

Nausiphanes' Tripod

Post by “Godfrey” of March 16, 2022 at 1:31 AM

This appears to be what is known of Nausiphanes' tripod, which is said to have inspired Epicurus' tripod of truth.

From *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers*, by Kathleen Freeman, [1948], at sacred-texts.com p. 124

Quote

75. NAUSIPHANES OF TEOS

Nausiphanes of Teos lived in the time of Alexander, and after.

He wrote a book called *The Tripod*, on epistemology and method. This was said to have been the source of Epicurus' *Canon*. It is preserved in epitome only, by Philodemus.

1. (*The man of science has the capacity for rhetoric, even if he does not practise it*).
2. (*The wise man will pursue rhetoric, because honour depends on winning a reputation for cleverness in politics, rather than on the over-lauded virtues*).

The wise man is he who can persuade his hearers; this power belongs to the man of science, its source being his knowledge of the facts, so that he could pass on his own convictions not only to his pupils but to any race of people. Having a knowledge of the facts, he is able to lead his audience where he wishes, because he can tell them what is to their advantage, which is what they wish to hear. The scientist has command of the best diction also: not that created by vain imagination and usage, but that based on the nature of things. He also has command of logic, without which knowledge is impossible, and is best qualified in that art indispensable to a statesman in a democracy or monarchy or any other constitution, of calculation of the future from the known facts.

The man who employs continuous discourse will be best able to employ the dialectic method and vice versa, because both depend on an accurate judgement of how to lead pupils from the known to the unknown; that is, they depend upon a knowledge of the 'right time' and 'right measure' in speaking).

3. (*Nausiphanes gave 'immovability' as the goal of life, this being the name he gave to Democritus' 'imperturbability'*).

4. (Of those things which appear to exist, nothing exists more than it does not exist).

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Post by “Cassius” of March 16, 2022 at 6:21 AM

Thank you that is interesting on many levels, not the least as the explanation under item two bears on our recent "logic" discussions.

I wonder where this comes from? The "on rhetoric" papyrus?

Item four seems cryptic.

"an accurate judgement of how to lead pupils from the known to the unknown" seems to be a good description of what we are looking for.

Post by “Don” of March 16, 2022 at 8:08 AM

[Herculaneum Papyri - Epicurus Wiki](#)

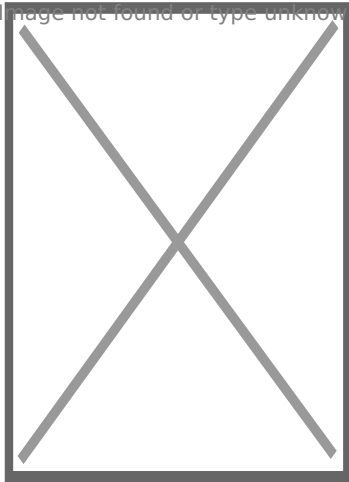
There are multiple On Rhetoric papyri. Do we have a more exact citation?

Post by “Cassius” of March 16, 2022 at 8:10 AM

I seem to remember reading that On rhetoric was one of the first ones that much progress was made on, and there is an old book somewhat equivalent to DeLacys version of On Methods of Inference.....

Post by “Don” of March 16, 2022 at 8:30 AM

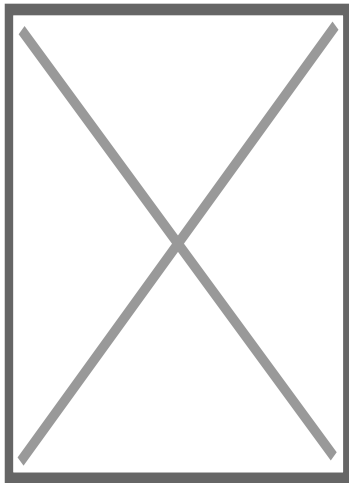
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Post by “Don” of March 16, 2022 at 8:52 AM



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Nausiphanes references...

Post by “Cassius” of March 16, 2022 at 11:00 AM

Yes that rings a dim bell from the distant past, as indicated by the red circle. I didn't absorb much of it then but maybe today I / we would get a lot more out of it, especially since we're now used to the fact that the title given to these scrolls isn't necessary an accurate reflection of the contents.



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Post by "Don" of March 16, 2022 at 5:49 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

that rings a dim bell from the distant past, as indicated by the red circle

LOL. Did NOT see that "uploaded by" name! 😊

Post by “Godfrey” of March 16, 2022 at 6:02 PM

The quote in post #1 is online at <https://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/app/app70.htm>.

It has a link to the book on Amazon, the book is:

Ancilla to Pre-Socratic Philosophers: A Complete Translation of the Fragments in Diels, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* Paperback, August 15, 1983 by Kathleen Freeman.

"This book is a complete translation of the fragments of the pre-Socratic philosophers given in the fifth edition of Diels, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*."

I'm not sure what that means, since Philodemus wasn't a pre-Socratic. Diels must have used fragments from other ancients which refer to pre-Socratics since there's not much left from them.

I believe that item 4 in post #1 comes from Pyrrho and from ancient Buddhism. It certainly is cryptic!