

Philodemus On the Senses

Post by “Bryan” of January 30, 2024 at 12:01 AM

Does anybody know of a translation of Philodemus' work "On the Senses"? I have not been able to find any.

Post by “TauPhi” of January 30, 2024 at 8:53 AM

[PHerc. 698 Cr. 3-4: A New Edition](#)

The following is a new edition of PHerc. 698 cr. 3-4, including an introduction, English translation and commentary. An in-line reprint of PHerc. 19, including...
scholarsarchive.byu.edu

'Download' button gives you access to a thesis on PHerc. 19/698. Translation starts on page 24.

I hope that's what you're looking for.

Post by “Bryan” of January 30, 2024 at 11:05 AM

Wow great find, thank you! So a certain Justin Barney was ahead of us and did this in 2015. I am working on something that looks very similar, but, in this regard, "the more the merrier," and this will help. Thanks again!

Post by “Cassius” of January 30, 2024 at 11:09 AM

Great use of the forum to coordinate work. Thank you [TauPhi](#) for finding that reference!

Post by “Bryan” of January 30, 2024 at 3:43 PM

It is interesting that this is out of Brigham Young University and most of the good recent translations of Philodemus have been from the Society of Biblical Literature.

(For example <https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/pubs/061633P.front.pdf>)

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.

Post by “Don” of January 30, 2024 at 8:29 PM

This IS a great find! Thanks, [TauPhi](#) !!

FYI: For the "original" <https://papyri.info/dclp/62381>

PS: That link of mine seems superfluous 😊 That paper does an amazing job of re-assembling the fragmentary puzzle along with a great transcription and translation. This find gets better

and better.

Note: When you see "affections" in the translations, that's πάθη *pathe*. ... PPS: Hmm... I'm going to have to take a closer look. The translator might have been playing fast and loose 😏
😁

I also want to add a caveat that, while this papyrus is of very keen interest to me (and us), we shouldn't "defer" to a treatise from 1st c. BCE over modern scientific neuroscience research when it comes to understanding feelings, perceptions, consciousness, and so on.

I am very much looking to dig into PHerc. 698 with this new find. [TauPhi](#) gets a gold star for this discovery!!

Post by “Joshua” of January 31, 2024 at 1:27 AM

Quote

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Hmm. I wonder if the link is papyrology; the scholars working on the Dead Sea Scrolls and those working on Herculaneum and other fragmentary texts sharing tools, technology, and insights.

Post by “Bryan” of February 1, 2024 at 1:25 PM

Given that there *is* a translation, I am going to abandon what little I started here and move on. Thanks again [TauPhi](#).