

Philodemus of Gadara - Main Biography

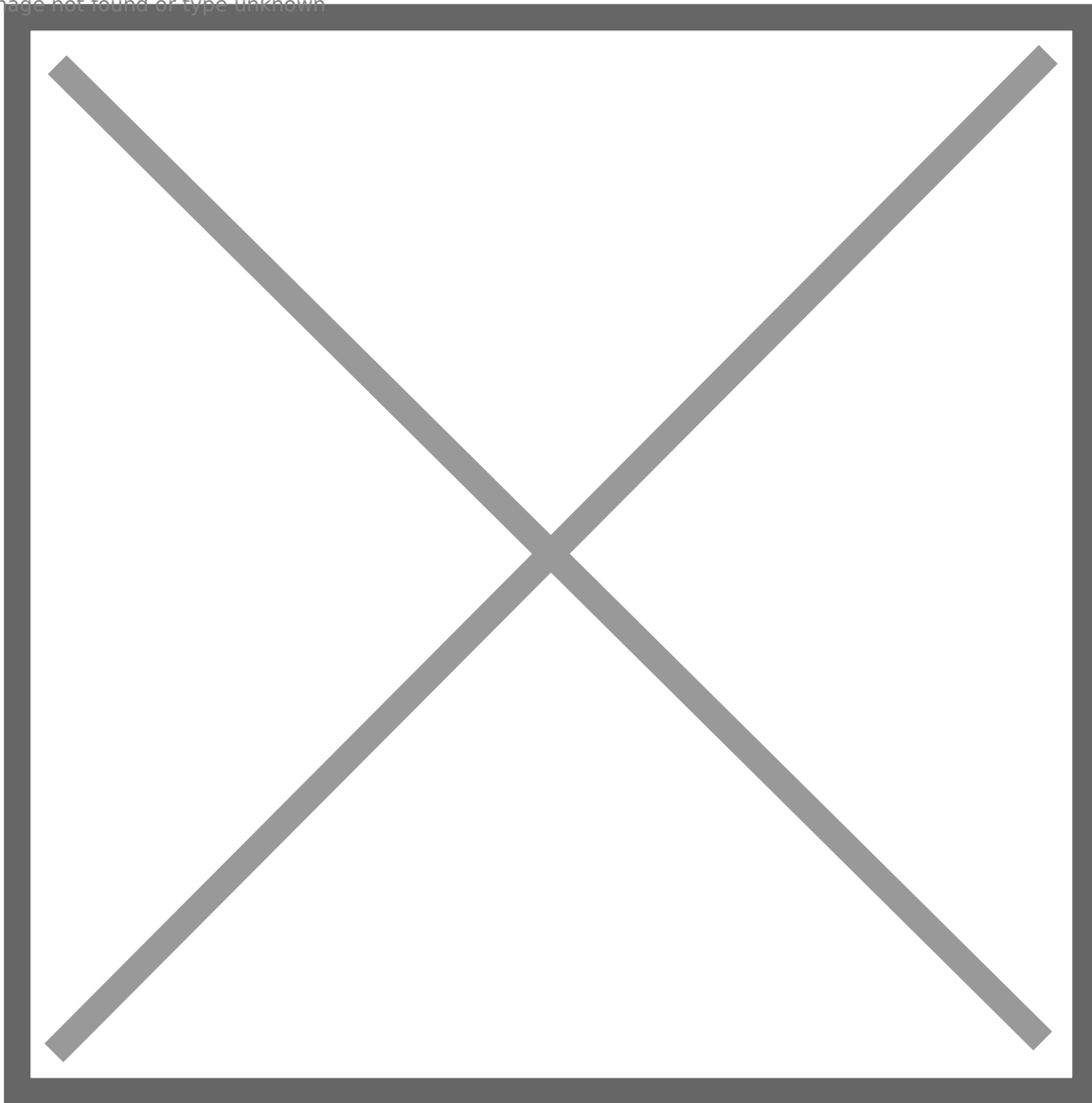
Post by “Pacatus” of November 30, 2023 at 4:02 PM

From the paper cited by [Don](#) in post #2: “The outcome of clearer editions has been to show that Philodemus made significant contributions to the development of Epicurean doctrines, which in turn has led to the realisation that Epicureans were not nearly as dogmatic and unchanging as our hostile sources had led us to believe.”

It seems clear that the author is using “dogmatic” in the pejorative sense of “disposed to make positive assertions without presenting arguments or evidence” (from the 17th century), and not in the original sense of holding opinions/beliefs (such as that it is possible to know things about the real world: knowledge – as opposed to the dogma of the Academic Skeptics that knowledge was impossible, or the agnosticism on the subject of Pyrrhonians). In the original sense, there seems to have been no connotation that such beliefs could not require evidentiary grounding – which, in the context of Epicurus’ teachings, is provided by the senses, feelings and prolepsis.

And Philodemus, at least, allowed for analogical inference from sense-experience to what is not so sensed (and that might be viewed as a precursor to modern inductive reasoning and logical inference).

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[dogmatic | Etymology of dogmatic by etymonline](#)

DOGMATIC: "disposed to make positive assertions without presenting arguments or evidence;" 1706, "pertaining to or... See origin and meaning of dogmatic.
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