Epicurus and Democritean Ethics

The Epicurean philosophical system has enjoyed much recent scrutiny, but the question of its philosophical ancestry remains largely neglected. It has often been thought that Epicurus owed only his physical theory of atomism to the fifth-century BC philosopher Democritus, but this study finds that there is much in his ethical thought which can be traced to Democritus. It also finds important influences on Epicurus in Democritus’ fourth-century followers such as Anaxarchus and Pyrrho, and in Epicurus’ disagreements with his own Democritean teacher Nausiphanes. The result is not only a fascinating reconstruction of a lost tradition, but also an important contribution to the philosophical interpretation of Epicureanism, bearing especially on its ideal of tranquillity and on the relation of ethics to physics.

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EPICURUS AND DEMOCRITIAN ETHICS

An Archaeology of Ataraxia

JAMES WARREN

University of Cambridge
For my family
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Fig. 2 Silver cup from Boscoreale depicting a pair of philosophers in debate, one of the whom is Epicurus. AD 30. Louvre. © Photo RMN – Hervé Lewandowski.  132

Fig. 3 Statue of a pig from Villa of the Papyri, Herculaneum. © Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome – Schwanke.  133
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More personally, I owe an enormous amount to my family (my parents would, I think, appreciate Democritus Β275) and especially to Sara Owen, without whom the ταραχαι of writing would have been much greater. This book is for them.
**ABBREVIATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arr.</td>
<td>G. Arrighetti (1973) <em>Epicuro opere</em>² (Turin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diels</td>
<td>H. Diels (1879) <em>Doxographi Graeci</em> (Berlin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DK</td>
<td>H. Diels and W. Kranz (1952) <em>Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</em>⁶ (Berlin)</td>
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<tr>
<td>EK</td>
<td>L. Edelstein, I. G. Kidd (1972) <em>Posidonius vol. 1, the fragments</em> (Cambridge)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGrH</td>
<td>F. Jacoby (1923– ) <em>Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker</em> (Berlin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luria</td>
<td>S. Luria (1970) <em>Democritea</em> (Leningrad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBerol.</td>
<td>Berlin Papyri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHerc.</td>
<td>Herculaneum Papyri; see <em>Catalogo dei papiri ercolanesi</em> (Naples, 1979)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POxy.</td>
<td>Oxyrhynchus Papyri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSR</td>
<td>G. Giannantoni (1990) <em>Socratis et Socraticorum reliquiae</em> (Naples)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVF</td>
<td>H. von Arnim (1903–5) <em>Stoicorum veterum fragmenta</em> (Leipzig)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Us.</td>
<td>H. Usener (1887) <em>Epicurea</em> (Leipzig)</td>
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