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The Legal Dimension of the Philosophy of Happiness

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Abbreviations used in the Thesis

Aristotle, *Pol*.	*Politics*
Aristotle, *Rh*.	*Rhetoric*
Aristotle, *NE.*	*Nicomachean Ethics*
Cicero, *Amic.*	*Laelius de Amicitia* / *On Friendship*
Cicero, *De Fin.*	*De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* / *On the Ends of Good and Evil*
Cicero, *De Leg.*	*De Legibus* / *On the Laws*
Cicero, *Rep.*	*De Re Publica* / *On the Republic*
Cicero, *Off.*	*De Officiis* / *On Duties*
DL	Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum* (Liber X: *Vita Epicuri*) / *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* (Book X: *Life of Epicurus*)
DRN	Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura / On the Nature of Things*
Epicurus, *Ep*.	*Epistulae* / *Letters* (DL 35 – 138§)
Epicurus, *Hdt.*	*Epistula ad Herodotum* / *Letter to Herodotus* (DL 35 – 83§)
Epicurus, *Men*.	*Epistula ad Menoeceum* / *Letter to Menoeceus* (DL 122 – 138§)
Epicurus, *Pyth*	*Epistula ad Pythoclem* / *Letter to Pythocles* (DL 84 – 121§)
Epicurus, *RS*	*Kyriai Doxai, Sovran Maksims* / *Principal Doctrines* (DL 139 – 154§)
Epicurus, *Dox.*	*Testimonia et Fragmenta* (incl. Doxographica, Scholia, Appendices)/ *Testimonies and Fragments* (incl. Doxography, Scholia, Appendices)
Epicurus, *Fr.*	*Fragmenta / Fragments*
Epicurus, *Sent.*	*Sententiae Vaticanae / Vatican Sayings*
Gaile&Hofa	*Epikūrs. Vēstules. Atziņas. Fragmenti.* Gaile, A un Hofa, A. 2008.. 2.izd. Rīga: Liepnieks & Rītups
Garden	*Hortus Epicuri / Epicurus' Garden /The School of Happiness*
HP	The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy
IEP	The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy
Laertius,	Diogenes Laertius, *Vita Epicuri* (ex. *Vitae Philosophorum*, Liber X) / *Life of Epicurus* (from *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Book X)
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LKV	Latvian Conversation Dictionary, *1927-1940*
LNE	National Encyclopedia
Lucretius	*De Rerum Natura* (DRN) / *On the Nature of Things*
Monograph	Scientific Monograph *"The Legal Dimension of the Philosophy of Happiness*,*"*submitted for defence in the doctoral promotion process
PDL	*Perseus Digital Library*
Pep.Herc.	Papyri Herculanenses / *Herculaneum Papyri* (Naples Collection)
Pep.Herc.Paris	Papyri Herculanenses / *Herculaneum Papyri* (Paris Collection)

Plato, *Leg.*	*Leges* / *Laws*
Plato, *Resp.*	*Respublica / Republi*
Sen. Ep.	Seneca, *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium / Moral Letters to Lucilius*
Sen. Dial.	Seneca, *Dialogi / Dialogues, Moral Essays*
SEP	Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
Zariņš	*Epikūrs: [manuskripts]*. Zariņš, V. 2015. Rokrakstā ar zilu tintes spalvu. [Archival Collection]. Donation of the Zariņš Family to the University of Latvia Library.

Introduction

The doctoral dissertation has been prepared in the form of a monograph, and its title, "*The Legal Dimensions of the Philosophy of Happiness*", indicates its central theme, the interaction of philosophical, legal, and ethical aspects within the doctrine of Epicurus and Epicureanism. Epicureanism, as a philosophical school that gained significant influence during the late Hellenistic period and continued to exist during the Roman Empire, was one of the leading philosophical traditions in the Greek and early Latin intellectual world for nearly five hundred years. It represents one of the most important systems of thought that offered an alternative perspective on the goals of human life, moral conduct, and the nature of law.

Epicureanism is inseparably connected with one of the most prominent strands of Western European philosophy. The life of Epicurus itself represents the final, great, and significant point of reference at the cradle of this doctrine of wisdom. The philosophical movement named after Epicurus constitutes a core element of ancient Greek philosophy, an intellectual tradition that continues to be studied today and whose exploration has not ceased even in contemporary scholarship. With Epicurus, the flourishing period of ancient Greek philosophy reaches its culmination, and an entire philosophical era comes to an end, an era that in later millennia has found no true equivalent. After Epicurus, the world learned essentially nothing fundamentally new from the spiritual current of ancient Greek philosophy. Meanwhile, the philosophical duel between Stoicism and Epicureanism appears almost eternal. Epicureanism and Stoic philosophy have been known to philosophers of all generations since their emergence in ancient Greece, around 300 BCE, up to the present day. All of these schools of ancient philosophy, those of Plato, Aristotle, the Cynics, the Skeptics, the Stoics, and the Epicureans, have left an invaluable theoretical and practical legacy in the development of Western European philosophical thought.[1]

The monograph focuses on the period from approximately the 4th century BCE to the 3rd century CE, from the ancient Athenian polis to the decline of the Roman Republic in the age of Augustus, when Latin traditions began to take shape and the ideas of the Roman Empire spread, gradually replacing the Greek language together with its intellectual life and culture. During this period examined in the monograph, which encompasses the end of the Hellenistic era and the beginning of the early Roman Empire, not only does philosophical thought flourish, but fundamental political and legal ideals also take shape, influencing the history of philosophy and theory up to the thought of the Enlightenment and beyond. With this era begins the gradual integration of the Hellenistic world into Roman legal thought,

[1] Leitlande, I., "Normālība un ārkārtējība: filozofiskie un sociālie aspekti", *University of Latvia Press*, 73

in which the Latin language and Roman institutions start to dominate, although the influence of Greek science and its theoretical heritage continues to persist for a long time.

Epicurus and his doctrine, Epicureanism, cannot be understood without examining the concept of Epicureanism itself as one of the most prominent philosophical traditions, while at the same time considering the doctrines of the Stoics, Cynics, Sophists, and other philosophical schools, which in various ways are reflected in Epicureanism and, conversely, in which Epicureanism is also discussed. Accordingly, in this monograph Epicureanism is analysed as an alternative form of normative thought, whose reception can only be understood when this philosophy is examined in parallel and in context with other intellectual and ideological currents of the Hellenistic age. Such a methodological approach makes it possible to reveal the significance of Epicurus and Epicureanism, both as a philosophical doctrine and as a source of legal thought, in the history of juridical thinking from antiquity to later historical periods.

The monograph also evaluates the influence of Epicurus' philosophy on the development of legal thought, examining the views of the *philosopher of happiness* on justice, norms, and the role of the state, and analysing the relationship between Epicureanism and later theories of the state and law. An essential part of this monograph is the analysis of the conditions under which Epicureanism was transformed during different historical periods. The monograph offers a comprehensive perspective on the philosophy of Epicurus not only as a theory of individual happiness or as an egoistic form of hedonism, but also as one of the early theoretical models of law that provides valuable insights for the philosophy, history, and theory of law in later periods. The monograph highlights the long-term and often underestimated significance of Epicurus' philosophy in the formation of legal thought, demonstrating how the pursuit of individual freedom, friendship, agreement, peace, and happiness evolves into a conventional and distinctly pragmatic conception of justice.

The aim of this monograph is to analyse in detail the central ideas of Epicurus' philosophy concerning happiness, justice, and the significance of normative order, namely law, within society and the state. Drawing on ancient texts as well as later scholarly works and interpretations, the monograph reconstructs one of the earliest traditions of thought on justice in the history of Western philosophy, Epicureanism, together with the conception of law it proposes.

Within the framework of the monograph, Epicureanism is considered not only as an example of a classical ethical doctrine, but is also justifiably incorporated into the discourse of Latvian and European philosophy and history of law as a fully developed philosophical system with its own coherent and pragmatic understanding of law, norms, duties, and

the conditions of human coexistence. The monograph devoted to the study of Epicurus and Epicureanism offers an unusual and atypical, yet methodologically rigorous, analytical, and substantively rich perspective on the origins, functions, and purpose of law. The monograph reveals the potential of Epicureanism in the history of legal thought, not only as a philosophical testimony to the intellectual debates of the Hellenistic age, but also as a relevant conceptual framework, open to critical evaluation and further interpretation, within the political and philosophical thinking on law in later centuries.

The philosophy of Epicurus is neither limited nor grounded in a fundamental morality or in an idealistic metaphysics. Rather, it represents a deeply pragmatic, experience-based, and human-oriented empirical and utilitarian understanding of practical life that addresses the *question of how one ought to live*? His doctrine is an invitation to interpret law as an instrument for maintaining social peace and balance, rather than as a means of exercising power. Epicurus conceives society as a community founded upon friendship and mutual justice, capable of overcoming fear, exclusion, and injustice.

Epicurus' understanding of law, contract, punishment, and justice offers one of the earliest models of the role of social agreement in securing normative order. Contemporary scholarship is gradually rediscovering this often overlooked dimension, demonstrating that Epicurus was among the first thinkers to conceive of law as a mechanism grounded in human agreement and mutual trust, rather than as an external command or a reflection of natural force. In this sense, his ideas are not only philosophically significant but also structurally related to later developments in legal thought, more precisely, they may be regarded as an important source and at times an inspiration for subsequent theories of law.

Epicurus, who has almost always remained on the margins when discussing such fundamental and topical themes in jurisprudence as *justice* (the just), *legality* (the lawful), *law* (the legal), *truth* (the true), *wisdom* (the wise), *equality* (the equal), *virtue* (virtue), *friendship* (the friend), and happiness, and more broadly the questions of the state, order, stability, trust, certainty, and peace, nevertheless appears as the thinker who most rationally and effectively among the philosophers of antiquity offers a practical synthesis of these concepts, freeing them from metaphysical illusions and returning them to their original meaning as ideas useful to human life. Epicurus, as the *philosopher of happiness*, instead of placing these notions within an idealistic construction or within doctrines prescribed by the authority of the state, presents them simply and pragmatically as instruments of life, as the result of rational agreement that endures only so long as it is capable of guaranteeing peace and preventing suffering.

Law is not the ruler of all things, nor a sacred magnitude; it is neither an act of sovereign will nor the highest moral imperative, but a *form of agreement* that serves a life free from fear,

anxiety, and pain. Truth is not an absolute dogma, but the concordance of criteria (*canonics*) and experience. Friendship is not an emotional privilege, but the most powerful social contract. And happiness is not an ecstatic ideal, but peace, security, and the absence of suffering, within which a person can think, feel, and live freely, undisturbed either by the wrath of the gods or by the power of rulers and the force of law, since Epicureanism recognized that law itself may also be unjust.

The philosophy of Epicurus resembles a small yet persistent stream within the great current of ancient thought, one that irreversibly transforms the way in which conceptions of law and morality, of the state and the citizen, are formed. The introverted asceticism of Epicurus is not a weakness of philosophical potential, but rather a convincing affirmation of intellectual consistency, a courage to refrain from participating in those processes of power in which truth becomes either an instrument of coercion or a utopian illusion. It is precisely this balance of restraint in relation to power, the state, and law that renders Epicurus so relevant in later philosophical and legal reflections, prompting a reconsideration of the boundaries between morality and necessity, between law, the state, the citizen, and human free will, between the monopoly of power and individual autonomy, between justice and expediency, between duty and choice, and between punishment as retribution and peace as the ultimate aim.

Epicurus, as the *philosopher of happiness* and at the same time one of the earliest innovators of jurisprudential thought, offers not ready-made solutions but a structured framework of thinking, namely a model in which law becomes an agreement for peaceful coexistence rather than an expression of morality or dogma. The scholarly monograph therefore not only proposes a new perspective on the intellectual heritage of antiquity, but also opens the way toward a pragmatic, just, and rational understanding of the philosophy of law, such as the one Epicurus began to articulate in his Garden more than two thousand years ago.

Aim of the research

The aim of the doctoral dissertation, alongside the study of classical ancient Greek philosophy and the reflections of thinkers of subsequent centuries, is to determine whether Epicurus and his philosophical doctrine, Epicureanism, can be understood as containing a legal doctrine that may be situated within a scientific framework. In other words, the dissertation seeks to provide a scholarly validation of the relationship between Epicurus and the legal doctrine potentially inherent in the philosophical tradition of Epicureanism. Within this framework, the study examines whether Epicurus' philosophy contains conceptual elements that form a juridical understanding of happiness, peace, and justice that can be incorporated into a coherent body of legal thought. In the context of this aim, the dissertation undertakes

a detailed analysis and systematization of the legacy of Epicurus' philosophy of law preserved in the textual materials of the Hellenistic period and subsequent eras. At the same time, it reveals the significance and continuing relevance of these ideas within the development of ancient legal thought and in the broader history of European philosophy and the theory of law.

Research tasks

Classical ancient Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle laid the foundations for the structure of Western European theoretical philosophy as well as for the doctrines of the state and law. During the Hellenistic period, alongside Stoic philosophy, the philosophy of Epicurus (*Epicureanism*) emerged as a tradition of ancient Greek *philosophy of happiness* that transformed fundamental philosophical reflection into an existential practice and taught how to understand the world and how to live justly, virtuously, well, freely, and happily. The task of the doctoral dissertation is to determine whether a legal dimension exists within Epicurus' philosophy, namely whether it contains a doctrine of law that may be situated within a scientific framework. In order to achieve this aim, the dissertation undertakes an in-depth analysis and systematization of the philosophical corpus of Epicurus' legal thought preserved in the textual materials of the Hellenistic period and the eras that followed. At the same time, the study reveals the significance of this corpus in the development of ancient legal thought and evaluates its relevance within later European philosophy of law and the history of law. Accordingly, in order to achieve the aim of the doctoral dissertation "*The Legal Dimensions of the Philosophy of Happiness*", the following research objectives are formulated, which are addressed in the three main parts of the dissertation, Parts I, II, and III:

1. To collect, analyse, and systematise the principal evidence concerning Epicurus' concept of justice and the nature of law from the corpus of Hellenistic texts and the works of later authors, identifying those characteristics that allow the emergence of juridical thought within Epicurus' philosophy to be recognised.
2. To develop, from the unsystematised collection of sources on Epicurean philosophy, a coherent, systematic, and comprehensive thematic and conceptual structure that would characterise the particular features of Hellenic law and its historical background, thereby enabling the philosophy of Epicurus, alongside other philosophical doctrines of ancient Greece, to be reconstructed as a component of legal thought.
3. To identify the sources of Epicureanism that contain Epicurus' doctrines of natural justice, social agreement, free will namely, *libera voluntatis*, *lathe biosa*, *carpe diem*, and the doctrine of happiness (*doctrina de felicitate*), and to analyze their substantive

scope in comparison with other Hellenic philosophical conceptions of happiness and legal justice.

4. To determine, taking into account the place of Epicureanism within the broader context of Hellenic philosophical thought, whether the reception of Epicurus' conception of law corresponds with the ideas of other ancient thinkers or represents a fundamentally distinct and atypical approach, and how this difference, at the crossroads of various historical periods, influenced the subsequent development of legal thought.
5. To characterise the legal construction of Epicureanism within the global map of philosophy, demonstrating how Epicurean insights concerning justice, freedom, peace, security, and happiness have influenced, across the centuries, the formation of conceptions of law and the state. This involves revealing the philosophical potential of Epicureanism as a current of legal thought, with particular emphasis on the existence of alternative theories of justice within the intellectual environment of the Hellenistic period and later Roman and Western European traditions.
6. To examine the role of *canonics* and *prolepsis*, as developed by Epicurus, within the broader Epicurean doctrine of justice, and to compare this with the Hellenic conception of the human being - *vita homini epicuriani*. The objective also includes analysing such law-related concepts as peace, security, and friendship, and exploring how this philosophical tradition emphasises the idea of the right to happiness across subsequent centuries.

Research questions

In order to reveal the potential of Epicurus' philosophy as a form of legal thought, the doctoral dissertation raises four principal research questions. These questions enable a structured analysis of both the substance and the spirit of ancient philosophical thought, as well as its transformation and continuing relevance in the legal thinking of later periods. The first two questions focus on the concept of justice proposed by Epicurus and examine whether it may be regarded as a normative construction formulated with sufficient clarity and theoretical coherence to be classified as a position within legal theory. The remaining questions, the third and the fourth, evaluate whether Epicurus in fact offers an alternative to the classical legal thought of the Hellenistic world. More specifically, they analyse the interaction between pleasure (*hedonē)* and tranquillity (*ataraxia*) within a legal framework, considering how individual happiness and peace may be understood as the core of normative order and how these ideas resonate in the legal thought of later centuries.

The aspects examined in the dissertation and presented below concisely outline the principal questions that reveal the legal dimension of the philosophy of happiness.

1. What is Epicurus' understanding of justice as a contractual agreement of mutual non-harm, and is it conceptually developed and sufficiently sophisticated to be regarded as an early model of legal theory in which justice functions as an instrument of social harmony and individual tranquillity rather than as a universal, sacred, or transcendent moral principle?

2. How did the philosophy of Epicurus and the doctrine of Epicureanism develop during the Hellenistic period, alongside the natural philosophy of the Presocratics, the Socratic schools (including the Cynics), Plato's Academy, Aristotle's Peripatetic tradition, the relativism of the Sophists, the sceptics' understanding of the limits of knowledge, the rational ethics of the Stoics, and later Neoplatonism, as a fully developed and original doctrine within the systematic structure of the philosophy, theory, and history of law in antiquity and subsequent periods?

3. How does Epicureanism, the philosophical tradition named after Epicurus, encompass, through its doctrines of *canonics*, *prolepsis*, *signs* (indications or preconceptions), *atoms (clinamen),* natural justice, peace, friendship, and happiness, a structured, internally coherent, and conceptually articulated foundation that allows it to be regarded as an original body of legal ideas? Furthermore, does this body of ideas constitute a distinct normative model that permits Epicureanism to be positioned as a specific tradition within the philosophy of law, an alternative to the dominant ancient theories of juridical order and to the ways in which these theories have been interpreted and constructed in the legal thought of later centuries?

4. How may the concepts contained in Epicurus' philosophy and in the doctrine of Epicureanism, namely *lathe biosas* (apolitical withdrawal), *hedone* (pleasure), *libera voluntas* (free will), *ataraxia* (tranquillity of the soul), *aponia* (absence of pain), *apperception* (clarity of mind), the doctrine of canonics, and *prolepsis*, be interpreted as an alternative functional form of law? In particular, how do these concepts establish a close connection with natural law (*ius naturale*), understood through the ideas of friendship (*amicitia*) and the common good (*utilitas publica*), as well as the emergence of the idea of security (*securitas*), while simultaneously offering an original perspective on the nature of justice, the principles of normative justification, the function of law, and the substance of the idea of the state? More specifically:

A. What is the nature of justice (*dikaiosyne, iustitia*)?

B. What is the function of law (*nomos, physis*)?

C. What is the role of the idea of the state (*politeia*)?

D. What is the significance of the paradigm of free will (*libera voluntas*)?

Research novelty

For the first time within the structure of Western European philosophical scholarship, a consolidated, coherent, and systematically organised system of Epicurus' philosophy of law is presented to the Latvian academic community. The principal aspects of this corpus, together with its most significant results, are set out in an extensive and clearly structured summary entitled – *A Guide to the Concepts and Legal Notions of Epicurus' Philosophy of Happiness* (table, see Annex No. 1). At the time of the preparation of this doctoral dissertation, this guide represents the only known compilation of Epicurean legal concepts in the scholarly literature of the 20th–21st centuries. The dissertation therefore offers a conceptually new perspective on how Epicurus' philosophy contributes to the development of research in the philosophy, theory, and history of law. In doing so, it introduces Epicureanism as an early form of normative thought, a perspective that has until now been largely absent in Latvian scholarship and comparatively neglected within the broader landscape of European legal thought.

The scientific relevance of the doctoral dissertation lies in its capacity, for the first time, to systematically reconstruct the overall ideological framework of Epicureanism, based not only on the fragmentarily preserved sources but also on historical reconstructions of ideas through the works of the most significant thinkers of antiquity and the modern period. The study offers a new reading of the sources in which Epicurean philosophy is analysed as a long-standing, continuous, and transmissible tradition of legal ideas. In this respect, the dissertation represents an initial step into a relatively underexplored field of research that, across almost all historical periods, connects ancient ethical doctrines with the theoretical construction of normative order.

The doctoral dissertation "*The Legal Dimensions of the Philosophy of Happiness*" is an interdisciplinary study which, alongside classical philosophy, encompasses the history, philosophy, theory, and methodology of law, as well as legal policy theory, the sociology and anthropology of law, and jurisprudence more broadly. In doing so, the dissertation creates a scholarly space for the reassessment of Epicurean philosophy not only as an ethical doctrine but also as a normative theory of law. By shifting Epicureanism from the domain of ethics into the disciplinary field of legal understanding, the study opens the possibility of examining the origins and development of law through an alternative perspective, namely through the prism of historical evidence, archaeological testimony, and lost textual traditions. In the context of Epicurus and Epicureanism, this approach creates space for new and creative directions of research as well as for further scholarly challenges.

The scientific novelty and scholarly relevance of the doctoral dissertation are expressed through six (6) mutually integrated disciplinary perspectives:

1. **Actualisation of sources in the philosophy and history of law.** The dissertation makes it possible to reconstruct Epicureanism as a tradition of thought in which clearly formulated normative and legal elements emerge.
2. **An alternative model of the legal ideal.** The dissertation offers an innovative interpretation of the central concepts of Epicurus and Epicureanism, namely *lathe biosas* (apolitical withdrawal), *ataraxia* (inner tranquillity), *hedone* (pleasure), *libera voluntatis* (free will), *friendship* (amicitia, philia), *security* (securitas), voluntary agreement, and the criteria of truth, namely the doctrine of canonics, as well as the principle of legal prolepsis, considering these as elements of an alternative model of the legal ideal.
3. **Deepening the perspectives of the history and theory of law.** The dissertation creates an opportunity to reopen and expand the discussion on the development of ancient legal thought. It demonstrates that alongside the theories represented by Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoic tradition, Epicureanism also constitutes an important formative current of legal thought, without which the history, theory, and philosophy of Western European law cannot be fully understood.
4. **Enriching the national legal scholarship.** Concepts such as the primordial agreement, apolitical withdrawal (*lathe biosas*), social concord (*symphia socialis*), understood as the balance of happiness expressed through tranquillity of the soul (*ataraxia*) and the absence of pain (*aponia*), the origin of Epicurus' theory of natural justice (*iustitia naturalis*), the concept of free will (*libera voluntatis*), utilitarianism, and the principle of the common good (*utilitas publica*) have thus far remained largely unexplored and undefined within Latvian legal scholarship. At the same time, the broader European academic discourse provides only a relatively extensive yet often superficial treatment of these legal categories.
5. **Rehabilitation of ancient conceptions of justice.** The dissertation reintroduces Epicureanism as a philosophical tradition whose visibility and coherence have been significantly diminished over the course of history under the influence of both secular and religious power structures.
6. **A contribution to the diversity of the Western tradition of the philosophy, history, and theory of law.** The relevance of the dissertation is reflected not only in the reinterpretation of Epicurus' philosophy within the normative context of later periods, but also in its potential application to contemporary discussions concerning justice, the function of the state, and the relativity of law. The conceptual depth and structural design of the dissertation are shaped by the effort to revive a philosophical

tradition that has remained largely undeveloped within Latvian legal thought and almost entirely absent from its scholarly discourse, while within the broader European legal tradition it has often been marginalised, partially overlooked, or addressed only in a fragmentary manner.

Research methods

The philosophy, history, and theory of law as academic disciplines, beginning with the pre-Hellenistic period, the classical age, and the centuries of the Roman Republic and Empire, and extending to the school of natural law, legal positivism, the sociology of law, as well as cultural and social anthropology, critical legal theory, the revival of natural law, and the Enlightenment thought of the 17th–19th centuries, are grounded not only in legal texts, norms, and analytical conclusions concerning their nature and structure. They are also based on a wide range of intellectual sources, including philosophical views, scholastic writings, conceptual frameworks, doctrines, historical representations, understandings of human nature and society, hermeneutic principles, and the development of the concepts of justice and its opposites. These traditions further encompass questions concerning the legitimacy of the state and authority, the dialectic of freedom and obligation, interpretations of happiness and pleasure, the synthesis of politics and ethics, the collective imagination and consciousness of society, the structure of culture and values, and the study of virtue and normative heritage. Together, these elements shape the understanding of legal order and determine its correspondence to the specific historical context and intellectual horizon of a given period or historical cycle.

The doctoral dissertation is a **theoretical-philosophical and historically methodological study** in which the doctrine of Epicureanism is reconstructed as a secularly structured, internally coherent, and normatively rich current of legal thought. The focus of the research lies in the reconstruction of concepts, the analysis of ideas, and their systematic integration within the context of the philosophy of law, with particular attention devoted to the conceptual structure of Epicureanism, its normative logic, philosophical foundations, and historical reception.

The doctoral dissertation is not an empirical or sociological study, as it does not involve the collection of primary data, statistical analysis, quantitative calculations, or the empirical observation of social processes. The subject of the research is the analysis of ideas, texts, and normative constructions, rather than the examination of social facts or institutional forms of practice. Accordingly, the methodological foundation of the study is based on a set of **theoretical approaches**, including textual interpretation, the analysis of **concepts**, doctrines,

views, intellectual traditions, and philosophical schools, as well as historical reconstruction, comparative evaluation, and normative reflection.

The doctoral dissertation is not an empirical or sociological study, as it does not involve the collection of primary data, statistical analysis, quantitative calculations, or the **empirical observation of social processes**. The object of the research is the analysis of ideas, **texts**, and **normative constructions**, rather than the study of social facts or institutional forms of practice.

Accordingly, the methodological foundation of the dissertation is based on a **set of theoretical approaches**, including textual interpretation, the analysis of concepts, doctrines, views, intellectual traditions, and philosophical schools, as well as historical reconstruction, comparative evaluation, and normative reflection.

The methods used in the doctoral dissertation serve the study of the doctrine of Epicureanism as an intellectual system in which concepts, their interrelations, logical structure, and theoretical significance for the development of legal thought are analysed. The nature of the dissertation determines that all methods employed belong to **the block of theoretical methods**, as they are directed toward the interpretation of ideas, conceptual systematisation, and normative reassessment rather than toward the empirical investigation of reality. Thus, the dissertation consistently adopts a **theoretical and philosophical methodological position**, in which Epicureanism is analysed as a potentially structured and critically reconstructible current within the philosophy and theory of law.

The doctoral dissertation is also an **interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary study** that brings together perspectives from several academic fields. This requires **methodological multilayeredness**, which makes it possible to analyse simultaneously the textual, conceptual, historical, and normative structures that constitute the core of Epicurus' philosophical thought and legal understanding, as well as their trajectory in relation to the particular historical period and other philosophical schools.

In order to systematically describe and classify the conceptual system of Epicureanism, including *ataraxia and hedone* (lat. *voluptas*),[2] as a value structure (ang. *pleasure, hedonistic value*), *aponiju*, *autarkiju*, *prolepsi*, *clinamen*[3] (indeterminacy, deviation, preconception, general idea, causality), libera voluntatis (free will), the doctrine of canonics (the criteria of truth), and other frequently encountered concepts of Epicureanism, reconstructing this

[2] These terms are found in Lucretius's DRN.

[3] Without *prolepsis* — without prior conceptions—a person would be unable to judge what he perceives, sees, or thinks. Prolepsis is what enables one to recognize things, compare them, and determine whether they correspond to reality. It is a general idea acquired through experience, which arises when the mind encounters repeated similar sensations and forms a stable conception — for example, of what a "human," "justice," or "god" is. Long, A. A., & Sedley, D. N. (1987). The Hellenistic Philosophers (Vol. 1, pp. 86 – 88). Cambridge University Press.

terminology from primary sources, such as the texts of DL,[4] in analysing the works of **scholastics and glossators,** as well as numerous later or secondary interpretations, the **descriptive research method** is employed. The analytical method is also applied, enabling the identification and comparison of the constitutive elements of Epicurus' philosophy – the understanding of the structures of being and reality, epistemological, ethical, and juridical aspects, as well as their interconnections within the context of the philosophy of law. The **comparative method** is used to identify and analyse similarities and differences between Epicureanism and other ancient philosophical schools, as well as to evaluate the reception of these ideas within the formations of the philosophy of law in later centuries.

The **hermeneutic method** plays an important role, as it enables the interpretation of philosophical texts within their cultural-historical and linguistic context, allowing the reconstruction of the meanings that concepts possessed within the intellectual system of the Hellenistic period. The combination of this approach with a **philological–hermeneutic method** makes it possible to interpret classical texts (the writings of Epicurus, Lucretius, Horace, Philodemus, Seneca, Diogenes Laertius, and others), including fragments from the papyrological materials of the ancient Italian city of Herculaneum (*P.Herc.,* the Paris manuscript), thereby enabling the conceptual content of these texts to be deciphered within the context of legal thought. The **historical method** assists in analysing the chronology of the development of Epicurus' ideas and their influence on later intellectual traditions. The **method of synthesis of texts, concepts, and views**, more precisely the **method of synthesis of arguments and discourses**, ensures the integration of the obtained results into a coherent theoretical framework that reveals the significance of Epicureanism in the evolution of legal thought. The **method of synthesis** is also applied in the process of correlating legal theories and views with the integration of Epicureanism, in order to develop a theory of law that incorporates the fundamental elements of Epicureanism, such as *ataraxia*, pleasure (*hedone*), agreement (*synthekē*), friendship (*philia*), and the analysis and synthesis of these elements in relation to the state, power, and legislation.

The **normative analysis** is employed to examine how Epicureanism develops its own distinctive internal logic of law, based on central categories such as autonomy, friendship (*philia*), peace, happiness, and agreement or contract (*synthekē*). The **deconstructive method** (the reassessment of traditions and ideas, as well as the analysis of processes of normative marginalisation) is applied in order to reconsider the position of Epicureanism within

[4] These terms are found in Lucretius's DRN.

the broader history of legal and philosophical thought,[5] it is applied in order to identify the ways in which the classical traditions of the philosophy of law, natural law theory, utilitarianism, the social contract (fr. *contrat social*), the general will (fr. *volonté générale*), the realist conception (fr. *raison d'État*), understood as action subordinated to the interests of the state and the agreement on non-harm and peaceful coexistence, ratio legis, and the Epicurean concept of "natural justice" (*dikaiosynē physikē*), may be interpreted and reassessed within the framework of Epicurean legal thought,[6] these traditions have often ignored or marginalised the contribution of Epicureanism, and the dissertation therefore examines how this marginalisation may be reconsidered and reassessed. The **deductive method** is applied in order to analyse the general theoretical principles of Epicurean philosophy, such as ataraxia (*tranquillity of the soul*), freedom from fear (*libertas a metu*), natural justice (*dikaiosynē physikē*), the doctrine of canonics, lathe biosas, the Stoic idea of the self (*eo ipso*), and the doctrine of the moment (*carpe diem*). From these principles, more specific legal concepts, their normative structure and order, are derived and interpreted as a possible conceptual matrix for the later development of legal thought within the framework of Epicurean philosophy.

The **critical method** is employed to characterise the ideology and innovative character of Epicureanism in its critique of power structures, as well as to determine its theoretical foundations. Through this method, the dissertation examines how, first, Epicureanism questions the traditional legitimisation of authority (including both political and religious authority). Second, it proposes existential autonomy as a component of the philosophical core of law, and third, it supports individual and collective freedom as an ideal of law that significantly, and indeed fundamentally, diverges from both the dominant Hellenic tradition and the later political and legal models of Rome and subsequent historical periods.

It should also be noted that the dissertation employs a **systemic approach**, which allows the teachings of Epicurus to be analysed as a unified, internally coherent, and logically structured system. In addition, the **dialectical method** is applied in order to understand the dynamics of the development of ideas through the interaction of oppositions, balance, and critique, particularly in relation to such conceptual tensions as nature and law, happiness and duty, and individual and common good. Certain aspects are also examined through **philological and semantic analysis**, which is necessary for the precise translation of concepts and for

[5] As Igors Gudenko notes in his 2015 doctoral dissertation, deconstructive thought is engaged with philosophy without belonging to it. Gudenko, I. Humanitāro zinātņu filozofiskā pamatojuma problēmas risinājumi Žaka Deridā dekonstrukcijā. University of Latvia., 2015, 36

[6] The mutual agreement serves security, peace, and the prevention of suffering; thus, law is just insofar as its purpose is not to harm and to protect individuals from fear and suffering.

evaluating their equivalence across ancient greek, Latin, and modern languages, primarily english, german, italian, french, and latvian.

The combination of these methods, the historical, comparative, and deductive method (moving from general principles to particular conclusions), as well as the systematic method (the organisation of texts and ideas into a unified theoretical whole and logical structure), and the **teleological method** (oriented toward the understanding of purposes and meanings), makes it possible to reconstruct Epicurus' philosophy not only as an ethical doctrine but also as a potentially traceable, structured, and critically analysable current of legal thought. This current of thought is grounded at the level of human existence and the essence of life itself, in personal autonomy and a reflective consciousness of life's fulfilment, expressed through security, freedom, mutual non-harm, and the awareness of happiness.

It should also be noted that the doctoral dissertation makes use of the following principal and most prominent sources and their representatives. Namely, among the sources for the study of Epicurean texts in Western European scholarship, apart from the already known medieval source – the summary of Epicurus' philosophy by the French priest and philosopher Pierre Gassendi, who lived in France at the turn of the XVI–XVII centuries**,** namely *Syntagma philosophiae Epicuri* and *De vita, moribus, et placitis Epicuri*, which are commentaries on Book X of the writings of the ancient Greek historian Diogenes Laertius, who lived in the 3rd century, and even a century earlier than Pierre Gassendi, namely the works of the 15th century **Italian** philologist Lorenzo Valla (*Lorenzo Valla, 1407–1457*), *De voluptate* and *De vero bono* (*On Pleasure and On the True Good*)[7] the rediscovered Epicurus and the Epicureanism illuminated in the light of humanism; however, in a manner more appropriate to the modern scholarly context, it would be necessary to mention the head of the Bonn School of Classical Philology, the German professor **Usener** (*Hermann Karl Usener)*. Usener, by collecting various materials and employing the methods of content analysis, hermeneutic interpretation, and phenomenological analysis, conducted research into social, religious, and ancient cultural traditions,[8] as a result, the significant and monumental work of 1887 entitled "*Epicvrea"* was produced, which is also available in its later reprinted version published by Cambridge University Press in 2010 under the same title "*Epicvrea"* (*Cambridge University Press, 2010*). During the preparation of the doctoral dissertation, the author had the opportunity to consult and utilise both of these sources.

[7] Also: Gaile&Hofa, 378–379.

[8] Flashar, H. and Vogt, S. 1995. *Altertumswissenschaft in den 20er Jahren*. *Neue Fragen und Impulse*. Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1995.

Laertius' text, under its English title "*Lives of the Eminent Philosophers"*, specifically its Book X *Epicurus*, apart from the outstanding Cambridge graduate, the blind scholar of Ancient Greek culture and particularly of Stoic and Epicurean philosophy, and translator of Ancient Greek texts, **Hicks** (*Robert Drew Hicks*). In addition to Hicks' 1925 translation, which serves as the principal English basis for the analysis of Epicurus' texts, the dissertation also makes use of the newer 2018 English edition, published by **James Miller** and translated by **Pamela Mensch**, under the same title – *Diogenes Laertius, Lives of the Eminent Philosophers* (*Oxford University Press*). Alongside **Cyril Bailey** and his equally didactic and monolithic account of Epicureanism, published in 1926 by Oxford Clarendon Press under the title *Epicurus*, with commentaries comparable in significance to Usener's *Epicvrea*, though presented in a Greek–English reading version, it is also necessary to highlight another notable work by Bailey published in 1928 in Oxford entitled *The Greek Atomists and Epicurus*. In honour of Epicurus' "advocate," as he is sometimes called, and the defender of scholarly historical inquiry, the priest **Gassendi** and his reconstructed image of Epicurus together with a renewed interpretation of atomism, a significant study has been carried out by Professor **Lynn Sumida Joy** (*Lynn Sumida Joy*) in her extensive work published by Cambridge University Press in 2002, entitled *Gassendi the Atomist: Advocate of History in an Age of Science*.[9]

The doctoral dissertation also makes use of many other significant scholarly works by various authors. Only the most important are mentioned here. **Long** (*Anthony Arthur Long*) should be noted as an author who has devoted at least five different articles and scholarly studies to the investigation of Epicureanism. Some of these works were published by Oxford University Press, for example the 2006 publication entitled From Epicurus to *Epictetus: Studies in Hellenistic and Roman Philosophy*. **Sedley** (*David Neil Sedley*) has also extensively researched and written about **Epicurus**, **Epicureanism**, and the **Epicureans**, as well as about the influence of this doctrine and school within the broader context of world philosophy. Together, **Long** and **Sedley** published, through Cambridge University Press, in 1986/1987, an almost canonical compendium of Hellenistic philosophical studies a scholarly sourcebook for the study of Ancient Greek philosophy entitled *The Hellenistic Philosophers*. At the end of the XX century and into the XXI century, the University of Arizona professor **Annas** (*Julia Annas*) carried out three contemporary studies devoted to the study of Epicureanism, transferring Western European scholarly insights on Epicurus and Epicureanism into the intellectual context of the eastern coast of the United States.

[9] Pumfrey, S. 1990. *Lynn Sumida Joy. Gassendi the Atomist: Advocate of History in an Age of Science.* Cambridge: University Press, 1988. Pp. xiii + 311.

Accordingly, the following works should be mentioned: 1989 *Epicurean Emotions*, 1993 *Epicurus on Agency*(*Cambridge*), and **1995** *The Morality of Happiness* (*Oxford*). Concerning Annas' work, another author **Richard Kraut** (*Richard Kraut*) has written a full publication entitled *The Morality of Happiness by Julia Annas*. Meanwhile, **De Witt** (*Norman Wentworth De Witt*) devoted three different works to Epicurus and Epicureanism between 1936 and 1967 – *Epicurus and His Philosophy*, *Epicurus' Three-Wheeled Chair*, and *Organization and Procedure in Epicurean Groups* (the remaining works are discussed in the introductory section). It should also be mentioned that in the Latvian language the translation of Epicurus' texts was published in 2008 under the title *Epikūrs. Vēstules. Atziņas. Fragmenti* (*Epicurus. Epistulae. Sententiae. Fragmenta*), issued by Kultūra 2000, the Ministry of Culture, and the publishing house Liepnieks & Rītups, translated by **Agnese Gaile** and **Aija van Hoofa**. In addition, the lecture notes and manuscripts of the Latvian philosopher **Vilnis Zariņš**, Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Latvia, have also been consulted.

Part I. Athens and the Age of Epicurus

Part I consists of three main chapters: The Path of Ancient Justice, which also bears a second title – The Genesis of Ancient Justice; Epicurus' Critique, or When Happiness Becomes a Problem; and The Place of Law and the Polis in the Decline of the Greek World. Each of these chapters is divided into logically structured and mutually subordinate subchapters and, where necessary, into even smaller thematically and argumentatively organised units, in order to ensure a clear, systematic, precise, conceptually transparent, and academically rigorous exposition of the subject under consideration. In each chapter, three principles are consistently observed. First, a chronological sequence is maintained, moving from the classical period to the Hellenistic age and beyond. Second, conceptual consistency is ensured, with particular attention given to the main terminological features and nuances found in Epicureanism (for example, dikaiosynē, physis, nomos, ataraxia, philia, pleasure vs. justice, etc.). Third, the study engages with **critical** scholarship, drawing both on ancient primary sources and on internationally recognised modern commentators (for example, beginning with Hicks, Bailey, Bignone, and later Long, Sedley, Mitsis, Masso, Rist, Roxam, Springborg, Riley, as well as Latvian sources such as Gaile & Hofa, Zariņš, and others). In each chapter, several principles are consistently observed. First, a chronological sequence is maintained, moving from the classical period to the Hellenistic age and beyond. Second, conceptual consistency is ensured, with particular attention devoted to the principal terminological features and nuances encountered in Epicureanism (for example, dikaiosynē, physis, nomos, ataraxia, philia, pleasure vs. justice, etc.). Third, the study incorporates critical scholarship, drawing on both ancient primary sources and internationally recognised modern commentators (for example, beginning with Hicks, Bailey, Bignone, followed by Long, Sedley, Mitsis, Masso, Rist, Roxam, Springborg, Riley, as well as Latvian sources such as Gaile & Hofa, Zariņš, and others). Fourth, attention is given to the perspectives of the philosophy, history, and theory of law, and to the compilation and variation of these perspectives in accordance with the intellectual demands of the historical period, within which Epicurus' doctrine is analysed as an alternative to the classical concepts of justice. Accordingly, this part serves as the foundation for the subsequent sections of the monograph and offers a conceptual framework for the integration of Epicurus' doctrine into the discourse of legal theory, legal history, and the philosophy of law.

In Part I, *Athens and the Age of Epicurus*, the place of Epicurus' philosophy is analysed within the context of ancient, Renaissance, and Enlightenment legal thought, with particular attention devoted to the development of justice and normative order within the Greek, Roman, and later European legal tradition. The study outlines the so-called path of ancient Greek justice, which was initially associated with the moral norms of society, the understanding of divine

order, and the institutional structure of the city-state (*polis*). Later, under the influence of the Hellenistic period and the Roman Empire, this conception gradually shifted toward a pragmatic and socially constructed model of justice, which thinkers of the humanist era subsequently interpreted, revived, and further developed until it evolved into the prerogative of happiness, eventually reaching the dimensions of a legal concept. For example, the father of humanism, Francesco Petrarch, both praises and criticises Epicurus, describing him as excessively indulgent and immoral, overly effeminate and timid, arguing that pleasure is not the good, but that only virtue gives rise to happiness, and even remarking that Epicurus cannot be taken seriously without at least a trace of a smile.[10] In a similar critical manner, he also views the legal practice of his time, maintaining that law without virtue is an empty instrument, serving merely the interests of power and greed. In his view, genuine justice cannot be determined solely by external laws, since the true foundation of law rests in the human conscience, virtue, and natural justice. Laertius, in *Vita Epicuri*, notes that in an epigram attributed to Athenios, Epicurus is praised for the following statement: *"You people exhaust yourselves in evil deeds, and in your insatiable desire for profit you begin to quarrel and wage war."*.[11]

In Part I of the doctoral dissertation, the most important philosophical views of Epicurus and his followers – Philodemus, Lucretius, and Seneca – on justice, norms and human freedom are examined, together with Cicero's critique and his attitude toward Epicureanism as a philosophical school and intellectual tradition. Cicero, as a republican and a representative of the Stoic tradition, sharply criticised the Epicurean approach to justice, arguing that it did not provide a sufficiently strong foundation for morality and for the sense of political duty. For example, in his work – *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum,*[12] Cicero provides a benchmark and vivid example of the aforementioned position and, more precisely, marks the beginning of the tradition of anti-Epicureanism (anti-hedonism and moral rigorism). However, his own views on the natural character of law and its adaptability to the interests of society in certain respects coincided with Epicurean ideas, for example the notion that the force and usefulness of law depend on its ability to ensure peaceful coexistence among people. Epicureanism offered an alternative perspective on law by distinguishing the laws of nature from laws created by humans, emphasising that law and justice are not absolute, but are formed on the basis of social agreement and the harmony of individual life. This perspective later influenced the development of social contract theory and the pragmatic direction of the philosophy of law,

[10] Papy, J. (2018). *Epicureanism and Stoicism in Filelfo's Letters*. In: V. Celati & P. J. Forshaw (Eds.), *Neo-Latin Commentaries and the Management of Knowledge in the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period (1400–1700)*. 215–216. [Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004382190_014]

[11] Gaile&Hofa, 11. Laertius. *Vita Epicuri,* 12

[12] Cicero, *De Fin.*

which became significant in the political and legal debates of the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods.

In Part I, it is established that during the Renaissance, with the revival of the texts of ancient philosophy and their academic interpretation, the Epicurean understanding of law entered the field of vision of the intellectual elite, which sought to balance the doctrines of ancient thinkers with the principles of Christian ethics. Thinkers of that period, such as Gassendi, attempted to rehabilitate Epicurus' philosophy by presenting it as rational and compatible with the development of scientific thought. During the Enlightenment, the Epicurean pragmatic approach to justice and norms gained renewed significance, as the efforts of political philosophy to find rational foundations for the organisation of society coincided with Epicurean legal concepts. For example, Robich, in his dissertation and other works, notes that Locke as well as Rousseau continued to develop the idea of a contract-based society and conventional agreement, which in part corresponded with the Epicurean view that justice exists only insofar as it is useful and serves human well-being.[13] Part I examines how the philosophy of Epicureanism, despite its initial rejection by thinkers of the Roman period, was later reinterpreted and became significant within the legal discussions of the Renaissance and Enlightenment. By analysing the ideas of Epicurus, Cicero, and their followers, the study traces how Epicurean views on justice and law were received and reworked within intellectual processes and debates that later influenced the development of early modern political theory. Thus, Part I of the monograph provides a comprehensive insight into the place of Epicurus' doctrine within philosophy, law, and the broader historical context of the era, examining its influence from the perspective of the ancient world up to the Enlightenment, where Epicurean ideas transcended through philosophical and political transformations, becoming one of the key intellectual frameworks within which the nature of the social contract, individual freedom, and justice was evaluated and debated.

[13] Robitzsch, J. M. (2016). *Epicurean Justice and Law*. PhD Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania.12. Arī: Robitzsch, J. M. (2024). *Epicurean Justice: Nature, Agreement, and Virtue.* Cambridge University Press. 54 – 55

Part II. The Synthesis of the Sources of Law

Part II of the monograph marks the transition from philosophical analysis to a normative and conceptual exposition of legal theory, in which the doctrine of Epicurus is approached as a foundation for a model of law grounded in empiricism and utilitarianism. In Part II, particular attention is devoted to the genealogy of the concept of law, namely to the way in which natural, social, and rational factors converge to form the meaning of ancient justice and its interaction with the legal order as the result of social agreement.

In Part II, the metaphysical and ethical foundations of Epicurus' philosophy are revisited, beginning with Epicurus' testament as a unique juridical philosophical document that reveals the principles of human freedom, friendship, and property rights. In the continuation of this part, the reaction of Seneca and Roman Stoicism to Epicureanism is examined, particularly their attitude toward the pantheon of gods and the causal explanation of social events within what was often perceived as the indeterminate order of worldly affairs. The analysis also addresses the concepts of infinite causation and free will (*libera voluntatis*), the paradox of the Ring of Gyges (*Ring of Gyges*, *lat. Gyges Anulus*) as a test of justice, as well as the attempts of Hobbes and Gassendi in the early modern period to reformulate the Epicurean understanding of human nature and freedom of action. The transformation of Epicureanism within the intellectual environment of Rome and its influence on late antique philosophy and legal thought are also examined. It is shown how Epicurus' doctrine of the non-intervention of the gods, the contingency of the world, the principle of clinamen, and the autonomy of human action became the foundation for an early philosophy of freedom and responsibility, which later influenced the development of natural law theory and social contract theory, thereby linking ancient moral thought with the secular humanism and profane world of modern legal philosophy.

In the exposition of this part, with reference to Cicero's Dream of Scipio and the Roman triad of justice – *Justice, Utility, Contract*, it is outlined how the Epicurean conception of utility and justice becomes a transitional point from ancient ethics to Hellenistic political philosophy, and later reveals itself in the humanism of subsequent periods, serving as a driving force of the Renaissance and the intellectual developments of the Enlightenment, which in turn represent a rational continuation in the formation of later theories of law. It is demonstrated that, in Epicurus' view, the meaning of law lies in the human capacity for rational judgment, enabling the preservation of balance between freedom and security, between happiness and duty, and between justice and utility. However, this conception does not establish a direct relationship between the political order of the state and the manifestation of divine power in public life, as is the case in Aristotle's understanding of justice.

At the centre of Part II is the story of a cup discovered near Pompeii, dating from the 1st century BCE, which depicts two important intellectual traditions of antiquity – Stoicism and Epicureanism. This unique monument of art and history illustrates how people in the ancient world reflected on the questions of how human beings ought to live, what constitutes happiness, how suffering may be overcome, what the true value of life is, and how the inner freedom of the individual may be balanced with the external order of the world. This so-called "Philosophers' Cup" (*Philosophers' Cup, also known as the Boscoreale Silver Cup*) is not only an artistic masterpiece but also an iconographic philosophical manifesto, representing two competing yet complementary interpretations of human existence: *the Stoic ideal of duty and self-restraint to endure and to bear and the Epicurean search for peace, pleasure, and natural harmony*. The figures depicted on the cup philosophers absorbed in contemplation, seated on a stone bench beside a garden table and reflecting on the nature of life and nature itself symbolise the transition of ancient philosophy from the polis to the individual, from the political life of the city-state to the personal freedom of consciousness.

In this sculptural composition, the *transition of the ancient individual from law to reason, from divine command to self-knowledge, is visually embodied*.[14] The cup's dual philosophical symbolism, Stoic and Epicurean, reflects the spirit of the Hellenistic age, in which morality and politics, happiness and law, freedom and necessity become different expressions of one and the same intellectual current.

Part II examines the persistent dialogue between Hobbes and Gassendi concerning Epicureanism. At the centre of their interpretations of Epicurean philosophy lie questions of freedom, determinism, human will, pleasure, and the foundations of materialist epistemology and existential reflection. Both philosophers, being closely connected with the Epicurean tradition of thought or intellectually influenced by it, nevertheless interpret it in different ways. Hobbes, relying on a physicalist understanding of the nature of the world, seeks to provide a rational justification for the limitation of freedom in the name of the social contract and security, whereas Gassendi, in the spirit of Catholic humanism, attempts to reconcile Epicurus' hedonism with the ideals of Christian ethics. In other words, Epicurus' *clinamen* becomes the analytical precursor of Hobbes' mechanism of free will, while his atomistic model of the world provides the foundation for mechanical philosophy, and Epicurus' concept of contractual justice anticipates Hobbes' theory of the social contract. Likewise, Epicurus' ataraxia, or tranquillity, corresponds to Hobbes' ideal of social peace and security. This perspective marks an important transition in the development of Western European philosophy of law, from a theologically determined law to a normative order constructed by human reason.

[14] Zanker, M. (1998). Pompeii: Public and Private Life. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 212

Part II of the monograph also examines the reflections of Erasmus of Rotterdam, a representative of the late Renaissance and Christian humanism, on Epicurus, which almost a century before the reflections of Gassendi and Hobbes laid the foundations for the renaissance of Epicureanism in the early modern period. Unlike the scholastic tradition, Erasmus did not condemn Epicurus but sought instead to understand him, restoring the ethical and spiritual dimension of his philosophy. One of the most striking examples is his dialogue *Epicureus (The Epicurean)*, which forms part of the cycle *Colloquia familiaria (Familiar Colloquies).* In this text, Erasmus, employing an ironic and paradoxical style, attempts to reconcile the ideas of Epicureanism with the Christian way of life, arguing that the true "*Epicurean*" is Christ himself, since he seeks the highest spiritual pleasure in a virtuous and tranquil life, rather than in sensual goods.[15] Through this interpretation, Erasmus not only rehabilitates Epicurus within the sphere of Christian thought, but also challenges the medieval perception of Epicureanism as mere hedonism, demonstrating that pleasure may also be understood as a spiritual category, namely as a state of harmony and inner tranquillity.

The study also examines the philosophical period in which Hobbes systematised the concept proposed by Gassendi, transforming it into the foundation of the theory of the state and the social contract. Here, law becomes not an external mechanism of coercion but a form of agreement that disciplines human natural inclinations and ensures freedom from chaos, fear, and mutual violence. Thus, from Epicurus to Gassendi and Hobbes, a coherent intellectual line develops that transforms the paradigm of philosophy and law: from divine law to an order created by human reason, from metaphysical freedom to freedom understood as a principle of self-regulation. This transition marks the beginning of the legal development of the early modern and humanist era, in which the human capacity to act rationally becomes the fundamental condition of law and morality, the point at which the worlds of physics and ethics ultimately converge within a single sphere of law. Moreover, alongside Hobbes, Gassendi, and Erasmus, the contribution of Lorenzo Valla marks a conceptually significant turning point in Western political and legal thought. They helped to modernise the doctrine of Epicureanism, transferring it from the ancient individual search for personal ataraxia to a social contract, in which law, justice, and the form of the state serve not abstract ideals but the practical needs of human freedom, security, and happiness.

In the conclusion of Part II, it is emphasised that Epicurus' concept of justice cannot be reduced to a simple normative or positivist construction. It is closely connected with the utility of life, security, and individual tranquillity. For Epicurus, the just does not strive for selfish

[15] Leushuis, R. (2015). *The paradox of Christian Epicureanism in dialogue: Erasmus' Colloquy Epicureus*. Erasmus Studies, 35(2). 113 – 114

advantage, but for mutual benefit, understood as non-harm and peaceful coexistence. Desires, interests, and utility converge in a unified understanding of legality, which serves not an idealised truth but the practical needs of human life. Within this framework, the institutions of guilt and punishment are not sacralised but rather rationalised as mechanisms that maintain social order and neutralise fear. The contract in Epicureanism is not a juridical document but an ethical–philosophical format that serves securit, the only genuine guarantee of freedom. This security leads to the highest form of pleasure tranquillity, in which justice becomes not an obligation but a condition of well-being and happiness. All these ideas are vividly embodied in the allegorical engraving of the Boscoreale Cup, where, through an artistic narrative, the centuries-long duel between the Stoic virtue of law and the Epicurean justice of pleasure is symbolically depicted, two major philosophical paradigms that continue to shape and develop the landscape of Western legal thought.

Part III. The Corpus of Justice: Relativism, Rationalism, and a Complex of Paradoxes

The third, which is at the same time the final and concluding part of the monograph, like the two preceding parts, consists of three principal chapters. The entirety of Part III, including these three chapters and their logically subordinate subchapters, seeks to address the question of what constitutes the corpus of justice in Epicureanism. Accordingly, the subsequent exposition is structured around relativism, rationalism, and a set of paradoxes that are particularly characteristic of Epicurean thought.

Part III turns to the internal architecture of Epicurus' thought, that is, to the manner in which human experience, friendship, reason, and contingency form a unified ethical–legal system, which at the same time symbolises the unity of justice and law. From this perspective, the study examines how, in Epicurus' philosophy, human experience, rational judgment, and emotions become the foundation of morality and legality, revealing the good as a harmony between reason, tranquillity, and the relationships formed by human beings themselves. Friendship appears here as a measure of identity and justice, where trust becomes the primary source of law and the substance of ethical connection. Pleasure is interpreted as a criterion of knowledge and choice. Similarly, as in the *myth of Heracles*, the human being stands before a choice between momentary pleasure and enduring virtue. The concept of chance (or contingency) in turn marks the possibility of freedom within an otherwise determined world, where human action is not mechanical but responsible, rationally controlled, and self-determined. It is emphasised that the sense of justice and law arises from several sources inherent in human nature sensations, experience, reason, memory, and language thereby forming a harmonious balance between individual freedom and social order. The study also analyses the enigmatic (or silent) polemic between Aristotle and Epicurus, which, according to some authors, was nevertheless relatively persuasive. In Aristotle's view, the sense of law (justice) arises from the natural social nature of the human being, namely from the capacity to understand the common good, to distinguish between the just and the unjust, and to live in accordance with measure and virtue. These three sources become the foundation of legal order. Epicurus expands this perspective by locating the origin of law in the synthesis of experience and reason: in sensations, preconceptions, memory, language, friendship, fear, and pleasure, where each element functions as an instrument enabling the human capacity to understand what ensures peace and happiness – namely, to cause no harm to others and to suffer no harm oneself. This is the essence of Epicurus' natural justice, a concept that transcends the centuries. Thus, Aristotle's ethical–political idea of the "*measure of justice*" and Epicurus' empirical principle of the "*harmony of life*" converge in a common aim: to explain law as a sentiment

arising from the joint operation of human nature, reason, and experience, rather than as an external concept imposed by law.

The relationship between law and human will in ancient thought is examined by analysing how purpose (*telos*) and law (*lex, nomos*) become central concepts in the transition from classical philosophy to Hellenistic philosophy, and later from the Roman Republic to the Imperial period. In Epicurus' view, law loses its divine authority and acquires a rational meaning grounded in human needs. Its purpose is no longer to punish or to rule through command, but to maintain peace and mutual security. In presenting the idea of the original state, Part III emphasises that the foundation of law lies in human memory and in the capacity not only to accept norms but also not to forget their original meaning, since behind every law stands the experience of human coexistence and a mutual promise – expressed through friendship, kinship, or, beyond these ties, through an agreement of non-harm and freedom from harm.

Importantly, according to Epicurus, the gods exist as perfect, tranquil, and self-sufficient beings who neither punish nor reward, and therefore cannot serve as the source of law or justice.[16] Law and justice, therefore, arise not from sacred authority, but from the rational agreement of human beings to live without fear and without harming one another. It is precisely in this context that the story of Glaucon, found in the second book of *Plato's Republic*, is mentioned.[17] In the story, Glaucon, recounting the myth of *the Ring of Gyges*, argues that people are just not because they wish to be just, but because they fear punishment and suffering. If punishment were removed, people would become unjust. Epicurus, however, reinterprets this story in his own light; more precisely, it serves as one of the most illustrative examples of the Epicurean understanding, challenging Glaucon's pessimistic anthropology. In Epicurus' view, a human being is capable of being just not out of fear of external punishment, but through the pursuit of inner tranquillity and harmony with others.

For Epicurus, justice is not the fear of law, but a contract that secures freedom from fear. Thus, the themes of Part III "*God outside the law*" and "*The story of Glaucon*" function within the Epicurean system as two philosophical boundary markers: the first liberates the human being from supernatural norms, while the second frees him from dependence on fear. Law, which once functioned as a sacred instrument, becomes a product of human reason and serves as a guide for human cooperation, rather than as its opposition. Punishment, which previously derived from sacral belief and political authority, becomes an immanent experience of consequence, that is, the result arising from the harmful nature of an individual's actions toward society, the state, and the tranquillity of one's own soul. The possibility of punishment and

[16] DL. *X*., 139 – 142
[17] Plato. *Resp.,* II., 358c–360d

the inevitability of its discovery generate a constant unrest and tension within the soul, which accompanies injustice. In this way, Epicurus replaces the fear of the gods with internal responsibility, and the concept of punishment with an understanding of consequences, thereby marking one of the most significant transitions from mythological to philosophical–legal thought in the ancient world.

Hume's philosophy, much like Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*, addresses the relationship between the human mind, experience, and illusion, and in this respect helps to clarify the revolutionary character of Epicurus' thought. Hume, as an eighteenth-century empiricist, continues the path initiated by Epicurus, demonstrating that the mind is not a divine light, but rather an embodiment of experience, which learns to recognise relations and patterns rather than to discover absolute truths. If Plato's human being escapes the Cave in order to behold the sun of eternal ideas, then the human being of Hume and Epicurus returns to the Cave – not into darkness, but into reality, where the true light lies in the mind's capacity to accept the limits of human knowledge and yet to live peacefully within them. In this sense, Hume may be regarded as one of the modern interpreters and continuators of Epicurean ideas, also within the philosophy of law: *a philosopher who leads the human being out of Plato's cave*, not toward the sun of ideal forms, but toward the light of experience, reason, and justice, where the meaning of law is sought in human nature and in the human capacity to live in harmony with others.

In the final part of the monograph, attention is given to how the markedly different ethical structures of Epicureanism and Stoicism become two responses to the same question: how moral duty and responsibility are possible in a world without divine intervention. Concluding Part III, and with it the entire monograph, in which the legal dimension of the Epicurean philosophy of happiness has been examined in detail and from multiple perspectives, it becomes clear that Epicurus' philosophy offers a fundamentally different understanding of the meaning and substance of law, when compared with the classical approaches of natural law theory or legal positivism.

It also becomes clear that Epicurus' philosophical contribution to the development of legal thought is far more significant than has previously been acknowledged. By analysing the texts of Epicurus and his followers, and interpreting them through modern theoretical models – such as the *Prisoner's Dilemma, the Dinner's Dilemma, Plato's Allegory of the Cave, the paradox of the Ring of Gyges, and the Boscoreale Philosophers' Cup* – it must be recognised that Epicureanism offers a precise understanding of why and how legal norms arise. Thus, the legal dimension of the philosophy of happiness, within the broader legal discourse, is not a marginal or emotionally charged supplement to classical normative models, but rather a concise and humanly grounded understanding of justice. The function of law cannot be

reduced merely to its repressive, protective, or regulatory dimensions, that is, to the balance of rights and duties as a reaction to human action. Its essential role, in a normative–positive sense, is to create an existentially secure space that supports human autonomy, reduces existential fear, promotes peace, and institutionalises the possibility of mutual trust (*institutionalization of trust*) and friendship. From this perspective, happiness becomes the aim of law, not as an abstract ideal, but as an attainable condition, possible only when law becomes a companion of peaceful human coexistence. This is the teaching that Epicurus left not only to the thinkers of his own time, but also to the modern world, in an era in which new foundations of justice and solidarity are being sought.

Finally, the monograph not only reconstructs the juridical core of Epicurus' doctrine and highlights the legal dimension of happiness, but also raises a timeless question: is the legal order of the modern age capable of once again recognising happiness as an expression of the general meaning of life? Or, in developing increasingly complex normative systems and the formalism of law, has society lost the original purpose of law itself to free the world from fear and suffering, as proclaimed by Epicurus – the philosopher who, although not a full citizen of Athens, founded his school on the outskirts of the city and formulated one of the most influential Hellenistic theories of justice and law: to live without fear, in accordance with reason and mutual non-harm.

The monograph is not only about Epicurus. *It is about the human being who seeks peace in law and meaning in justice. It reminds us that law without happiness is empty, and happiness without justice is blind. Perhaps it is precisely in the modern age, after more than two thousand years, that the time has come to return to the Garden – not as a mythical place or a citadel of hedonism, but as a space of thought, where human reason, tranquillity, and mutual trust become the foundation of the meaning of law, rather than merely its external form.*

Concluding Remarks

In the conclusion of the monograph, upon completing the extensive study of Epicurean materials – which, in principle, encompasses nearly everything that can be said about Epicureanism and Epicurus, at least regarding the legal structure of his philosophy within Latvian scholarship in the twenty-first century, it is emphasised that this work is unique, as it brings together the perspectives of the philosophy of law, legal history, and legal theory into a unified analytical framework, doing so specifically through the prism of Epicurus and his philosophical doctrine, Epicureanism. With scientific consistency, the monograph reconstructs Epicurus' legal conception as a fully developed normative theory, which until now has not been articulated within Latvian academic thought, and proposes an original methodological framework in which law is interpreted through the categories of human reason, friendship, and peace. The monograph is also significant in that it overcomes the traditional perception of Epicurus not merely as an ethically hedonistic thinker, but as a creator of a systematic approach to law and political philosophy, whose ideas influenced later theories of contract, justice, normativity, and the formation of the state. It not only reconstructs the historical context, but also introduces a new interpretative paradigm, in which the doctrine of Epicurus becomes the foundation for a philosophy of human freedom, peace, and legality one that connects the ancient experience, as the essence of the philosophy of happiness, with the vertical development of legal thought in the centuries that followed.

The monograph establishes that Epicurus' *contractual conception* of justice represents the first secular theory of law in the history of Western thought, in which law is understood not as a sacred instrument of governance, but as a living instrument of human agreement, evolving together with society, time, place, and circumstances. Thus, within Epicureanism, law becomes a form of self-regulation of freedom, friendship, and peace, where reason replaces fear, and agreement replaces command. In this respect, the monograph is significant, first of all, because it systematically reconstructs Epicurus' philosophy in the language of legal theory, legal history, and the philosophy of law, revealing its profound connection with the emergence of the concepts of justice, law, and contract in the ancient world. Second, the monograph reveals Epicureanism as a source of Western secular legal thought, enabling a clearer understanding of how human reason and mutual agreement came to form the foundation of law, replacing theological determinism with rational self-governance. Third, this approach offers a new methodology of law, in which the juridical phenomenon is viewed not as an external authority, command, sanction, or punishment, but as a structure of inner balance, reason, and friendship that supports peace, security, and human self-knowledge as the highest expression of legality.

The time period examined in the monograph extends back more than two thousand years into the ancient past. In the ancient world, to reflect on society was simultaneously to reflect on law, since the order of the human being and the state was inseparable from the understanding of cosmic order. Therefore, anyone who deliberated on the good, virtue, or the purpose of life also inevitably reflected on justice and law, on what the structure of communal life should be so that human beings might live without fear and suffering. Within this broad historical landscape, the doctrine of Epicurus appears as a distinctive relic among the many theories that address peace, security, pleasure, justice, and happiness. Epicurus transforms the philosophical paradigm: the glorification of the sacred world is replaced by the cognitive power of human reason; the command imposed by authority is replaced by the concept of agreement; the disharmony of justice by understanding; fear by self-sufficient wisdom; and, finally, death by the recognition of its meaningless character. In this way, the philosophy of Epicurus becomes a monolithic construction situated between myth and law, between pleasure and duty, between human beings and the gods. This carefully structured framework marks the very beginning of law as the art of reasoned living in peace and happiness.

In Epicurus' doctrine, reason is the source of all knowledge; it is elevated and brought close to the divine dimension, becoming the new supervisor and guiding principle of the age, while law becomes a reflection of the human capacity to think and to agree. Thus, the philosophy of Epicurus is not merely a memory of the Garden he founded, but a living idea of law as the art of peaceful coexistence, which continues to breathe in every age in which human beings seek freedom from fear and strive to live in harmony with themselves.

The Hellenes greatly cherished the *polis*, its traditions and its laws; yet, just as passionately as they observed, cited, and revered them, they also violated them. At the same time, they brought disputes before the courts and made use of the advantages and opportunities offered both by the *polis* and by citizenship in order to defend their rights and interests.[18] Moreover, within the culture of the polis, legal processes were not merely a set of norms but a symbol of social identity and political belonging. Law was both the pride of the community and its moral measure. In the Greek world, litigation was not an exception but a form of civic participation, in which every free man considered it his duty to defend himself in the public sphere, thereby affirming both his self-sufficiency and his loyalty to the polis as a whole. In this context, when the ancient Hellene was often captivated by the spirit of the law, Epicurus' doctrine of peace, mutual non-harm, and pleasure as the measure of life sounded not as a poetic retreat, but as a bold resistance to this culture of juridical and political competition. The philosopher of happiness sought to return law to its original function – to serve human

[18] Epicurus turned to the latter—interests, or needs.

peace and security, rather than ambition and the rivalry for power. In his philosophy, law loses its "*aura of sanctity*" and acquires a human character. Law becomes an instrument rather than an ideal, a means of harmony rather than power. It is precisely this position, which unites pragmatism with ethical balance, that makes Epicurus one of the first thinkers to propose a humane interpretation of law, grounded not in sacred commands or the dictates of authority, but in mutual understanding among human beings.

In Epicurean philosophy, peace is regarded as the highest good, and the most direct path toward this peace leads through friendship (*philia*). For this reason, the entire legal conception developed by Epicurus may be interpreted as a kind of "algorithm of friendship" – a model in which social order and the mutual restraint from harm are grounded not in coercive power or a religious imperative, but in rationally recognised mutual trust and goodwill. In Epicureanism, friendship is not merely a private ethical choice, but a foundation of civilisational development, representing humanity's movement from chaos and animal aggression toward *logos* – the principle of reason and agreement that enables coexistence and mutual non-harm. It embodies the first form of solidarity, in which morality and mutual trust become the essential preconditions for legality and social order.

Even Augustine, who sharply criticises the Epicurean "*worldly philosophy of pleasure*" in his works, is unable to completely deny its rational appeal. Although Augustine rejects Epicurus' sensual conception of happiness, he nevertheless adopts the idea of inner tranquillity, transforming it into a theological form of Christian peace of the soul (*tranquilitas animi*). Thus, even the opponents of Epicurus become carriers of his thought, and his philosophy, once proclaimed "*pagan*", acquires a secular force that unites human reason, ethics, and law, transcending the boundaries of time and space, as well as those of religion and history. The Epicurean emphasis on individual tranquillity, pleasure, and contractual justice, together with the Stoic idea of a rational life grounded in duty within a cosmic order, creates a powerful dialectical resonance that balances these theoretical directions in the development of Western European jurisprudence and philosophy in later periods. These are value orientations which, although they emerged more than two thousand years ago, continue to engage and intrigue contemporary discussions on law, morality, and the meaning of human life. Epicurus and his counterpart, the Stoics, remain not only figures of history but also enduring intellectual companions in the history of world thought in the centuries that followed.

The scientific approbation of this monograph spans a period beginning in 1998, when the author initiated broader discussions on this topic namely the doctrine of *canonics* (it should be noted that Epicurus was the first to introduce this concept into written history) and canon law, in the restored Republic of Latvia, where at that time the study of canonics had not yet

become an established or fully developed field of inquiry. The author was also among the first, *at that time within the Faculty of Law of the University of Latvia, and in Latvia more broadly, to publish the article "The Existence of Sacramental and Juridical Elements in Law*", thereby drawing attention to the question of canon law, which subsequently led to the development of the academic course Church Law. Over the course of nearly thirty years, a considerable amount of work has been accomplished within both the practical and theoretical dimensions of the fundamentally applied scientific approbation process of this monograph. This includes activities within the relevant field in the Ministry of Justice, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia (LELB), the Synod of the LELB, the Riga Metropolitan Roman Catholic Curia (RMRKK), as well as participation as an invited expert at the Constitutional Court and in other scientific discussions. The author has also contributed as a specialist abroad, including in the United States, Greece, and the United Kingdom, as well as in various organisations and research centres. The author has also participated in conferences, congresses, and seminars, and has produced relevant publications related to the theme of the monograph, which have contributed to the development of this research (a list of publications is attached). Furthermore, the author has been actively involved in educational processes, including teaching and research activities at institutions such as the University of Latvia, Turība University, Riga Stradiņš University, and others.

A more detailed account of these activities is provided within the monograph itself under the section "*About the Author*".

Conclusions

Taking into account the scientific analysis, research, and comparative evaluation of theoretical positions carried out in this study, and based on the results of the doctoral dissertation, it has been established that the objectives of the dissertation have been fulfilled and its aim has been achieved. The legal dimension of the philosophy of happiness in the thought of Epicurus and in the philosophical school named after him, Epicureanism within the Hellenistic period has been examined in an extensive and detailed manner. This analysis makes it possible to reconstruct Epicurus' understanding of law, its structure and continuity, as a consistent and unified normative system, grounded in empirical cognition and a rationally justified theory of contract, oriented toward mutual non-harm as the central principle of justice.

The conclusions of the dissertation reflect an interdisciplinary and fundamentally new approach, centred on a broad and in-depth analysis of the philosophical legacy of Epicurus, the intellectual space of Epicureanism, as a significant, yet previously insufficiently recognised and studied direction within legal thought. The dissertation also, for the first time within the context of Latvian legal scholarship and intellectual memory, consistently challenges the marginalised stereotype of Epicureanism and addresses the historical gap it has left behind. In doing so, and by overcoming this historical injustice, it reveals Epicurus and his doctrine, Epicureanism, within the framework of the philosophy of law, legal history, and legal theory as a fully developed, mature, coherent, and intellectually integrated system of thought. This system provides not only an ethical perspective, but also a juridically articulated and conceptually clear understanding of peace, justice, law, happiness, and human freedom and autonomy within the state and society.

Thus, through the application of grammatical, historical, descriptive, comparative, and analytical methods, as well as elements of deductive and teleological approaches (see the section on methods), the concepts of justice, contract, and happiness embedded in Epicurean philosophy were reconstructed. The dissertation concludes that the concepts contained in Epicurus' doctrine such as ataraxia (*tranquillity of the soul*), aponia (*absence of suffering*), contract (*synthekē*), friendship (*philia*), and the maxim of natural justice, among others form a structured and internally coherent body of ideas that possesses significant normative capacity, that is, a potential for legal interpretation and claims a distinct, comprehensive, and systematic juridical evaluation. In a narrower sense, Epicurus' philosophy may be characterised as a corpus of law a collection of juridical maxims and philosophical sententiae while in a broader sense it may be understood as a philosophical ideology of

normative character, containing a distinctive legal colouring and a recognisable system of values unique to Epicureanism.

The following fifteen (15) conclusions, taking into account the thematic specificity of the dissertation and its stated objective, are structured in a logical and chronologically ordered sequence. In order to fully understand the overall architecture of moral, legal, and political thought in ancient Greece and in later historical periods, these conclusions should be regarded as forming a unified conceptual model of law that reflects Epicurus' legal doctrine. Such a structure of conclusions makes it possible to trace the development of Epicurus' legal legacy, revealing its internal logic and its place within the philosophical landscape of the Hellenistic period as well as within the legal thought of the centuries that followed, as demonstrated in the conclusions presented below.

1. The philosophy of Epicurus may be interpreted as a synthesis of atomism and ancient moral philosophy, within which the form of a corpus of law also becomes discernible. The conceptual model of Epicurean thought includes prolepsis, the original form of perception, which is reduced to a memory-based empirical anticipation, accumulated through experience and knowledge. This process represents the structured activity of reason, determined, sequential, and prejudicial in character,forming the basis for human decision-making and the evaluation of possible consequences.

   The doctrine of Epicurus thus emerges as a pragmatic philosophy of choice, teaching that there is no unbearable duty or law, but rather an inevitable choice what to accept and what to reject. **As a result, Epicurus' doctrine reveals a harmonious unity and balance between the principles of morality and law, in which human freedom of action does not contradict social order, but instead constitutes its precondition, grounded in an ethical–legal unity.**
2. The doctrine of *canonics*, or the criteria of truth, represents an empirical and pragmatic theory of knowledge that examines the origin, criteria, and limits of knowledge. It serves not only as a methodological foundation for the entire philosophical system of Epicurus, but also as an indirect instrument for the understanding of law. *Canonics* functions as the central mechanism for the determination of truth. Within Epicureanism, the doctrine of canonics not only structures the mechanism of truth recognition, but also outlines a form of juridical autonomy, in which the origin and justification of norms are grounded in empirically knowable human experience and individual judgment, rather than in external authority or a transcendent source of law.

3. The prism of wisdom and law is systematically interwoven with Epicurus' doctrine of canonics (*kanōnikē*), which describes the human capacity to form judgments about reality through sensations, preconceptions (*prolepsis*), and emotions. For a legal norm to be recognised as justified, it must withstand this canonical test of experience, namely whether it contributes to the peace and order of society. Therefore, wisdom, understood as a rational choice, becomes not only a moral principle but also a legal one. In this context, wisdom is not limited to an inner virtue, but emerges as a source of law itself. It regulates human relations, since only prudence and thoughtful judgment can ensure a reasonable and non-harmful coexistence among individuals.
4. In **Epicurus' philosophy**, **justice** is not ontological; that is, it is not a form of reality embedded in the **structure of being** or in the **laws of nature**, existing independently of **human experience** and **human will**. Nor is justice an essence incorporated into the order of nature. Rather, it is a **functional and relative social concept** that does not exist in itself, but arises only when **people, in a particular place and time, agree upon mutual non-harm and peaceful coexistence**.
5. In Epicurus' view, justice is neither permanent nor immutable. It is conditional, remaining valid only so long as it serves to preserve peace and friendship. The Epicurean doctrine of justice holds that justice is not entirely of natural origin. Nor is it an unchanging ideal principle, as in the philosophy of Plato, or a moral expression of the natural order, as in Aristotle's thought; yet neither is it a purely conventional construct. Justice (gr. dikaiosynē, lat. iustitia) is a combination of contract and utility, a rational form of agreement that evolves together with society and through which social equilibrium is established.
6. In Epicurus' view, justice is neither permanent nor immutable. It is conditional, remaining valid only so long as it serves to preserve peace and friendship. The Epicurean doctrine of justice maintains that justice is not entirely of natural origin. Nor is it an unchanging ideal principle, as in the philosophy of Plato, or a moral expression of the natural order, as in Aristotle's conception of virtue; yet neither is it a purely conventional construct. **Justice** (*gr. dikaiosynē, lat. iustitia*) **is a combination of contract and utility, a rational form of agreement that evolves together with society and through which social equilibrium is established.**
7. Likewise, in Epicureanism, justice is not an ideal axiom, but a practical instrument whose function is to ensure stability and peace. In this way, Epicurus and his followers, the Epicureans, make not only a significant contribution to ancient moral philosophy, but also formulate a juridically articulated model of law, in which the algorithm of friendship and the pact of non-harm are oriented toward the goals of security, freedom, and mutual

goodwill, thereby defining the essential substance of happiness within law. These conclusions demonstrate the contemporary relevance, intellectual value, and largely underestimated potentialof Epicurus' philosophy, which makes it possible to include Epicureanism within the broader discourse of the philosophy of law, alongside the classical schools of antiquity and their representatives.

8. At the centre of Epicureanism lies the idea that justice is a relative and functional principle, arising from a mutual agreement reached through compromise in order to prevent harm – namely, neither to suffer harm nor to inflict it. Consequently, as soon as law ceases to fulfil this function of justice, it loses its normative force. Such a perspective marks not only an early form of secular law and a distinctive paradigm of justice, but also one of the earliest attempts to conceptualise law as a dynamic institution, synthesised through human experience and mutual trust. In this sense, it transcends the moral boundaries of its time and forms an intellectual foundation for later European philosophical reflections on law.
9. In formulating the foundations of justice and knowledge, Epicurus shifts the focus of legal thought from metaphysicsto an empirical and rationally verifiable evaluation. In the historical context, this marks one of the earliest precursor models of empiricism and utilitarianism within ancient Greek philosophy.
10. Particularly significant is Epicurus' contribution to the discourse of the history and theory of law, as he is among the first European philosophers who, through atomism and the study of natural science, introduced a concept closely connected with law – the principle of the free individual and free will (libera voluntas), thereby also determining the legal dimension of human happiness. Epicurus formulates one of the earliest foundations of individualism and human autonomy in the history of Western thought, in a world otherwise strictly shaped by state authority, the power of the gods, and fear (especially the fear of death and the unknown). In this sense, he articulates the human capacity to be free and independent from the authority of the state. Libera voluntas creates the possibility for a person to act in accordance with one's own reason, where reason itself is liberated from external necessity and from submission to religious dogma.
11. Hedonism and the concept of pleasure are not the true essence, purpose, or ultimate aim of this philosophy; rather, the idea of happiness becomes an important dimension of law. It does not stand in opposition to the system of norms, but instead provides it with substantive meaning and existential justification. In Epicureanism, the algorithm of law functions as follows: law operates as an instrument that ensures security (asphaleia), while the guarantee of security in turn creates the preconditions for peace (ataraxia). Peace, understood as a state of inner and outer harmony, then becomes the foundation of

happiness, which represents the highest aim of human life. From the Epicurean perspective, the task of law is not normativism for its own sake nor the mere existence of positive law, but rather the assurance of the quality of human life, where happiness is understood simultaneously as an existential and a juridical reality.

12. The legal dimension of happiness lies in the human capacity to live in accordance with reason and the natural measure of things, avoiding excess, fear, and mutual harm. For Epicurus, happiness – which differs from Aristotle's conception of happiness – becomes the internal telos of law, the purpose that determines to what extent a norm or agreement is just, useful, and consistent with the human inclination toward peaceful coexistence.
13. In Epicureanism, universal truth or justice as legality cannot be identified as an absolute or eternal metaphysical category. Laws must be observed in the name of advantage and utility, yet only insofar as their violation does not produce greater harm than their observance. Such is the principle reduced in Epicurus' doctrine, which renders justice a relative and functional agreement among human beings. When a law loses its usefulness and begins to produce more suffering than benefit, its observance is no longer rationally justified.
14. The observance of laws is not a prerequisite for a happy life, but rather a means that the individual accepts through rational choice, as long as such observance serves to ensure peace, security, and freedom from fear. According to Epicurus' system, to live in accordance with the law means to live wisely, justly, and virtuously, yet only insofar as the law itself corresponds to these fundamental values of wisdom. A pleasant existence is inseparable from a wise, honest, and just life.
15. In Epicureanism, law is not something absolute, inherently just, or universally correct. Law is not the ruler of everything. Although it may claim the character of universal justice, it is nevertheless compelled to return from that supposed universality back to its own foundation – the guarantee of benefit or pleasure.
16. In Epicureanism, a law that does not correspond with what is beneficial cannot claim to be just, since the measure of justice is not an external principle of authority, but rather the possibility of a peaceful human existence. Consequently, in Epicurus' view, a law may also be unjust if it violates its own function. This approach approximates an early form of utilitarian jurisprudence, formulated within Epicurean thought, in which the value of legality is measured according to its practical consequences – how it ensures the quality of human life – rather than by its conformity with abstract or absolutised ideas.

Proposals

As a result of the doctoral dissertation "*The Legal Dimension of the Philosophy of Happiness*", and on the basis of the developed conclusions—encompassing the space of cognition, the structure of the normative order and its institutional forms of manifestation, as well as aspects of legal history, philosophy, and theory, the principal theses to be defended have been identified and the most significant proposals have been formulated. For the purposes of clarity and comprehensibility, these have been structured in accordance with the aim of the dissertation, its research tasks, and the system of methods employed, thereby forming a coherent and logically ordered construction of proposals that reveals the interrelationship of concepts, conceptual clarity, and the internal dynamics of legal thought. Accordingly, the five proposals set out below articulate an evidence-based and argumentatively substantiated inclusion of the doctrine of Epicurus and its philosophical school Epicureanism within the canon of classical legal thought, as well as within the study of legal history and the further development of legal theory. The developed proposals are grounded in the further development of early—namely, ancient functional and practical legal theories and in their later reception within philosophical and legal surveys, the core of which lies in the human capacity to make an informed choice, that is, a choice grounded in knowledge and the faculties of reason, while strictly maintaining the balance between pleasure and pain. Epicurus' thought may thus become not merely a historical alternative, but also a philosophically viable counterpoint to legal dogmatism, relativism, and positivism alike, establishing a transition between ancient ethics and the Hellenistic path of virtue, the philosophy of justice "The Genesis of Ancient Justice and the practical jurisprudence of later epochs.".

1. ***Epicurus' hedonistic theory of justice***, that is, the ***empirically conventional model of justice***, constitutes a theoretically grounded alternative to the opposition between natural law and legal positivism.

Epicurus' concept of justice is neither strictly normative, as it is in Plato, where justice is grounded in the existence of eternal Ideas and in the internal harmony of the human soul, nor juridically positivist, as it later appears in the works of legal theorists for whom justice is separated from ethical or metaphysical content and reduced to the formal force of law and its effectiveness. Nor is the foundation of this hedonistic theory of justice oriented toward a teleological interpretation of human nature, as it is in Aristotle, where justice is understood as harmony with the natural end (*telos*) of the human being. In such a view, justice is conceived as conformity with a pre-determined ontological purpose of human existence or with a social function whose realization entails the cultivation of virtue and the attainment of a certain state

of perfection based on the fulfillment of predefined natural functions. Likewise, this conception is not cosmologically universal in the manner proposed by the Stoics, who understood justice as a component of divine reason (*logos*) and of the natural law of the universe (*lex naturalis*). In other words, justice is not grounded in an all-encompassing rational principle or in a metaphysical law of world order – nor in its sacred normative reflection that would determine the structure of legality beyond human practical experience or the divinely structured logic of the cosmos.

Accordingly, the understanding of justice within this framework is neither teleologically perfectionist nor cosmically determined, but instead justice is grounded in the *principle of utility* the *non-harm principle*, and the *criterion of peaceful coexistence*, where justice signifies ensuring security and preventing suffering. Such an interpretation evidently offers a **third direction in the philosophy of law, namely a *hedonistic–pragmatic concept of justice*** grounded in the ***balance of experience and benefit*** rather than in an abstract or *metaphysical ideal*. It may be concluded that Epicurus proposes an early alternative to the dichotomy between natural law and legal positivism, establishing a third – **empirically conventional model of justice, the foundation of which lies not in ideas or metaphysics, but in the practical utility of life and psychological equilibrium.**

2. The paradigm of ***natural justice is to be further developed through the proleptic model of justice***, which constitutes a cognition-theoretical legal framework grounded in a cognitive approach, serving as a standard of justice or its great maxim. Within this framework, legality is not an absolute or eternal truth, but rather an empirical agreement grounded in experience and perception (contractual model – *syntheke* and the security principle). Its foundation lies in the human capacity to perceive an initial preconception – *prolepsis* of non-harm and freedom from suffering, arising from shared experience and reason, and serving the practical ordering of life, security, and mutual non-harm.

Epicurus emphasizes that truth is not to be sought in ideas or in the eternal *logos* as the expression of the essence of things, as it appears in the philosophy of Aristotle. In Epicurus' system, *logos* is replaced by a pragmatic mechanism of criteria, where what matters most is what works, rather than what corresponds to eternal forms. As Gunārs Brāzma writes in "*Pārdomas par reliģijas skaidrojumu kādā mācību grāmatā*", the philosopher Peter van Inwagen suggests that there are two possibilities: either the ontological origin of ideas is an impersonal *Chaos*, more precisely, the kind of *Chaos* from which regularities emerge, or the origin possesses rationality, in which case it may be described by the variously translated term derived from the ancient Greek *logos*, such as "law", "word" or "explanation".

However, Epicurus transforms this choice in a fundamental way. He refuses to accept *logos* as a cosmic rationality structuring reality, and instead introduces *prolepsis* as an internal, experience-based measure of cognition, enabling human beings themselves to construct meaning and order in life. If, for the Stoics, *logos* represents the reason of the universe, then for the Epicureans *prolepsis* becomes the principle of self-regulation of the human mind a mechanism through which the individual systematizes the world without the presence of a sacred rational order or eternal ideas.

In legal theory, this makes it possible to construct an alternative to the classical and universal model of globalization, offering instead an empirically variable, utilitarian, individually perceived, and conventionally coordinated legal space, in which law acquires its force only insofar as it serves security, mutual non-harm, and peace as the guarantor of happiness, rather than being imposed authoritatively or hierarchically. Within such a perspective, *prolepsis* or ***proleptic justice*** becomes a natural cognitive mechanism through which law is perceived not as a command of external authority, but as an empirical construct arising from the synthesis of reason and experience. Justice, in the Epicurean understanding, is thus an internally constructed agreement on the ordering of life and non-harm, grounded in the human capacity to **intuitively recognize harmony between individual and common good.**

3. Legal theory is to be supplemented and revised through the doctrine of ***canonics***, understood as a **theory of measure and criteria of truth**, whose founder is Epicurus.

The doctrine of *kanōnikē* in the philosophy of Epicurus is developed as a theory of the criteria of truth – a connotation of knowledge and perception, a mechanism that provides a measure for recognizing truth. The foundation of this doctrine lies in the view that law should not be evaluated according to abstract ideals or dogmatic authority, but rather according to its practical capacity to ensure social peace and to prevent suffering (*aponia and ataraxia*).

Canonics becomes a methodological framework and instrument through which it is possible to empirically evaluate the conformity of normative acts and legal principles with human natural needs and the utility of practical life. The theory of *canonics* offers a system of criteria grounded in sensation and experience, which stands in contrast to formally dogmatic jurisprudence and promotes a utility-based conception of legality. The theory of *canonics* developed by Epicurus is not only grounded in philosophical argumentation but also proposes a practically applicable system of criteria, through which legal norms are assessed according to their actual impact on individual well-being and social harmony. Thus, they are evaluated through the prism of effectiveness, rather than solely according to their conformity with some normatively ideal form. The *canonical* theory of law may therefore become a model of

cognition, within which legality is perceived not as a dogma but as a rationally verifiable category, and law as an instrument for organizing life that serves peace, security, and the possibility of happiness. In this respect, Epicurus' philosophy of criteria occupies an important place among the early functional theories of law, where justice is measured not by formal conformity, but by its real effect on human existence and the sense of social community.

4. In ***national legal scholarship***, alongside the legal schools of Plato and Aristotle, the doctrine concerning the understanding ***of Epicurus' legal system should also be examined***, thereby broadening the search for perspectives within modern legal thought and enriching the structure of classical jurisprudence with an alternative model of justice grounded in empiricism and utilitarianism.

The aforementioned is connected with several interrelated and hierarchically structured reasons. First, such an approach ensures a conceptual balance between normative and pragmatic models of justice, thereby creating a more diverse intellectual space for the development of legal thought. Second, the inclusion of the doctrine of Epicurus makes it possible to examine the foundations of legality beyond metaphysical constructions and the culturally and historically religious experience of Western Europe. In doing so, it approaches later developments associated with legal realism, practicality, utilitarianism, and precedent-based reasoning. Third, this approach restores an intellectually marginalized source, one possessing a high degree of research, ideological, and philosophical potential, within the study of legal history, philosophy, and theory. Fourth, the doctrine of Epicurus promotes the development of an interdisciplinary perspective, integrating aspects of philosophy, psychology, and jurisprudence into a unified cognitive framework. Fifth, the concept of this philosophy of happiness makes it possible to trace how, across the centuries – from ancient thought to the early modern period – the history, philosophy, and theory of Western European law have been formed and developed, and how within this process a distinct and novel legal concept has emerged – *the legal dimension of the philosophy of happiness*. Finally, such a perspective strengthens the pluralism of academic curricula in higher education and scholarship, making the study of philosophy of law academically richer, methodologically more diverse, and theoretically more comprehensive.

5. ***In legal theory and philosophy, the history of the formation of the ancient understanding of justice and the trajectory of its origins should be reconsidered***, and as a result it should be recognized that Epicurus is one of the early founders of the conceptual autonomy of jurisprudence and an initiator of the doctrine of natural justice. In the doctrine of Epicurus, justice is understood as an empirical and rational agreement rather than a metaphysically

determined norm, thereby offering legal philosophy an alternative paradigm a contractual model of justice grounded in mutual security, non-harm, and peaceful coexistence as the primary objective of the social contract. The internal coherence of such a constructed approach reinforces the scientific relevance of the doctoral dissertation, proposing a reinterpretation of Epicurus' philosophy as an early stage in the historical emergence of jurisprudence, in which law had not yet been institutionalized but was conceptually understood as a means of ensuring a peaceful and rational human life.

List of publications, reports and patents on the topic of the Thesis

The author, doctoral candidate Kristaps Zariņš, has produced several publications—listed below—that are indexed in internationally recognized scientific databases, namely ERIH+, SCOPUS, and Web of Science (including AHCI and ESCI indexing), as well as in other academic information systems. The monograph itself, "The Legal Dimension of the Philosophy of Happiness," is fully included in the international scientific union catalogue of the National Library of Latvia. These publications demonstrate the author's research capacity within the international scholarly community and the thematic consistency of his work in the analysis of issues in legal theory, philosophy, and history, which has served as the foundation for the development of the present scientific monograph. However, in the summary of the doctoral dissertation these studies are not developed into a detailed analysis, as they serve primarily as a conceptual and methodological basis for the dissertation's reconstruction of the legal dimension of Epicureanism, rather than as separate empirical or thematic objects of research. Thus, the body of publications demonstrates the author's academic competence and research continuity, while the doctoral dissertation integrates this prior research into a unified, theoretically structured and normatively grounded framework of the philosophy, theory, and history of law.

Publications:

1. Zariņš, K. *Epicurus. The Genesis of Ancient Justice*. Rakstu krājums: *Reliģiski – filozofiski raksti*. LU Filozofijas un socioloģijas institūts. Humanitāro zinātņu fakultāte, Rīga, 2025. Indeksēts: SCOPUS.
2. Zariņš, K. *Homo Climaticus vs. Homo Religiosus: arhetipu savstarpējā mijiedarbība.* LU Humanitāro zinātņu fakultātes, Filozofijas un socioloģijas institūts. Rīga, 2025. Indeksēts: SCOPUS.
3. Zariņš, K. *The Manifesto of Ancient Church Law and the Canonization Process of the Roman Empire*. Reliģiski-filozofiski raksti, 2024, Nr. 35. DOI: 10.22364/rfr.35. Indeksēts: SCOPUS.
4. Kronis, I.; Zariņš, K. *Max Weber's theory of law history and political views of religion*. Reliģiski-filozofiski raksti, 2023, Nr. 34. DOI: 10.22364/rfr.34. Indeksēts: SCOPUS.
5. Zariņš, K.; Siders, E. G. *Corporate sustainability reporting in public healthcare institutions: relevance, challenges, and legal perspectives.* Proceedings of the 16th International Scientific and Practical Conference. RTU Press, 2025, Vol. I, 611–621. DOI: 10.17770/etr2025vol1.8664. Indeksēts: Web of Science.

   (Raksts par korporatīvās ilgtspējas ziņošanu publiskajā veselības aprūpē ir arī atskats Epikūra laimes filozofijas tiesību dimensijā, jo raksts analizē tiesiskus mehānismus, kas institucionalizē savstarpējas nekaitēšanas, drošības un stabilitātes principus, kuri epikūriskajā modelī veido taisnīguma un laimes normatīvo pamatu.)
6. Zariņš, K.; Siders, E. G. *Homo climaticus vs. Homo religiosus: arhetipu savstarpējā mijiedarbība*. Religions, 2024, Vol. 15, No. 10, Article 1208. DOI: 10.3390/rel15101208. Indeksēts: Scopus, Web of Science – Q1

   (The article "Homo climaticus vs. Homo religiosus" constitutes a direct reflection of the philosophy of Epicurus, as the archetypal synthesis analyzed therein—between existential fear, a religious understanding of the world, and a rational awareness of nature—corresponds to the central task of Epicurean thought: to liberate human beings from a normativity determined by fear and to establish the preconditions for security and peaceful coexistence.)
7. Zariņš, K. *Primary Law in Medicine, its Legal Nature*. SHS Web of Conferences, 2016. ISBN 978-2-7598-9029-Indeksēts: Scopus; Web of Science.

   (The publication on the legal nature of primary rights in medicine is directly connected with the legal dimension of Epicurus' philosophy of happiness, since the structure of fundamental rights protection analyzed therein institutionalizes the principles of mutual non-harm, autonomy, and security, which in the Epicurean model constitute the normative foundation of justice and happiness.)

8. Zariņš, K.; Siders, E. G. *Medicīnas personāls kā sociāli atbildīgas zaļās pārejas atslēga veselības aprūpes nozarē*. Society. Integration. Education. Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference, 2024, Vol. II. ISSN 1691-5887. Indeksēts: Web of Science.

   (The publication on the role of medical personnel in a socially responsible green transition is also connected with the legal dimension of Epicurus' philosophy of happiness, as it analyzes the normative and institutional mechanisms that structure the principles of mutual non-harm, security, and risk reduction. These are precisely the values that, within the Epicurean model, constitute the foundation of justice and happiness.)

9. Būmeistere, A.; Zariņš, K. *The development of early social democracy as an ideological and political alternative to Marxism from the perspective of rights and social justice*. SOCRATES: Rīga Stradiņš University Faculty of Law Electronic Scientific Journal of Law, 2025, Vol. 31, No. 1, 30–39. DOI: 10.25143/socr.31.2025.1.30-39. Indeksēts: ERIH PLUS

   (The article on the development of early social democracy as an alternative to Marxism from the perspective of law and social justice constitutes a direct reflection of the legal dimension of Epicurus' philosophy of happiness, since in both cases the security of the individual stands at the center of the normative structure. For example, the doctoral dissertation contains sections on the "relationship" between Karl Marx and Epicurus, where the emphasis is placed on social stability and practically ensured well-being, rather than on metaphysical or revolutionary teleological goals.)

10. Zariņš, K. *Canon law and Latin legal characterization.* SOCRATES: Rīga Stradiņš University Faculty of Law Electronic Scientific Journal of Law, 2024, Vol. 29, No. 2, 87–92. DOI: 10.25143/socr.29.2024.2.87-92. Indeksēts: ERIH PLUS

11. Zariņš, K. *Legal doctrine of Max Weber's sociology of religion*. SOCRATES: Rīga Stradiņš University Faculty of Law Electronic Scientific Journal of Law, 2022, Vol. 24, No. 3, 119–139. DOI: 10.25143/socr.24.2022.3.119-139. Indeksēts: ERIH PLUS

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1. Zariņš, K. *Retrospective on Freedom and Security at the Crossroads of Eras: The Convergence of Aristotle's and Epicurus' Concepts of State, Politics and Happiness.* Rakstu krājums: *Letonica.* LU Literatūras, folkloras un mākslas institūts. Indeksēts: SCOPUS Q1, ERIH PLUS, EBSCO

2. Zariņs, K. *Epikūrs Latvijas vēstures un filozofijas tekstos*. Rakstu krājums: *LU Akadēmiskais apgāds*. Latvijas Vēstures Institūta žurnāls. Indeksēts: SCOPUS Q1.

3. Zariņš, K. *The Genesis of Ancient Justice*. Routledge Research in Legal Philosophy. Routledege, Taylor & Francis. Web of Science Book Citation Index (BKCI)

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2. Zariņš, K. *Canon law legal description of the historical and contemporary codification.* 60th International Scientific Conference of Daugavpils University, 2018. Indeksēts: konferences materiāli (ISBN).

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Annexes

Explanation of Terms

A Guide to the Concepts of Epicurus' Philosophy of Happiness and Legal Concepts

No.	Concepts, Their Explanations, Definitions	DL Texts, the Vatican Sentences, and a Selection of Fragments	Conclusions
1.	**Canonics** (*kanon*) is the measure and criterion of truth. A foundational doctrine. An approach to the entirety of Epicurus' philosophy. **Definition:** Canonics is the measure of the criteria of truth**,** consisting of: • *Sensations*; • *Perceptions (apprehensions);* • *Experiences*; • *Mental imaginative apprehensions* (appearances, phantasms, dreams, etc.).	*DL, Vita Epicuri*.,30., 31 *Ep.Men*., 129.	Canonics includes the doctrine concerning[19]: • *generation and destruction*; • ii. *what is to be chosen and what is to be avoided*; iii. *ways of life**;** the highest goal*. Canonics provides a general framework for judging what is good. It helps one make decisions regarding every choice and avoidance. (See below under "*pleasure*" and "*good*".)
2.	**Law*** **Definition:** *Law is a mutual agreement among people, the purpose of which is to ensure security and peace in society, while simultaneously reducing suffering and conflict.* *Law is not absolute, but rather an instrumental tool that may change according to the requirements of time and circumstances.* *The value of law is measured by its practical utility, rather than by its connection to any higher or immutable moral norm.* Law is therefore understood not as a transcendental or eternal truth, but as a humanly constructed agreement, oriented toward the common good of coexistence and the reduction of suffering.	*Ep.Pyth*., 86 *RS*., XXXVII (152.§) *DL*.,*Vita Epicuri*, 118 *Sent.*, 51 *Fr*., 3., 48., 51., 116	1. Law exists to prevent the experience of injustice. 2. Just as unjust action is disadvantageous, so too is unconditional submission to the law. 3. Law may be unjust. 4. Unjust action is not always unlawful action. 5. Law must be compatible with: • *What is useful in mutual interaction;* • *Customs (traditions).* 6. According to the textual analysis of Diogenes Laërtius by Cyril Bailey: "*Law becomes useless when it no longer serves its purpose—to prevent harm and to make life easier*.".[20]

[19] It is well known that the teachings comprised more than fifty-six books or papyrus rolls, of which almost none have survived. This is attributed to Epicurus and is also noted by Laërtius. *Vita Epicuri,* 24,25,27, 28.§.

[20] *Bailey,* 1926. *Epicurus: The Extant Remains. Clarendon Press,* 150 – 151.§.

No.	Concepts, Their Explanations, Definitions	DL Texts, the Vatican Sentences, and a Selection of Fragments	Conclusions
3.	**State.*Power.*** **The purpose of the state** is to prevent fear and conflict. Its legitimacy depends on its ability to ensure peace and order. **Power** is not understood as independent of human will. Power is grounded in agreement, which may be reconsidered whenever it loses its practical value. *State power is relative and is grounded in practical necessity. The state or authority is not the highest moral institution, but rather a pragmatic mechanism for the peaceful coexistence of people.*[21] People, beginning from a primitive state, agreed upon common rules, which became the foundation of state authority. *"When people realized that not only force but also agreement could ensure peace, the first beginnings of the state emerged, in order to protect themselves from mutual harm*."[22] As long as fear exists, the state and life among people do not provide security. Yet fear arises from anxieties about what is **above, what is beneath the earth**, and, in general, what exists in the infinite. (This insight is also included in point 6 under the definition of Security.)	*DL*.,*Vita Epicuri*,10., 119 *RS*., XIV (143.§) *Sent*., 58	1. Security comes from well-established authority. 2. Authority provides security. 3. Honesty and the exercise of state governance are not compatible concepts. 4. Protection should be sought through legal means, by engaging in judicial proceedings. 5. In times of necessity, one must serve the state and the ruler. 6. One should free oneself from the prison of everyday *labor and the affairs of the state*. 7. The state is a necessary instrument that corresponds to the pragmatic understanding of the organization of society in the philosophy of Epicurus. 8. Power is useful only insofar as it provides peace and security. When it loses this function, it becomes unnecessary. 9. The state and authority are indicators of individual well-being.

[21] Diogēns, L. 1925. Lives of Eminent Philosophers. Loeb Classical Library, 650-652.
[22] DRN, Arī:*"De Rerum Natura". Hackett Publishing,* 132-135.

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4.	**Friendship*** **Definition:** **Friendship** *is a perishable good, but wisdom is immortal. Yet of all that wisdom provides, the most important is the attainment of friendship.*	*DL*.,*Vita Epicuri*, 120b *RS*., XXVIII (148.§) *Sent*.,23., 28., 34., 39., 78 *Fr*., 54	1. Friendship is grounded in mutual advantage. 2. Friendship is a virtue, yet it should be maintained only as long as it provides pleasure. 3. However, for the sake of a friend, an Epicurean is prepared to expose himself to danger and even to die. 4. Despite the great importance of friendship, there is no common property; property belongs individually to each person.
5.	**Friend.** **Definition.** *Nothing is eternal, yet the security provided by friendship attains the greatest completeness.*	*DL*.,*Vita Epicuri*, 11., 118., 120a, 121b. *Sent*., 56., 57., 66 *Fr*., 45., 95	1. The wise person will not violate the law for the sake of friendship; the law must be observed. 2. A friend is a value, and security is grounded in friendship.
6.	**Security** (confidence), as a good.* **Definition.** *The security provided by friendship attains the highest degree of completeness.* *Security* arises primarily from trust in the help that friendship provides, rather than from the friend himself. Living among people, the state is unable to provide security. Security arises from the absence of fear, yet fear itself—like human nature, which conceals danger within its own essence—is irrational; it arises from anxieties about what is above, what lies beneath the earth, and, generally, what exists in the infinite.	*RS*., VII (141.§), XIII, XIV(143.§), XXVIII (148.§), XL (145.§)	1. To be secure among people means to gain trust among neighbors, through which unshakable security is established, thereby guaranteeing the closest form of mutual confidence**.** 2. By establishing friendship, fear disappears. Fear also disappears within the relationships that friendship provides. 3. Security may be attained: • by withdrawing from the crowd; • through reputation (fame); • through recognition and prosperity; • through relations with neighbors.

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7.	**Peace*,** tranquility. Disturbance. 1. Virtues, if they are meaningless, provoke disturbance, because they arise from the expectation of reward; therefore, they are incompatible with blessedness. Yet the greatest fruit of justice is tranquility (*ataraxia*). 2. Peace is attained when the causes of those processes that occur incessantly and *that frighten other people, are clarified*. 3. Desires arising from empty opinions are themselves empty and limitless; neither honor, nor fame, nor wealth will dispel the disturbance of the soul.	*Ep. Hdt*., 37., 77.,80., 81.,82.,83 *Ep. Pyth*., 85., 86., 87., 96 *Ep. Men*., 128 *Ep.Men.Dox*.,136 *RS*., XIV (143.§) *Fr*., 7.,43.,114	1. Peace is security, and conversely, security brings the greatest peace and blessedness. Peace is attained by withdrawing from the crowd. 2. Fear arising from one's actions and from mistakes in choice is a cause of disturbance. 3. Peace arises from the study of nature and from knowledge, not from proofs that extend into infinity and thus become "*empty sounds*". 4. The attainment of peace is the principal aim of Epicurus' "*general doctrine*" namely the achievement of tranquility in life."[23] 5. The aim of knowledge is to attain peace, that is, to achieve tranquility (*ataraxia*)**,** which can be secured through wisdom. 6. One who rushes into war will not attain tranquility but will lose security. 7. Everything becomes stable and undisturbed when we explain all things, and when we do so in multiple ways. 8. In life, what is needed are not empty opinions and judgments or irrational laws, but according to what observable phenomena indicate, the possibility of living without disturbance. 9. Disturbance arises from myths about the gods, and nothing prevents these myths from sowing unrest among people.
8.	**Truth,*** the just***.** **Definition**. *With regard to what is common, the just so long as it is useful in mutual interaction is the same for all. But with regard to other circumstances, the same thing is not just for everyone.*	*RS*., XVII (144.§), XXXII (150.§), XXXIV (151.§) *Sent*., 7 *Fr*., 116., 117	1. Law prevents injustice, and the wise person observes it. 2. Injustice itself is not evil; what is harmful are the fears that accompany it. 3. Truth (*justice*) is connected with justice as a moral principle. 4. The just person is the least disturbed, whereas the unjust person is under the power of disturbance. 5. he just is a useful action: • in mutual interaction; • arising from customs (traditions).
9.	**Justice*** Tranquility (ataraxia). Justice, friendship, security. Also **injustice**. *Justice arises from practical utility, rather than from divine or metaphysical norms.* 1. **Definition of Natural Justice**: *Natural justice is the guarantee of mutual advantage, such that no one harms another and no one suffers harm from another.* (150.§)	*RS*., V (140.§), XXVII (148.§), XXXI, XXXII, XXXIII (150.§), XXXVI (151§), XXXVIII (153.§) *Ep.Men*., 132 *Fr*., 114	1. Justice is accompanied by misconceptions and judgments about it. 2. Neither in harming nor in refraining from harm is there anything inherently just or unjust. 3. This also applies to peoples who are unable to conclude mutual agreements not to harm one another and not to suffer harm.

[23] Bailey. *Epicurus*. 175. – 176.; Gaile&Hofa. 206.

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9.	2. Justice arises*:* • *By coming together*; • *By reaching agreement.*		
10.	**Virtue lies** in friendship, and conversely, friendship is grounded in virtue. 1. Prudence (*phronesis*) is a virtue. 2. **Definition of prudence:** "*It is impossible to live pleasantly without living prudently, well, and justly; nor is it possible to live prudently, well, and justly without living pleasantly.*"[24] 3. Virtue is inseparable from pleasure.	*Ep. Men.*, 132 *Ep. Men.Dox*., 138 *RS*., V (140.§) *Sent*., 23 *Fr*., 13., 15., 43., 54	1. Virtue is related to justice. Justice is friendship. 2. Friendship, which is a virtue, begins in mutual advantage. 3. Friendship is reciprocal and is grounded in the benefit it provides. 4. Prudence is the highest virtue. 5. A life of pleasure is inseparable from virtue.
11.	**The Predicate of Happiness** and **Pleasure. The Good.** **Definition: *Pleasure*** *is the beginning and the end of a blessed life. Pleasure is the highest goal. Pleasure is the good. However, not all pleasures are desirable. Pleasure must be judged by weighing and considering what is beneficial and what is not.* **Pleasure** is necessary when pain is being experienced; but when pain is no longer suffered, pleasure is no longer needed. There are two kinds of experiences: • Pleasure is advantageous; • Pain is alien (to our nature).	*Ep.Pyth*., 116 *Ep.Pyth.Dox*., 118., 121a *Ep.Men*., 122., 127 *Fr*., 11., 17., 36., 51.,53., 118., 119 Aristotle, *Rhet*.,1369a2	1. Happiness is associated with freedom, and freedom in turn with law. 2. Pleasure is acceptable insofar as it does not come into conflict with the law. 3. Happiness can be increased, just as it can also be **diminished**. 4. Everything is done for the sake of happiness, and it provides for everything. 5. The aim of pleasure is to feel no pain and to experience no disturbance (*ataraxia*). 6. Choices are made on the basis of experience (feeling). *7.* Choice consists in: *avoiding, abstaining, or acting.* *8.* At the same time, pleasure is the goal of everything. It manifests in two ways: • Not to suffer pain in the body; • Not to experience disturbance in the soul (ataraxia). 9. By observing and weighing pleasure and pain, a decision is made about what is beneficial. 10. Pleasure is naturally connected with us, yet, like any good, we do not choose every pleasure.

[24] This definition of virtue is cited by both Seneca and Cicero—respectively in Seneca's On the Happy Life (De Vita Beata) and in Cicero's De Finibus I, 18, 57. See also Gaile & Hofa, pp. 94–95, and Cyril Bailey, Epicurus, pp. 351–352.

No.	Concepts, Their Explanations, Definitions	DL Texts, the Vatican Sentences, and a Selection of Fragments	Conclusions
11.	**Happiness is**: • Freedom from suffering; • Moderation in experiences; • *The ability to determine the limits of the natural.* **Happiness** itself is of two kinds: one that cannot be increased, such as that which belongs to the gods, and another in which pleasure may be increased or diminished. Thus, for Epicurus, *pleasure is the highest* ***good****. For Aristotle, the will is the striving for the good. No one desires anything other than the pursuit of the good;* from it decisions are made, choices are carried out, and to it we ultimately return.		
12.	**Freedom is** "*The greatest fruit of self-sufficiency*". **Freedom is limited by**: • property; • the crowd; • the ruler, the state; • favoritism (friendship); • unlimited desires.	*Sent*., 67., 77 *Fr*., 48., 51., 90	1. Freedom consists in "*not being enslaved to law and opinions*" and in a life "*not constrained by law*". 2. Freedom extends only insofar as it does not collide with the interests of others or with a "*neighbor's attack*". 3. Some desires are natural, while others are empty. 4. True freedom can be attained through wisdom (philosophy), and it belongs to the wise person.
13.	**Chance, coincidence, fortune.** The order of all things is determined by a **threefold scheme of causes** [25] are: • Necessity, which does not submit to judgment; • Chance, which possesses an inexorable inevitability, yet can be influenced by reason; • Our actions, that is, free choice.	*Ep.Men*., 131.,133.,134., 135 *Ep.Pyth.Dox*., 120a *RS*., XVI (144.§) *Sent*., 17., 47 *Fr*., 42 Aristotle. *Rhet*., 1369a2	1. Struggle with chance, concern for the future, and care for property are inevitable. 2. The order of nature produces an inevitable chain of events, while chance determines particular occurrences.[26] 3. Human free will is acknowledged.[27] 4. It is better to follow the myth about the gods than to follow fate. Fate is replaced by the concept of chance. 5. If the gods can be appeased, fate is inexorable. 6. It is in human nature to be in a state of conflict with oneself; by seeking causes only in necessity and in what happens of itself, we fall into a contradiction between action and opinion.

[25] Corresponds with the causes of "*all things*" in the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle.
[26] Bailey, *Epicurus*. 82 – 94.
[27] *Ibid.,* 339 – 341. Also Gaile&Hofa, 250., (348 – 350.).

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13.	Necessity is characterized by actions that we do not wish to perform, yet which we nevertheless carry out "*of ourselves*". Aristotle includes chance among the seven causes of all actions.		
14.	**Truth, the true, error, illusion.** **Definition.** *General truth does not exist. Likewise, truth cannot be generalized.* 1. Rejects the Sophists and the Stoics, opposing Zeno of Elea's paradox: *it is impossible to refute the non-existence of motion while moving at the same time.*[28] 2. Concerning what is unclear, proofs must be provided with the help of what is visible. Therefore, Epicurus states: "*That which does not exist cannot move*.". **Definition:** Only that which is observed or grasped through the apprehension of the mind is true. Error arises: • from other movements (factors influencing our actions)**;** • rom the choices made; • from necessity; • from self-deception.[29]	*DL. Vita Epicuri*., 31., 32., 34 *Ep.Hdt*.,51., 62 *Fr*., 37., 38 (5., 13)., 38 (9 – 11.), 63 – 65.	1. Opinions may be mistaken. They are associated with unbeneficial action. Through reason, however, one can arrive at a rational judgment. 2. An opinion must be grounded in evidence. 3. By eliminating error, truth emerges. If other factors influencing a conclusion are neither confirmed nor refuted, illusion arises; but if the conclusion is confirmed or not disproved, truth emerges. 4. A certain movement within ourselves, connected with the mind's imaginative (associative) apprehension, gives rise to error.

[28] Gaile&Hofa, 277.

[29] Here, Epicureanism offers rich insights through Lucretius. See, for example, DRN IV, 816–817; 1024; 1025–1036. See also Gaile & Hofa, p. 216, and Cyril Bailey, Epicurus, pp. 197–198.

No.	Concepts, Their Explanations, Definitions	DL Texts, the Vatican Sentences, and a Selection of Fragments	Conclusions
15.	The significance of the mind and of conclusions grounded in experience. **Opinion.** **Definition**. *Opinion is a judgment, and it is either true or false. If it is confirmed or not refuted, the judgment is true; but if it is not confirmed or is refuted, it proves to be false.* 1. The mind is entirely dependent on the senses. 2. The mind is connected with the senses at the moment of perception, and in order to arrive at understanding and correct judgment it is necessary to evaluate: • Coincidences; • Correspondences; • Similarities and all this must be done "through the process of ordering.".	*DL.Vita Epicuri*., 31.,32 *Ep.Hdt*., 38.,46., 47., 50., 51., 58., 59., 62., 75.,76., 78 *Ep.Pyth*., 89., 117 *Ep.Men*., 132 *RS*., I (139.§), X (142.§), XVI, XVIII (144.§), XIX, XX (145.§), XXIV (147.§) *Fr*., 8.,23., 37., 38 (5.,13)., 53., 65., 66., 88	1. It is better to experience failure through rational judgment than to experience success through irrational judgment. 2. Through reason and prudence, it is possible to overcome chance.[30] 3. The mind, without avoiding pleasure and by forming a judgment grounded in experience about the body's highest goal and its limits, dispels the fear of eternity and renders life complete.
16.	A judgment grounded in experience creates predictability and hope. An exceptional case does not **prove the rule**. 1. An opinion is true if sensations and the apprehension of the mind refute the opposing assumption. 2. Every opinion and the experience-based judgment related to it should be given the following significance (**definition**): it is not possible to subject every opinion immediately to an experience-based judgment; however, it is sufficient that a person is prepared to make such a judgment.	*Fr*. 14., 26., 29., 37., 38. (3 – 8.)	1. Generalization is the most common source of error. 2. Truth is practically verifiable and must be tested "in one's own actions.". 3. Experience-based judgments and verbal concepts may change over time and may prove to be erroneous. 4. An experience-based judgment also excludes the sophistic dilemma of whether it is possible – by affirming or denying – to both know and not know the same thing at the same time.

[30] Clay, D. 1998. *Paradosis and survival: three chapters in the history of Epicurean philosophy*. University of Michigan Press 33.-34. Also Gaile&Hofa, 256. Also Bailey, *Epicurus*. 358.

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17.	**Power.** 1. Its purpose is to establish trust among people. 2. Power that is rooted in what is natural is good, and it may be preserved by any means.	*RS.*,VI, XIV (140., 143.§) *Fr.*,118s	1. Security comes from "*well-established power*". 2. Power is connected with peace, the state, and security. 3. Power and high offices do not guarantee happiness.
18.	**Punishment. Fear.** **Definition:** **"***We do everything in order not to suffer pain and not to live in fear.*". **Definition.** 1. Since the pleasure of the soul is greater than the pleasure of the body, the punishment of the soul is heavier than the punishment of the body. Bodily punishment torments in the present, whereas the punishment of the soul torments in the present, the past, and the future. 2. Likewise with fear as with punishment: the limits of pleasures attained by the mind, rather than by the body, give rise to the greatest fears. 3. Plutarch states that Epicurus held that people can be restrained from unjust actions only through the fear of punishment.	*Ep.Hdt.,* 81., 82., *Ep.Men.,* 122., 125., 126., 128., 131., 133., 137 *RS.*, X (142.§), XII, XVIII (143.§), XX (145.§), XXVIII (148.§), XXXIV, XXXV (151.§) *Sent*., 70 *Fr.*, 53., 57., 94., 107., 110.,117s	1. The source of fear is another person. "*It is impossible to be without fear if you yourself inspire fear*".[31] 2. Fear accompanies injustice, which may be rectified by punishment imposed by a court (judges). 3. Fear arises from the possibility of being caught, since it is uncertain whether the wrongdoing can be concealed until the end of one's life. Therefore: *do nothing that creates fear merely because someone else might find out about it (including a close person).* 4. The evil of injustice lies in the fear of punishment arising from suspicion. 5. Fear arises generally from: • ignorance; • the future; • the inability to explain the "terrible," death, and similar phenomena; • myths about the gods that inspire such eternal fears; • disturbance (anxiety); • unfounded opinion. 6. But fear arising from the violation of the law occurs in two ways: • in the awareness of punishment; • in the possibility of being caught (exposed).

[31] Bailey, *Epicurus*. 367. Also Gaile&Hofa, 257. Epicurus' collection of sayings in the Paris manuscript1168F, 115u = Usener fragments., 537.)