

Philodemus On the Senses

Post by “Pacatus” of January 30, 2024 at 7:04 PM

“The trouble may be cleared up by considering the terminology used by these two philosophers.”

Yes - as when the Stoics distinguish between *pathe* and *eupathe*, while the Epicureans treat *pathe* as such: signaling either pleasure or pain/disturbance (physical or mental).

The Epicurean division of aesthesis (sensus), *pathe* (adfectio) and *prolepsis* (intuitio) seems just, all round, more clear.

“Philodemus seems to make explicit the connection between affections and self-consciousness, and he identifies affections as ‘sense perceptions of themselves’ (ἐαυτῶν ἐπαισθήσεις, col. XII). This is underscored in col. XV, where Philodemus says that we have a perception of pleasure that is discrete from our perception of the object that produces it. In the same column, Philodemus makes another important claim: that “we also have a perception of (ἐπαισθάνεσθαι) the fact of seeing.”

And (although I could be wrong) I don’t see that “being aware of x” and “being aware that I am aware” and “being aware that I am also aware of the affect that being aware has upon me” necessarily leads to an infinite regression. Except in the most radically abstract application of logic.