, since Epicurus was obviously concerned with the well-being of the children of Metrodorus and was not averse to having children named after him. I don't *think* so... but I'm raising it here for discussion. This continues to be a very illuminating and enjoyable discussion. Would that we just had MORE of Epicurus's writings!!

PS. Even though I brought it up for discussion, I remain highly skeptical of a reading like "not enjoying the benefits of children and wives" as in not being a husband and father. It doesn't fit with the drinking and feasting that bracket ἀπολαύσεις παιδῶν καὶ γυναικῶν. I still find the possible connotation intriguing but not compelling. Wanted to get that in here.

Post by “Pacatus” of June 10, 2023 at 7:31 PM

For this [Elli](#) -

“Conclusion: Epicurus is a genuine rebel of his era, and YES, he DOES POLITICS. A fruitful rebellious politics that is considered timeless ... Epicurean philosophy cares for the “eudaemonia” of the Human being in reality of life, and it points out all the timeless phenomena of life as (social, political, religious, finance etc etc) that are against humans' eudeamonia, and pleasurable living. Epicurean philosophy is real as it gives and real solutions on every issue that concerns every real relationship among the people.”

- I simply say, “Thank you!”

Post by “Elli” of June 11, 2023 at 9:32 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

remain leaning toward the sense of not taking advantage of slaves and women/wives, but now Elli has planted the idea in my mind that... Could the phrase means something like "not enjoying the benefits of children and wives" to go along with an ambivalence toward marriage and children. It seems to harsh, since Epicurus was obviously concerned with the well-being of the children of Metrodorus and was not averse to having children named after him. I don't *think* so... but I'm raising it here for discussion.

Hello and Joy to all the friends.

Frankly, dear friend Don, I do not like to plant such an idea that "enjoyments with paides as boys/children, and women" is an ambivalence of Epicurus toward marriage... this hypothesis is going too far since, it would be and against this: **"The wise man will marry and have children, as Epicurus says in treatises On Problems and On Nature, but only in accord with the circumstances of his life"**.

"enjoyments with paides/slaves and women...and fish"!

All these are considered as "things" i.e. beings without **feelings** and **free will**. All these have masters that decide on how those would live, since all these are not the masters of themselves to decide on how they live in freedom.

We have to understand and point it out of what Epicurus is against, and on what epicureans were accused/slandered by those that do not understand what means "pleasure" for EP. Of course, when speaking about pleasure we do not mean any mania for luxury and wealth, and as I said above: "Thus, it is not a coincidence "why", greeks, made such wars among them. Because, for maintaining and having at the same time not one, not two, but (3) three women with children (legitimate or not legitimate) in their life, they have to be rich! How else?" 😊

We exclude that when Epicurus says "paides" does not mean sex with boys i.e. the paiderasty. It is a false notion that greeks were inclined to paiderasty and homosexuality in general. The love for the young man was inside the gymnasium or in the Academy of Plato, and that was something of a platonean love/eros i.e. more imaginative, and not the sexual intercourse itself. Since for ancient Athenians (and Spartans) - above all - was the production of children by their wives. With homosexuality and paiderasty there is no production of children.

But anyway, with the phrase "enjoyments with paides and women", we said that "paides" means "slaves" and women means "wives". Since we read on the wise man and this: **"The wise man will not have intercourse with any woman whom the laws forbid, as Diogenes**

says, in his epitome of the Ethical Maxims of Epicurus".

Laws did not forbid to a man having intercourse with a hetaira or a mistress, as those women were libertarians. imo laws forbid to have intercourse with a legitimate wife of someone else since this is called "adultery". In ancient Athens the only reprehensible adultery on the part of the husband was the one he committed with the legal wife of another Athenian, and the reason was that by this act he wronged another citizen.

And again, from Demosthenes that is the general picture: **"Because, we have the hetairai/courtesans for the sake of pleasure, the concubines for the daily care of our bodies, but women to bear us legitimate children and to be faithful guardians of our households".**

Maybe Epicurus with this word "women as wives" had in mind the wife of Pericles Aspasia that was first as hetaira and Pericles made her as his legitimate wife. Please remember the photo I posted with Philodemus with Aspasia. So, that Epicurus maybe he says: we do not enjoy hetaira as a person without free will, but we can see her as a woman that is equal in rights with us, as she is educated same with us, and is able to be next to us, as any legitimate wife that - above all- she must have "parrhesia"/frankness of speech for all the issues concerning life.

The epicurean Leontion that was hetaira and the wife of Metrodorus is an example as Aspasia was for Pericles. in a few words, it is like Epicurus declares: In my Garden, all women are human beings, they can be educated, they are able to speak with "parrhesia/frankness of speech" for all the issues...and not as Plato who excluded them from his academy. 😊

Post by "Don" of June 28, 2023 at 2:59 PM

FYI I'm in the process of creating a revised edition of my Menoikeus translation & commentary... More hopefully soon.... Of course, I have additional thoughts on απολαυσεις etc in 131 & 132. Stay tuned...

Post by "Don" of June 29, 2023 at 11:54 AM

Okay, here is a sneak preview of my Menoikeus update. I still have a lot to do before posting the revision, but I thought this would stir up some controversy so here it is 😊

Quote

I am now of the opinion that τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας should be interpreted as "those who are stuck in enjoying (only) those things which provide enjoyment from outside themselves." To me, this is a direct reference to the "incorrect" beliefs of the Cyrenaics and others in relation to pleasure. And, yes, the reader is correct that I'm referring to the kinetic and katastematic pleasures that Epicurus mentions. I realize this is considered controversial by some, but I believe this best explains Epicurus's being able to use ἀπολαύσει in both positive and negative senses.

Epicurus is on record for including both kinetic and katastematic pleasures within his definition of "pleasure." I have come to understand kinetic pleasures as those arising from factors and circumstances outside of ourselves; katastematic pleasures are those arising from within ourselves (such as tranquility, pleasurable memories, etc.). While Epicurus conveys (along with Metrodorus and Philodemus) that we can be more confident in katastematic pleasures, he clearly says that we should continue to "delight" in kinetic pleasures when they are available. It is the exclusivity of "getting stuck in" only seeing kinetic pleasures as pleasure that Epicurus is objecting to here with τὰς ἐν ἀπολαύσει κειμένας.

PS. I am MORE than happy to entertain other ideas. This one is the one (so far) that makes the most sense to me.

Post by "Bryan" of June 29, 2023 at 1:26 PM

Hello Don,

What about taking the second τὰς back to τὰς ἡδονὰς?

[Quote from Little Rocker](#)

Granted, I'm just eyeballing it, so I should take some time to give it closer attention, but I'm reading the second τὰς as a reference back to τὰς ἡδονὰς, with the ἡδονὰς understood, so taken together 'the pleasures of profligates or the [pleasures] lying in consumption.'

Post by "Cassius" of July 1, 2023 at 5:58 PM

A series of post original in this thread have been split into a new thread entitled:

Thread

[Modern Neuroscience And The Katastematic / Kinetic Debate](#)

[...]

[...]

I address that elsewhere in my translation commentary, but, briefly, even if that's the course taken, I would still stand by something like "those (pleasures) stuck in the enjoyment of (only) those things from outside ourselves."

My take is that this is a direct swipe at the Cyrenaics.



Don

June 29, 2023 at 2:14 PM