

Since line 91 has the term *venieit*, my reinterpretation requires us to assume that before the passage of the epigraphic law the Roman state had sold off not only some public land in Africa but also some of the *ager publicus* it had acquired in other parts of the empire. In my view, there are good grounds for thinking that this assumption is correct. In this context it should be remembered that the second half of the second century B.C. not only witnessed the destruction of Carthage and Corinth but also the imposition of Roman rule on the interior districts of Spain and on Southern Gaul. As a result of these conquests, Rome must have acquired substantial amounts of *ager publicus* in these areas, as is indeed proved by the foundation of Narbo Martius in 118 B.C.³¹ Interestingly, line 43 of the *Lex agraria* contains a reference to the establishment of a colony *ex lege Baebia*. Although modern scholarship remains divided over the identity of this colony, it is generally agreed that it was situated neither in peninsular Italy nor in Africa.³² Again the implication is that at least some land in a western province had become *ager publicus populi Romani*.

For all these reasons it does not seem far-fetched to suppose that lines 91–3 of the epigraphic law are to be interpreted as containing a short series of provisions concerning the rights of those non-Italian communities whose political existence had been temporarily extinguished by conquest or surrender and then recreated by a *senatus consultum*.

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³¹ It is also possible to point to the establishment of Roman colonies at Palma and Pollentia by Q. Metellus Balearicus, one of the consuls of 122 B.C. (Strabo 3.5.1), on which see Lintott (n. 1), 246.

³² *Lex agr.* 43: [...*ex lege*] *pl(ebeive) sc(ito), quod M. Baebius tr(ibunus) pl(ebis) IIIvir coloniae deducend[ae rogavit...]*, with the comments of Lintott (n. 1), 246, and Crawford (n. 1), 169. Cf. also the phrase *quod eius agri loci extra terra Italia est* in line 49.

MENS AND EMOTION: *DE RERUM NATURA* 3.136–46

The location of the mind was a point of contention among philosophers and physicians in antiquity. By the early third century B.C., however, the medical debate had effectively come to an end. The use of human vivisection allowed the Alexandrian physicians Herophilus and Erasistratus to establish beyond a doubt the brain's status as the control centre for psychic activity.¹ Surviving sources record no subsequent medical advocates of the heart over the head.² By contrast, philosophical defences of such a view continued throughout the entire Hellenistic period.³

¹ See the discussion in G. Cambiano, 'Philosophy, science and medicine', in K. Algra, J. Barnes, J. Mansfeld, and M. Schofield (edd.), *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1999), 585–613, at 600–1.

² J. Mansfeld, 'Doxography and dialectic: the *Sitz im Leben* of the "placita"', in *ANRW* II 36.4 (Berlin, 1990), 3056–229, at 3092–108, contains a detailed analysis of relevant, surviving evidence.

³ So Cicero, for example, could treat the question as open in *Tusc.* 1.9.19: *alii in corde, alii in cerebro dixerunt animi esse sedem et locum*.

Deep-rooted allegiance within the Hellenistic philosophical schools to their founder's professed views helps explain this striking difference.⁴ Both Epicurus and Zeno of Citium, the founders of Epicureanism and Stoicism respectively, explicitly located the seat of reason in the chest.⁵ Later Stoics, even ones as diverse in their views of the *ψυχή* as Chrysippus and Posidonius, felt obliged to maintain the same position.⁶ That Lucretius similarly agrees with Epicurus on this point is therefore scarcely remarkable in itself.⁷

My concern here is with the particular argument Lucretius, apparently following Epicurus,⁸ offers in support of his position. The argument is of course unsound. Herophilus and Erasistratus were right; Epicurus, Zeno and their followers wrong. The repeated and misguided criticism against which I wish to defend Lucretius concerns the pertinence of his premises to his desired conclusion.

I give first the relevant lines of *De rerum nat.* (= 3.136–46):⁹

Nunc animum atque animam dico coniuncta teneri
inter se atque unam naturam conficere ex se,
sed caput esse quasi et dominari in corpore toto
consilium, quod nos animum mentemque vocamus.
idque situm media regione in pectoris haeret. 140
hic exsultat enim pavor ac metus, haec loca circum
laetitiae mulcent: hic ergo mens animusquest.
cetera pars animae per totum dissita corpus
paret et ad numen mentis momenumque movetur.
idque sibi solum per se sapit, < id > sibi gaudet, 145
cum neque res animam neque corpus commovet una.

Now, I say that the *animus* and *anima*¹⁰ are bound cojoined one with the other, and out of themselves they produce a single nature; but the rational faculty that we call '*animus*' and 'mind'

⁴ On which topic, see D. Sedley, 'Philosophical allegiance in the Greco-Roman world', in M. Griffin and J. Barnes (edd.), *Philosophia Togata* (Oxford, 1989), 97–199.

⁵ For Epicurus' division of the soul into *τὸ λογικὸν μέρος* and *τὸ ἄλογον μέρος* and the placement of the former in the chest, see Aët. 4.4.6 (= Us. 312) and the *scholion* on Ep. Ep. ad Hdt. 66 (= Us. 315). Galen (*PHP* 2.5.8 = *SVF* 1.148) preserves a syllogism of Zeno's designed to confirm the chest as the seat of reason.

⁶ Chrysippus' views are reported and criticised throughout Gal. *PHP*; Posidonius receives specific mention in *PHP* 6.2.5 (= EK fr. 145).

⁷ Evidence from a partially preserved Herculaneum papyrus (= *PHerc.* 1012) does show that Epicureans prior to Lucretius were at least alive to the difficulties of continuing to maintain such a position in a way that he himself seems not to have been. For a discussion of this evidence and its relevance to the question of Lucretius' alleged 'fundamentalism', see D. Sedley, *Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom* (Cambridge, 1998), 68–72.

⁸ The scholiast on Ep. ad Hdt. 66 (n. 5) attributes to Epicurus the following claim: 'He says ... that the rational part of the soul is in the chest, as is clear from both our fears and our joy' (λέγει ... τὸ δὲ λογικὸν ἐν τῷ θώρακι, ὡς δῆλον ἐκ τε τῶν φόβων καὶ τῆς χαρᾶς).

⁹ The Latin text here and elsewhere is that of C. Bailey (ed.), *Titi Lucretii Cari De Rerum Natura Libri Sex* (3 vols.; Oxford, 1947); the translations are my own.

¹⁰ *Animus* and *anima* are Lucretius' technical terms for Epicurus' *τὸ λογικὸν μέρος* and *τὸ ἄλογον μέρος* respectively. No single English term is entirely satisfactory for either. The former is often rendered 'mind', though the use of the phrases *quod nos animum mentemque vocamus* in line 139 and *hic ergo mens animusquest* in line 142 of the present passage renders such a translation awkward here. The tendency to translate *anima* as 'soul' seems to me more generally infelicitous, given that Lucretius intends by the technical term to designate only a particular part – and the irrational part at that – of the *ψυχή*. (To complicate matters further, Lucretius sometimes employs *anima* in its ordinary sense to designate the entire soul. Thus the phrase *cetera pars animae* in line 143 is itself just equivalent to *anima* in its technical sense.) Having explained the terms' significance, I shall simply leave untranslated all their technical usages in the passage.

is, so to speak, the head ¹¹ and rules in the whole body. And this clings steadfast situated in the middle region of the chest. For here fear and fright spring up, around this place joys delight: here therefore is the mind and *animus*. The other part of the soul, dispersed through the entire body, obeys and is moved in accordance with the will and impulse of the mind. This [i.e., the mind] alone through and for itself has understanding, this rejoices for itself at times when nothing affects either the *anima* or the body.

The charge of *non sequitur* is levelled most directly by E.J. Kenney, ¹² though similar criticisms are at least implicit in the earlier commentaries of R. Heinze ¹³ and C. Bailey. ¹⁴ Here is Kenney's formulation: 'L.'s argument confuses the distinction between the *mens* and the rest of the *animus*...: his examples are all of emotions and do not support the location of the *mens* proper in the chest'. ¹⁵ In a subsequent note, Kenney calls the use of *sapit* in line 145 'the only reference to the rational activity of the *animus*, whose operation here as above (141–2n.) is otherwise discussed in terms of the emotions'. ¹⁶

The Epicureans themselves, however, reject the dichotomy presupposed by this objection. For them, as for the Stoics (and, on at least some readings, Aristotle), emotions are inseparable from value judgments. ¹⁷ This view is nowhere more evident than in Philodemus' *De ira*, the only substantially extant treatise by an Epicurean philosopher devoted to an emotion. ¹⁸ In it, Philodemus treats anger generically as a desire for revenge arising from the belief that someone has intentionally and unjustly harmed, or attempted to harm, either oneself or one's friend. ¹⁹ Adapting Epicurus' own classification of desires, ²⁰ Philodemus further distinguishes between a 'natural' (*φυσική*) and 'empty' (*κενή*) species of anger. ²¹ The former, which even a sage

¹¹ Obviously in the metaphorical sense of *caput*, given that Lucretius will go on to assert in the very next sentence that the mind is physically located in the chest.

¹² E.J. Kenney (ed.), *Lucretius: De Rerum Natura Book III* (Cambridge, 1984).

¹³ See R. Heinze (ed.), *T. Lucretius Carus: De Rerum Natura Buch III* (Leipzig, 1897), 68: 'Epikur und ihm folgend L. nimmt also ohne weiteren Beweis an, dass Furcht und Freude ihren augenpunkt im *animus* haben, und schiebt stillschweigend die Platonische Annahme eines vom λογιστικόν verschiedenen θυμοειδές bei Seite'.

¹⁴ Immediately after allowing that the ancient Greeks were less inclined than people in modern times to separate sharply thought and emotion, Bailey adds ([n. 9], 1012): 'It is, however, noticeable that Lucr.'s proofs (141–2, 148 ff.) are all derived *from emotion and not from thought*, as though he may have felt some slight difficulty in placing the seat of thought in the breast' (emphasis added).

¹⁵ Kenney (n. 12), 94–5.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 95.

¹⁷ For such a reading of Aristotle, see W.W. Fortenbaugh, *Aristotle on Emotion* ² (London, 2002). The literature concerning Stoic views of the emotions is vast. B. Inwood, *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism* (Oxford, 1985), especially 127–81, provides a useful starting point.

¹⁸ *PHerc.* 182 preserves roughly the final fifty columns of this work, for which the most recent edition is G. Indelli's *Filodemo: L'ira; edizione, traduzione e commento* (Naples, 1988).

¹⁹ Cf. Aristotle's definition(s) of anger in *Rh.* 1378a30–2, *Top.* 127b30–1, *Top.* 151a15–16, *Top.* 156a32–3, and *De an.* 403a29–403b1. No formal definition survives in the extant columns of Philodemus' *De ira*. For the general outline of such a definition, see, among others, columns 37.29–39, 40.33–5, and 44.21–30. The requirement that the harm be intentional is stressed in column 46.30–5. The possibility of becoming angry over harm done not to oneself but to one's friends is the subject of column 41.17–9.

²⁰ See *Ep. ad Men.* 127–8; cf. *Sent.* 29, where desires that are not natural are characterised as 'due to empty belief' (*παρὰ κενὴν δόξαν γινόμεναι*).

²¹ See especially *De ira* columns 37.40–38.6. The supplement *τὴν κ[ενὴν ὀρ]γὴν* in column 38.1 is supported by the adjective's appearance again at column 39.8.

experiences, is short-lived and moderate;²² the latter intense and prolonged.²³ Empty anger, like empty desires generally, results from an agent's false value judgments.²⁴ In the case of empty anger, the relevant value judgments concern the harm suffered or the retribution sought.²⁵ Natural anger, by contrast, 'results from a consideration of the actual nature of things, and from having no false beliefs regarding the estimation of the harms suffered and the punishments for those doing the harm'.²⁶

We are not, however, dependent solely on Philodemus for evidence of Epicurean 'cognitivism' *vis à vis* the emotions.²⁷ In fact, we need look no further than *De rerum nat.* 3 itself. This book's central aim, as announced in its proem, is to dispel the fear of death.²⁸ Epicurus consistently represented the fear of death as one of the greatest impediments to human flourishing.²⁹ That he and his followers regard this fear as essentially cognitive is clear from the means by which they seek to cure it. The Epicureans employ for this purpose a form of cognitive therapy; that is, they seek to disabuse people of their false beliefs regarding the nature of death and its (dis)value and to replace these with correct ones.³⁰ Lucretius accordingly devotes more than half of *De rerum nat.* 3 to a lengthy discussion of the soul's material composition (lines 177–322) and twenty-nine proofs of its mortality (lines 417–829).³¹ A proper understanding of death reveals this to be 'nothing to us' (*nil igitur mors est ad nos*).³² And acceptance of this fact effectively eliminates fear of death; since, on a cognitivist view, the judgment that something constitutes a harm is integral to fearing it.³³

²² On natural anger's brevity, see *De ira* columns 40.1–2 and 45.9–11; on its moderation, see columns 42.4–6, 43.41–44.10, and 45.5–8.

²³ See, e.g., *De ira* column 45.34–7.

²⁴ Desires for crowns and statues are the paradigmatic examples of empty desire given in the *scholion* to *Sent.* 29. A person who desires these does so precisely because he or she harbours mistaken beliefs about their value.

²⁵ See *De ira* columns 42.4–14, 42.21–30 and 43.41–44.35. The possession of a 'thoroughly wicked disposition', which Philodemus names in column 38.2–3 as the source of empty anger, itself presumably corresponds to a corrupt or fundamentally misguided value-system.

²⁶ *De ira* column 37.32–9: *συνίσταται γὰρ ἀπὸ το[ῦ] βλέπειν, ὡς ἡ φύσις ἔχει τῶν πραγμάτων, καὶ μηδὲν ψευδοδοξεῖν ἐν ταῖς σ[υ]μμετρήσεσι τῶν ἐλα[ττ]ωμάτων καὶ ταῖς κολάσσει τῶν βλαπτόντων.*

²⁷ As regards the emotions, the term 'cognitivism' has been applied to a broad range of positions within both philosophy and psychology; see, e.g., R. Solomon and C. Calhoun (edd.), *What Is an Emotion? Classical Readings in Philosophical Psychology*¹ (Oxford, 1984), especially 16–22; and K.T. Strongman, *The Psychology of Emotion*³ (Chichester, 1987), especially 34–42. I intend by the term any account that makes evaluative judgments at least partly constitutive of emotions.

²⁸ See, e.g., *De rerum nat.* 3.59–93.

²⁹ See, e.g., *Ep. ad Men.* 124–7 and *Sent.* 10–12.

³⁰ Cf. the description by A.T. Beck, M.D., the acknowledged 'father' of modern cognitive therapy, of his own general approach to treating 'emotional disorders': 'This new approach – cognitive therapy – suggests that the individual's problems are derived largely from certain distortions of reality based on erroneous premises and assumptions ... The therapist helps a patient unravel his distortions in thinking and to learn alternative, more realistic ways to formulate his experience' (*Cognitive Therapy and the Emotional Disorders* [New York, 1979], 3).

³¹ Following Bailey's numeration ([n. 9], 1064–131) of the proofs.

³² *De rerum nat.* 3.830; cf. *Ep. ad Men.* 124–7 and *Sent.* 2.

³³ As with anger, we lack a formal definition of fear in any surviving Epicurean text. Once again, however, the outline of the emotion's definition is clear from the cure. And once again the outline that emerges bears strong resemblance to definitions common to both Aristotle and the Stoics; see, e.g., Arist. *Rh.* 1382a20–1383a12 and the Stoic definition cited by Andronicus in his own *On Passions* 1 (= *SVF* 3.391).

Lucretius' appeals to the phenomenology of fear must be understood in the context of this combination of a materialist account of mind and a cognitivist view of the emotions. He points to the fact that we may experience sweats and pallor over our entire frame when the mind is moved by fear (*est commota metuque mens*) as evidence of the intimate connection between the *anima*, which is dispersed throughout the body, and the *animus*, which has a fixed location.³⁴ Given the role judgments play within Epicureanism as both constituents and causes of emotions, the claim that fear is felt to arise in the breast (*hic exsultat*)³⁵ is surely a relevant consideration when attempting to identify the location where these judgments themselves take place.³⁶

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³⁴ *De rerum nat.* 3.152–60.

³⁵ *De rerum nat.* 3.141.

³⁶ The same could be said, *mutatis mutandis*, of the joys to which Lucretius refers in this same passage. That he intends by *laetitia* in line 142 pleasures of the *mens/animus* in particular is borne out by the expression *<id> sibi gaudet, cum neque res animam neque corpus commovet una* in lines 145–6.

VIRGIL'S CUCUMBER: *GEORGICS* 4.121–2

tortusque per herbam
cresceret in uentrem cucumis

The cucumber appears only here in Virgil's poetry, as one of the plants to be grown in the garden sketched out by the poet in the fourth *Georgic*. Commentators remark on the verisimilitude of this short description,¹ and it is indeed true that cucumbers will swell in the grass, and (especially in the days before EU directives on the straightness of cucumbers) may grow in plump curves. However, I am inclined to see a little bit more in these lines: it seems to me that this description of something twisting through the grass and expanding its belly initially suggests a far more sinister presence in the garden, the snake.²

The line ending *per herbam* might ring the first alarm bells. Although, naturally, grass can be viewed by the poet as representative of luxuriant growth and plentiful fodder for the herds, there are several marked occasions when the long grass conceals a snake. Firstly, we might think of Damoetas' couplet in *Eclogue* 3:

qui legitis flores et humi nascentia fraga,
frigidus, o pueri, fugite hinc, latet anguis in herba.

Ecl. 3.92–3

¹ Cf. the comments on these lines by R.A.B. Mynors, *Virgil, Georgics* (Oxford, 1990) and R.F. Thomas, *Virgil: Georgics* (Cambridge, 1988), vol. 2.

² Thomas (n. 1) seems aware of this possibility, as is evinced by his translation, '[and how] the cucumber snakes through the ground and swells into a paunch'. He does not develop the idea in his comment, however; moreover, his translation of *per herbam* as 'through the ground' blunts the association with the image of the snake in the grass that I want to make.