

remark that rash men seem courageous but really are cowards, since they really feel the emotions of the coward—whereas the confidence associated with courage comes from the man's own character and not from avoiding something else. Thus, rash confidence is against the grain of the rash man's cowardly character, while courageous confidence is the pleasure of acting according to one's nature.¹⁶

The appearance of confidence in two places, first, as an emotional reaction to fear, transforming a painful emotion into a pleasant one, and then as the concomitant of virtue, is of great ethical significance. Pleasure, throughout the *Ethics*, is regarded in two ways. Pleasure is the opposite of pain; men normally infer that if something brings pain, its opposite will bring pleasure. Here pleasure and pain are signs of, and components of, the passions. On the other hand, pleasure is unimpeded activity and is a sign of activity. Here pleasure is not known by its contrary, pain; rather, each pleasure is known by its correlative activity. Both dimensions of pleasure are explored throughout the *Ethics*, and their interrelations occasion some of the complications in the argument. Here, in the discussion of courage and its vices, both senses of pleasure come in. Confidence is a pleasant passion, the opposite of the painful passion of fear. Rashness is based on excessive confidence. But the courageous man is confident (1115b29–34); courageous action sometimes is accompanied by the pleasure of unimpeded activity. Since the activity here is facing risks cheerfully, without hesitation or fear, the accompanying pleasure is confidence. Hence, the rash man imitates and tries to be the courageous man by having the right feeling, confidence, instead of through the right choice. Pleasure, including the pleasure of confidence, accompanies both passion and action; the two dimensions of pleasure are easy to confuse—easy, that is, for everyone except the virtuous man.

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16. 1117a34–b17. See esp. 1117b15–17: "Thus, it is not true of every virtue that its *energeia* is pleasant, save insofar as (*πλήν ἐφ' ὅσον*) it attains its end." For an analysis of this surprising claim of Aristotle, see my "Aristotle on Virtue and Pleasure," in *The Greeks and the Good Life*, ed. D. Depew (Indianapolis, 1980), pp. 157–76.

LUCRETIIUS ON THE INEFFICACY OF THE MEDICAL ART:

6. 1179 AND 6. 1226–38

Some commentators, such as H. A. J. Munro and C. Bailey,¹ assume a close and immediate dependence of Lucretius on Thucydides' account of the Great Plague at Athens in 431 B.C. and thus conclude that the poet mistranslates,

1. H. A. J. Munro (ed.), *T. Lucreti Cari libri sex*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, 1864), pp. 406–17; C. Bailey (ed.), *T. Lucreti Cari libri sex*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1947), 1:27–28, 3:1723–44. Cf. A. Ernout and L. Robin (eds.), *T. Lucreti Cari libri sex*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1925), pp. 359–60, who are persuaded by Lucretius' divergencies from the Thucydidean text to postulate the existence of an intermediary account which the poet followed; W. Lück, *Die Quellenfrage im 5. und 6. Buch des Lukrez* (Ph.D. diss., Breslau, 1932), pp. 175–82, goes so far as to assign such an account to Demetrius of Laconia, an Epicurean physician of the second century B.C. All such arguments, however, have not proved convincing. See E. Reitzenstein's review of Lück, *Gnomon* 9 (1933): 542–49; Bailey, *T. Lucreti Cari*, 1: 26–28.

misrepresents, and shows a general lack of competence in his rendition (6. 1138–1286). Others, such as J. P. Elder and H. S. Commager,² laud the originality of Lucretius and suggest that the poet's translation—rather interpretation—accommmodates a general tendency, whereby in accord with Epicurean ideology he views physical phenomena—facts and events—in moral or psychological terms. In defense and expansion of the latter view, two alterations of the Thucydidean account by Lucretius deserve consideration.

Thucydides tells us that (1) the physicians suffered the greatest mortality as the result of their active, humanitarian involvement in treating the afflicted and (2) their inability to cope with the disease was justifiable because they had to treat it without knowing beforehand its nature (2. 47. 4). Lucretius renders this information in one line—a stark, emphatic, disparaging declaration of the impotence of the medical art: . . . *mussabat tacito medicina timore* (6. 1179).

Albeit at first glance it appears that Lucretius has indeed grossly misrepresented the Thucydidean text, the alteration upon closer examination reflects an Epicurean position not unexpected in our poet. Thucydides emphasizes the underlying humility of the physicians: despite the uncertain beneficence of their medical art under the circumstances, they persevere in their commitment to healing—their actions bespeak a profound respect for man's fallibility, acquiescence in the fact that man cannot know all, that the best of his endeavors are limited, full of error, and uncertain in result.³ However, as N. W. DeWitt points out,⁴ Epicurus, as a moralist, could not have indulged in the doubt, hesitation, or uncertainty of efficacy to which the medical art obligingly subscribed. Accordingly, in this context Lucretius' derogatory statement is quite apropos. The strength of his position is also all the more pointed when we note that in his lengthy and involved discussion on the beginnings and advance of civilization (5. 772–1457), wherein he deals with the invention and discovery of numerous arts, crafts, and institutions which have a significant and efficacious place in civilized society, notice of the medical art and its practitioner is conspicuously absent.⁵

Of additional interest here is Lucretius' association of fear (*timor*) with the inefficacy of the medical art in dealing with physical disease. The association

2. J. P. Elder, "Lucretius 1. 1–49," *TAPA* 85 (1954): 93, n. 10; H. S. Commager, Jr., "Lucretius' Interpretation of the Plague," *HSCP* 62 (1957): 105–18. Cf. R. Minadeo, "The Formal Design of *De Rerum Natura*," *Arion* 4 (1965): 444–61, and D. F. Bright, "The Plague and the Structure of *De rerum natura*," *Latomus* 30 (1971): 607–32, who incorporate Commager's conclusions in their examination of the passage relative to the overall structure of the *De rerum natura*.

3. Cf. here the Hippocratic First Aphorism (E. Littré, *Oeuvres complètes d'Hippocrate*, vol. 4 [Paris, 1844], p. 458): ὁ βίος βραχύς. ἡ δὲ τέχνη μακρὴ. ὁ δὲ καιρὸς ὀξύς. ἡ δὲ πείρα σφαλερὴ. ἡ δὲ κρίσις χαλεπή.

4. N. W. DeWitt, *Epicurus and His Philosophy* (Minneapolis, 1954), p. 98. The stress, however, which Epicurus placed upon the identification of the philosophy with a knowledge of Nature, on sense evidence as the criterion of truth, and on the love of mankind, did bring his school into close contact with the similar aims and views of the Hippocratic writers. See here B. Farrington, *Science and Politics in the Ancient World* (London, 1939); also, DeWitt, *Epicurus*, pp. 306–7.

5. There is one possible allusion here which might be construed as indirectly reflecting the development of the medical art in the progress of civilization. It occurs in the paragraph on the death of primitive man (5. 988–1010), where throughout contrast is made between primitive times and present-day conditions. At one point Lucretius implies (994–98) that, whereas primitive mankind died of wounds because it did not know how to treat them, knowledge of medical treatment is now available. However, the ability to treat wounds scarcely reflects the scope and purpose—the role—of the medical art in the progress of civilization, and Lucretius does not proceed to elucidate or remark further on the cursory reference.

accords with Commager's demonstration that a considerable number of Lucretius' deviations from Thucydides' text suggest a remarkable pattern whereby the poet appears to regard physical disease in terms of psychological elements, particularly *timor* and *cupido*, held by Epicurean doctrine to be the two principal obstacles to happiness.⁶ Grimm, moreover, has demonstrated that the motif of *timor* in particular plays a key role in Lucretius' whole poem and seems indicative of the poet's own highly individual *Weltanschauung*.⁷

Further clarification of Lucretius' view of the medical art is provided by a second alteration. Thucydides notes that two aspects of the Plague were equally dreadful: apathy (*ἀθυμία*) and the danger of contagion (*ἕτερος ἀφ' ἑτέρου θεραπείᾳ ἀναπιμπλάμενοι*) (2. 51. 4). Lucretius states at 6. 1226, "nec ratio remedi communis certa dabatur," and then proceeds (1227–38) to emphasize only the apathy (1233 *deficiens animo*). As Commager notes,⁸ he relegates the spread of disease—with no small amount of grammatical confusion—to a subordinate position (1235); he makes the uncertainty of medical treatment (1226 "nec ratio remedi communis certa") serve as an analog to the lack of sure knowledge on the part of those infected by mental or psychological despair.

In a remarkable but nonetheless characteristic movement from the physical plane to the metaphysical (or the mental or spiritual) on the part of his highly symbolic imagination,⁹ Lucretius transfers the uncertainty and the fear (*tacitus timor*), which he associates with the inefficacy of the medical art in the healing of bodily disease, to the psychic plane of the afflicted. Thereby the lack of sure knowledge and the fear can indeed be healed by the sure knowledge of Epicureanism.¹⁰ And thus, while on grounds of Epicurean ideology or his own highly individual point of view he necessarily looks askance at the efficacy of the medical art, Lucretius reconciles its specific objective—healing—with a basic Epicurean assumption, namely, a sick mankind is to be cured by the healing draughts of the philosophy.

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6. Commager, "Lucretius' Interpretation," pp. 105–9; cf. J. Grimm, *Die literarische Darstellung der Pest in der Antike und in der Romania* (Munich, 1965), p. 50.

7. Grimm, *Die literarische Darstellung*, p. 51.

8. Commager, "Lucretius' Interpretation," pp. 112–13.

9. See here Elder's discussion, "Lucretius 1. 1–49," pp. 91–93. He thinks that this kind of movement from the physical plane to the metaphysical is sanctioned if indeed not required by Epicurean physics since the body and mind are corporeal, coterminous, and consensitive.

10. Cf. Epicurus frags. 220 and 221 (Usener 169).

HECTOR, SYCHAEUS, AND DEIPHOBUS: THREE MUTILATED FIGURES IN *AENEID* 1–6

When Aeneas first turns to his own role in the tragic events on the night of Troy's fall, it is with an account of Hector's appearance in a dream and his own immediate response (2. 268–317). The passage forms one of the most striking sequences in this powerful book. It begins in an atmosphere of deceptive calm