

ДРУШТВО ЗА АНТИЧКЕ СТУДИЈЕ СРБИЈЕ

АНТИКА
И САВРЕМЕНИ СВЕТ:
ТУМАЧЕЊЕ АНТИКЕ



Зборник радова

ДРУШТВО ЗА АНТИЧКЕ СТУДИЈЕ СРБИЈЕ
БУКЕФАЛ Е.О. Н.

Научне публикације
Друштва за античке студије Србије
Едиција
Антика и савремени свет

- Том 1: Антика и савремени свет, 2007, стр. 404
Скуп одржан 2006. године
- Том 2: Европске идеје, античка цивилизација и српска култура, 2008, стр. 496
Скуп одржан 2007. године
- Том 3: Антички свет, европска и српска наука, 2009, стр. 432
Скуп одржан 2008. године
- Том 4: Античка култура, европско и српско наслеђе, 2010, стр. 508
Скуп одржан 2009. године
- Том 5: Антика и савремени свет: култура и религија, 2011, стр. 507
Скуп одржан 2010. године
- Том 6: Антика, савремени свет и рецепција античке културе, 2012, стр. 524
Скуп одржан 2011. године
- Том 7: Антика и савремени свет: научници, истраживачи и тумачи 2012, стр. 350
Скуп одржан 2012. године
- Том 8: Антика и савремени свет: тумачење антике, 2013; стр. 472
Скуп одржан 2013. године

Proceedings
of the Serbian Society for Ancient Studies
Series
Antiquity and Modern World

- Antiquity and Modern World, Proceedings of the Serbian Society for Ancient Studies, Vol. I, Belgrade 2007, pp. 404
- European Ideas, Ancient Civilization and Serbian Culture, Proceedings of the Serbian Society for Ancient Studies, Vol. II, Belgrade 2008, pp. 496
- Ancient World, European and Serbian Scholarship, Proceedings of the Serbian Society for Ancient Studies, Vol. III, Belgrade 2009, pp. 432
- Ancient Culture, European and Serbian Heritage, Proceedings of the Serbian Society for Ancient Studies, Vol. IV, Belgrade 2010, pp. 508
- Antiquity and Modern World: Religion and Culture, Proceedings of the Serbian Society for Ancient Studies, Vol. V, Belgrade 2011, pp. 507
- Antiquity, Modern World and Reception of Ancient Culture, Proceedings of the Serbian Society for Ancient Studies, Vol. VI, Belgrade 2012, pp. 524
- Antiquity and Modern World, Scientists, Researchers and Interpreters, Proceedings of the Serbian Society for Ancient Studies, Vol. VII, Belgrade 2013, pp.
- Antiquity and Modern World, Interpretation of antiquity
- The Editor in chief of the Proceedings of the Serbian Society for Ancient Studies, Vol. I-VII, is Prof. Dr. Ksenija Maricki Gadjanski
- Весна Манојловић Николић, *Из средњовековне археологије*, Студије и истраживања, Београд, 2012, стр. 160, ил.
- Vesna Manojlović Nikolić, *From Medieval Archeology*, Studies and researches, Belgrade, 2012, 160 pp, ill.

ИЗДАВАЧИ

Друштво за античке студије Србије, Београд
Букефал ЕОИ, Београд

За издаваче

Проф. др Ксенија Марицки Гађански
Милан Милетић

УДК

Драгана Обрадовић

Лектура и коректура

др Ксенија Марицки Гађански
др Снежана Ферјанчић

Припрема рукописа за штампу

Милан Милетић
др Ивана Гађански
др Снежана Ферјанчић

Прелом, графичко уређење
и дизајн корица

Милан Милетић

Штампа

„Јован“, Београд

Тираж 100

ISBN 978-86-89367-03-4

CIP – Каталогизација у публикацији
Народна библиотека Србије, Београд

94(398)(082)

930.85(398)(082)

1:929 Савић Ребац А.(082)

АНТИКА и савремени свет: тумачење антике : зборник радова / [организатор скупа] Друштво за античке студије Србије ; [главни уредник Ксенија Марицки Гађански]. – Београд : Друштво за античке студије Србије ; Београд : Букефал Е.О.Н, 2014 (Београд : Јован). – 476 стр. ; 23 см. – (#Едиција #Антика и савремени свет ; #том #8 = #Series #Antiquity and Modern World. #vol.#8)

Радови на срп. и енг. језику. – Текст ћир. и лат. – „Свој осми међународни научни скуп Антика и савремени свет: Тумачење антике Друштво за античке студије Србије је одржало од 18–20. октобра 2013“--> уводна реч. – Тираж 100. – Напомене и библиографске референце уз текст. – Библиографија уз сваки рад. – Резимеи на страним језицима.

ISBN 978-86-89367-03-4

1. Друштво за античке студије (Београд) а) Савић Ребац, Аница (1892–1953) – Зборници б) Југоисточна Европа – Историја – Стари век – Зборници с) Југоисточна Европа – Културна историја – Стари век – Зборници

COBISS.SR-ID 207866636

САДРЖАЈ

Ксенија Марицки Гађански: Уводна реч	5
--	---

I

У ЧАСТ АНИЦЕ САВИЋ РЕБАЦ

Срђан Дамњановић, <i>У њројадљивом њелу њребива дух</i>	11
Srđan Damjanović, <i>Fragile is the Body that Holds the Spirit</i>	
Миријана Д. Стефановић, <i>Лирика Анице Савић Ребац и антика</i>	21
Mirjana D. Stefanović, <i>Die Lyrik von Anica Savić Rebac und die Antike</i>	
Небојша Грубор, <i>Платонова естетика и интерпретацији Анице Савић Ребац</i>	31
Nebojša Grubor, <i>Plato's aesthetics in the interpretation of Anica Savić Rebac</i>	
Сандра Дуčić Колетте, <i>Аница Савић Ребац и Платонов Ерос</i>	42
Sandra Dučić Collette, <i>Anica Savić Rebac and the Platonic Eros</i>	
Марија Стијерић, <i>Аница Савић-Ребац и Летопис Матице Српске</i>	52
Marija Stijerčić, <i>Anica Savić Rebac and the Letopis Matice Srpske</i>	
Јасмина Премовић, <i>О „Животној истинитости“ и делима Томаса Мана према тумачењима Анице Савић Ребац</i>	60
Jasmina Premović, <i>Anica Savić Rebac on the „Verity of Life“ in the writings of Thomas Mann</i>	
Данијела Стефановић, <i>Осврт Анице Савић Ребац на „оријентална друштва“ и концепт примитивне демократије</i>	69
Danijela Stefanović, <i>A note by Anica Savić Rebac on the oriental societies and the concept of primitive democracy</i>	
Слађана Миленковић, <i>Аница Савић Ребац и Димитрије Митриновић: Једна њаралела</i>	74
Slađana Milenković, <i>Anica Savić Rebac and Dimitrije Mitrinović: A parallel</i>	
Миријана Д. Стефановић, <i>Библиографија Анице Савић Ребац (1998–2013)</i> ...	85
Mirjana D. Stefanović, <i>Die Bibliografie von Anica Savić Rebac (1998–2013)</i>	

II

РАДОВИ СА СКУПА

Самир Аличић, <i>Аквилијанска заштитна њлодоуживања у римском њраву</i> . . .	107
Samir Aličić, <i>Aquilian Protection of Usufruct in Roman Law</i>	
Снежана Боџанић, Милица Кисић, <i>Intertekstualni дијалог Георгика и De Rerum Natura кроз IV књигу Вергилијевог свепа</i>	119
Snežana Božanić, Milica Kisić, <i>Vergil's Georgics and Lucretius' De Rerum Natura</i>	
Зоја Војић, <i>Сликање времена: Филостратови Ситарји о времену и сликање Филостратовој концепцији времена у европској уметности</i>	126
Zoja Bojić, <i>Painting Time: Philostratus The Elder on Time and Depictions of Philostrateian Concept of Time in European Art</i>	
Светозар Бошков, <i>Историја ѡредримској ѡдоунавља у радовима Расислава Марића</i>	139
Svetozar Boškov, <i>The History of the Pre-Roman Danube Region in the Studies of Rastislav Marić</i>	
Немања Вујчић, <i>Криви су бојови и римљани! Питање кривице за ѡкрепање Миѡридативих рајова у античким изворима и модерним ѡумачењима</i>	155
Nemanja Vujić, <i>Gods and Romans are to be Blamed! The Question of War Guilt in the Case of Mithridatic Wars in Ancient Sources and Modern Interpretations</i>	
Владан Гавриловић, <i>Професура Јована Ђорђевића На Великој ѡправославној новосадској ѡмназији у Новом Саду</i>	177
Vladan Gavrilović, <i>The professor Jovan Đorđević at the Great serbian orthodox gymnasium of Novi Sad</i>	
Петар Грујић, <i>Платоново наслеђе</i>	184
Petar Grujić, <i>Plato's Legacy</i>	
Ивана Кузмановић Нововић, <i>Gryllo ѡрепставе у античкој ѡлиптици</i>	197
Ivana Kuzmanović, <i>Gryllo Representation in Glyptic Art of antiquity</i>	
Ирена Љубомировић, <i>Галеријев едикт и хришћани</i>	208
Irena Ljubomirović, <i>The Edict of Galerius and the Christians</i>	
Michail Mantzanas, <i>Aritotle on the Presocratic Moral Psychology</i>	219
Μιχαήλ Μαντζανάς, <i>Η κριτική του Αριστοτέλη στην ηθική ψυχολογία των προσωκρατικών</i>	
Весна Манојловић Николић, <i>Симболика орла на средоовековном ѡрсјењу у Србији</i>	231
Vesna Manojlović Nikolić, <i>Symbolism of the Eagle on the Medieval Rings from Serbia</i>	

Гордан Маричић, <i>Ужиј љубав, зѣраби „саг“: Песме Кајула, Проџерџија, Адија и Милана Ракића</i>	240
Gordan Maričić, <i>Carpe Amorem, Carpe Diem (Seize the Love, Seize the Now): Poems by Catulus, Propertius, Ady, and Rakić</i>	
Ненад Марковић, <i>Јулијан Аџосџаџија и свети бик Аџис</i>	252
Nenad Marković, <i>Julian the Apostate and the sacred bull Apis</i>	
Emilia Masson-Jovanović, <i>Од некада до данас: Дуџовечности и џоука џрасџарих сведочанџава</i>	276
Emilia Masson-Jovanović, <i>De jadis à nos jours : La longevité et L'Enseignement de Témoignages Anciens</i>	
Miroslava Mirković, <i>Metodi i model, pojedinačno i opšte u istraživanju antike</i>	285
Miroslava Mirković, <i>Method and model, from the particular to the general concept in researching Antiquity</i>	
Mirko Obradović, <i>Lakonofilija u službi filhelenstva: Ksenofontovo panhelenstvo u Agesilaju i ustavu Lakedemonjana</i>	293
Mirko Obradović, <i>Philolaconism in the Name of Philhellenism: Xenophon's Panhellenism in Agesilaus and Lakedaimoniōn Politeia</i>	
Јелена Пилиповић, <i>Porta eburna – Дијалоџ са Хомером као средџиво онџолошке џпре у Верџилијевој Енеџди</i>	307
Jelena Pilipović, <i>Porta eburna – a dialogue with Homer as an instrument in the ontological play of Vergil in the Aeneid</i>	
Evangelos D. Protoparadakis, <i>“Death is Nothing to Us”: A Critical Analysis of the Epicurean Views Concerning the Dread of Death</i>	317
Evangelos D. Protoparadakis, <i>„Ουδέν προς ημάς ο θάνατος: Μια κριτική ανάλυση των επικούρειων αντιλήψεων περί του φόβου του θανάτου“</i>	
Небојџа М. Раденковић, <i>Анџички осџиаци у Тоџлици у делу Феликса Каниџа</i>	324
Nebojša M. Radenković, <i>Antique Remains in Toplica in the Work of Felix Kanitz</i>	
Саџа Радојчић, <i>Превоџ као инџерџреџијаџија</i>	335
Saša Radojčić, <i>Translation as an Interpretation</i>	
Мира Руџић, <i>Текија (Transdierna) – живоџу у касџелу</i>	343
Mira Ružić, <i>Tekija (Transdierna) – Living in a Castellum</i>	
Глиџор Самарџић, <i>Биџешке о миџоказима са југа Далмаџије</i>	357
Gligor Samaržić, <i>Notes on the Milestones from Southern Dalmatia</i>	
Georgios Steiris, <i>Conclusiones Secundum Pythagoram et Hymnos Orphei: Early Modern Conception of Ancient Greek Wisdom</i>	372
Геџџргџос Сџтеџρης, <i>Συμπεράσματα σύμφωνα με τον Πυθαγόρα και τους Ορφικούς ύμνους</i>	
Борис Стојковиџки, <i>Жиџиџије Конџџанџиџина Великоџу у јаџобиџџском и еџџиџиџском синаџсару</i>	383
Boris Stojkovski, <i>The Life of Saint Contantine the Great in the Jacobite and Ethiopian Synaxarion</i>	

Евстратије Т. Теодосију, Василије Н. Маниманис, Милан С. Димитријевић, <i>Астрологија у раном Византијском царству и њена осуда.</i>	396
Åfstration Theodosiu, Vassilios N. Manimanis, Milan S. Dimitrijević, <i>Astrology in the early Byzantine Empire and Its Condemnation</i>	
Снежана Ферјанчић, Константиновина паганска визија у савременој <i>историографији 20. века</i>	417
Snežana Ferjančić, <i>Saxa Loquuntur: Constantine’s Pagan Vision in Modern Historiography of the Twentieth Century</i>	
Валентина Цветковић-Ђорђевић, Антички корени неправне неоснованој <i>обогаћења</i>	424
Valentina Cvetković-Đorđević, <i>Ancient Roots of Unjust Enrichment</i>	
Боривој Чалић, Заборављени славенски словар Захарије Орфелина	438
Borivoj Čalić, <i>Forgotten Slavic Dictionary from Zaharia Orfelin</i>	
Срђан Шаркић, Држава и црква у Јустинијановом законодавству.	449
Srđan Šarkić, <i>State and Church in the Legislation of Justinian</i>	
Ђурђина Шијаковић, Жена у рановизантијском друштву: Статус <i>бијела и друштвени статус</i>	457
Đurđina Šijaković, <i>Woman in Early Byzantine Society: Body Status and Social Status</i>	
Учесници скупа 2013.	469

EVANGELOS D. PROTOPAPADAKIS

National and Kapodistrian
University of Athens

*“DEATH IS NOTHING TO US”: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS
OF THE EPICUREAN VIEWS CONCERNING
THE DREAD OF DEATH*

Abstract: To the mind of humans death is an impossible riddle, the ultimate of mysteries; therefore it has always been considered a task of paramount importance for philosophers to provide a satisfactory account for death. Among the numerous efforts to deal with the riddle of death, Epicurus’ one stands out not only for its unsurpassed simplicity and lucidness, but also for the innovative manner in which it approaches the issue: Epicurus denounces the fear of death as a profoundly unfruitful, unreasonable and unjustifiable passion of the mind. In this short paper I will first provide a brief account of Epicurus’ argumentation. Then I will argue that, although Epicure’s efforts to annihilate the fear of death proved to be unconvincing (people never ceased to fear death), still in a way they have been successful. Epicurus managed to rationalize in a certain degree the most deeply rooted fear in the souls of humans, and this seems to have been his initial purpose: consolation sometimes is due not only to definite resolution, but also to doubt and inconclusiveness.

Key-Words: Epicurus, death, dread, consolation.

Hedonism in both its Epicurean and Aristippian forms is a part of the consequential tradition in ethics – as a matter of fact in a way it actually initiates it. To a convinced hedonist like Epicurus what can be intrinsically good is only *ἡδονή* (pleasure), while what is intrinsically bad can only be *πόνος* (pain). Therefore, to be a hedonist means to accept the view that all situations in life, any option or action are of only extrinsic value, one totally dependent on whether these situations, actions or options facilitate the enjoyment of pleasure and drag off suffering or pain. It is true that Aristippus seems to have invested the most of his efforts in discussing exclusively the pleasures and the pains of the body, giving thus the impression that he somehow tended to disregard the pleasures and the pains of the soul, but this isn’t peculiar for a theory in its baby steps that focuses on the possible consequences of a given option: eighteenth century utilitarian ethicists

Jeremy Bentham¹ and – in a somewhat lesser degree – John Stuart Mill seem to have been sharing the same disposition. After all, the pleasures of the body are much more easily accountable compared to those of the spirit, and they are equally shared by all humans, while spiritual delight is most of the times a matter of individual taste.

Tagging along with Aristippus, Epicurus misses no chance to put as much emphasis as he could on the value of bodily pleasures: “If I have rye-bread and baked barley and water”, he writes, “I think my table so well furnished, as to dare dispute happiness with Zeus himself”²; and again, “every pleasure is based on the pleasures of the belly”³. The latter could be taken as to imply that, accordingly, all pains are based on the pains of the belly. Epicurus, however, did not share this view; he regarded mental pleasures and pains as equally important for the acquisition of *ἡδονή*⁴. As a matter of fact, he considered *ἡδονή* as the complete absence of both physical (*ἀπονία*) and mental pain (*ἀταραξία*)⁵. As for the first, he suggested that one should prefer static (*καταστηματικαί ἡδοναί*) over dynamic pleasures (*κατὰ κίνησιν ἡδοναί*), since the former are free from pain, while the latter are not⁶. As for the second, he invested all his efforts in an ambitious project: Epicurus set out to eliminate any fear that may lurk in the souls of humans, including the most prominent among these, the fear of death.

As to other possible sources of fear, Epicurus provided some piece of practical advice: if you fear for the fate of those you are intimately connected with, you should avoid getting intimately connected⁷: refrain from getting married and acquiring off-spring⁸. If you fear the envy of others, try not to expose yourself to

¹ See Jeremy Bentham’s amusing doggerel: “Intense, long, speedy, certain, fruitful, pure, such marks in pleasures and in pains endure; such pleasures seek – if private – by the end; if it be public, wide let them extend. Such pains avoid, whichever by thy view...” Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (New York: Dover, 2007), 29.

² Aelianus, *Varia historia*, edited by R. Hercher (Leipzig: Teubner, 1866), IV.13

³ Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, edited by G. Kaibel (Leipzig: Teubner, 1890), XII 546f: “... the beginning and the root of every good is the pleasure of the belly. And everything that is wise or useless is due to it”.

⁴ Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, edited by H. S. Long (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), X.136-137.

⁵ Seneca, *Epistulae morales ad Lucilium*, edited and translated by Richard Gummere (London: William Heinemann, 1951), 66.45: “... apud Epicurum duo bona sunt, ex quibus summum illud beatumque componitur, ut corpus sine dolore sit, animus sine perturbatione.”

⁶ Epicurus, *Ratae sententiae*, in *Epicuro. Opere*, edited by G. Arrighetti (Turin: Einaudi, 1973), VIII: “No pleasure is evil as such. However, the sources of some pleasures bring about much more nuisance than pleasure”. See also Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1967), 244.

⁷ Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, edited by H. S. Long (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), X.120a: “[the wise man] will not acquire anything dear to him”.

⁸ Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1967), 245.

⁹ Plutarch, *Adversus Colotem*, in *Plutarchi moralia*, edited by R. Westman, vol. 6.2, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1959), 1125c: “... We have to say which way one will maintain the purpose of his nature, and willingly refrain from being elected to office”.

their meanness: avoid getting engaged into politics⁹, and in general try to live your life unnoticed by others – this is his famous *λάθε βιώσας* imperative¹⁰. All these practical pieces of advice might sound like easy witticism to some, and they seem to form the gospel of a lukewarm life totally deprived of any fervor; to some a way of life as the one proposed by Epicurus might look totally meaningless. It was not due to teachings like these, however, that Epicurus earned his reputation; it was rather due to the innovative way he dealt with the greatest fear that haunts the hearts and the minds of humans, which is no other than the fear of death.

The way Epicurus sees it, the fear of death is of a twofold character: on the one hand it is about the wrath of the gods that one might fear that may fall upon him in the afterlife, when he has reached the eternal darkness of Hades; on the other it is about death *per se*, to wit about *being dead*. As to the first, Epicure argues that this fear is neither justified nor reasonable even for the wicked or the unjust, those who one might reasonably think that they should be rightfully expecting to be punished in the afterlife for their sins or crimes¹¹. This is because the gods, as Epicure assumes, are not aware either of the good or bad deeds of people – in a way they are totally ignorant about the existence of humans, and this is not without a good reason: the gods, being *par excellence* the utmost reasonable of all beings, can only be rational hedonists like him and his disciples; therefore, they surely try to avoid pain and achieve pleasure, exactly as a perfectly rational hedonist would do. The human condition, however, would only be a source of distress to them, exactly as it is to humans; therefore, the gods have surely decided to turn their eyes away from humans and have thus become totally disinterested in their condition, their achievements and their failures equally. It follows the gods are neither interested nor disposed to punish or reward anyone in the afterlife.

Any being that is blissful and indestructible neither faces problems itself, nor does it create problems to others. Therefore it cannot be affected either by rage or goodwill¹².

This unique view of Epicurus concerning the ignorance of the gods with regard to the human condition is possible to have influenced centuries later Baruch Spinoza in articulating a similar thesis, namely that God doesn't have a clue about the existence of men¹³.

¹⁰ Plutarch, *De latenter vivendo*, in *Plutarchi moralia*, edited by R. Westman, vol. 6.2, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1959), 1128c.

¹¹ Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, edited by M. Marcovich (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1986), 1.22.5.

¹² Epicurus, *Ratae sententiae*, in *Epicuro. Opere*, edited by G. Arrighetti (Turin: Einaudi, 1973) I. Also Aetius, *Placita Philosophorum*, edited by W. W. Goodwin, translated by John Dowell (London: Little & Brown, 1874) 1.7.7: "... the blissful and indestructible being, since it is full of every good and unaffected by any evil, is totally turned to the sustaining of its bliss and indestructibility and is totally indifferent for the human affairs."

¹³ Lucian, *Bis accusatus sive tribunalia*, edited by A.M. Harmon, vol. 3 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969), 2: 27.

But it is not only the fear of punishment that makes death dreadful in the eyes of humans; it is also the very condition of *being dead per se*. This fear is equally ungrounded, unreasonable and unjustified, argues Epicurus in a famous passage from his *Letter to Menoeceus*:

Accustom yourself to believe that death is nothing to us, for good and evil imply awareness, and death is the absence of all awareness. Therefore a right understanding that death is nothing to us makes the mortality of life enjoyable, not by adding to life an unlimited time, but by taking away the yearning after immortality. For there is nothing fearful in living for those who thoroughly grasp that there is nothing fearful in not living. Foolish, therefore, is the person who says that he fears death, not because it will pain when it comes, but because it pains in the prospect. Whatever causes no annoyance when it is present, causes only a groundless pain in the expectation. Death, therefore, the most awful of evils, is nothing to us, seeing that, when we exist death is not present, and when death is present we do not exist. It is nothing, then, either to the living or to the dead, for with the living it is not and the dead exist no longer. People sometimes shun death as the greatest of all evils, but at other times choose it as a respite from the evils in life. But the wise person neither deprecates life nor does he fear its ending. The thought of life is no offense to him, nor is death regarded as an evil. But just as he chooses the pleasantest food, not simply the greater quantity, so too he enjoys the pleasantest time, not the longest.¹⁴

For Epicurus it was much easier than it is to a Christian or a Buddhist to maintain that death is the absence of all awareness. This is because, according to his physics, the soul – the source and the *locus* of any kind of awareness – is composed of indestructible material atoms; when the person dies the soul is being dissolved into separate atoms exactly as the body is, depriving thus the corpse of the ability of sensual perception. To the sensible scholar it is almost obvious that the Epicurean universe has no place either for Hades or for the gods; nevertheless, as Bertrand Russell assumes, Epicurus never outwardly rejected the existence of both, well aware of the fact that their existence is deeply rooted in men’s mind and human civilization¹⁵.

In arguing that man and death never meet, because when man is present death is not, and when death comes man is not anymore present, Epicurus introduces to this debate the so-called “Existence Condition”, articulating thus an argument based on experience. This argument could be outlined in this way:

- A. Only what can hurt you may be bad for you.
- B. Nothing can hurt you if you do not exist.
- C. Therefore, when you don’t exist, nothing can hurt you.

¹⁴ Epicurus, *Epistula ad Menoeceum*, in *Epicuro. Opere*, edited by G. Arrighetti (Turin: Einaudi, 1973), 124-126.

¹⁵ Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1967), 247.

Moreover, it is nonsensical to worry about what can not hurt you, because such worries actually hurt you in advance (when you can really be hurt), and this is with no reason.

“... item alio loco dicit: ‘quid tam ridiculum quam adpetere mortem, cum vitam inquieteam tibi feceris metu mortis?’”¹⁶

To a rational hedonist and a materialist like Epicurus, this is only self-evident. It might not be the same to any other, but in order to do justice to Epicurus we have to judge his views on grounds of his overall theoretical system, in the context of which pleasure is the only good and pain is the only bad. And it is more than obvious that the dead can experience neither pain nor pleasure, therefore death in the eyes of a hedonist can only be a neutral condition.

Epicurus’ views have been defended by many philosophers and questioned by much more. Among its champions one can find his late successor Lucretius¹⁷, and in our times Stephen Rosenbaum¹⁸, Galen Strawson¹⁹ and Martha Nussbaum²⁰. To the opponents of his views are included Harry Silverstein²¹ and Thomas Nagel²². Both his opponents and proponents, however, seem to have dealt with Epicurus’ views not from the perspective of hedonism, but from other idiosyncratic ones. Thus, they can barely do justice to his views regardless of whether they question or defend them. Therefore I will try to articulate my criticism on Epicurus’ views concerning the fear of death solely on hedonistic grounds; I will do this in my effort to prove Epicurus wrong by arguing that death can be bad even for a rational hedonist like him.

Let us accept for the sake of the argument that the only good is pleasure and the only bad is pain, and that the deceased can experience neither. If this is the case, then death *per se* may seem axiological neutral to the dead person. Death, however, is not just a state of being (or *not* being), one that comes unnoticed or unannounced; it is rather the end of the process of dying, and during this process the person who will eventually die is actually present. Therefore, the process of dying can be good or bad for the person who experiences it, and most of the times – if not always – it is bad, because it is connected by either mental or physical pain. There are, of course, cases in which one dies without experiencing the

¹⁶ Seneca, *Epistulae morales ad Lucilium*, edited and translated by Richard Gummere (London: William Heinemann, 1951), 24.23.

¹⁷ Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things*, translated by W. E. Leonard (New York: Dover, 2004).

¹⁸ See Stephen E. Rosenbaum, “How to Be Dead and Not Care: A Defense of Epicurus”, *American Philosophical Quarterly* 23.2 (1986): 217-225.

¹⁹ Galen Strawson, “What is the relation between an experience, the subject of the experience, and the content of the experience?”, *Philosophical Issues* 13 (2003): 279-315.

²⁰ Martha Nussbaum, “Mortal Immortals: Lucretius on Death and the Voice of Nature”, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 50 (1989), 303-351

²¹ Harry Silverstein, “The Evil of Death”, *Journal of Philosophy* 77.7 (1980): 401-424.

²² Thomas Nagel, “Death”, in *Applied Ethics*, edited by Peter Singer, 9-18 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

agony of death, when, for example, one dies in his sleep or if he is drugged. But these cases are rare, so we have to disregard them as ordinary instances of dying. In all others death comes through a more or less agonizing procedure. One would say that this proves only that the process of dying can be bad for the person who experiences it, but not death *per se*. To me this is only a witticism, because nobody would have to experience the process of dying if he didn't have to die, to wit to become dead. In other words, the process of dying cannot be disconnected from its only consequence, this of driving the person who suffers it towards death, since it is the only sufficient and necessary condition for one to become dead. In conclusion, given that the condition of being dead could not be reached without the process of dying, and assuming that the process of dying is always bad for the person that experiences it, death has to be bad even for a rational hedonist like Epicurus.

Epicurus, however, is ready to provide an apt answer to all these: the process of death can be indeed both physically and mentally burdensome, but the wise man can easily overcome these pains and agonies by contemplating past joys, in particular intellectual ones. Epicurus argued that the wise man can be happy even when tortured²³, and this was not just an easy assumption for him. The very day of his death Epicurus wrote to Idomeneus a letter that started with this famous passage: "On this truly happy day of my life, as I am at the point of death, I write this to you. The diseases in my bladder and stomach are pursuing their course, lacking nothing of their usual severity: but against all this is the joy in my heart at the recollection of my conversations with you"²⁴. If the agony of dying can be moderated or, even, eliminated by the powers of the intellect, then Epicurus' argument against the fear of death is – *prima facie*, at least – a strong one.

One would have much more to say on these, since the discussion concerning Epicurus' views on the fear of death is a long and multi-faceted one. At this point, however, I would prefer to rest my case – but not without adding a last remark of paramount importance for the issue: one would do no justice to Epicurus if he failed to mention that his main pursuit seems to have been not primarily to articulate a theoretically flawless and consistent philosophy, but something else. This becomes clear in the efforts he puts in discussing the possibility of divine punishment or reward in the afterlife, although his ontology allowed neither for gods nor for Hades. I believe that I am not far from Epicurus' actual disposition if he assumes that he engaged into debates as such only in order to alleviate humans of some of their most deeply rooted and timely fears. As a conclusion, it seems to me that Epicurus was earnest when he spoke of philosophy as a consolation in life for humans: in my view his primary purpose has been exactly this one. Now, if this is true, if we would like to judge the efficiency of Epicurus' views concerning the fear of death, we need to ask ourselves whether actually his

²³ Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, edited by H. S. Long (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), X.118

²⁴ Diogenes Laertius, *ibid.*, X.22. The translation from Bertrand Russell, *op. cit.*, 242.

views have the power to offer us that kind of consolation or not. To me they didn't; I haven't ceased fearing death, neither do I fear death in a lesser degree due to his efforts. However, Epicurus forced me (together with millions of people over the years) to question – even slightly – my fears. Epicurus made me doubt the powers that death has on me and on my kind, even in some degree. And doubt in such cases is in favor of those in need of consolation – sometimes it is a true blessing.

LITERATURE

- Aelianus, *Varia historia*, edited by R. Hercher (Leipzig: Teubner, 1866).
- Aetius, *Placita Philosophorum*, edited by W. W. Goodwin, translated by John Dowell (London: Little & Brown, 1874).
- Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, edited by G. Kaibel (Leipzig: Teubner, 1890).
- Bentham Jeremy, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (New York: Dover, 2007).
- Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philosophorum*, edited by H. S. Long (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966).
- Epicurus, *Epistula ad Menoeceum*, in *Epicuro: Opere*, edited by G. Arrighetti (Turin: Einaudi, 1973).
- Epicurus, *Ratae sententiae*, in *Epicuro: Opere*, edited by G. Arrighetti (Turin: Einaudi, 1973).
- Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, edited by M. Marcovich (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1986).
- Lucian, *Bis accusatus sive tribunalia*, edited by A.M. Harmon, vol. 3 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969).
- Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things*, translated by W. E. Leonard (New York: Dover, 2004).
- Nagel Thomas, "Death", in *Applied Ethics*, edited by Peter Singer, 9-18 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).
- Nussbaum Martha, "Mortal Immortals: Lucretius on Death and the Voice of Nature", *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 50 (1989), 303-351
- Plutarch, *Adversus Colotem*, in *Plutarchi moralia*, edited by R. Westman, vol. 6.2, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1959).
- Plutarch, *De latenter vivendo*, in *Plutarchi moralia*, edited by R. Westman, vol. 6.2, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1959).
- Rosenbaum Stephen E., "How to Be Dead and Not Care: A Defense of Epicurus", *American Philosophical Quarterly* 23.2 (1986): 217-225.
- Russell Bertrand, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1967).
- Seneca, *Epistulae morales ad Lucilium*, edited and translated by Richard Gummere (London: William Heinemann, 1951).
- Silverstein Harry, "The Evil of Death", *Journal of Philosophy* 77.7 (1980): 401-424.
- Strawson Galen, "What is the relation between an experience, the subject of the experience, and the content of the experience?", *Philosophical Issues* 13 (2003): 279-315.

Ευάγγελος Δ. Πρωτοπαπαδάκης
Λέκτωρ Εφαρμοσμένης Ηθικής
Εθνικό και Καποδιστριακό
Πανεπιστήμιο Αθηνών

«Ουδέν προς ημάς ο θάνατος: Μια κριτική ανάλυση
των επικούρειων αντιλήψεων περί του φόβου του θανάτου»

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Στην ανθρώπινη σκέψη ο θάνατος φαντάζει δυσεπίλυτος γρίφος, το έσχατο και απόλυτο μυστήριο. Ως εκ τούτου οι φιλόσοφοι ανέκαθεν θεωρούσαν εξόχως σημαντικό στόχο τους την ενασχόλησή τους με το ζήτημα, και την προσπάθεια της ικανοποιητικής διευθέτησής του. Η σχετική απόπειρα του Επίκουρου ξεχωρίζει μεταξύ αναρίθμητων άλλων, όχι μόνον λόγω της αξεπέραστης απλότητας και διαύγειάς της, αλλά και χάρη στον καινοτόμο τρόπο με τον οποίο ο Επίκουρος προσεγγίζει το ζήτημα: απορρίπτοντας, δηλαδή, τον φόβο του θανάτου ως καταφανώς επιζήμιο, άλογο και αδικαιολόγητο πάθος της διάνοιας. Στο σύντομο αυτό δοκίμιο αρχικά θα παραθέσω τις κύριες σχετικές θέσεις του Επίκουρου. Στην συνέχεια θα υποστηρίξω πως, παρότι η προσπάθεια του Επίκουρου να εξοβελίσει τον φόβο του θανάτου από την ανθρώπινη σκέψη απεδείχθη αλυσιτελής, κατά κάποιον τρόπο και σε κάποιον βαθμό υπήρξε επιτυχής.

Λέξεις-κλειδιά: Επίκουρος, θάνατος, φόβος, παραμυθία.