The suffering body: philosophy and pain in Seneca's Letters


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Abstract

Book synopsis: Classical scholarship has traditionally neglected the prominence of the body in antiquity. Constructions of the Classical Body theorizes that the study of antiquity is necessarily a study of the body, and that attention to this fact can lead to a much-needed shift in the way in which classical studies are approached today. This volume aims to reestablish the relevance of the problem of the body at the perimeters of several different kinds of inquiry, and, in this way, to help open up a field of possibilities for future study. The range covered by the essays in this volume is sweeping: from Corinthian vaseware to Athenian and Roman politics, poetry from Homer to Ovid, medical writers from the Hippocratic corpus to the diary of Aelius Aristides (second century c.e.), philosophy (Seneca, Porphyry), the Greek novel, Christian apocrypha, Ovid's medieval reception, and twentieth century film. This range is a consequence of the multidisciplinarity that any study of the body requires, and it attests to the particular richness of the body in classical antiquity and as an object for study today. The volume illustrates that body is located between traditional borders, not within them; the body dissolves traditional objects of study and joins areas usually kept apart. Retracing the fate of the body is thus a way of rendering antiquity truly strange again—it allows us to see the past afresh, with open eyes.

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Seneca, Seneca's Morals: Of a Happy Life, Benefits, Anger and Clemency. tags: behavior, character, cruelty, weakness. 755 likes. Like. “Religion is regarded by the common people as true, by the wise as false, and by rulers as useful.” — Seneca. tags: common-people, corruption, organized-religion, useful. 732 likes. Like. “Non est ad astra mollis e terris via” - “There is no easy way from the earth to the stars” — Seneca. tags: latin, philosophy, stars. 639 likes. Like. “Difficulties strengthen the mind, as labor does the body.” — Lucius Annaeus Seneca. tags: adversity, challenge... “We suffer more often in imagination than in reality” — Lucius Annaeus Seneca. 492 likes. Like. Letter 67: On Ill-Health and Endurance of Suffering. Thoughts From Modern Stoics: Massimo Pigliucci. Letter 68: On Wisdom and Retirement. How to Use Philosophy as a Personal Operating System: From Seneca to Musashi (tim.blog/philosophy). Discovering Kindness In The Storm (tim.blog/kindness). Vexation and pain and other inconveniences are of no consequence, for they are overcome by virtue. Just as the brightness of the sun dims all lesser lights, so virtue, by its own greatness, shatters and overpowers all pains, annoyances, and wrongs; and wherever its radiance reaches, all lights which shine without the pain in his body. Whatever delights fall to his lot over and above these two things do not increase his Supreme Good; they merely season it, so to speak, and add spice to it. The suffering body: philosophy and pain in Seneca's Letters’ 252-268 in J.I.Porter ed. Constructions of the classical body (Ann Arbor 1999) more. by Catharine Edwards. The younger Seneca redeploy with characteristic linguistic bravura the complex of meanings mapped on to the body in pain in Roman culture. In his writings, the body of the...