

LUCRETIANA

D. R. SHACKLETON BAILEY

I CITE from Cyril Bailey's text:

*postremo duo de concursu corpora lata
si cita dissiliant, nempe aer omne necesse est,
inter corpora quod fiat, possidat inane.* 1.384–386

"*lata*: 'broad' and also by implication 'flat and smooth,' not participle, 'when brought together.'" Thus Bailey. But bodies do not have to be broad to rebound after collision, and the alleged implication is hardly implied. Read *late*; cf. 5.203 *mare quod late terrarum distinet oras*, 6.599 *neu (terra) . . . late dispanat hiatum*, Virg. G. 4. 359 *alta iubet discedere late / flumina*. *cita* is a participle, "set in motion," not an (adverbial) adjective ("quickly" Bailey); cf. 1.997 *cita corpora materiai*, 2.85 *nam <cum> cita saepe / obvia confligere, fit ut diversa repente / dissiliant*.

*praeterea quare quisquam magis omnia tollat
et velit ardoris naturam linquere solam,
quam neget esse ignis, <aliam> tamen esse relinquat?
aequa videtur enim dementia dicere utrumque.* 1.701–704

aliam add. Q¹: om. OQG. Instead of the feeble *aliam*, Lachmann added *quidvis*. But another element would naturally serve as alternative to *ignis*. Read *terrae*.

*quorum Acragantinus cum primis Empedocles est,
insula quem triquetris terrarum gessit in oris,
quam fluitans circum magnis anfractibus aequor
Ionium glaucis aspergit virus ab undis,
angustoque fretu rapidum mare dividit undis
Aeoliae terrarum oras a finibus eius.* 1.716–721

undans Lachmann. But *undis* in 720 probably comes from the line above, ousting some quite different word. *arcens* springs to mind. The strait separates Italy, keeping off the Italian coast.

*sic ab rebus item simili ratione necesse est
temporis in puncto rerum simulacra ferantur
multa modis multis in cunctas undique partis;
quandoquidem speculum quocumque obvertimus oris,
res ibi respondent simili forma atque colore.* 4.163–167

166 *oris* Q: om. O: *ollis* Brieger: *omnis* Cartault; 167 *ibi* O: *sibi* Q. Perhaps *quocumque obvertimus, umbris / res ibi* (or *sibi*) *respondent*—*umbra* being, of course, the normal word for “mirror image.”

*nec ratione alia volucres armenta feraeque
et pecudes et equae maribus subsidere possent,
si non, ipsa quod illarum subat ardet abundans
natura et Venerem salientum laeta retractat.* 4.1197–1200

retractant OQ, corr. Lambinus. Bailey explains *retractat*: “‘shuns,’ ‘accepts reluctantly,’ as again in 4.1270” (*clunibus ipsa viri Venerem si laeta retractat*). But in *this* context there is no place for reluctance. Munro’s translation, “joyously draws in the Venus of the covering males” or Ernout’s “et qu’elles ne prissent point plaisir à répondre à leurs assauts” requires a different text. Read *receptat*.

*crassius his porro quoniam concretius aequo
mittitur, aut non tam prolixo provolat ictu
aut penetrare locos aeque nequit aut penetratum
aegre admiscetur muliebri semine semen.* 4.1244–1247

The possibilities are two, not three (as is, indeed, implied in Bailey’s “head-note” to the passage). Either the thick seed moves forward sluggishly, and so does not penetrate; or it penetrates, but fails to mingle easily with the female seed. Note Ernout’s rendering: “son élan est sans vitesse ni légèreté; aussi ne peut-elle pénétrer partout également ou bien” Read *et* (or *ac*) *penetrare*.

*principio quantum caeli tegit impetus ingens,
inde avidam partem montes silvaeque ferarum
possedere, tenent rupes vastaeque paludes
et mare quod late terrarum distinet oras.* 5.200–203

Various substitutes are on offer for the grotesque *avidam*, which even Bailey retained with hesitation: *aliam*, *aliquam*, *amplam*, *avide*, *avidei*, *habitam*. But the answer, I suggest, is *quotam*. From a senseless *quodam* (cf. Housman on Manil. 2.740 and note cod. E’s *quodam* for *quota* in Hor. *Sat.* 2.6.44) *avidam* is not so far. In Ovid and later writers expressions like *quota pars* are stereotyped to mean “how small a part;” see Bömer on *Met.* 7.522. Similarly *quantus* often, though of course not always, means “how little.” But since *quotus* in origin is simply interrogative, Lucretius might properly use it in a rhetorical question: “what proportion (think you) . . . ?” The only other occurrence of *quotus* in the poem is at 6.652 *nec tota pars, homo terrai quota totius unus*.

*non alia longe ratione ac saepe videmus,
aurea cum primum gemmantis rore per herbas
matutina rubent radiati lumina solis
exhalantque lacus nebulam fluviique perennes,
ipsaque ut interdum tellus fumare videtur.*

5.460–464

I see no function for *ut*. Perhaps a verse-filler, inserted after *ipsa quoque* had become *ipsaque*. *quoque* (*q°*;) conjectured by Pius, is certainly preferable to *et* (Wakefield). Note Wilkinson's *horribiles quoque* for *horribilesque* in Cat. 61.144 (PCPhS 23 [1977] 133 f.). Both seem to have fallen out of sight.

*inque dies magis hi victum vitamque priorem
commutare novis monstrabant rebus et igni
ingenio qui praestabant et corde vigeant.*

5.1105–1107

Commentators make two objections to Lachmann's *rebu' benigni* (other attempts to deal with the ineffable *et igni* need not detain us): *benignus* "is not a Lucretian word" and the implication of altruism on the part of the inventors does not suit Epicurean notions. The first is idle. There was nothing to prevent Lucretius from using once a word which is used once by Virgil, once by Lucan, twice by Catullus (as adverb), twice by Tibullus, twice by Martial. The second point is valid. So read *rebu' benigno* = *copioso*: cf. Hor. *Carm.* 2.18.9 *at fides et ingeni / benigna vena est*.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY