

# THE STOIC PHILOSOPHER

A quarterly eJournal published  
by the Marcus Aurelius School of  
the College of Stoic Philosophers

Oct/Nov/Dec 2012: Issue #4

**HERACLITUS STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS:** If you haven't read a doctoral dissertation recently you will enjoy reading *The Theology of Heraclitus: a Presocratic Pantheism* (1980), by David Valiulis (25 MB), located in the College library Stacks on Early Stoics [http://stoicscollege.com/college\\_stacks.php](http://stoicscollege.com/college_stacks.php). This doctoral thesis was submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Toronto. Particularly note the introduction and conclusion.

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**UPCOMING—THE ART OF PARABLE IN EPICTETUS:** *Although the use of parable is generally recognized as a hallmark of the teaching style of Jesus, it was not unique to him. Stoics, especially Epictetus, frequently used parable and parable-like examples to illustrate a point, as well. Like Jesus, Epictetus drew upon the everyday aspects of life around him: athletics, military service, the theater, dinner parties, and so on. Although the milieu in which Epictetus lived was that of the sophisticated urban environment of Imperial Rome, rather than the simpler agricultural life of Palestine, Epictetus and Jesus did share some common examples in their teachings: that of the fig tree and of children. Starting in the January issue, member Gregory Wasson will examine and contrast how Epictetus and Jesus used these two symbols in their teaching.*

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## “Stoic Glossary & Pronunciation Guide”

Gregory Wasson, M.A.

*[Editor] In my bookcase full of Stoic philosophy books I have never been able to find a pronunciation guide for the many Greek and Latin words we Stoics use every day. It's been a source of frustration to me for years. Now, we have one. The glossary was brought together from numerous sources, but the pronunciation guide, the only one of its kind, was generously provided by Gregory Wasson, fellow Stoic and master of ancient Greek and Latin. It was deemed important enough to feature of this quarterly eJournal and has also been placed in the College of Stoic Philosophers library at <http://stoicscollege.com/PDF/stoicglossary.pdf>*

**Note:** The pronunciation used for Classical Greek in modern academic circles is based on the comments of ancient Greek writers and the model proposed by Erasmus. It is a conjecture since there are no Classical Greeks around to tell us otherwise, but it is clear that ancient Greek was pronounced

differently than modern Greek. For example, it had a tonal accent, rather than a stress accent as in English and the Greek spoken today. But a stress accent is generally used in academic circles today. For additional information, see the links:

<http://www.biblicalgreek.org/links/pronunciation.php#Conventions>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:IPA\\_for\\_Greek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:IPA_for_Greek)

Each Greek word in the list below is followed by the word in Greek letters and then the approximate pronunciation in English-speaking countries today. The sound indicated by **kh** is like the strongly aspirated **ch** in the Scottish word **loch** or in the German **ach**. The first link contains audio files to hear the pronunciation of both ancient Greek and the modern language.

***aegritudo (Latin word) [eye-gree-TU-doh]***

Distress or contraction. One of the four general passions. Unlike the other passions, Distress has no opposite. See *pathos*.

***agathon (ἀγαθόν) [a-ga-THON]***

The Good. The only Good is our own virtuous choices, both beneficial and wise. The opposite of the Good is the Bad (*kakon*). Things which are not Bad or Good are *Indifferent*.

***arete (ἀρετή) [ar-eh-TAY]***

Virtue. Virtues are character traits of those who are more prone to make virtuous choices. Virtuous choices are those appropriate choices in accordance with Nature. In other words, virtue consists of making appropriate selections among Indifferents, selecting the preferred and avoiding the dispreferred.

***assent***

A modification of the pneuma-soul which the *hegemonikon* identifies on the basis of *common notions*, or *the criterion of truth* - the collections of like experiences accumulated by memory.

***bad***

See *kakon*.

***boulesis (βούλησις) [BOO-lay-sees]***

Wish. This is one of the three *hai eupatheiai*, or 'good feelings'. Wish is the opposite of Appetite (*epithumia*, *libido*). See also *hai eupatheiai*.

***cardinal virtues***

There are four cardinal virtues: Wisdom, Justice, Courage, and Decorum. All virtues are attributes of the first cardinal virtue of Wisdom. These virtues are the only good and their achievement is the good or excellence of the wise man, the philosopher. Moral excellence is the perfection of virtue (*arete*), which the wise man cultivates as an art, the art of living. Because the perfection of virtue is the work of the wise, only the wise truly know virtue. And, because virtue is the only good, it alone is sufficient for happiness (*eudaimonia*). All virtues are manifestations of knowledge, and the lack of knowledge, or ignorance is the cause of the lack of virtue, which is vice, or evil. See also the individual entries for each.

***chara (χαρά) [khar-AH]***

Joy. This is one of the three *hai eupatheiai*, or 'good feelings'. Joy is the opposite of Pleasure (*hedone*, *laetitia*). See also *hai eupatheiai*.

***Chrysippus [cry-sip-us]*** (*this is the pronunciation generally used in English academic circles*)

Stoic philosopher

**common notions**

Collections of like presentations, grouped in our minds by similarities.

**courage**

The third *Cardinal Virtue*. The knowledge of what things are to be confronted. Two attributes are bravery (the management of fear) and boldness (vision and ambition). Its perfection is in facing and mastering what we fear.

**crasis (κράσις) [KRA-sees]**

The total blending that occurs between wine and water, and between the active and passive principles in matter.

**criterion of truth**

The means by which the command center (hegemonikon) discerns which presentations (phantasia) are real or imaginary, and which are true or false. It does this by comparing immediate presentations with common notions.

**daemon (δαίμων) [DIE-moan]**

Literally, the god or part of god within each human being. It may have denoted the rational self. Socrates had a *daemon* that he referred to many times. In classical times, the term was used to refer to a lesser deity.

**decorum**

The fourth *Cardinal Virtue*. Although the fourth virtue is often referred to as 'temperance' the original word was *Sophrosyne*, which has no perfect translation, and is a much more inclusive word than temperance. *Sophrosyne* is the knowledge of self-control and how to be steadfast, including the regulation of appetites, emotions, and desires. It is also a dignified propriety or noble bearing in appearance, speech, and manners.

**denotation**

The actual thing to which a word refers.

**dispreferred**

The quality of an *Indifferent* such that it is inconsistent with Nature. See also, *Indifferent*.

**divine fire**

See *Logos*.

**Doctrine of Preconception**

See "*prolepsis*"

**ekpyrosis (ἐκπύρωσις) [ek-PURR-o-sees]**

The purifying fire of the *Logos* which periodically destroys the cosmos in a conflagration before it is reborn.

**Epictetus [Eh-peek-TEE-tus] (this is the pronunciation generally used in English academic circles)**

Stoic philosopher

**epithumia (ἐπιθυμία) [eh-pee-thu-MEE-ah]**

Appetite or lust/swelling. One of the four general passions. See *pathos*.

**Eros**

The creative force. Represented by the God of Love, *Eros* is that force which unifies opposites in order to create and recreate. We rationally perceive this force as love.

***eudaimonia (εὐδαιμονία) [ew-die-mo-NEE-ah]***

Happiness. This refers to what we would translate today as happiness independent of circumstance.

***eulabeia (εὐλάβεια) [ew-LAH-bey-ah]***

Caution. This is one of the three *hai eupatheiai*, or 'good feelings'. Caution is the opposite of Fear (*phobos*). See also *hai eupatheiai*.

***Evil (vice)***

See *kakon*.

***externals***

See *Indifferent*.

***good***

See *agathon*.

***good feelings, good passions***

See *hai eupatheiai*.

***hai eupatheiai (αἱ εὐπαθείαι) [high ew-pa-THAY-eye]***

The 'good passions' or 'good feelings'. The opposite of Passion (*pathos*), these are the serene and reasonable actions of the soul in the good states. These are feelings that arise from true judgments about the Good (*agathon*) and the Bad (*kakon*). They include: Joy (*chara*), Wish (*boulesis*), and Caution (*eulabeia*).

***hedone (ἡδονή) [hay-doh-NAY]***

Pleasure or elation/delight. One of the four general passions. See *pathos*.

***hegemonikon (ἡγεμονικόν) [hay-geh-mon-ee-KON]***

The command center of a human soul. That part which is capable of making choices. It has four essential abilities: presentation, impulse, assent, and reason (*Logos*).

***hexis (ἕξις) [HEX-ees]***

Cohesive state. Bodies are held together by a two-way motion. Pneuma motion begins at the center of the object, simultaneously moving to the surface and back again producing an internal tension, *tonos*, that creates the cohesive state.

***hypomnemata (ὑπομνήματα) [hyp-om-NAY-mah-tah]***

Personal notes as found in the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius. Today we would call this 'journaling'.

***impulse***

The instinctive movement of the soul toward that which appears to be beneficial, and away from that which appears to be harmful. All living animals are spurred to action by impulse.

***incorporeal***

Those things which are not bodies. While corporeal bodies exist, incorporeal bodies subsist. Only a body, that which exists, can act and be acted upon. The incorporeal includes: *Iekta* (the meaning of words), void (that infinite realm outside the cosmos and within which the cosmos exists), place (location), and time (only the present exists and is rationally divided into past and future to understand movement of the corporeal).

**indifferent**

Things which are not within our control - externals, in the sense of being external to our will. Since the only Good (*agathon*) is our virtuous choice, and the only Bad (*kakon*) is our vicious choice, all other things are therefore in the category of things which are Indifferent. This refers, not to our attitude of indifference, but rather an objective quality of a thing as being indifferent to the Good or the Bad. Stoics do not attach themselves, their feelings, sense of value, or contentment to Indifferents. Among *Indifferents*, there are *Preferred Indifferents* (consistent with Nature), *Dispreferred Indifferents* (inconsistent with Nature), and *True Indifferents*.

**justice**

The second *Cardinal Virtue*. Justice is the knowledge of how things are to be distributed, taking into account the fairness of each individual's interest when measured against every other interest in the prevention of harm and in the distribution of benefit.

***kakon* (κακόν) [kah-KON]**

The Bad. The only Bad is our own vicious (unvirtuous) choices, both harmful and unwise. The opposite of the Bad, is the Good (*agathon*). Things which are not Bad or Good are *Indifferent*.

***katalepsis* (κατάληψις) [ka-TAH-layp-sees]**

The process whereby the *hegemonikon* (command center) grasps or apprehends the presentation (*phantasia*), becoming cognizant of it. This is less than *knowledge* but comes after *assent*.

***laetitia* (Latin word) [lie-tee-tee-a]**

Pleasure or elation/delight. One of the four general passions. See *pathos*.

***lekta* (λεκτά) [lek-TAH]**

The incorporeal quality described as the meaning of words.

***libido***

Appetite or lust/swelling. One of the four general passions. See *pathos*.

***Logos***

An artistic fire, the *active principle*, creates as it expands pervading inert matter, the *passive principle*, and defining existence as an evolving, dynamic process. Logos is the Seminal Reason of creation, the past, present, and future of the cosmos existing in potential at the beginning. Just as the apple seed contains the intelligence to grow into a tree, so does the universe evolve from the seed of its intelligence at birth. This same quality in humans is what gives them the power of reason that animals lack.

***lupē* (λύπη) [lu-PAY]**

Distress or contraction. One of the four general passions. Unlike the other passions, Distress has no opposite. See *pathos*.

***Marcus Aurelius* . . . .** (MARK-us A-REEL-ee-us) (*this is the pronunciation generally used in English academic circles*)

*Roman emperor, Stoic philosopher*

***mneme* (μνήμη) [MNAY-may]**

memory work.

**noesis**

Thought. Rational presentation capable of human beings. Thoughts are corporeal physical states of the pneuma-soul which have the structure of language. Thought is related to three parts: (1) the Sign, (2) the Significate, and (3) the Denotation.

**oikeiosis (οικείωσις) [oy-KAY-o-sees]**

The Doctrine of Appropriation. This is the migration of our natural affinity for self to an affinity for others, extending outward to larger and larger circles: self, family, community, nation, world, etc.

**pathos**

Passion. The inappropriate feelings or enrapturing emotions. A form of mental illness or psychic disturbance, these emotions are a case of false judgments about the Good (agathon) and the Bad (kakon). The four general passions are distress (or contraction, lupe, aegritudo), fear (or shrinking, phobos), appetite (or lust/swelling, epithumia, libido), and pleasure (or elation/delight, hedone, laetitia). Their opposite are the Good Feelings or hai eupatheiai.

**phantasia**

Presentations. The initial sensory impressions we experience.

**phantastikon (φανταστικόν) [fan-tas-tee-KON]**

An imaginary presentation; dreams, fantasies, hallucinations. These are produced from the internal manipulation of the mental content of previously stored presentations (*phantasia*).

**phobos (φόβος) [FOH-boss]**

Fear or shrinking. One of the four general passions. See *pathos*.

**phusis (φύσις) [FU-sees]**

That quality that, when mixed with a body that is cohesive (*hexis*), makes the body organic. Bodies with only hexis and phusis grow and reproduce, but have no cognitive ability.

**pneuma (πνεῦμα) [PNEW-mah]**

Air, the Divine Breath that enters, defines, and rules inert matter produces an internal tension (*tonos*) by moving from the center of an object to its surface, then returning to its center again. Pneuma is the World Soul that pervades and directs the cosmos just as it pervades and directs a material body with a human soul (*pneuma psychikon*) extending a spark of divine reason, the Logos, to human kind.

**pneuma psychikon (πνεῦμα ψυχικόν) [PNEW-mah psu-khee-KON]**

The human soul.

**preferred**

The quality of an *Indifferent* such that it is consistent with Nature. See also, *Indifferent*.

**prokoptōn (προκόπτων) [pro-KOP-tone]**

Making progress. Even though one has not obtained the wisdom of a sage when appropriate actions are increasingly chosen fewer and fewer mistakes will be made and one will be prokoptōn, making progress.

**prolepsis (πρόληψις) [PRO-layp-sees]**

The Doctrine of Preconception. The human infant, although a 'blank slate' at birth, has a number of preconceptions or innate dispositions toward forming certain kinds of concepts. The greatest of these are impulses encouraging the formation of a concept of God and the Good.

***prosoche* (προσοχή) [pro-soh-KHAY]**

The attentiveness or mindfulness that Stoics should apply to every impression and situation they face as they determine the proper judgement they need to make in order to maintain their *eudaimonia*.

***psuche* (ψυχή) [psy-KHAY]**

Soul. Animals with impulse and perception have psuche, while things that merely reproduce and grow without cognitive ability do not.

***quality***

The Pneuma totally blended with the substratum creating a body.

***sign***

The spoken word, whether to one's self or out loud.

***sophrosyne* (σωφροσύνη) [so-froh-SU-nay]**

See *decorum*.

***state***

Each body made cohesive and defined by its unique mixture of the Pneuma: Cohesive state – *hexis*, Organic nature – *hexis* & *phusis*, Non-rational animals – *hexis*, *phusis*, & *psuche* (soul), and Rational animals (human) – *hexis*, *phusis*, *psuche*, & *Logos* (reason).

***substratum***

Shapeless matter before it is permeated by the Pneuma.

***syllogism***

Valid forms of deductive reasoning. Chrysippus developed five forms of syllogism. Syllogisms reemerged in the mid 20th Century once more formally understood and became the leading school in the development of formal logic.

***tonos* (τόνος) [TOH-nos]**

An internal tension in a body, simultaneously moving to the surface and back again, that creates the cohesive state – *hexis*.

***to paschon* (τὸ πάσχον) [toh PASS-khon]**

The Passive Principle which is entered into and blended with the active principle as wine is blended into water.

***to poioun* (τὸ ποιοῦν) [toh poi-NOON]**

The Active Principle which enters and blends with the passive principle as wine is blended into water.

***preferred***

The quality of an Indifferent such that it is consistent with Nature. See also, *Indifferent*.

***virtue***

See *arete*.

***wisdom***

The first *Cardinal Virtue*. Wisdom is the knowledge of what is good or bad or neither. Knowing what is prudent, what is in accord with Nature, what is true and what is false.