

PLOTINUS AND EPICURUS

This volume investigates why Plotinus, a philosopher inspired by Plato, made critical use of Epicurean philosophy. Eminent scholars show that some fundamental Epicurean conceptions pertaining to ethics, physics, epistemology and theology are drawn upon in the *Enneads* to discuss crucial notions such as pleasure and happiness, providence and fate, matter and the role of sense perception, intuition and intellectual evidence in relation to the process of knowledge acquisition. By focusing on the meaning of these terms in Epicureanism, Plotinus deploys sophisticated methods of comparative analysis and argumentative procedures that ultimately lead him to approach certain aspects of Epicurus' philosophy as a benchmark for his own theories and to accept, reject or discredit the positions of authors of his own day. At the same time, these discussions reveal what aspects of Epicurean philosophy were still perceived to be of vital relevance in the third century AD.

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PLOTINUS AND EPICURUS

Matter, Perception, Pleasure

EDITED BY
ANGELA LONGO
and
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Preface

This volume arises from the PRIN MIUR 2009 project *Le filosofie post-ellenistiche da Antioco a Plotino* (*Post-Hellenistic philosophies from Antiochus to Plotinus*). In particular, it reflects the work organised by the research unit set up by Angela Longo and Daniela Patrizia Taormina, *Gli atomi di Epicuro e l'ordine di Plotino: Uno scorcio sugli usi plotiniani dell'epicureismo* (*Epicurus' Atoms and Plotinus' Order: An Overview of Plotinus' Use of Epicureanism*). The terms 'atoms' and 'order' here refer not to any specific field, but to the underlying conceptual structures of the two philosophies, at work in all areas of enquiry: physics, ontology and ethics. The idea of conducting this comparative work on Plotinus came from Angela Longo, and was immediately and enthusiastically taken up. This enthusiasm might seem rather surprising, given that Platonism and Epicureanism may not unreasonably be regarded as philosophies so distant from one another as to appear quite incompatible and unsuitable for comparison. Recent studies have shown, however, that it is possible to bridge the distance between the two. Beyond the polemic, clear points of contact between the two philosophies have been seen to emerge.

What we have, then, is a twofold perspective. On the one hand, the polemical distance between two highly distinctive philosophies is bound to bring out important aspects of both. On the other hand, the emergence of unexpected convergences sheds light on some significant historical and theoretical aspects.

In our pursuit of this perspective, we organised three symposia: on 29 November 2012 at the headquarters of the Società Geografica Italiana (Palazzetto Mattei) in Rome, on 7 and 8 March 2013 at the University of L'Aquila and on 19 April at the Swiss Institute in Rome.

In these symposia we sought to contextualise Plotinus' position within the framework of the more general debate between late Platonists and Epicureans, not least in relation to specific theoretical stances held by Epicurus and his followers. The papers delivered covered a broad range of topics:

‘So that you may understand the philosopher under every aspect and not judge him before knowing him’: The school and writings of Epicurus in the early centuries of the Roman empire (T. Dorandi); *Epicurus and Epicureans against geometry?* (F. Verde); *Aspects of Plutarch’s anti-Epicureanism: A re-assessment* (E. Kechagia); *Sextus Empiricus and the Epicurean telos: Is pleasure preferable by nature?* (E. Spinelli); *Epicurus and Epicureanism in Seneca* (S. Maso); *No deviations allowed: Causality and Epicurean atomism in Plotinus’ tr. 3* (Enn. III 1) (C. Arruzza); *‘Heavy birds’* (tr. 5 (Enn. V 9) 1.8): *References to Epicureanism and the problem of pleasure in Plotinus* (M. Pagotto Marsola); *Corporeal matter, indefiniteness and multiplicity: Plotinus’ critique of Epicurean atomism in treatise 12* (Enn. II 4) 7.20–8 (M. Ninci); *Dieu, le monde et les corps: Le retournement du motif épicurien de la fatigue et de l’inaction* (Plotin, traité 6 (Enn. IV 8) 2) (J.-F. Balaudé); *Plotinus, Epicurus and the problem of intellectual evidence: Treatise 32* (Enn. V 5) 1 (P.-M. Morel); *‘What is known through sense perception is an image’: Plotinus’ tr. 32* (Enn. V 5) 1.12–19: *An anti-Epicurean argument?* (D. P. Taormina); *Arnobius’ Christian Epicureanism* (C. Moreschini); *With Epicurus against Platonists: Augustine on the physiology of the human body* (Th. Fuhrer); and *Proclus confronting real and imagined Epicureans* (C. Steel).

My thanks go to the speakers and to all the people who took part in the symposia and contributed to turning them into important moments of mutual engagement among scholars through in-depth and wide-ranging discussions: our students and colleagues, especially F. Alesse, A. Aportone, G. Basileo, R. Chiaradonna, A. Conti, A. Corti, G. Di Tommaso, L. Ferroni, F. Fronterotta, F. Giampietri, F. G. Masi, A. M. Ioppolo, C. Maggi, L. Perilli, A. Serangeli, G. Schiavon and C. Tommasi.

The present volume only includes those works presented in the three symposia that were turned into a text focusing on Plotinus’ criticism of Epicureanism. The volume also features five contributions that, while developed in the context of the project, for purely contingent reasons were not preceded by any discussion during the symposia: A. Longo, *The mention of Epicurus in Plotinus’ tr. 33* (Enn. II 9) *in the context of the polemics between pagans and Christians in the second to third centuries AD: Parallels between Celsus, Plotinus and Origen*; M. Mazzetti, *Epicureans and Gnostics in tr. 47* (Enn. III 2) 7.29–41; E. Eliasson, *Plotinus’ reception of Epicurean atomism in On Fate, tr. 3* (Enn. III.1) 1–3; A. Cornea, *Athroa epibolē: On an Epicurean formula in Plotinus’ work*; A. Linguiti, *Plotinus and Epicurus on pleasure and happiness*.

We have greatly benefited from a set of critical remarks by anonymous reports.

We are most grateful to Sergio Knipe for his accurate translation or proofreading of the articles in the present volume. We would like to thank John M. Dillon for his conscientious re-reading of the manuscript. And the authors' grateful thanks also go to Rosario Scalia for his careful preparation of the three indices.

Daniela Patrizia Taormina

Abbreviations

This list contains the abbreviations used in this volume to refer: 1. to collections of works, fragments, papyri and inscriptions; 2. to collections of modern studies; 3. to ancient authors and works or fragments. In the case of authors of a single work, references, as a rule, are by author's name only. For modern editions of the most important works, see *Ancient Authors, Editions, Translations and Commentaries Cited* below in this volume.

I Collections of works or fragments of various authors, of papyri and inscriptions

CAG	<i>Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca</i> , Prussian Academy series, Berlin 1891–1909.
CPF	<i>Corpus dei papiri filosofici greci e latini</i> , Florence 1989–.
DG	Diels, H. (ed.) <i>Doxographi Graeci</i> , Berlin 1879.
DK	Diels, H. and Kranz, W. (eds.) <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> , with. transl. and notes, Berlin 1951–2. (1st edn. 1903).
IG	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i> , Berlin 1902–.
LS	Long, A. A. and Sedley, D. N. <i>The Hellenistic Philosophers</i> (2 vols.), Cambridge 1987.
NH	Bibliothèque Copte de Nag Hammadi, Québec <i>et al.</i> 1997–.
PBerol.	<i>Berliner Leihgabe griechischer Papyri</i> .
PHerc.	<i>Herculanenses Papyri</i> .
POxy.	<i>Oxyrhynchus Papyri</i> .
SEG	<i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i> , Leyden 1923–.
SSR	Giannantoni, G. (ed.) <i>Socratis et Socraticorum Reliquiae</i> (4 vols.), Naples 1985.
SVF	<i>Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta</i> , ed. von Arnim, J. (3 vols.), Stuttgart 1903–5.
Us.	Usener, H. <i>Epicurea</i> , Leipzig 1887 (repr. Stuttgart 1966).

2 Collections of modern studies

- ANRW* *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, ed. Temporini, H. and Haase, W., Berlin and New York 1972–.
- DphA* *Dictionnaire des Philosophes Antiques*, publié sous la direction de R. Goulet, Paris 1989–.
- RE* Pauly, A. and Wissowa, G. (*et al.*), *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Stuttgart, after Munich 1893–.

3 Ancient authors and works or fragments

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| <i>Aët.</i> | <i>Aëtius Placita</i> |
| <i>Alcin.</i> | Alcinous <i>Didaskalikos</i> |
| Alex. | Alexander Aphrodisiensis |
| <i>Fat.</i> | <i>De fato</i> |
| <i>in de Sens.</i> | <i>In librum De sensu commentarium</i> |
| <i>in Metaph.</i> | <i>In Aristotelis Metaphysica commentarium</i> |
| <i>Mant.</i> | <i>De anima libri Mantissa</i> |
| <i>Mixt.</i> | <i>De mixtione</i> |
| <i>Prov.</i> | <i>De providentia</i> |
| <i>Quaest.</i> | <i>Quaestiones</i> |
| <i>An.</i> | Anonymous <i>in Theaetetus</i> |
| Arist. | Aristoteles |
| <i>Cael.</i> | <i>De Caelo</i> |
| <i>de An.</i> | <i>De Anima</i> |
| <i>EN</i> | <i>Ethica Nicomachea</i> |
| <i>GC</i> | <i>De generatione et corruptione</i> |
| <i>Mem.</i> | <i>De Memoria</i> |
| <i>Metaph.</i> | <i>Metaphysica</i> |
| <i>Mete.</i> | <i>Meteorologica</i> |
| <i>Phys.</i> | <i>Physica</i> |
| <i>Po.</i> | <i>Politica</i> |
| <i>Protr.</i> | <i>Protrepticus</i> |
| <i>Sens.</i> | <i>De sensu et sensibilibus</i> |
| Attic. | Atticus |
| <i>Fr.</i> | <i>Fragmenta</i> |
| Aug. | Augustinus |
| <i>Conf.</i> | <i>Confessiones</i> |
| Calcid. | Calcidius |

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<i>in Tim.</i>	<i>In Timaeum</i>
Cicero	
<i>Div.</i>	<i>De divinatione</i>
<i>Fat.</i>	<i>De fato</i>
<i>Fin.</i>	<i>De finibus</i>
<i>Luc.</i>	<i>Lucullus</i>
<i>ND</i>	<i>De natura deorum</i>
<i>Tusc.</i>	<i>Tusculanae disputationes</i>
Clem.	Clemens Alexandrinus
<i>Ex. Theod.</i>	<i>Excerpta ex Theodoto</i>
<i>Strom.</i>	<i>Stromateis</i>
Demetr. Lac.	Demetrius Lacon
D.L.	Diogenes Laërtius <i>Vitae</i>
Diog. Oen.	Diogenes Oenoandensis <i>New Fragments</i>
Epic.	Epicurus
<i>Ep. Hdt.</i>	<i>Epistula ad Herodotum</i>
<i>Ep. Id.</i>	<i>Epistula ad Idomeneum</i>
<i>Ep. Men.</i>	<i>Epistula ad Moeneceum</i>
<i>Ep. Pyth.</i>	<i>Epistula ad Pythoclem</i>
<i>Fr.</i>	<i>Fragmenta</i>
<i>Nat.</i>	<i>De Natura</i>
<i>RS</i>	<i>Ratae Sententiae</i>
<i>VS</i>	<i>Sententiae vaticanae</i>
Eus.	Eusebius
<i>PE</i>	<i>Praeparatio evangelica</i>
Gal.	Galenus
<i>Libr.</i>	<i>De libris suis</i>
<i>PHP</i>	<i>De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis</i>
Himerius	
<i>Orat.</i>	<i>Orationes</i>
Hipp.	Hippolytus
<i>Ref.</i>	<i>Refutatio omnium haeresium</i>
Irenaeus	
<i>adv. Haer.</i>	<i>Adversus Haereses</i>
Lact.	Lactantius
<i>ID</i>	<i>De ira Dei</i>
Luc.	Lucianus Samosatensis
<i>Alex.</i>	<i>Alexander seu pseudomantis</i>

Lucr.	Lucretius
<i>DRN</i>	<i>De rerum natura</i>
Orig.	Origenes
<i>Cels.</i>	<i>Contra Celsum</i>
Phil.	Philo Alexandrinus
<i>Op. mun.</i>	<i>De opificio mundi</i>
Phld.	Philodemus
<i>De piet.</i>	<i>De pietate</i>
<i>Sign.</i>	<i>De signis</i>
Plato	
<i>Gorg.</i>	<i>Gorgias</i>
<i>Lg.</i>	<i>Leges</i>
<i>Phd.</i>	<i>Phaedo</i>
<i>Phdr.</i>	<i>Phaedrus</i>
<i>Phil.</i>	<i>Philebus</i>
<i>Pol.</i>	<i>Politicus</i>
<i>Resp.</i>	<i>Res publica</i>
<i>Symp.</i>	<i>Symposium</i>
<i>Tht.</i>	<i>Theaetetus</i>
<i>Tim.</i>	<i>Timaeus</i>
Plot.	Plotinus
<i>Enn.</i>	<i>Enneades</i>
<i>Tr.</i>	<i>Treatise</i>
Plut.	Plutarchus Chaeronensis
<i>An. Procr.</i>	<i>De animae procreatione in Timaeo</i>
<i>Col.</i>	<i>Adversus Colotem</i>
<i>Is. et Os.</i>	<i>De Iside et Osiride</i>
<i>Stoic. Rep.</i>	<i>De Stoicorum repugnantiis</i>
<i>Suav. viv.</i>	<i>Non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum</i>
Porph.	Porphyrius
<i>Abst.</i>	<i>De abstinence</i>
<i>Marc.</i>	<i>Ad Marcellam</i>
<i>Plot.</i>	<i>Vita Plotini</i>
Procl.	Proclus
<i>in Tim.</i>	<i>In Platonis Timaeum commentaria</i>
Sen.	Seneca
<i>Ep.</i>	<i>Epistulae</i>
S.E.	Sextus Empiricus
<i>M</i>	<i>Adversus mathematicos</i>

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<i>PH</i>	<i>Pyrrhonei hypotyposes</i>
Them.	Themistius
<i>Or.</i>	<i>Orationes</i>
Theon Sm.	Theon Smyrnaeus, <i>Expositio rerum mathematicarum ad legendum Platonem utilium</i>

Transliteration

Key words in Greek are transliterated and printed in italics. Only a long vowel at the end of a word is marked with a macron, whereas macra placed on other long vowels within a word are not marked.