

# Letter to Menoikeus translation by Peter Saint-Andre

Post by “Elli” of June 9, 2023 at 9:28 AM

Dear epicurean friends hello and Joy! 😊

**"Enjoyments with paides and women...and fish".**

For our epicurean issues, this good catch that was done by Don, it has to be considered as **the first really quite a find!** 👍

Dear friend [Don](#) , I found more material in the basis of the etymology of the greek words, and for the further strengthen on your argument on what the above sentence means really, and as is written by Epicurus.

1. The word “**paides**” does not mean “boys” indeed. It means “**slaves**”.

Epicurus in his last Will (which was an official document and it had to be written according to official terms) writes and ending it with the freedom of his slaves:

Ancient Greek text: <<ἀφήμι δὲ τῶν παίδων ἐλευθέρων Μῦν, Νικίαν, Λύκωνα· ἀφήμι δὲ καὶ Φαίδριον ἐλευθέρων.>>

Translation: And of my **slaves**, I hereby emancipate (or I set free) Mys, and Nicias, and Lycon: I also give Phaedrium her freedom (or I set free Phaedrium).

2. And now, my dear epicurean friends, stand up from your chairs, your sofas and your beds to see clearly what means the word “women”, as used by Epicurus! ☐

**Ancient Greek text: Δημοσθένης, Κατὰ Νεαίρας** [122] Τὸ γὰρ συνοικεῖν τοῦτ' ἔστιν, ὃς ἂν παιδοποιῆται καὶ εἰσάγη εἰς τε τοὺς φράτερας καὶ δημότας τοὺς υἱεῖς, καὶ τὰς θυγατέρας ἐκδιδῶ ὡς αὐτοῦ οὔσας τοῖς ἀνδράσιν. **Τὰς μὲν γὰρ ἐταίρας ἡδονῆς ἔνεκ' ἔχομεν, τὰς δὲ παλλακὰς τῆς καθ' ἡμέραν θεραπείας τοῦ σώματος, τὰς δὲ γυναῖκας τοῦ παιδοποιεῖσθαι γνησίως καὶ τῶν ἔνδον φύλακα πιστὴν ἔχειν.**

The above passage is from **Demosthenes** “against Neaira” (that was a Hetaira) and was one of his speeches for use in private legal suit inside a court. The translation was made by **Norman W. DeWitt and his son Norman J. Dewitt**.

Demosthenes was a politician and a lawyer and of course some of his speeches were presented to judges inside the court and in the city of Athens. Demosthenes died 19 years before Epicurus was born. So, the words that used by Demosthenes had same meaning and in the era of Epicurus. Thus, we read in this paragraph something that is remarkable, and the translation in English as follows:

Translation by Norman W. DeWitt and his son Norman J. DeWitt, [122] “For this is what living with a woman as one's wife means—to have children by her and to introduce the sons to the members of the clan and of the deme, and to betroth the daughters to husbands as one's own. Mistresses we keep for the sake of pleasure, concubines for the daily care of our person, but women to bear us legitimate children and to be faithful guardians of our households”.

My translation [122] : “Because this is what living with (a woman) is – to have children (by her) and to introduce the sons to the members of the phratry (i.e. brotherhood or kinfolk) and of the deme, and to betroth the daughters to husbands as one's own. Because, **we have the hetairai/courtesans for the sake of pleasure, the concubines for the daily care of our body, but women to bear us legitimate children and to be faithful guardians of our households**”.(\*)

(\*) My note: And that is because we, the greeks - and not only greeks- we have them ALL (hetairai/courtesans, concubines and women i.e. wives) for our enjoyments taking advantage from them as to be subjects and things. Please, remember the phrase by Epicurus in LTM : **“enjoyments with slaves and women... and fish”!**

Thus, it is not a coincidence “why”, greeks, made such wars among them. Because, for maintaining and having at the same time not one, not two, but (3) three women with children (legitimate or not legitimate) in their life, they have to be rich! How else?

So that Epicurus when he writes “**women**” he means literally “**wives**”. Women that have to be pathetic accepting this kind of choices of their husbands, and treating them ALL as to be subjects without free will! That’s how so oppressed were women in ancient Greece and in the basis of what is called “**patriarchy**” that this word means: man in the house was the alpha man, the “pater” i.e. “father” that means a Despotic and a Ruler who decided for all the issues concerning in the house and in the city! And are same narcissistic-despotic behaviors and phenomena that exist in our era too!

Yes indeed, Epicurus was a real liberator for his era and for every era. A real savior and a healer that gave the remedy to mankind. And as Norman DeWitt points out somewhere:

[...“**I prefer to agree with Plato and be wrong than to agree with those Epicureans and be right,**” wrote Cicero, and this snobbish attitude was not peculiar to him. Close to Platonism in point of social ranking stood Stoicism, which steadily extolled virtue, logic and divine providence. This specious front was no less acceptable to hypocrites than to saints. Aptly the poet Horace, describing a pair of high-born hypocrites, mentions “Stoic tracts strewn among the silken cushions.” Epicureanism, on the contrary, offered no bait to the silk cushion trade. It eschewed all social distinction. The advice of the founder was to have only so much regard for public opinion as to avoid unfriendly criticism for either sordidness or luxury. This was no fit creed for the socially or politically ambitious. Yet this similarity is apt to be obscured by more conspicuous differences.

[...(Epicureanism allied itself instead with the Ionian tradition of medicine, which was philanthropic and independent of political preferences. Just as all human beings, men, women and children, slave and free, stand in need of health, so all mankind, according to Epicurus, stands in need of guidance toward the happy life. This view of things tinged his philosophy with the color of a gospel and bestowed upon it a pragmatic urgency, which is lacking in Socratic thought. With the leisurely meanderings of dialectic he had no patience. Truth, he believed, must possess immediate relevance.

[..."**Love goes dancing round and round the inhabited earth, crying to all men to awake to the blessedness of the happy life.**" About the identity of this Love there can be no doubt; it is the Hippocratic love of mankind, which to true members of that craft was inseparable from the love of healing. In this teaching Epicurus displayed his originality. His new design for living was applicable everywhere, irrespective of country or government. He had emancipated himself from the obsessions of his race, political separatism and the exclusive faith in political action. The whole world was a single parish. It is mere justice that other original features of the new philosophy should receive recognition.

[...Cicero, a crafty trial lawyer, in his last years employed the tricks of the courts to discredit Epicureanism with his contemporaries and with posterity. Among other false charges he upbraided Epicurus for neglecting methodical partitions of subject matter, classifications and definitions. Yet the pragmatic partition of knowledge that was standard in Cicero's own day and through out the greater part of ancient time was the invention of the despised Epicurus. His division was three headed:**The Canon, Physics and Ethics...**] 😊