

Epicurus On Pleasure

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ABSTRACT

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

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

Practically every modern survey of the Epicurean conception of pleasure begins by saying that Epicurus' concept of pleasure was twofold: in the opinion of researchers, Epicurus distinguished two kinds of pleasure – a 'static' pleasure or a pleasure 'in a state of rest' and a 'kinetic' pleasure or a pleasure 'in motion.' We know about this division mainly from one text – the first two books of Cicero's dialogue *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*. In Book 1 of this work¹ one of its characters, an Epicurean by the name of Lucius Torquatus, gives a definition of two different kinds of pleasure, one of which *suavitate aliqua naturam ipsam movet et iucunditate quadam percipitur sensibus*, thus being a pleasure 'in motion,'² while

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¹ 1.37.

² Throughout his work, Cicero alternatively refers to it as *voluptas in motu* (2.9, 16 et al.) and *movens* (2.31).

the other, static pleasure, *percipitur omni dolore detracto*.³ Here Torquatus draws a distinction between two different states to either of which, in his opinion, the notion of pleasure can be applied – firstly, a state presupposing active stimulation of pleasant sensations and, secondly, a state negatively defined as the absence of pain and suffering.

Most researchers believe this statement by Cicero to be veracious;⁴ however, it confronts us with a number of complicated problems. To begin with, scholars are not all of one mind about what pleasures Epicurus regarded as kinetic. According to the traditional point of view,⁵ Epicurus referred to as kinetic those pleasures which accompany the process of satisfying one's desires and regarded as static pleasure the state experienced when the desires are satisfied. This interpretation is based on still another piece of evidence from Cicero, where he considers the pleasure from satisfying one's thirst as an example of kinetic pleasure, contrasting it with the static pleasure from satisfied thirst.⁶ Evidently, this example implies that in this case Cicero means by motion a change in the state of the organism.

Cicero himself, however, does not by any means always adhere to such an interpretation of the two forms of pleasure. In another place⁷ he gives a quotation from Epicurus about pleasures accompanying gustatory, auditory and visual sensations, and this time he regards these pleasures as pleasures in motion, speaking now about physical motions in the sensory organs (just as in the above-cited definition of kinetic pleasure in 1.37). Besides, the traditional interpretation of kinetic pleasure contradicts Epicurus'

³ Cicero refers to this type of pleasure a few times throughout this work as *voluptas in stabilitate* (2.9, 16) and *stans* (2.31).

⁴ As far as I know, Gosling and Taylor alone have doubted the veracity of Cicero's evidence (see J. C. B. Gosling, C. C. W. Taylor, *The Greeks on Pleasure* (Oxford, 1982), 365-396). Many of their arguments seem to me quite convincing and will be used in this article. The hypothesis advanced by Gosling and Taylor, who deny the authenticity of the division of pleasures, has not been properly appreciated. In my view, however, the possibilities of argumentation in its favour have not yet been exhausted.

⁵ See E. Bignone, 'La formazione dell'etica epicurea', *Atene e Roma* (1934), 217ff.; C. Bailey, *The Greek Atomists and Epicurus* (Oxford, 1928), 491ff.

⁶ *De Fin.* 2.9: *restringit sitis stabilitatem voluptatis habet, inquit [Torquatus], illa autem voluptas ipsius restrictionis in motu est.*

⁷ *De Fin.* 2.6-7: *Quia voluptatem hanc esse sentiunt omnes, quam sensus accipiens movetur et iucunditate quadam perfunditur. Quid ergo? istam voluptatem, inquit, Epicurus ignorat? Non semper, inquam; nam interdum nimis etiam novit, quippe qui testificetur ne intellegere quidem se posse ubi sit aut quod sit ullum bonum praeter illud, quod cibo et potione et aurium delectatione et obscena voluptate capiatur.*

idea that it is impossible simultaneously to experience pleasure and pain:⁸ for example, if a man is feeling pleasure while satisfying his hunger, then, apparently, at the same moment pleasure has to be accompanied by pain from hunger that has not yet been fully satisfied.

To resolve these contradictions, some scholars⁹ offer another explanation of kinetic pleasure. Firstly, they propose to regard 'motion' not as a process of change, but as a physical motion in the sensory organs. Secondly, in their opinion, a static pleasure does not ensue from a kinetic pleasure, but rather a static pleasure should invariably precede a kinetic one: we derive static pleasure from a sensation that our organism is healthy and does not experience a pain, whereas kinetic pleasure is experienced when a pleasant external influence is added to this good state of the organism. According to this theory, the contradistinction between the process and the result of satisfying such desires as hunger and thirst should be represented differently from the way traditional interpreters represent it. The kinetic pleasure from eating and drinking can no longer be described simply as a pleasure from satisfying hunger and thirst, for every kinetic pleasure should necessarily presuppose a static pleasure preceding it. Hence we should believe that, from Epicurus' point of view, it is not the stomach, which continues to feel hunger or thirst in the process of satisfying them, but only the gustatory organs that experience pleasure during eating and drinking, and this pleasure is added to the static pleasure which these organs are experiencing at the moment. Therefore, when Epicurus differentiates between the pleasure from the process of drinking and that from satisfied thirst, he implies not only two different kinds of pleasure, kinetic and static, but also a pleasure experienced by two different parts of the organism: when thirst is being satisfied, it is the gustatory organs that experience pleasure, and when it has been satisfied, it is the stomach that enjoys it. There is, however, almost no other additional evidence from classical authors¹⁰ to support such a dual explanation of the differences between the pleasures from drinking and from satisfied thirst. Cicero, who

⁸ Epicurus, *Principal Doctrines* 3: ὅπου δ' ἂν τὸ ἡδόμενον ἐνῇ, καθ' ὃν ἂν χρόνον ῇ, οὐκ ἔστι τὸ ἀλγούν ἢ τὸ λυπούμενον ἢ τὸ συναμφοτέρων. See also fr. 421 Usener.

⁹ See C. Diano, 'Note epicuree II', *Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica* N. S. 12 (1935), 266ff. (= *Scritti Epicurei* (Firenze, 1974), 36ff.); J. M. Rist, *Epicurus. An Introduction* (Cambridge, 1972), 104ff.

¹⁰ The adherents of this theory usually refer to one place from Lucretius (*De Rerum Nat.* 4.627-9), where the pleasures experienced by the palate and the stomach in the process of eating are actually differentiated. However, as I will try to show further on, this passage bears no relation to the division of pleasures into kinetic and static ones.

confines himself to contrasting the process with the result of satisfying thirst and says nothing to the effect that these pleasures are experienced by different organs, also hardly had it in mind. So the validity of this interpretation is open to doubt.

However, complexities related to defining kinetic pleasure are not the only problem with which we are faced in trying to comprehend the Epicurean classification. The use by Epicurus of the concept of pleasure in relation to a state consisting simply in the absence of pain, i.e., to a state which Cicero regards as a second, static kind of pleasure, also seems rather strange. The critical remark which the very same Cicero makes on this point is difficult to contest:

*aut Epicurus, quid sit voluptas, aut omnes mortales, qui ubicumque sunt, nesciunt . . . quia voluptatem hanc esse sentiunt omnes, quam sensus accipiens movetur et iucunditate quadam perfunditur.*¹¹

Why shouldn't Epicurus agree with all the other philosophers and use some special term such as ἀπονία or ἀπάθεια for naming this state instead of departing from the usual usage¹² and describing it with the word 'pleasure,' which does not seem quite suitable in this case? The search for an answer to this question often results in speculative psychological assumptions. We are asked to suppose that Epicurus views the neutral state as pleasure only by virtue of his own buoyant and optimistic disposition.¹³ Epicurus' philosophy, however, is least of all the self-expression of a buoyant man. Epicurus aimed to develop a doctrine that would attract a great number of people and, as far as we know, he achieved a considerable success in this. He could hardly have expected to score such a success had he oriented himself only towards people buoyant by nature.

Yet another problem is related to determining the significance of kinetic and static pleasure for a happy life. As evidenced by Cicero, it was static pleasure that Epicurus regarded as the supreme good and the ultimate goal.¹⁴ However, certain other pieces of evidence seem to contradict or at

¹¹ *De Fin.* 2.6.

¹² The more so as Epicurus, unlike, for example, the Stoics, always aimed to use words in their commonly accepted meaning; see Diogenes Laertius 10.31.

¹³ Merlan goes even further: 'Perhaps his was an optimism of reaction and overcompensation. It seems that Epicurus was sick a great deal. Could it be that his was an optimism of heroic defiance and that it was only this defiance which made life bearable to him?' (Ph. Merlan, *Studies in Epicurus and Aristotle* (Wiesbaden, 1960), 10).

¹⁴ *De Fin.* 1.37-9.

least not quite agree with this. Firstly, in one of his utterances quoted by Cicero and Diogenes Laertius, Epicurus states that he cannot think of any other good than pleasures related to gustatory, auditory, visual or sexual sensations,¹⁵ i.e., pleasures which are on the traditional interpretation regarded as kinetic. Secondly, in his letter to Idomeneus written on his death-bed Epicurus stressed that, although the continual pains from strangury and dysentery were so great that nothing could increase them, he set above them all his gladness of mind at the memory of their past conversations;¹⁶ and since the gladness of mind is a kinetic pleasure, which on the usual interpretation it is, then we should have to admit that sometimes a kinetic pleasure can quite well compensate for the absence of a static pleasure.

Besides all these problems and contradictions there is yet another, quite remarkable fact. As it happens, most sources make no mention whatever of any differentiation between kinetic and static pleasures but rather convey Epicurus' doctrine in such a way as to suggest that pleasure was to him a unified and unambiguous concept. This group comprises sources that are rightly considered to be the most reliable: these are texts by Epicurus himself, as well as by Lucretius and Plutarch. On the other side, besides Cicero, only Diogenes Laertius¹⁷ and Athenaeus¹⁸ mention two kinds of pleasure.

I therefore believe that the problem of kinetic and static pleasure needs to be further examined. The way to do this that seems to me the most reasonable is first to describe the Epicurean concept of pleasure on the basis of only one group of sources (i.e., Epicurus, Lucretius and Plutarch) which are the most reliable and only then to make use of the information contained in texts by Cicero, Diogenes Laertius and Athenaeus. Since Cicero's report differs substantially from everything we find in the extant texts of Epicurus himself, supported by Lucretius and Plutarch, it would only

¹⁵ Cic. *De Fin.* 2.7; DL 10.6: οὐ γὰρ ἔγωγε ἔχω τί νοήσω τάγαθόν, ἀφαιρῶν μὲν τὰς διὰ χυλῶν ἡδονάς, ἀφαιρῶν δὲ τὰς δι' ἀφροδισίων καὶ τὰς δι' ἀκροαμάτων καὶ τὰς διὰ μορφῆς. It is worthwhile to compare this statement with a statement by the Epicureans conveyed by Plutarch (*A Pleasant Life Impossible* 1091a), in which the absence of pain alone is named as the only conceivable good: κακῶν ἀποφυγὴ τὸ χαρτόν ἐστι καὶ τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἄλλο δὲ οὐδὲν διανοεῖσθαι φασί.

¹⁶ See DL 10.22.

¹⁷ 10.136. True, Diogenes refers to words by Epicurus himself; however, as I will try to show further on, he interprets them in a way different from what Epicurus originally meant.

¹⁸ 546 and 280.

be natural to put less trust in Cicero. On the other hand, even in this case the evidence by Cicero, Diogenes and Athenaeus should not be rejected simply as erroneous without trying to establish the reason for this error. This is exactly how I am going to structure my study: first, I will address myself to texts by Epicurus, then I will compare Cicero's, Diogenes's and Athenaeus' reports with them, and finally I will search for an explanation of discrepancies between these two groups of texts.

The first question to which an answer should be found concerns the state which Cicero describes as static pleasure – a state consisting in the absence of pain. Does Epicurus really refer to an absolutely neutral state as pleasure or was Cicero distorting his meaning?

We have at our disposal a number of fragments from which it positively follows that Epicurus defines as a pleasure and a good a certain state which he refers to as 'health' (ὑγίεια)¹⁹ and 'the good state of the body' (εὐστάθεια σαρκός and εὐσταθὲς σαρκὸς κατάστημα).²⁰ It is usually believed that this is what Cicero means when speaking about the Epicurean concept of static pleasure. However, if we take a closer look at precisely how Epicurus describes this state, it will appear that in this case he had more reasons to use the word 'pleasure' than would follow from Cicero's evidence.

Characteristic of the whole of Greek philosophy was the idea of a relation between pleasure and the restoration or preservation of the natural state of the organism. We find this idea in Empedocles, who explains pleasure by the influence of like elements on like and – in the case of pleasures from eating and drinking – by compensation for a shortcoming of something or other in the organism.²¹ A similar description of pleasure is offered by Plato in the *Timaeus*: 'An impression produced in us contrary to nature and violent, if sudden, is painful; and, again, the sudden return to nature is pleasant';²² '[bodies feel] pleasure when restored to their natural conditions.'²³ This idea of pleasure as a 'return' to the natural state or its 'restoration' (κατάστασις) was taken over by the later philosophers

¹⁹ In his *Letter to Menoeceus* 128 Epicurus writes of σώματος ὑγίεια and ψυχῆς ἀταραξία: τοῦτο τοῦ μακαρίως ζῆν ἐστὶ τέλος. τούτου γὰρ χάριν πάντα πράττομεν, ὅπως μῆτε ἀλγῶμεν μῆτε ταρβῶμεν, and further identifies these states with ἡδονή.

²⁰ Plutarch, *A Pleasant Life Impossible* 1089d.

²¹ DK 31A95: τὰς ἡδονὰς γίνεσθαι τοῖς μὲν ὁμοίοις ἐκ τῶν ὁμοίων, κατὰ δὲ τὸ ἐλλείπον πρὸς τὴν ἀναπλήρωσιν ὥστε τῷ ἐλλείποντι ἡ ὀρεξις τοῦ ὁμοίου.

²² 64c-d: τὸ μὲν παρὰ φύσιν καὶ βίαιον γινόμενον ἀθρόον παρ' ἡμῖν πάθος ἀλγεινόν, τὸ δ' εἰς φύσιν ἀπὸν πάλιν ἀθρόον ἡδύ.

²³ 64e: καθιστάμενα δὲ εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ πάλιν ἡδονὰς.

of the Academic school. It manifests itself in the definition of pleasure as 'sensate restoration' (κατάστασις αἰσθητή), which Aristotle gives in his *Rhetoric* (1369b) and which is examined in detail in his *Nicomachean Ethics* (1153a) and in the Peripatetic *Magna Moralia* (1204b-1205a). Apparently, Epicurus adhered to a similar standpoint. This can be inferred from an explanation of pain and pleasure found in Lucretius (*De Rerum Nat.* 963-72): in answering the question why the atoms cannot feel pain and pleasure, Lucretius says:

*Praeterea, quoniam dolor est, ubi materiai // corpora vi quadam per viscera viva
per artus // sollicitata suis trepidant in sedibus intus, // inque locum quando remi-
grant, fit blanda voluptas, // scire licet nullo primordia posse dolore // temptari
nullamque voluptatem capere ex se; // quandoquidem non sunt ex ullis principio-
rum // corporibus, quorum motus novitate laborent // aut aliquem fructum capi-
ant dulcedinis almae. // haut igitur debent esse ullo praedita sensu.*

Thus, the Epicurean view of the physical nature of pleasure as a whole varies little from that of other philosophers: in Epicurus' opinion, pleasure is experienced when the atoms of a human body, acted upon by a certain force, find themselves in their proper places, i.e., when the organism attains its natural state under the effect of some influence. Epicurus, however, differed from his predecessors on one essential point. When speaking about pleasure as restoration, Plato and his followers meant by this only the process of restoration, separating this process from its result and believing that it leads to a neutral state, a state of rest, when both pleasure and pain are absent. Proceeding from this, they proved that pleasure cannot be the actual good and end: from their point of view, it is a process of becoming leading to another end different from it – the absence of pain. For example, when we satisfy hunger, the end is not pleasure but the state of satiety regarded by the Academics as neutral.²⁴ By contrast, I propose, and aiming to refute this argument, Epicurus links pleasure not only with the process but also with the result of restoration, i.e., with the natural state which the organism attains. In connection with this new interpretation of pleasure Epicurus introduces his own term *κατάστημα*; unlike the Academy's term *κατάστασις*, cognate with it, it denoted the result and not the process of restoration. If we take into account all those associations with the traditional description of pleasure which the root verb *καθίστημι* carried, and also if we do not ignore the description of the nature of

²⁴ See, for example, Plato *Philebus* 54a ff.

pleasure in the passage from Lucretius cited above, there is hardly any reason to believe that Epicurus denoted by this term a perfectly neutral state, a state where both pain and positive pleasure are absent. It would be more reasonable to assume that, when speaking about 'the good state of the body' (εὐσταθὲς κατάστημα), Epicurus meant such a state which is necessarily the effect of some external force restoring or supporting the organism.²⁵ Such an interpretation of the given concept appears to be corroborated by a number of other facts as well.

Among the *Vatican Sayings* there is one saying by Epicurus in which 'the good state of the body' is explained by three examples – 'not to be hungry, thirsty, or cold.'²⁶ One may get the impression that what this implies is simply the absence of pain, i.e., a neutral state. However, if we take a closer look at how Epicurus explains cases of a similar kind, it will appear that he views this state in an entirely different way. As for the first two states that are mentioned here, 'not to be hungry' and 'not to be thirsty,' they are inseparable from the process of satisfying hunger and thirst and from the external influence on the organism thanks to which man satisfies these desires, i.e., from eating and drinking. For example, in his *Letter to Menoeceus*²⁷ Epicurus states that even bread and water can confer the highest possible pleasure when they are brought to hungry lips. Obviously, Epicurus means by this the state of satiety, but he does not in any way separate it from pleasure from eating and drinking that leads to this state. Apparently, the Epicureans similarly interpreted the meaning of their statement, known to us from Plutarch²⁸ and Athenaeus,²⁹ that the beginning and root of every good is a pleasure of the stomach. Again, what is meant here is, primarily, satiety. In the same place, however, Plutarch gives a quotation from a letter by Metrodorus, where mention is made of pleasure from eating and drinking.³⁰ Thus, Plutarch does not differentiate

²⁵ From my point of view, κατάστημα in Epicurus preserves its original semantics of a verbal noun with a perfect meaning, i.e., it denotes a state which is the result of an action and which is inseparably linked with that action.

²⁶ *Vatican Sayings* 21: σαρκὸς φωνὴ τὸ μὴ πεινῆν, τὸ μὴ διψῆν, τὸ μὴ ῥιγοῦν· ταῦτα γὰρ ἔχων καὶ ἐλπίζων ἔξειν κἂν Διὶ ὑπὲρ εὐδαιμονίας μαχέσαιο.

²⁷ 131.

²⁸ *A Pleasant Life Impossible* 1098d.

²⁹ 546f.

³⁰ *A Pleasant Life Impossible* 1098c: οὐδὲν δεῖ σφάζειν τοὺς Ἕλληνας οὐδ' ἐπὶ σοφία στεφάνων παρ' αὐτῶν τυγχάνειν, ἀλλ' ἐσθίειν καὶ πίνειν οἶνον, ὃ Τιμόκρατες, ἀβλαβῶς τῇ γαστρὶ καὶ κεχαρισμένως.

between pleasure from eating and satiety. Finally, as for the third example contained in the above-mentioned Vatican saying – ‘not to be cold’ – a connection between this state and a positive pleasure caused by a favorable external force is even more obvious: a person’s freedom from cold presupposes that this person is in the warm, i.e., not only is he experiencing no pain, but he is feeling pleasure from the environment’s pleasant influence upon him.

Pleasure from the absence of cold, i.e., pleasure from warmth, is one of the pleasures caused by pleasant sensations in the sense-organs.³¹ It does not substantially differ from the pleasures accompanying pleasant gustatory, auditory or visual sensations, i.e., from those sensory pleasures which interpreters subsequent to Cicero classified as kinetic. Now it is expedient to turn to the treatment by Epicurus of these sensory pleasures and the connection between them and the state of ἀπονία.

In the second book of *De Finibus* Cicero gives a quotation from Epicurus’ writing *On the End*:

*testificetur [Epicurus] ne intellegere se posse, ubi sit aut quod sit ullum bonum praeter illud, quod cibo et potione et aurium delectatione et obscena voluptate capiatur.*³²

Believing that Epicurus is talking here about kinetic as distinct from static pleasure, Cicero comes to a conclusion about the philosopher’s inconsistency: now he regards the absence of pain, i.e. static pleasure, as the supreme good, now he asserts that he knows no other good except sensory kinetic pleasures. In fact, however, Cicero cites here only part of Epicurus’ words; if we read this quotation in full, just as the very same Cicero gives it in his *Tusculanae Disputationes*,³³ this contradiction disappears. Epicurus wrote:

nec equidem habeo, quod intellegam bonum illud, detrahens eas voluptates quae sapore percipiuntur, detrahens eas quae rebus percipiuntur veneriis, detrahens eas quae auditu e cantibus, detrahens eas etiam quae ex formis percipiuntur oculis suavis motiones, sive quae aliae voluptates in toto homine gignuntur quolibet sensu. nec vero ita dici potest, mentis laetitiam solam esse in bonis.

³¹ Thus, Plato in his day considered sensations of the warm and the cold alongside sensations of the rough/the smooth and the light/the heavy, regarding them as part of the class κοινὰ περὶ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα παθήματα (*Timaeus* 61d-65b); this class as a whole corresponds to our concept of the sense of touch (see F. Solmsen, *αἴσθησις in Aristotelean and Epicurean Thought* (Amsterdam, 1961), 6).

³² 2.7; cf. Diogenes Laertius 10.6 (see note 15).

³³ 3.41.

laetantem enim mentem ita novi: spe eorum omnium, quae supra dixi, fore ut natura is potiens dolore careat.

Epicurus speaks here about two components of the good – pleasures of the body and the resulting pleasure of the soul. It is interesting to note that Plutarch in his dialogue *A Pleasant Life Impossible*³⁴ refers to the same two components as εὐσταθὲς σαρκὸς κατάστημα and χαρὰ ψυχῆς; thus, we can link the sensory pleasures listed by Epicurus with ‘the good state of the body’ mentioned by Plutarch. Moreover, the concluding words in the quotation from Epicurus – *ut natura is potiens dolore careat* – definitely shows that Epicurus did not oppose sensory pleasures to the absence of pain but, on the contrary, viewed them as a unity, believing such pleasures to be an indispensable condition of ‘the good state’ of the organism.³⁵ Pleasures from tasting, hearing and contemplating can be explained in a way similar to what was said above concerning pleasure from warmth: a person experiences various external influences, which are pleasant or unpleasant; in the former case they give pleasure and ensure ‘the good state’ of the organism and in the latter, they result in a pain and loss of ‘the good state.’

Thus, the state of ‘freedom from pain’ turns out to be the effect of some external forces and is inseparable from those positive sensory pleasures which are conventionally classified as kinetic. Such an interpretation of this state is corroborated by a number of other texts as well. Thus, Epicurus describes any pleasure as πάθος,³⁶ which compels us to view any pleasure as resulting from the action by an external force and not to talk of some static pleasure unconnected with any such action. The interpretation of ‘the good state of the body’ as πάθος is also supported by a piece

³⁴ 1089d ff.

³⁵ Gosling and Taylor also use this fragment from *Tusculanae Disputationes* in proving the inconsistency of attributing the differentiation between kinetic and static pleasures to Epicurus (see Gosling, Taylor (n. 4), 368). Their interpretation differs from mine only in one detail: from Gosling’s and Taylor’s point of view, ἀπονία is a state which is not conditioned by sensory pleasures but, rather, which itself is a condition for deriving such pleasures (ibid., 371ff.); accordingly, they translate Cicero’s words *ut natura is potiens dolore careat* as ‘that nature may acquire them with complete absence of pain.’ In the Latin text, however, a condition should be expressed by a participial construction; therefore, it is rather *is potiens* than *dolore careat* – i.e., sensory pleasures rather than the absence of pain – which functions as a condition here, and the translation ‘that nature acquiring them may be free from pain’ would be more correct in this case.

³⁶ Diogenes Laertius 10.34.

of evidence found in Plutarch,³⁷ who without any differentiation describes it now as εὐστάθεια, now as εὐπάθεια: conveying the Epicureans' principle that the soul experiences pleasure from a good state of the body, he states in one place that χαρᾶς ἀρχὴ ἀπάσης ἢ τῆς σαρκὸς εὐστάθεια,³⁸ and elsewhere he speaks about ὑπὲρ σαρκὸς καὶ ἐπὶ σαρκὸς εὐπαθεία τῆς ψυχῆς διαχύσεις.³⁹ Finally, only if we regard the Epicurean absence of pain as the effect of external forces, will we be able to comprehend one statement by the Epicureans, quoted by Plutarch, that the absence of pain penetrates into a person through his pores: οἴονται δὲ περὶ γαστέρα τάγαθον εἶναι καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους πόρους τῆς σαρκὸς ἅπαντας δι' ὧν ἡδονὴ καὶ μὴ ἀλγηδὼν ἐπεισέρχεται.⁴⁰

At least two contexts enable us to assume that, from Epicurus' point of view, a state of ἀπάθεια, i.e., a state unconnected with the impact of an external force cannot be regarded as pleasure at all. The first one is the above-cited fragment from Lucretius⁴¹ explaining why atoms are not capable of suffering and enjoying: they do not comprise smaller particles and therefore are not capable of responding to the action of an external force. The second example concerns man. It is generally assumed that (for the Epicureans) a person experiences pleasure through all of his organs at all times when he is not suffering. That this is not exactly the case is demonstrated by one remark made by Lucretius regarding pleasure in the organs of taste. According to Lucretius, when the juices of the food that we consume are in the mouth, it is the palate that derives pleasure, and when they pass through the throat and move on down into the stomach, there is no longer any pleasure in the palate.⁴² Interpreters attributing the doctrine about static and kinetic pleasure to Epicurus believe that Lucretius means only kinetic pleasure: in their opinion, in this case it is kinetic pleasure that vanishes, while the palate remains in the state of static pleasure. Lucretius's text, however, does not provide us with any grounds for such

³⁷ True, in one place Plutarch regards the absence of pain as ἀπάθεια, turning the following argument against Epicureans (*Reply to Colotes* 1123a): τὸ δὲ πόνου καὶ ἡδονῆς μηδὲν εἶναι μέσον οὐκ ἀποφαίνεσθε παρὰ τὴν πάντων αἴσθησιν, ἥδεσθαι τὸ μὴ ἀλγεῖν καὶ πάσχειν τὸ μὴ πάσχειν λέγοντες; What we have here, however, is most likely a polemical reinterpretation of Epicurus' idea; on this see further below.

³⁸ *A Pleasant Life Impossible* 1098a.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1092d.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 1087d.

⁴¹ 2.963-72.

⁴² 4.627-9: *Deinde voluptas est e suco fine palati; // cum vero deorsum per fauces praecipitavit, // nulla voluptas est dum diditur omnis in artus.*

an interpretation: according to him, after the juices have passed through the organs of taste and the palate has ceased to be subject to their influence, it no longer experiences any pleasure at all (*nulla voluptas*).

Thus we come to a conclusion that the 'absence of pain' and the 'good state' of the organism in Epicurus is not opposed to positive pleasures but is directly related to them. If, however, the absence of pain is not a separate kind of pleasure, what does Epicurus intend this concept to mean?

From my point of view, ἀπονία in Epicurus does not at all denote any specific state; rather, he uses this concept to describe any pleasure. In developing his doctrine, Epicurus had to respond to the Academic criticism of hedonism based, among other things, on the following argument: if pleasure consists in the satisfaction of desires, while the result of being satisfied is a neutral state and not a pleasure, then hedonists should provoke desires and avoid their complete satisfaction, making themselves like someone compelled night and day to fill leaky casks;⁴³ their desires prove to be insatiable and the satisfaction of these desires has no limit. To protect himself from such criticism, Epicurus had to set a limit on desires and pleasures, and he regarded the absence of pain as such a limit; however, he viewed the absence of pain not as a special neutral state the Academics considered it to be, but as a characteristic giving sense to any pleasure and determining its magnitude. In Epicurus' opinion, the magnitude of pleasure reaches its limit in the removal of all pain.⁴⁴ For example, plain fare gives as much pleasure as a costly diet, when once the pain of want has been removed, while bread and water confer the highest possible pleasure when they are brought to hungry lips.⁴⁵ When we are having a rest, the magnitude of pleasure that we are feeling does not depend on whether we are doing this on a plebeian rug or on exquisitely patterned carpets.⁴⁶

It may be assumed that this notion is also applicable to pleasures from pleasant tastes, smells, etc. If a person is subject to some external influence, this influence may either bring his sense organs into their natural state and thus be pleasant or it may be unnatural and unpleasant. When such sensations are not unpleasant and do not cause any pain, they are certain to give pleasure, and the magnitude of this pleasure will always be the same regardless of what the object of sensory perception actually

⁴³ See Plato, *Gorgias* 493-4.

⁴⁴ Epicurus, *Principal Doctrines* 3: ὅρος τοῦ μεγέθους τῶν ἡδονῶν ἢ παντὸς τοῦ ἀλγοῦντος ὑπεξαιρέσις.

⁴⁵ Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus* 130.

⁴⁶ Lucretius 2.34-36.

is. For example, if we are feeling a smell and it is not disagreeable, we are experiencing a pleasure no smaller than we would be experiencing from the most delicate aromas.

Now that I have examined the concept of the 'absence of pain,' it is expedient to turn to the idea of Epicurus which underlies Cicero's statement about pleasure 'in motion.' As already mentioned above, Cicero proposes to understand a pleasure 'in motion' as a pleasure which *suavitate aliqua naturam ipsam movet et iucunditate quadam percipitur sensibus*. We find a similar use of 'motion' in Plutarch, when, in relating the Epicureans' opinion, he describes the state of the organs of taste and smell under the influence of pleasant flavours and smells as κινούμενον λείως καὶ προσηνῶς.⁴⁷ Epicurus himself explains pleasant sensations in the organs of smell and hearing in a similar way.⁴⁸

On the other hand, two contexts in Plutarch show that Epicurus used the word 'motion' in respect of absolutely any pleasure. Firstly, in one instance Plutarch describes the Epicurean definition of the supreme good as πᾶσα διὰ σαρκὸς ἐπιτερπνῆς κίνησις ἐφ' ἡδονήν τινα καὶ χαρὰν ψυχῆς ἀναπεμπομένη,⁴⁹ while a little further on the same state is characterized as εὐστάθεια and εὐσταθὲς σαρκὸς κατάστημα; hence, the Epicureans apparently link with motion what is normally regarded as static pleasure.

Yet another similar example is to be found in the dialogue *Reply to Colotes*. Here Plutarch reports the Epicurean argument proving that pleasure is a good determining the purposes of human actions; the essential point of the argument is that longing for pleasure arises quite naturally, without any previous training. In relating this idea, Plutarch refers to pleasure as 'light and gentle movements in the body': ἄνευ διδασκάλου γὰρ αὐτὰ προκαλεῖται τὰ καλὰ ταῦτα καὶ λεία καὶ προσηνῇ κινήματα τῆς σαρκός, ὥς αὐτοὶ φασιν οὗτοι.⁵⁰ If we assume that this implies only one variety of pleasure, sensory kinetic pleasures separated from static pleasure, this argument will seem inconsistent. In this case it appears that the Epicureans regard the absence of pain as the ultimate goal and the supreme form of pleasure and at the same time prove their concept of an ultimate goal by

⁴⁷ *A Pleasant Life Impossible* 1087e.

⁴⁸ Epicurus, *Letter to Herodotus*, 53: καὶ μὴν καὶ τὴν ὁσμὴν νομιστέον ὥσπερ καὶ τὴν ἀκοὴν οὐκ ἂν ποτε οὐθὲν πάθος ἐργάσασθαι, εἰ μὴ ὅγχοι τινὲς ἦσαν ἀπὸ τοῦ πράγματος ἀποφερόμενοι σύμμετροι πρὸς τοῦτο τὸ αἰσθητήριον κινεῖν, οἱ μὲν τοῖοι τεταραγμένως καὶ ἄλλοτρίως, οἱ δὲ τοῖοι ἀταράχως καὶ οἰκείως ἔχοντες.

⁴⁹ *A Pleasant Life Impossible* 1087b.

⁵⁰ 1122e.

resorting to another, lower kind of pleasure – kinetic pleasure.⁵¹ Even Rist, a convinced adherent of the view that Epicurus' doctrine contains a classification of pleasures, admits that here Plutarch should have spoken about static pleasure: 'the phrase "light and gentle movements" used by Plutarch,' he writes, 'perhaps describes katastematic pleasure.'⁵² But if the Epicureans describe static pleasure as motion, how can we regard this pleasure as static and how can we find a basis for contrasting it with kinetic pleasures?

Thus by my reasoning it follows that Epicurus might speak of any pleasure both as motion and as the absence of pain; thus, these two concepts by no means refer to two different kinds of pleasure. From my point of view, all the terms that are mentioned above – ἡδονή, κίνησις, ἀπονία, εὐσταθὲς κατάστημα/εὐστάθεια – serve to describe different characteristics of the same phenomenon, which consists in an impact on the organism of some force bringing it into a natural state, and which in the most general sense is referred to as ἡδονή. The terms ἀπονία and μὴ ἀλγηδών express the most essential, negative characteristic of this phenomenon which makes it possible to set a limit on the magnitude of pleasures. As for the expression λεία καὶ προσηνὴς κίνησις, it defines the physical nature of pleasure – the penetration into the organism of atoms coming from the outside and their influence on the totality of atoms constituting a person's organism. Finally, Epicurus uses the terms εὐσταθὲς κατάστημα and εὐστάθεια to designate the state of an organism that is experiencing pleasure.⁵³

⁵¹ This is precisely how Cicero understands this Epicurean proof, which makes it possible for him to reproach Epicurus: *qui igitur convenit ab alia voluptate dicere naturam proficisci, in alia summum bonum ponere?* (*De Fin.* 2.32).

⁵² Rist (n. 9), 102.

⁵³ When saying that εὐσταθὲς κατάστημα arises in consequence of an external influence and of a 'pleasant movement', I speak about only logical and not chronological consecution; chronologically these two aspects of pleasure may coexist. This is evident at least in the case of pleasures in the sense organs: they remain in a pain-free state as long as a pleasant influence on them continues. As regards pleasure from eating, it can be treated in two ways. Perhaps, here a 'pleasant movement' precedes the absence of pain: first we eat, and only after that we are satiated. On the other hand, it may be assumed that in this case Epicurus meant by a 'movement' not only the process of eating, but, in general, the entire process of influence of the particles of food being consumed on the particles of the human body – a process which does not end when a person has had a meal, but which continues as long as he remains satiated; in this case Epicurus must have regarded satiety not as a static, but as a dynamic state constantly maintained through the influence of an external force.

Thus, I believe that when Epicurus calls εὐσταθὲς κατάστημα the supreme good, he by no means is trying to make the concept of healthy and pain-free state of the organism in itself, not conditioned by any pleasant external influence, the pivotal point of his ethical doctrine. When speaking about εὐσταθὲς κατάστημα and ἀπονία, he does not call upon his followers to avoid any interaction with the surrounding world; rather, his theory is called upon to show how the relations between man and the world can be made most harmonious with the help of ordinary means that are within anyone's reach.

One of the arguments put forward by interpreters who suppose the existence in Epicurus of a classification of pleasures is a parallel found in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, which mentions a pleasure 'in rest' and a pleasure 'in motion' and which regards pleasure 'in rest' as the supreme form of pleasure, as pleasure experienced by god (1154b22ff.). Interpreters believe that it was precisely this idea of Aristotle which influenced Epicurus when he proposed his own division of pleasures into kinetic and static. I would like to examine this passage from Aristotle in detail and will therefore quote it in full:

οὐκ αἰεὶ δ' οὐθὲν ἡδὺ τὸ αὐτὸ διὰ τὸ μὴ ἀπλὴν ἡμῶν εἶναι τὴν φύσιν, ἀλλ' ἐνεῖναι τι καὶ ἕτερον, καθὼ φθαρτοί, ὥστε ἂν τι θάτερον πράττη, τοῦτο τῇ ἑτέρᾳ φύσει παρὰ φύσιν, ὅταν δ' ἰσάζῃ, οὔτε λυπηρὸν δοκεῖ οὔθ' ἡδὺ τὸ πραττόμενον· ἐπεὶ εἴ του ἡ φύσις ἀπλὴ εἴη, αἰεὶ ἡ αὐτὴ πράξις ἡδίστη ἔσται. διὸ ὁ θεὸς αἰεὶ μίαν καὶ ἀπλὴν χαίρει ἡδονήν· οὐ γὰρ μόνον κινήσεώς ἐστιν ἐνέργεια ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀκινήσιός, καὶ ἡδονὴ μᾶλλον ἐν ἡρεμίᾳ ἐστὶν ἢ ἐν κινήσει. μεταβολὴ δὲ πάντων γλυκύ, κατὰ τὸν ποιητὴν, διὰ πονηρίαν τινά· ὥσπερ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος εὐμετάβολος ὁ πονηρός, καὶ ἡ φύσις ἡ δεομένη μεταβολῆς· οὐ γὰρ ἀπλὴ οὐδ' ἐπικτικής.

So Aristotle says that human nature is composite and not simple, and, because of this complexity of nature, no activity can give pleasure to the whole of man: while being natural for one of his parts, this activity turns out to be unnatural for the other. Apparently, what this means is that man consists of a body and a soul and an activity which is natural and pleasant for the soul turns out to be unnatural and unpleasant for the body. Most likely, Aristotle is implicitly referring to intellectual activity in which a person cannot engage permanently, for it exhausts his body and he has to eat and sleep in order to restore his strength and thus to alternate intellectual and bodily activities. Unlike man, god, whose nature consists solely of mind, always enjoys only intellectual activity. It is in the context of these ideas that the distinction between pleasures 'in rest' and pleasures 'in motion' is to be understood: here the terms 'rest' and 'motion' denote constancy and change of activity and not different types of

pleasures as in the classification ascribed to Epicurus. It is only in this way that the transition from this distinction to the quotation from Euripides, 'change in all things is sweet' and to the thought of the 'meanness' of the being that needs change is to be explained.

Now I should turn to probably the strongest argument which the adherents of the authenticity of the Epicurean classification of pleasures can put forward – a statement by Diogenes Laertius, corroborated by a quotation from a writing by Epicurus himself. Just like Cicero, Diogenes believes that the Epicureans singled out two kinds of pleasure; he refers to the first kind as 'katastematic' pleasure (καταστηματική) and to the second one as pleasure 'in motion' (ἐν κινήσει).⁵⁴ Further on Diogenes refers to a number of writings by Epicurus and his disciples and at the end quotes Epicurus' own words: ὁ δ' Ἐπίκουρος ἐν τῷ Περὶ αἰρέσεων οὕτω λέγει· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἀταραξία καὶ ἀπονία καταστηματικαὶ εἰσι ἡδοναί· ἡ δὲ χαρὰ καὶ ἡ εὐφροσύνη κατὰ κίνησιν ἐνεργεῖα βλέπονται.

It seems that this quotation does indeed testify to a division of pleasures into static (or 'katastematic') and kinetic. However, it is not so easy to reconcile Epicurus' words with what Cicero reports about this division. Firstly, it is not clear why Epicurus gives pleasures of the soul (χαρὰ and εὐφροσύνη) as an example of kinetic pleasures, whereas Cicero places pleasures of the body in this category, speaking now about motion in the sensory organs,⁵⁵ now about motion as a change in the physical state of the body.⁵⁶ As a way to solve this contradiction, some interpreters view the word εὐφροσύνη as designating bodily pleasures; however, the accepted meaning of this word, its etymology (from φρήν 'mind') and the history of its usage,⁵⁷ as well as an express statement by Plutarch,⁵⁸ who examined the use of this concept in the Epicurean school – ὅς δὲ ἄξιον καὶ δίκαιον εὐφροσύνας καὶ χαρὰς νομίζεσθαι . . . οἰκεῖον τῇ ψυχῇ καὶ ψυχικὸν ἀληθῶς . . . αὐτῶν τὰγαθὸν ἐστὶ – all run counter to such an interpretation.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ 10.136.

⁵⁵ Besides the definition of kinetic pleasure in 1.37, given at the beginning of this article – *quae suavitatem aliquam naturam ipsam movet et iucunditatem quadam percipitur sensibus* (cf. also 2.6: *quam sensus accipiens movetur et iucunditatem quadam perfunditur*; and 2.32: *quae permulcet sensus*) – in 2.7 Cicero also classifies under this category pleasure from eating, drinking and having sex and pleasure received by the ears from pleasant sounds.

⁵⁶ See 1.10.

⁵⁷ See, for example, Plato, *Protagoras* 337ff.

⁵⁸ *A Pleasant Life Impossible* 1092e.

⁵⁹ Merlan, who admits that the use of this word for designating bodily pleasures

Secondly, with such an interpretation it is hard to understand what meaning in this statement by Epicurus the word ἐνέργεια would have. In the opinion of Merlan, who admits that these problems do exist and that no satisfactory solution to them has yet been proposed, the general meaning of this passage is nevertheless clear. I believe, however, that it is precisely an incorrect understanding of its general meaning that gives rise to these difficulties, which we may well get over if we interpret Epicurus' utterance differently.

I believe that in interpreting the passage in question one point which interpreters usually ignore should be taken into account. The two parts of the division about which Epicurus is speaking – ἀπονία and ἀταραξία, on the one hand, and χαρά and εὐφροσύνη, on the other – are not separate, mutually exclusive types of pleasures. According to Plutarch, who examines these concepts in Chapters 7 and 8 of his dialogue *A Pleasant Life Impossible* (1091a-1092d), the states of painlessness and tranquillity invariably bring about joy. This essential connection between the concepts mentioned by Epicurus compels us to view Epicurus' passage quoted by Diogenes Laertius not as a classification of pleasures but rather as a definition of two coexistent aspects of any pleasure: its passive aspect, i.e., a certain state of the body or the mind, and its active aspect manifesting itself in an emotional response of the soul. Such an interpretation makes it possible to resolve both problems relating to the passage in question: it becomes clear why Epicurus regards only pleasures of the soul as 'kinetic' and what meaning the word ἐνέργεια has (Epicurus must have understood it to mean activity of the soul responding to the states of ἀπονία and ἀταραξία).

Epicurus' passage understood in this way accords well with the discourses and discussions on the nature of pleasure which are to be found in earlier philosophy. Plato spoke about pleasure as a motion of the soul,⁶⁰

looks somewhat strange, nevertheless asserts that 'such an interpretation can be hardly ruled out' (Merlan (n. 13), 6). However, I am convinced that Plutarch's context completely rules out such an interpretation.

⁶⁰ *Republic* 583e: καὶ μὴν τό γε ἡδὺ ἐν ψυχῇ γινόμενον καὶ τὸ λυπηρὸν κίνησις τις ἀμφοτέρω ἐστόν. Many scholars believe that here the word κίνησις means a change from one state to another, as, for example, pleasure from eating is a change from hunger to satiety. It should be noted, however, that Plato regards κίνησις as a motion of the soul, whereas the change from one state to another takes place in the body. Therefore I should rather agree with the opinion of Murphy, who believes that in this passage 'Plato's term *kinesis* appears to be simply his word for emotion' (W. R. Murphy, *The Interpretation of Plato's Republic* (Oxford, 1951), 212, note 2).

referring to it as joy (*χαρά*).⁶¹ On the other hand, he regarded the processes of restoration of the organism to its natural state,⁶² which he called *κατάστασις*,⁶³ as the source of this motion. Apparently, both *χαρά* and *κατάστασις* were to Plato equal aspects of pleasure and he did not question whether pleasure should be regarded solely as a function of the soul, thus identifying it with *χαρά*, and whether the physical act of *κατάστασις* should be viewed only as a source of pleasure and not as one of its components.⁶⁴ Similarly, the motion of the soul and *κατάστασις* appear as two equal aspects of pleasure in the definition of pleasure given by Aristotle in his *Rhetoric*: *κίνησιν τινα τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ κατάστασιν ἀθρόαν καὶ αἰσθητὴν εἰς τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν φύσιν*.⁶⁵

At a certain moment, however, there arose a polemic among philosophers about whether *κατάστασις* should be included in the concept of pleasure. The fact is that some of the opponents of hedonism used the definition of pleasure as *κατάστασις* in formulating the following argument: if pleasure is an act of restoration of the organism to its natural state and of removal of pain, then it is a process of becoming and there-

⁶¹ Contrasting pleasure and pain as motions with the neutral state, which is a state of rest, Plato designates pleasure with the word *χαρά*: οὐκοῦν καὶ τὸ μῆτε χαίρειν μῆτε λυπεῖσθαι εἶναί τι; μεταξύ τούτοιιν ἀμφοῖν ἐν μέσῳ ὃν ἡσυχίαν τινὰ περὶ ταῦτα τῆς ψυχῆς (*Republic* 583c). Cf. the same contrast in *Laws* 657c8-9: καὶ μὴν ἐν γε τῷ τοιούτῳ χαίροντες ἡσυχίαν οὐ δυνάμεθα ἄγειν and also the use of the word *χαρά* in *Gorgias* 494a.

⁶² *Republic* 584c.

⁶³ See, e.g., *Philebus* 42d (the quotation is given in the next note).

⁶⁴ Cf. *Gorgias* 496e1-2: τὸ δὲ πίνειν πλήρωσίς τε τῆς ἐνδείας καὶ ἡδονῆ . . . οὐκοῦν κατὰ τὸ πίνειν χαίρειν λέγεις; and *Philebus* 42d: εἰς δέ γε τὴν αὐτῶν φύσιν ὅταν καθίστηται, ταύτην αὖ τὴν κατάστασιν ἡδονὴν ἀπεδεξάμεθα παρ' ἡμῶν αὐτῶν, where pleasure is in fact equated with *κατάστασις*. In *Gorgias* 496e, Plato's Socrates says that it is of no consequence to him whether pleasure should be regarded as an activity of the soul or as a bodily process.

⁶⁵ 1369b33-1370a1. It is normally believed that here Aristotle designates by the word *κίνησις* a change in the organism and explains in the second part of the phrase what this change consists in (compare, for example, the translation of this phrase by Gosling and Taylor (n. 4), 196: 'pleasure is a certain process of change in the soul, viz. a sudden and perceptible attainment of the natural state which belongs to it.'). It should be noted, however, that, in speaking about movement, Aristotle refers it to the soul, while the restoration of the organism to its natural state is a process taking place in the body. Thus, the second part of this definition cannot be understood as an explanation of its first part. From my point of view, this refers to two different sides of pleasure: by restoration Aristotle means the physical restoration of the body and by a 'movement of the soul' he means an emotion accompanying this restoration.

fore cannot be regarded as a good; in this case it is the state that is the end and result of this process – namely, the absence of pain – which is to be regarded as a good. This argument was used by Plato in his *Philebus*⁶⁶ and, probably, by Speusippus.⁶⁷ On the other hand, Aristotle, defending the hedonist point of view and refuting this argument in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, stated that pleasure is not restoration itself but that it accompanies restoration,⁶⁸ that means that he came to view the activity of the soul alone as pleasure. The same idea is set forth in detail by the author of the Peripatetic *Magna Moralia*: according to him, when we are experiencing pleasure from eating, it is not our body, which is being restored and receiving food, but part of our soul, which at that moment is ‘acting and moving’ (ἐνεργεῖ καὶ κινεῖται), that is enjoying pleasure: ‘its movement and activity is what constitutes pleasure’ (ἡ δὲ κίνησις αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ ἐνέργειά ἐστι ἡδονή).⁶⁹

The terminological closeness of the reasoning in *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Magna Moralia* to Epicurus’ utterance cited by Diogenes Laertius is quite evident: Epicurus’ concept καταστηματικαὶ ἡδοναί reminds us of the term κατάστασις in Aristotle, and the words κίνησις and ἐνέργεια are directly repeated by Epicurus after the author of the *Magna Moralia*. However, special attention should be given to certain specific features of the interpretation by Epicurus of the contraposition of the two sides of pleasure. Plato and Aristotle contrapose the concepts κατάστασις and κίνησις ψυχῆς by two criteria at once: firstly, as a passive state and activity and, secondly, as processes affecting the body and the soul, respectively. In some of their statements Epicurus and his disciples do indeed preserve both values of this contraposition. Thus, for example, stating that ‘the good state of the body (ἡ τῆς σαρκὸς εὐστάθεια) is a source of every enjoyment (χαρά)’,⁷⁰ Epicurus differentiates not only between a state and activity, but also between bodily and mental pleasures; Plutarch’s remark

⁶⁶ 53-5.

⁶⁷ Speusippus’ views are reconstructed mainly on the basis of some of the answers to the critics of hedonists given by Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics*. It is possible that in refuting the characterization of pleasure as γένεσις in Book 10 (1173a29ff.), Aristotle gives an answer precisely to Speusippus.

⁶⁸ *Nicomachean Ethics* 1173b7: καὶ λέγουσι δὲ τὴν μὲν λύπην ἔνδειαν τοῦ κατὰ φύσιν εἶναι τὴν δ’ ἡδονὴν ἀναπλήρωσιν. ταῦτα δὲ σωματικά ἐστι τὰ πάθη. εἰ δὲ ἐστι τοῦ κατὰ φύσιν ἀναπλήρωσις ἡ ἡδονὴ ἐν ᾧ ἡ ἀναπλήρωσις τοῦτ’ ἂν καὶ ἦδοιτο· τὸ σῶμα ἄρα· οὐ δοκεῖ δέ· οὐδ’ ἐστὶν ἄρα ἡ ἀναπλήρωσις ἡδονὴ ἀλλὰ γινομένης μὲν ἀναπληρώσεως ἦδοιτ’ ἂν τις.

⁶⁹ 1204b.

that the Epicureans ‘back up the pleasure of the body with a joy of the soul’⁷¹ has the same meaning. In Diogenes Laertius’ passage that I am analysing, however, a mental state of ἀταραξία is found next to a bodily state of ἀπονία and thus the distinction between the body and the soul in this case disappears. As a matter of fact, a similar unification of these two states in contraposition to the activity of the soul is to be found in Epicurus more than once. For example, Plutarch repeats Epicurus’ words τὸ γὰρ ποιοῦν ἀνυπέρβλητον γῆθος τὸ παρ’ αὐτὸ πεφυγμένον μέγα κακόν,⁷² where both ἀπονία and ἀταραξία are understood to mean deliverance from evil; further on, Plutarch’s personage exclaims: φεῦ τῆς μεγάλης ἡδονῆς τῶν ἀνδρῶν καὶ μακαριότητος ἣν καρποῦνται χαίροντες ἐπὶ τῷ μὴ κακοπαθεῖν μηδὲ λυπεῖσθαι μηδὲ ἀλγεῖν.⁷³ Another specific feature of Epicurus’ conception is that he substitutes κατάστημα for the term κατάστασις, linking this aspect of pleasure not so much with the process of restoration, which earlier philosophers used to do, as with its result – the state of ἀπονία which, in his view, as I have already argued, constitutes the principal content of every pleasure.

Now it would be in order for us to answer the question, in what context Epicurus could make his utterance which is quoted by Diogenes. Certain verbal similarities between his words and the text of the *Magna Moralia* entitle us to assume that this phrase is Epicurus’ response to the polemic over the meaning of the concept of pleasure: he opposes the Peripatetics, who link pleasure only with activity of the soul, and proposes, like the early Academics, to include a certain state of the organism (as a matter of fact, as I have already said, he adds a mental state here). Epicurus can afford this interpretation of pleasure without fear of

⁷⁰ Plutarch, *A Pleasant Life Impossible* 1090a.

⁷¹ τὸ μὲν ἡδόμενον τῆς σαρκὸς τῷ χαίροντι τῆς ψυχῆς ὑπερείδοντες (*A Pleasant Life Impossible* 1089e).

⁷² *A Pleasant Life Impossible* 1091b.

⁷³ In the fragment from the dialogue *A Pleasant Life Impossible* 1091-2, quite a few other examples of the same juxtaposition of ἀπονία and ἀταραξία, on the one hand, and of χαρά are also to be found. The usage of the word εὐφροσύνη as, in fact, a synonym for χαρά see in 1092e. It should nonetheless be noted that the addition of the concept of ἀταραξία to the pair ἀπονία – χαρά in Epicurus is, apparently, of a secondary nature; the fact is that the word κατάστημα, which defines the first member of the opposition, is used by Epicurus with reference to the state of the body; therefore, ἀταραξία gets into this contraposition only by analogy with ἀπονία. Cf. also the Epicurean statement in the same dialogue by Plutarch 1089d: τὸ γὰρ εὐσταθὲς σαρκὸς κατάστημα καὶ τὸ περὶ ταύτης πιστὸν ἔλπισμα [i.e., ἀταραξία – B. N.] τὴν ἀκροτάτην χαρὰν καὶ βεβαιωτάτην ἔχειν τοῖς ἐπιλογίζεσθαι δυναμένοις.

criticism of the kind to which Aristotle had to respond: his pleasure cannot be viewed as becoming and separated from the object of becoming – the state of ἀπονία, since Epicurus does not separate the process of restoration from its result and regards the state of ἀπονία resulting from this restoration as the main characteristic of pleasure. On the other hand, it was essential for Epicurus to show that pleasure is not only an emotion of the soul, but also an objective state of the organism underlying this emotion. Hence he had to give the status of pleasure to the states of the body and the mind – ἀπονία and ἀταραξία – which, from his point of view, are inseparably linked with emotions of the soul.⁷⁴

In conclusion, I will examine the last piece of evidence concerning Epicurus' classification of pleasures – a report by Athenaeus. Just like Diogenes Laertius, Athenaeus compares the Cyrenaics' and the Epicureans' doctrines and says that both 'welcomed' kinetic pleasure.⁷⁵ Athenaeus is speaking here about the same contradiction that Cicero found in Epicurus' theory: allegedly, Epicurus normally views static pleasure as the supreme good, yet sometimes he describes kinetic pleasure as the supreme good. Immediately after this, Athenaeus gives a quotation from Epicurus' writing *On the End* in corroboration of his words: οὐ γὰρ ἔγωγε ἔχω τί νοήσω τάγαθόν, ἀφαιρῶν μὲν τὰς διὰ χυλῶν ἡδονάς, ἀφαιρῶν δὲ τὰς δι' ἀφροδισίων, ἀφαιρῶν δὲ τὰς δι' ἀκροαμάτων, ἀφαιρῶν δὲ καὶ τὰς διὰ μορφῆς κατ' ὅπιν ἡδεΐας κινήσεις. I have already mentioned that Cicero had used the same quotation to establish the same point,⁷⁶ and demonstrated that Cicero had made an incomplete paraphrase of Epicurus' words and thus distorted their meaning.⁷⁷ It is interesting to note that Athenaeus ends the quotation in

⁷⁴ Apparently, the polemic between the Peripatetics and Epicurus was continued by the Stoics, who sided with Aristotle's followers. This can be seen from a Stoic argument directed against the Epicureans which is cited by Diogenes Laertius (7.85-86). This argument centres round the first natural urge of a living being from which the Hellenistic philosophers deduced their concepts of the ultimate goal. According to Diogenes, the Stoics, in contrast to the Epicureans, believed that this urge is aimed not at achieving pleasure but at preserving and maintaining the natural state, whereas pleasure, in their opinion, is only a 'consequence' (ἐπιγέννημα) of satisfying the first urge. From the Epicureans' point of view, however, it is the maintenance of the natural state that is pleasure. The Stoic argument is thus built on a different, narrower meaning of the concept of 'pleasure'. The Stoics use this word only to denote the emotion accompanying the restoration of the organism to its natural state, whereas the Epicureans regard this restoration itself also as a pleasure.

⁷⁵ 546e: τὴν κατὰ κίνησιν ἡδονὴν ἡσπάζοντο.

⁷⁶ *De Fin.* 2.7.

⁷⁷ The full quotation is given in *Tusculanae Disputationes* 3.41; from the text of

exactly the same place, making it fit his argument. From this we can conclude that Athenaeus' report goes back to the same doxographic tradition as Cicero's text and therefore cannot be regarded as an independent and reliable piece of evidence.

In my view, all the facts examined above testify that the Epicurean concept of pleasure differs from the way it is represented in Cicero and Diogenes Laertius. Epicurus is far from seeing pleasure in a neutral state – a state in which both pain and usual, positive kind of pleasure are absent. Nor does Epicurus have all those contradictions of which Cicero accuses him and which are related to the division of pleasures into kinetic and static ones. One gets the impression that Cicero and Diogenes try to impose this division on Epicurus, reading it into phrases the actual meaning of which is absolutely different: Diogenes finds it in a sentence which is in fact dealing with the physical and emotional side of any pleasure, and Cicero, in his turn, infers it from the two characteristics of pleasure – as the absence of pain and as a pleasant movement perceived by the senses. Having attributed the distinction between the two kinds of pleasure to Epicurus, Cicero tries to find it in some other utterances by the philosopher as well. For example, Torquatus in the first book of *De Finibus*, right after his statement about two kinds of pleasure, quotes Epicurus' words:

*omnis autem privatione doloris putat Epicurus terminari summam voluptatem, ut postea variari voluptas distinguique possit, augeri amplificarique non possit.*⁷⁸

According to Torquatus, Epicurus says here that static pleasure is the supreme form of pleasure and when it is achieved, sensory kinetic pleasures can only impart variety to it, but cannot increase its magnitude.⁷⁹ However, as Gosling and Taylor justly notice,⁸⁰ Epicurus' phrase itself says nothing

Tusculanae Disputationes it can be seen that here Epicurus by no means distinguishes between kinetic pleasures and the absence of pain but, on the contrary, he combines the two concepts into a single whole.

⁷⁸ 1.38. Cf. Epicurus, *Principal Doctrines* 3 (the text is quoted here in note 43) and 18: οὐκ ἐπαύξεται ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ ἡ ἡδονή, ἐπειδὴν ἅπαξ τὸ κατ' ἐνδειαν ἀλγοῦν ἐξαιρεθῇ, ἀλλὰ μόνον ποικίλλεται.

⁷⁹ Compare a similar interpretation of these words in 2.10 (an utterance by Cicero refuting the Epicureans' doctrine): *ista varietas quae sit, non satis perspicio, quod ais, cum dolore careamus, tum in summa voluptate nos esse, cum autem vescamur iis rebus, quae dulcem motum afferant sensibus, tum esse in motu voluptatem, qui faciat varietatem voluptatum, sed non augeri illam non dolendi voluptatem, quam cur voluptatem appelles, nescio.*

⁸⁰ Gosling, Taylor (n. 4), 377.

about kinetic and static pleasures: we can only find this meaning in it if we choose to believe from the very beginning that Epicurus distinguished between these two kinds of pleasures. From my point of view, this utterance is better compared with a statement made by Epicurus in his *Letter to Menoeceus*:⁸¹ οἱ γὰρ λιτοὶ χυλοὶ ἴσην πολυτελεῖ διαίτη τὴν ἡδονὴν ἐπιφέρουσιν, ὅταν ἅπαξ τὸ ἀλγοῦν κατ' ἔνδειαν ἐξαιρεθῇ. Here Epicurus explains his idea that the magnitude of pleasure is determined solely by the removal of pain and the complete satisfaction of desires and does not depend on the manner in which this desire is satisfied – the idea which I analysed above when I tried to explain the meaning of the Epicurean concept of ἀπονία. It is precisely this meaning that Epicurus' phrase quoted by Cicero had, and only his conviction that 'the removal of pain' in Epicurus was not the characteristic of any pleasure but the designation of a special kind of pleasure, pleasure 'in a state of rest,' that made it possible for Cicero to view it as a distinction between two different kinds of pleasures.

If Epicurus did not divide pleasures into kinetic and static, the question arises where Cicero and Diogenes Laertius found this idea. We will be able to answer this question if we examine the context in which a classification of pleasures is normally proposed. Both Cicero and Diogenes speak about it when they wish to contrast Epicurus' doctrine with the Cyrenaics' views. According to them, the Cyrenaics recognized only one type of pleasure, pleasure in motion, whereas Epicurus admits two types – pleasure 'in motion' and pleasure 'in a state of rest.' Besides, it should be noted that in comparing Epicurus' and the Cyrenaics' ideas Cicero proceeds from a description of various ethic doctrines that goes back to Carneades and is related to Carneades' division of theories of the supreme good (*divisio Carneadea*): using the classification principle 'thesis – antithesis – synthesis', the author of this division contraposed the definitions of the supreme good as pleasure in motion, as the absence of pain, and Epicurus' view which he believed to synthesize both of these concepts. Probably, Cicero received this view of Epicurus' concept of pleasure through Antiochus of Ascalon,⁸² who, as Cicero himself reported, had often used the *divisio Carneadea* in his reasoning. Let us now look at the tradition upon which the text by Diogenes Laertius is based.

The overview of Epicurean ethics in Book 10 of Diogenes can be separated into three parts. In the first part (117-121), Diogenes cites Epicurus'

⁸¹ 130.

⁸² See n. 84.

opinions about various problems of theoretical ethics. Following next is a second part comprising the text of Epicurus' *Letter to Menoeceus* (122–135) and a mention of Epicurus' view of divination (135) – a small piece of information that remained unfinished in the first part. After this section Diogenes seems to sum up the description of ethics: 'Such are his opinions about the way of life; in other places he speaks about this in greater detail.' Interestingly enough, Diogenes concludes his overview of Epicurus' physics (83: 'Such is his letter about physics') and Epicurus' views of celestial phenomena (117: 'Such are his opinions about celestial phenomena') in the same way. One might expect that the exposition of ethics would end with a similar phrase in 135, yet Diogenes unexpectedly goes on to speak about some of Epicurus' ideas. We may assume that this third part is a supplement to the overview of Epicurus' ethical doctrine and that it was borrowed from another source. The contents of this part make it possible for us to advance a hypothesis about the source from which it was taken. In it, Diogenes reports four ideas of Epicurus. Firstly, it is the concept of kinetic and static pleasure (136), which I am discussing in this paper. Secondly, there is Epicurus' idea that mental pleasures and pains are stronger than bodily pleasures and pains (137; this idea is also contraposed to the Cyrenaics' view). Thirdly, Diogenes reports Epicurus' argument that pleasure is the ultimate goal – an argument based on deriving the ultimate goal from the primary object of a living creature's natural impulse.⁸³ And, fourthly, Diogenes presents Epicurus' idea that virtues are to be sought for not for their own sake but for the sake of the pleasure they give (138). All these four principles are not related among themselves by any common theme, and one can give only one reason for bringing them together. The fact is that they correspond to the four parts of the analysis of Epicurean ethics by Antiochus of Ascalon: it is precisely these four parts which form the basis for the overview of Epicurus' ethics by Cicero in *De Finibus*⁸⁴ and, what is even more interesting, Antiochus' dis-

⁸³ 137: 'And as proof that pleasure is the end he adduces the fact that living things, so soon as they are born, are well content with pleasure and are at enmity with pain, by the prompting of nature and apart from reason.'

⁸⁴ On the possibility of Cicero's dependence in Book 1 of *De Finibus* on Antiochus' ideas, see my comments on Book 1 of the dialogue in: Cicero, *On the Ends of Good and Evil* (Moscow, 2000), 245–284 (in Russian). Antiochus' views remain in the focus of Cicero's attention through the whole of his work. It is these views that Cicero contraposes to Epicurus' concepts in Book 2 and the Stoics' concepts in Book 4, and it is to them that he devotes practically the whole of Book 5. In general, *De Finibus* is arranged so that Antiochus' teaching (expounded in Book 5) appears to be a synthe-

ciple Marcus Varro examines Epicurus' ethics from the same four aspects.⁸⁵ Thus, this part of Diogenes' text turns out to be related to the same doxographic tradition upon which Cicero depended. It would be an unwarranted assertion to say that Diogenes Laertius borrowed his description from Antiochus. Apparently, Antiochus adopted his entire analysis of ethic doctrines from the philosophers of the Middle Academy and it would therefore be most reasonable to assume that it is precisely texts by Carneades' followers that formed the basis for Diogenes' report.

All the facts listed above convince me that the singular interpretation of the Epicurean concept of pleasure which we find in Cicero and Diogenes Laertius first appeared in Carneades or in writings by his followers who developed the *divisio Carneadea*. In my opinion, its emergence

sis of the main principles of the Epicurean and Stoic theories, which are opposite to each other (and which are dealt with in Books 1-2 and 3-4, respectively): thus, while the Epicureans, according to Cicero, regard only the good of the body and the Stoics, only the good of the soul as the supreme good, Antiochus brings the good of the body and the good of the soul together in his concept of the supreme good; while the Epicureans regard virtue as a means to achieve the supreme good and the Stoics view it as an end, i.e., the supreme good itself, Antiochus regards it both as an end and a means to that end; and so on. As for the exposition of the Epicurean ethics in Book 1, it follows, on the whole, the same pattern which Antiochus himself followed: (1) the definition of the object of the natural impulse and the substantiation on this basis of a concept of the supreme good (1.30-42; cf. 5.24-45 on Antiochus); (2) the role of virtue (1.42-64; cf. 5.59-64); (3) the relative importance of the body and the soul in defining the supreme good (1.55-57; cf. 5.46-58); and (4) the importance of social life (1.65-70; cf. 5.65-70). Individual notions and ideas examined in "Epicurean" Book 1 are also treated in the spirit of Antiochus' teaching and not the teaching of Epicurus. What might be given by way of examples is the description of the natural impulse (1.30), the interpretation of virtues (1.42ff.), the attribution to the Epicureans of Antiochus' three criteria of truth (1.31; about Antiochus see *De Finibus* 5.27 and *Academica* 2.30-31), and so on.

⁸⁵ As may be inferred from Varro's fragment in Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* 19.1, Antiochus of Ascalon proceeded from the following pattern in analyzing and classifying ethical doctrines: (1) primary objects of the natural impulse; (2) functional relationships between these objects and virtue; and (3) views on social life. The same three components form constituent parts of Antiochus' own theory (the exposition of his ethics in 19.3 and in Book 5 of Cicero's *De Finibus* follows precisely this pattern). The first of the three parts contained yet another section dealing with the role of the body and the soul as primary objects of the natural impulse; besides, doctrines taking pleasure and the absence of pain as such objects were further classified into concepts concerning the drive for kinetic pleasure, for the absence of pain and for both types of pleasure. The composition of Book 1 of *De Finibus* is based on precisely this pattern. Practically all the parts named here are present in Diogenes' text, except Epicurus' views on public life, which Diogenes analyzed earlier (see 10.119 and 120).

is to be explained by the desire to arrange in a single system theories put forward by the Cyrenaics, Epicurus and those philosophers who regarded the absence of pain as the supreme good.⁸⁶ Having noted that Epicurus, like the Cyrenaics, speaks about pleasure as movement and, on the other hand, links pleasure with the state of ἀπονία, and ignoring the fact that both 'movement' and ἀπονία are to Epicurus not different types of pleasure but, rather, different ways of describing one and the same pleasure, the developer of the *divisio Carneadea* assumed that Epicurus had joined together the viewpoints of the Cyrenaics and the advocates of painlessness and singled out two types of pleasure – pleasure 'in motion' and pleasure 'in a state of rest.' Evidently, the author of the idea of Epicurus' classification of pleasures did not clarify what, in his view, was the meaning of the concept of 'kinetic' pleasure. Hence the inconsistency of information about this class of pleasures in our sources. Thus, Cicero usually refers to pleasure related to pleasant movement in the senses as pleasure 'in motion,'⁸⁷ yet sometimes he regards movement in a different way – like Speusippus, he uses this word with reference to the process of restoration of the organism. Diogenes, in his turn, names pleasures which consist in 'movement' of the soul as examples of 'kinetic' pleasures and thus includes emotions of the soul under this class.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Hieronymus, according to the *divisio Carneadea*.

⁸⁷ *De Fin.* 1.37; 2.6 and 32, etc.

⁸⁸ I am indebted to Prof. David Sedley for the careful reading of a previous version of this paper and his many helpful comments, to my father Michael Nikolsky for his assistance in translating the paper into English, and to C. J. Rowe and Gregory Dashevsky whose valuable suggestions have helped me greatly in improving my style and argumentation.