Lucretiana

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2, 20ff. *ergo corpoream ad naturam pauca uidemus*
esse opus omnino, quae demant cumque dolorem,
delicias quoque uti multas substernere possint
gratius interdum; neque natura ipsa requirit,
si non aurea sunt iuuenum simulacra per aedes e.q.s.

Bailey[1] has a full discussion of various ways of punctuating and interpreting this difficult passage; the conclusion which I draw is that none of these is really satisfactory. The latest editor, K. Müller, punctuates as above and (on p. 356) explains as follows: "Lucretius hoc dicere uidetur, illa pauca quae ad dolorem detrahendum satis sint ... esse eiusmodi ut interdum delicias quoque multas suppeditare possint *gratius* (= iucundius, suauius)". This interpretation is identical with that of N. H. Romanes (Further notes on Lucretius, Oxford 1935, 13): "Therefore we see that few things are absolutely necessary for our material condition, only such, in fact, as banish pain, ... so as to be able at times the more pleasantly ... to furnish many delights; nor does nature feel any lack, even if there are no golden statues of boys" e.q.s. On this view both the consecutive *uti* clause and the comparative adverb *gratius* are exceedingly awkward.

It seems to me more probable (a) that a full stop should be placed at the end of 21 (after *dolorem*), (b) that between 22 and 23 a line is missing which contained something to govern the *uti possint* clause of 22; e.g.

delicias quoque uti multas substernere possint
⟨nil opus omnino; quin his prorsum caruisse⟩
gratius interdum; neque e.q.s.

One can then give *delicias* its full pejorative sense (as at 5, 1450), objects of luxurious self-indulgence like those which Lucretius proceeds to list in 24–28.

2, 216ff. *illud in his quoque te rebus cognoscere auemus,*
corpora cum deorsum rectum per inane feruntur
ponderibus propriis, incerto tempore ferme
incertisque locis spatio depellere paulum,
tantum quod momen mutatum dicere possis.

1 C. Bailey, edition with translation and commentary (Oxford 1947). The other modern editions referred to are those of K. Lachmann (Berlin 1850; 4. Aufl. 1871–82), H. A. J. Munro (Cambridge 1864; ed. 4, 1886), K. Müller (Zürich 1975).

Lucretius begins to expound the doctrine of the 'swerve' of the atoms.

In his Prolegomena (p. 105) Bailey lists a number of transitive verbs which Lucretius employs in an intransitive or quasi-passive sense; one of them is *depellere* ('swerve'), nowhere else so used in the whole of Latin. In his note on this passage Bailey sets out the emendations which have been suggested to eliminate this unique use. Better than any of these, I suggest, would be *deflectere,* the word used in a passage of Cicero which Bailey calls "a striking parallel" to our passage: Lael. 40 *deflexit iam aliquantum de spatio curriculoque consuetudo maiorum.* As for the corruption, *p* for *f* is one of the commonest confusions (in Lucretius at 2, 867; 4, 890; 5, 1064; 6, 33); *l* for *c* or *t* is found at 6, 35; 6, 92; 6, 241.

3, 992ff. *sed Tityos nobis hic est, in amore iacentem*
quem uolucres lacerant atque exest anxius angor,
aut alia quauis scindunt cuppedine curae.

The mythical punishments of the underworld are an allegory of what happens in real life. Tityos, torn by vultures (984 *Tityon uolucres ineunt Acherunte iacentem*), represents the man who is torn by love or other passion.

The latest discussion of this passage is that of H. D. Jocelyn, Acta Classica 29 (1986) 47, who concludes: "Instead of 'uolucres lacerant' we should expect some reference to current reality corresponding with 'uolucres ineunt' of v. 984, just as 'in amore iacentem' corresponds with 'Acherunte iacentem'. A careless scribe has let his mind wander back to 3, 880 [*corpus uti uolucres lacerent*]. What Lucretius actually wrote lies, however, beyond the power of conjectural criticism to restore." But the number of words which fit both sense and metre must be very small; I suggest *quem aerumnae lacerant,* noting that *aerumna* is used of the suffering of lovers at 4, 1069. I admit that Lucretius does not elsewhere elide *quem* or *quam,* but he does elide some monosyllables ending in *m,* particularly the conjunction *cum.*

4, 75ff. *et uulgo faciunt id lutea russaque uela*
et ferrugina, cum magnis intenta theatris
per malos uulgata trabesque trementia flutant.

Various colours are thrown off awnings in the theatre.

If *uulgata* is sound it must mean 'stretched', an unexampled meaning which is not made any more credible by such renderings as that of Bailey, 'stretched for the folk'. I think that it is corrupt, and would replace it by *iactata,* the word used in the corresponding passage at 6, 109f. *carbasus ut quondam magnis intenta theatris / dat crepitum malos inter iactata trabesque.* The corruption could be due to an unfortunate recollection of *uulgo* in 75; many other instances of an earlier word influencing a later one are collected by K. Müller in his note on 6, 131.

4, 283ff. *sed ubi speculum quoque sensimus ipsum,*
continuo a nobis in eum quae fertur imago
peruenit, et nostros oculos reiecta reuisit.

Mirror images. Since there is no authority for a masculine noun *speculus,* most editors replace *in eum* by such conjectures as *in idem, in id haec, itidem, iterum,* none of which has won much approval. K. Müller rewrites the line more drastically: *a nobis quae fertur in illud imago.* I suggest that the easiest solution would be *illuc.*

4, 577ff. *sex etiam aut septem loca uidi reddere uoces*
unam cum iaceres: ita colles collibus ipsi
uerba repulsantes iterabant dicta referre.

referre Marullus: *referri* codd.

Echoes. Lachmann was surely justified in objecting to the construction of *iterare*
K. Müller eliminates the infinitive by changing *referri* to *disertim* (which is palaeographically not so remote as it might at first sight seem), but I think it is rather the main verb *iterabant* which should be changed; I would replace it by ⟨*pro*⟩*perabant,* on the assumption that, after the loss of *pro,* the initial *p* was changed to *it* to restore metre and some sort of sense. For *properare* with an inanimate subject construed with an infinitive cf. 5, 295ff. *lychni claraeque ... / ... taedae / ... properant ... / suppeditare nouum lumen.*

More frequently it is *dicta* which has aroused suspicion: several modern editions adopt Lachmann's *docta referri,* and other proposals are *iacta referri* and *icta referre*; but *uerba dicta,* 'words that have been spoken', seems entirely appropriate in the context.

4, 788ff. *quid porro, in numerum procedere cum simulacra*
cernimus in somnis et mollia membra mouere,
790 *mollia mobiliter cum alternis bracchia mittunt*
et repetunt oculis gestum pede conuenienti?
scilicet arte madent simulacra et docta uagantur
nocturno facere ut possint in tempore ludos.

Repetunt oculis, 'represent to the eyes', must be wrong because "Lucr. is dealing with a mental vision in sleep and the eyes are not concerned at all" (Bailey ad loc.). The favourite remedy has been to emend *oculis* to *ollis* (= *bracchiis*) construed with *conuenienti,* 'with foot in harmony with the arms', but *ollis* is not unjustly characterized by W. Richter (Textstudien zu Lukrez, München 1974, 83) as "inhaltsarm und unbeholfen". I suggest that a more satisfactory emendation of *oculis* might be ⟨*d*⟩*ocili,* 'skilful', which would harmonize not only with the preceding repeated adjective *mollis* but also with the following

ironical lines 792–793, especially *arte madent* and *docta* ('trained') *ut.* The resulting double epithet with *pede* would be unobjectionable in Lucretius, so that there would be no need to suggest *conuenienter,* although that adverb also would be quite credible (see Bailey's Prolegomena, p. 137).

4, 1057 *namque uoluptatem praesagit muta cupido.*

muta O: *multa* Q

In sexual intercourse desire foretells pleasure.

Not all editors have been satisfied with *muta*; apart from *mutua* (impossible, as Bailey makes clear), there is the conjecture *mota,* made by E. Orth and adopted by K. Müller. In the light of 1048 *corpus, mens unde est saucia amore,* I suggest *menti' cupido*; for *mens* used 'de amore, libidine sim.' see ThLL VIII 735, 50ff., e.g. Catull. 64, 147 *cupidae mentis ... libido.*

4, 1149ff. *et tamen implicitus quoque possis inque peditus*
effugere infestum, nisi tute tibi obuius obstes
et praetermittas animi uitia omnia primum
†ut† quae corpori' sunt eius quam praepetis ac uis.

A lover overlooks blemishes of mind and body in his beloved.

Lachmann's *aut* (for *ut*) has been generally adopted by later editors; wrongly, I believe, because then *primum,* to the embarrassment of the translators, stands isolated. They should have returned to what used to be the vulgate, *tum.*

5, 311f. *denique non monumenta uirum dilapsa uidemus,*
†quaerere proporro sibi cumque† senescere credas?

Line 312 is one of the most vexed passages in Lucretius; over 25 attempts to make sense of it have been published. Nearly all of these retain *proporro,* which occurs only here and in five other passages of Lucretius. There is a helpful examination of the word by D. A. West in Hermes 93 (1965) 496ff., from which I conclude that all attempts to extract sense from *proporro* in our passage are doomed to failure. By contrast Lachmann's *quae fore* for *quaerere* is a promising emendation so far as it goes; I should adopt it, taking *fore* to mean 'will exist', and then emend *proporro* to *perpetuo.*

If *senescere credas* is sound (as it appears to be), the corrupt *sibi cumque* must conceal (a) a connective, presumably *-que,* (b) a negative or quasi-negative. These conditions are fulfilled by K. Müller's *minimumque*; also, I suggest, by *numquamque.* With either of these there is no obvious explanation of the presence of *sibi* in the paradosis except as a stop-gap to repair the metre after the loss of one long or two short syllables.

5, 1094f. *multa uidemus enim caelestibus †insita† flammis*
fulgere, cum caeli donauit plaga uapore.

For the impossible *insita* the favourite emendation has been Marullus's *incita* (others are satisfactorily disposed of by Bailey), but even that ('set in motion') does not go well with *caelestibus flammis.* K. Müller transposes *incita* and *fulgere,* thus making *incita* agree with *plaga,* but that also seems a dubious expression. If transposition is the solution (and it is the approved solution in quite a number of passages in Lucretius), the easiest transposition, and one which gives admirable sense, is *flammis caelestibus icta.* The participle *ictus* is the *mot juste* in this context (ThLL VII 1, 160, 54ff.); it concludes a hexameter four times elsewhere in Lucretius.

5, 1269ff. *nec minus argento facere haec auroque parabant*
quam ualidi primum uiolentis uiribus aeris,
nequiquam, quoniam cedebat uicta potestas,
nec poterant pariter durum sufferre laborem.
1273 *nam fuit in pretio magis ⟨aes⟩, aurumque iacebat*
propter inutilitatem hebeti mucrone retusum.

Primitive man tried to use silver and gold, as he had used copper, for making instruments, but found them useless for this purpose.

'*Nam* [in 1273] ferri non potest, quod causam indicat pro effectu', Lachmann, who therefore wrote *tum*; and later editors have generally followed him. But Latin has other words for expressing an effect, one of the commonest (in Lucretius, as elsewhere) being *hinc.* Initial *H* and *N* are easily confused; e.g. 4, 615 *nec*] *hoc* O; 6, 816 *hos*] *nos* O.

5, 1286ff. *posterius ferri uis est aerisque reperta. ...*
aere solum terrae tractabant, aereque belli
1290 *miscebant fluctus et uulnera uasta serebant*
et pecua atque agros adimebant; nam facile ollis
omnia cedebant armatis nuda et inerma.

Ollis armatis is misunderstood in all the translations which I have seen, including that of Munro ("to them with arms in hand"). *Ollis* really means *ferro et aere* (1286); it is instrumental ablative construed with *armatis* masculine dative.

6, 217f. *tum sine taetro*
terrore et †sonis† fulgit nulloque tumultu.

Sonis has always been emended to *sonitu,* but palaeographically more convincing would be *sonibus.* The evidence for a fourth-declension noun *sonus*

is set out in Neue-Wagener, Formenlehre I, 786; the only other possible trace of it in Lucretius is at 4, 584, where Q offers *sonus* instead of *sonos*. Elsewhere he uses only the nominative singular *sonus*, which could belong to either declension.

6, 263ff. *neque enim caligine tanta*
obruerent terras, nisi inaedificata superne
multa forent multis exempto nubila sole;
266 *nec tanto possent uenientes opprimere imbri,*
flumina abundare ut facerent camposque natare,
si non exstructis foret alte nubibus aether.

Line 266 is noteworthy on three counts:

1. The noun with which *uenientes* agrees is not expressed. It must be *nubes*, supplied either "from the general sense of the passage" (Bailey) or from line 268 (Munro).
2. *uenientes* adds nothing to the sense. Editors adduce 1, 285f. *uenientis aquai / uim*, 'the force of the advancing flood', but there *uenientis* is by no means otiose.
3. *opprimere* has no object expressed. The same is true of *opprimere* just below (286) if the paradosis is right, but it has often been suspected.

All three points could be met by changing *uenientes* to *umentes* (sc. *terras* from 264).

6, 519f. *at retinere diu pluuiae longumque morari*
consuerunt, ubi multa cientur semina aquarum.

Although the intransitive use of *tenere* ('persist') is well established (see OLD, sense 15d), the corresponding use of *retinere* is confined to this passage. Lachmann wrote *atque tenere*, but Bailey rightly rejects *atque* on grounds of sense; he could have added the metrical point that Lucretius seldom (10 times only) has unelided *atque* in the first foot. The true emendation, I believe, is *at residere*, an infinitive which occurs at 2, 1010 and 3, 398.

6, 597ff. *metuunt inferne cauernas*
terrai ne dissoluat natura repente,
neu distracta suum late dispandat hiatum
idque suis confusa uelit complere ruinis.

Earthquakes cause men to fear the destruction of the universe.

Since there is no evidence for a neuter noun *hiatum* Lachmann changed *idque* to *adque*, i.e. *atque*, and some later editors have followed him; this would be another instance of unelided *atque* in the first foot (see note on 6, 519 above). Preferable on all counts, I suggest, would be *iamque*, construed with *confusa*.

6, 1230ff. *illud in his rebus miserandum magnopere unum*
aerumnabile erat, quod ubi se quisque uidebat
implicitum morbo, morti damnatus ut esset,
deficiens animo maesto cum corde iacebat.

The plague at Athens.

Velut in the sense of *uelut si* is well established (Hofmann-Szantyr 675), but for *ut* in the sense of *ut si* only one other example is quoted (Val. Fl. 5, 92). Hence Lachmann tentatively suggested *quasi esset* and K. Müller conjectures *ut ipse*. Better than either of these, I suggest, would be ⟨*uel*⟩*ut si*; it is possible that, if *uel* were omitted by haplography, *si* would be replaced by *esset* to mend the metre.