



University of Cyprus
Department of Classics
and Philosophy

Δημωνάκτειες Διαλέξεις Φιλοσοφίας 2022/23
Demonactian Lectures of Philosophy 2022/23

Το Τμήμα Κλασικών Σπουδών και Φιλοσοφίας σας προσκαλεί στην 3η ομιλία της σειράς των **Δημωνάκτειων Διαλέξεων Φιλοσοφίας** για το ακαδημαϊκό έτος 2022/2023, η οποία θα πραγματοποιηθεί την **Τρίτη 15 Νοεμβρίου, ώρα 18:30, στην αίθουσα 110, κτήριο ΧΩΔ 02 (Πανεπιστημιούπολη), με τίτλο:**

To Exist or not to Exist?

Ομιλήτρια:

Κατερίνα Ψαρουδάκη
(Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου)

Περίληψη:

To exist or not to exist? If your life is net beneficial (the benefits sufficiently outweigh the harms), then coming into existence makes you better off. I present two arguments to support the above claim. The first argument pursues an analogy between the counterfactual harm inflicted upon one who dies and the counterfactual harm one would suffer had they never existed. The upshot of the analogy is that if one would be worse off dying, then one would be worse off never existing. In conjunction with the general principle “x is better than y if y is worse than x”, we reach the conclusion of the first argument: if one would be worse off never existing, then one would be better off coming into existence. The second argument has the harmfulness of death as its starting point, and paired with the principle “the loss of x is a real disadvantage if the presence of x is a real advantage”, concludes that coming into existence confers upon the living a real advantage. If my view is plausible, it can potentially offer solutions to a couple of the most serious challenges raised against procreation. According to the first challenge, procreation is morally wrong because it subjects non-consenting individuals to severe harms, even when their lives are on balance worth living. Considering that bringing someone into existence “rescues” them from the severe harm of non-existence (which is equivalent to the harm caused by death), the exposure to lesser harms seems to be justified as a necessary and unavoidable means to prevent the worst outcome. The second challenge points to the moral costs of procreation related to overpopulation, environmental destruction, resource depletion, animal killings, and opportunity costs to third-parties (especially children in need of adoptive families). While the matter is complex, and neither the general costs of procreation nor the moral urgency of adoption can be easily dismissed, I merely wish to show that, if procreation prevents the imposition of the greatest harm that could befall one, then it can perhaps alleviate – if not completely counterbalance – some of the other harms it brings about.