

stellung trifft, daß auch der moderne Mensch in sich das naturwissenschaftliche, rationale Weltbild mit religiösen Glaubensvorstellungen verbinden könne. Naturforschung und religiöse Mystik setzen sich bei Empedokles gegenseitig voraus und ergänzen einander; der „Dualismus“ seiner Weltanschauung, wenn man schon von einem solchen reden soll, ruht im tiefen Grunde auf der Vorstellung eines von den Elementen und von den Kräften Liebe und Haß verursachten Zusammenwirkens der Reiche der Materie und des Geistes.

Über die zeitliche Folge<sup>20)</sup> der beiden Gedichte wird sich eine sichere Aussage nicht erreichen lassen. Vielleicht dürfen wir, so möchte ich glauben, in den *καθαρμοί* den Abgesang des Philosophen vernehmen, sein De profundis, den Buß- und Bittgesang des am Leben Leidenden, das Lied der Sehnsucht nach Erlösung und der Hoffnung auf Rückkehr in die Lichtheimat des Himmels.

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MYTH AND MAGIC IN COSMOLOGICAL  
POLEMICS:  
PLATO, ARISTOTLE, LUCRETIVS

*I: Plato*

At *Sophist* 246A7 Plato compares the materialists to the Giants of yore, the “friends of the Forms” to the defending Olympians. The materialists, latter-day Giants that they are, are said to “pull down to earth” (*εἰς γῆν . . . ἔλκουσι*) all things (a) “from the sky” (*ἐξ οὐρανοῦ*), i. e. the astrotheological deities of the Academy, and (b) “from the unseen”, i. e. the Forms<sup>1)</sup>, while grasping rocks and trees in their hands; for by gripping

Denkhaltung die übergreifende Einheit der Persönlichkeit des Dichterphilosophen in seinen Gegensätzen aufzudecken. Vgl. z. B. S. 224, wo er von der ingegnosa intuizione fantastica des Empedokles spricht: poesia, mito e scienza si fondono con le loro linee un poco gracili, a formare un unico tutto.

20) Vgl. hierzu die Ausführungen von W. Luther, a. O. 134f.

1) At *Phaedr.* 247 C 2 the Forms are referred to as τὰ ἔξω τοῦ οὐρανοῦ.

with their hands<sup>3)</sup> all such objects they assure themselves and us that real existence belongs only to that which offers resistance and contact . . .". Two discrepancies appear to have gone unnoticed. In the first place, of the two activities here ascribed to the materialists, viz. pulling down objects and grasping missiles in order to hurl them, only the second is in fact consistent with the account of the Gigantomachy as we find it in 4th century vase-painting (perhaps inspired by Phidias' famous representation on the shield of his Athena) and Apollodorus I 34-38<sup>3)</sup>. The Giants are there pictured as bombarding with rocks and burning tree-logs the celestial ramparts of the defending gods. In the second place, the seriousness and viciousness of the Giants' attack precludes that Plato's humor here could have been inspired by the Gigantomachy. Is there any mythological paradigm with the requisite combination of humor and of pulling down πάντα, ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, and physically? At first sight, the pulling down of sun and moon to cause luni-solar eclipses, popularly ascribed to Thessalian witches<sup>4)</sup>, might seem to qualify. In fact, however, it does not. For the pulling ascribed to them is by means occult, not physical; it is of sun and moon only, not of πάντα; and, fatally, is quite devoid of humor. Only one mythological model seems to satisfy all these requirements at once: the Golden Rope episode in Homer's *Iliad*<sup>5)</sup>. The gods are there reported by Zeus, their master, to have once tried to pull on a rope, which they had attached to the sky (σειρήν χρυσείην ἐξ οὐρανόθεν κρεμάσαντες), hoping thereby to pull both

2) Some commentators, e.g. Diès in the Budé ed., compare Hesiod, *Theog.* 675 ff. First, however, the bombardment there mentioned, occurs in the context of the Titanomachy, not of the Gigantomachy. Second, it is carried out (by the 300-armed Ones) in support of, not in opposition to, the gods; the Titans being the target. Third, all that Hesiod does tell us concerning the Giants is that they come armed with armor and lance (186). All this argues against the affiliation of Plato's ταῖς χειρῶν ἀτεχνῶς πέτρας καὶ ὄρυς περιλαμβάνοντες to Hesiod's πέτρας ἡλιβάτους στιβαρῆς ἐν χειρῶν ἔχοντες (*Theog.* 675).

3) Cf. Preller-Robert, *Griech. Mythologie* (Berlin, 1894), I. 77.

4) See Riess, *RE s.v.* "Aberglaube" (1894), 41. To his citation of Plin., *NH* II. 54; XXV. 10, add Plutarch, *Coniug.* 48; *Def. Or.* 13; Vergil, *Ecl.* VIII. 69 and below, note 27.

5) Greene, "The Spirit of Comedy in Plato", *HSCP* 31 (1920), 113 cites the *Sophist's* use of dichotomies, but not our passage, as an instance of neatly hoisting the opponents with their own petard; De Vries, *Spel bij Plato* (Amsterdam, 1949) merely notes the humor; Howes, "Homeric Quotations in Plato and Aristotle", *HSCP* 6 (1895), ignores it. Nor is it to be found in the list of passages given in Lévêcque, *Aurea Catena Homeri* (Paris, 1959).

ἐξ οὐρανόθεν πεδίονδε (Θ 19; 21; cf. Plato's εἰς γῆν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ) all things in the sky, the sky itself, and Zeus. Yet their efforts had remained hopelessly and comically ineffective. Zeus had easily pulled them all – gods, Olympus, earth, and sea – up to himself.

For his characterization of the materialists as Giants Plato selects the moment just prior to their commencing the bombardment. Like most details of Plato's dramatic frames this one, too, is clearly charged with philosophical relevance. Showing the Giants in the actual act of bombardment would have conveyed nothing unique to the materialist argument, only the polemical intent which it shares with so many other arguments. But the picture of materialists as Giants still clasping their missiles in their hands could, and explicitly does, double as dramatization of their insistence on concrete particulars as the only, because sensible and tangible, reality. Zeno's use of the half-closed hand and the clenched fist for the acts of assent and understanding respectively (Cic., *Ac. Pr.* II 144 = *SVF* I 66) and the manual gestures by which Raffael has Plato and Aristotle underline their opposite views in the *Disputa* are obvious parallels. In effect, Plato transforms gripping from a mere means to, and preamble of, bombardment into a declarative gesture of inherent philosophic import. It is on this higher, doctrinal plane that he returns to his original picture, the imminent use of force. "They (sc. the materialists) pull down to earth all things", he says, the ramparts celestial (sc. the star-gods) and hyperouranic (sc. the Forms), zealously defended by the "friends of the Forms". Plato's substitution of pulling for bombarding signals his barely perceptible shift from the grim because unpredictable setting of the Gigantomachy to the high comedy of predictable self-defeat associated with the Golden Rope episode. The point of this modulation is clear: the materialists' attempt to turn the evidence of the senses into an argument against the Forms is self-defeating because the objects of sense-perception are themselves dependent upon the Forms (sc. through their „participation“ in them) for such identity and intelligibility as they possess. Like Homer's rebellious gods the materialists are thus hoisted with their own petard, the role of Olympus devolving upon Plato's astrotheology and Forms, the role of Zeus devolving upon the "friends of the Forms". For all its apparent smoothness, this shift from the Gigantomachy to the Golden Rope episode does leave some loose ends. The materialists are pictured

as doing two things at once: they grip the solid objects which they are about to throw, and pull on the rope which they have attached to the ramparts of the Platonists, the first presumably with their right, the second with their free, left hand. In effect, the solid objects in their right hands undergo a functional change from missiles to supplementary weights that correspond to earth and sea in the Golden Rope episode. The Platonists, by the same token, change from the role of desperate defenders to that of an easily triumphant Zeus; the attackers, from the role of alien Giants to that of Zeus' fellow-gods<sup>6</sup>). Plato capitalizes on this mixed metaphor to show up the would-be Giants, the materialists, as in reality harmless because self-defeating. This reading is confirmed by his famous attack on the materialists at the end of the *Laws* (XII, 967 C 1–2). By failing to draw the correct inference from their own teleological *Nous*, viz. to the existence of astral intelligences, the Anaxagoreans, Plato says, “ἄπανθ’ ... ἀνέτρεψαν πάλιν, ἑαυτοὺς δὲ πολὺ μᾶλλον”. By the force of their logical inconsistency they have caused everything, themselves included, to be turned upside down. Plato does not here embellish this rather abstract metaphor with the colors of the Golden Rope episode. Yet attentive readers can be relied on to connect “ἄπανθ’ ... ἀνέτρεψαν with the (εἰς γῆν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀοράτου) πάντα ἔλκουσι of *Sophist* 246 A 7 and ἑαυτοὺς δὲ πολὺ μᾶλλον with the notorious fate of those pulling on Homer’s Golden Rope.

## II: Aristotle

According to *De Philosophia* fg. 18, Aristotle contrasted his own doctrine of cosmic eternity to the “terrible impiety” of those who held that the cosmos has a temporal beginning and so is no better than a human artifact (*χειροόκιμητον*). He then continued sarcastically that whereas once he feared only lest some day storms, old age, and disrepair would cause the collapse of his house, he was now living in terror of those who by their

6) The point of that “family-resemblance” between materialists and Platonists, then, is three-fold. First and foremost, of course, it is a function of Plato’s adapting the Golden Rope episode to metaphorical use. Second, to the extent that sensory data do in fact “participate” in the Forms, they can be thought of as “akin” to them. Finally, there is the sense in which, say, Democritus’ atoms, like Plato’s Forms, are purely intelligible entities (so SE VIII, 6 with Bailey, *Greek Atomists and Epicurus* [Oxford, 1928], 177–85)

logos were destroying the whole universe. Whom is Aristotle attacking here? Jaeger<sup>7)</sup> noted that *χειρόκμητον* echoes the Timaeon creation-account and concluded that Aristotle is coupling a respectful critique of Plato's creation-account with a sarcastic critique of the physicists, viz. Heraclitus, Empedocles, and the Atomists. As for the form of this attack, Bignone recognized that in the manner characteristic of his early period Aristotle here echoes Platonic precedent, viz. *Sophist* 246 A<sup>8)</sup>. This is the more likely, one may add, as his characterization of the fourth, Pre-Platonic, stage of philosophy in *De Phil.* I, fg. 18 reflects *Sophist* 246 B-C<sup>9)</sup>, and his juxtaposition of Xenophanes and the Eleatics in *Met.* A 5, 986 b 18 ff. *Sophist* 246 C-D<sup>10)</sup>. On this view, Aristotle would be charging Plato, along with certain materialist cosmologists, of impiety for (a) explicitly affirming a beginning of the cosmos, (b) implicitly if unintentionally affirming an end of the cosmos, and (c) in the process relapsing into an anthropomorphic god-notion. Plato's inclusion in these grave charges is, of course, predicated on the standard view

7) Jaeger, *Aristotle* (Oxford, 1948), 139-40.

8) Bignone, *L'Aristotele Perduto e la Formazione Filosofica di Epicuro* (Firenze, 1936), II. 420-21.

9) See Untersteiner, "Il ΠΕΡΙ ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΑΣ di Aristotele", *Riv. Fil.* 88 (1960), 341-43 for the exact parallelism between the confrontations of materialism and idealism in Plato, *Sophist* 46 A and Aristotle, *De Phil.* fg. 8 Ross (= fg. 1 Unterst. = Philopon., *In Nicom. Isag.* 1. 1) and Untersteiner, ed. Aristotele, *Della Filosofia* (Roma, 1963), 130-31. That part of Philoponus, by contrast to his *σοφία - σοφές* etymology (on it Haase, "Ein vermeintliches Aristotelesfragment bei Johannes Philoponos", in *Synusia* [= Festschrift Schadewaldt, Pfullingen, 1965], 340), is certainly authentically Aristotelian.

10) See *Empedocles' Mixture, Endoxan Astronomy, and Aristotle's Connate Pneuma* (Amsterdam, 1960), 116-18; 123; 126-29, with Untersteiner, "Il ΠΕΡΙ ΦΙΛ. etc." (above, note 9), 347, note 1, and ed. *Della Filosofia* (*ibid.*), xii; 133 ff.; 187-88, where he approves of my attempt to trace back *Met.* A 5, 986 b 24 f. to Xenophanes, by way of Aristotle's *argumentum ex gradibus entium* in *De Phil.* I, fg. 16 and Plato, *Rep.* II, 380 D-381 C. Taràn's attempt to dismiss the evidence for Aristotle's periodization of cultural history in *De Phil.* (*AJP* 87 [1966], 464-72) is unconvincing. Besides the confrontation of materialism and idealism in fg. 8 (see above, note 9), there is Aristotle's pre-Egyptian dating of the Magi (fg. 6) and his pre-Chilonic dating of the Delphic inscription (fg. 3). Porphyry's testimony in fg. 3 is not reducible (*pace* Taràn) to the trivial report that *γνώθη σωτῶν* was in fact inscribed upon the temple. These datings, in turn, create a presumption in favor of Aristotle's mentioning the Seven Wise men (fg. 5) and thus in favor of his interest in the periodization of philosophy's pre-history (cf. below, p. 318 f.).



that Aristotle thought Plato meant the Timaeian creation-account literally<sup>11</sup>). Yet is that view in fact sound? I doubt it.

Had Aristotle thought the Timaeian creation-account inherently impious, he would hardly have waited till the publication of his *De Philosophia* to say so<sup>12</sup>), witness his dissent from Plato's notion of the soul as self-mover at least as early as his reading of *Tim.* 57 E 3-6<sup>13</sup>), i. e. soon after B. C. 360, as much as a dozen years prior to Plato's death. Such criticism would have been perfectly consistent with the undogmatic intellectual climate which Plato fostered in the Academy<sup>14</sup>). True, the charge of impiety, as against say a critique of Plato's theory of the Forms or of soul as a self-mover, would have been too grave to be tolerated and, if made, would have meant a break with Plato personally and secession from the Academy a dozen years prior to its actual occurrence. Yet, had Aristotle thought the creation-account to have been meant literally and, therefore, to be impious, it is unthinkable that he would have let sentimental attachment to Plato personally<sup>15</sup>), let alone fear of jeopardizing his chances of election to the scholarchate, stand in the way of candor. Aristotle's explicit commitment to Socrates' command to place respect for truth above that for his own person (*Phaed.* 91 B 8 -C 2), viz. ἀφοῦν γὰρ ὄντων φίλον ὄσιον προσιμῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν (*NE* I 4, 1096 a 16), precludes it. Positive confirmation is provided by two texts, both temporally close to the very *De*

11) As maintained by e. g. Taylor, *A Commentary on Plato's Timaeus* (Oxford, 1928), 69 on Aristotle, *De Coel.* I, 279 b 32ff. and 280 a 28; Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology* (London, 1937), 26; Cherniss, *Aristotle's Criticism of Plato and the Academy* (Baltimore, 1944), I, 414-15; 423. By contrast, I find myself reaching the same conclusion, if by a somewhat different road (see the remainder of this section), as Claghorn, *Aristotle's Criticism of Plato's Timaeus* (The Hague, 1954), 53 ff., viz. that Aristotle did not in fact misunderstand Plato's intention. That Plato did not understand his creation-account literally is generally accepted: see e. g. Cherniss, *op. cit.*, 421-31, and Herter, "Gott und die Welt bei Platon. Eine Studie zum Mythos des Politikos", *Bonner Jahrbücher* 158 (1958), 113. Disagreement is confined to such issues as the relation of the pre-cosmic *σεισμός* to the World-Soul's orderly self-motion (Cherniss takes it to originate in, Herter, "Die Bewegung der Materie bei Platon", *RhM* 100, 1957, 330, to be independent of, though coeval with, the latter.)

12) Pace Zeller, *Die Philosophie der Griechen*<sup>3</sup> (Leipzig, 1921), II, 2, 432.

13) So Cherniss (above, note 11), 602.

14) Cf. Cherniss, *The Riddle of the Early Academy* (Berkeley, 1945), 81-85.

15) So Wilamowitz, *Platon*<sup>3</sup> (Berlin, 1929), I, 728 and Jaeger (above, note 7), 149.

*Philosophia* in which Aristotle attacks certain defenders of the Timaeian creation-account as impious. One is Aristotle's *Elegy to Eudemus*, the other *De Gen. et Corr.* II 336 b 27 ff.<sup>16</sup>). In the first passage, he praises Plato in religiously charged language (*ALG* I, p. 115 Diehl-Beutler); in the second, he himself actually uses Plato's creation-myth without the slightest hint that to do so is impious. It follows that Aristotle, like the rest of the Academy, was perfectly aware that the creation-account is in fact a metaphor and that, by the same token, he disagrees with Xenocrates *et al.* (*De Coel.* I, 279 b 33 ff.) not as to the necessity of producing a metaphorical explanation of that account but merely as to the aptness of Xenocrates' attempt to resolve the metaphor by means of an analogy with something as untemporal as a geometric diagram<sup>17</sup>). The correct resolution of the creation-metaphor, so Aristotle implies, must (with Xenocrates) abolish its uniqueness and externality, but (*pace* Xenocrates) retain the essential temporality of "order being produced from disorder" (*Tim.* 30 A 5)<sup>18</sup>). He therefore translates Plato's personalized "leading" (ἡγᾶσθαι) into an impersonal "becoming" (γενέσθαι, *De Coel.* I, 280 a 7) conceived as a cyclical process (ἐνδελεχῆ ... γένεσθαι) perpetuated by the sun's annual course through the ecliptic (*De Gen. et Corr.* II 336 b 31 ff.; a 32 ff.). Xenocrates' disjunction of order and disorder, by contrast, fails to provide an explanation of the creation-metaphor consistent at once with Plato's evident intention and with the facts. Those accepting Xenocrates' analogy of Timaeian creation and a geometric diagram are therefore faced with the following choice. Either they retain this pseudoexplanation and so, in effect, leave Plato's creation-account indistinguishable from a literal doctrine of creation with all the impious consequences which that entails; or they reject this pseudo-explanation and embrace, instead, Aristotle's own explanation. The point of *De Phil.* fg. 18 is to dramatize the first of these options.

16) The fact that Aristotle's adaptation of the Timaeian creation-myth in *De Gen. et Corr.* 336 b 27 ff. is itself a paraphrase of *De Phil.* (so Harder, "Ocellus Lucanus", *NPhU* 1 [1926], 122-24) argues that Xenocrates' particular attempt to explain Plato's metaphor is at least coeval with and probably older than *De Philosophia*.

17) Theophrastus' remark (*Dox.* 486, 2) that ἡ γένεσις οὐχ ὁμοίως ἔχει καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν διαγραμμάτων preserves the gist of Aristotle's objection.

18) Aristotle's criticism of Xenocrates here could not be more serious. It is certainly not reducible to what Simplicius terms verbal jibes (σκόμματα)

Aristotle's criticism of Plato's self-moving soul as ambiguously termed "later than" and "coeval with" the "created" cosmos (*Met. A*, 1071 b 37–1072 a 3) is fully consistent with this reading. It does not prove that he took Plato's creation-account literally, but, on the contrary, that he thought Plato's creation-metaphor should not be allowed to obscure his evident philosophical intention, the eternity of the cosmos and of motion. If then Aristotle understood Plato as sharing his own doctrine of cosmic eternity, he must have thought of his critique of Plato's Forms as but articulating Plato's own, "lispering" philosophical intention. Whence he recognizes no necessary connection between Plato's paradeigmatism and a literal reading of the creation-account<sup>19</sup>).

In sum, Aristotle was as aware as his fellow-Academics of the metaphorical status of Plato's creation-account. He understood it as the evident challenge that it was and must have thought of himself as doing for the Timaeian creation-account what Eudoxus had done for the circular planetary orbits pre-figured in "the circle of the Other" (*Tim.* 36 C 5). This conclusion enables us to settle a chronological point in *De Phil.* fg. 18. Aristotle contrasts a "past" (πάλαι), when he feared only for his house, to the "present" (νῦν δὲ), when he fears for the cosmos as a whole. The contrast may be that between the period prior to B.C. 360, the *terminus post quem* for the composition of the *Timaeus*, and the present, i.e. the date of composition of *De Philosophia*, B.C. 347/5. Or it may be that between the period prior to Plato's death in B.C. 348/7 and the period from his death to the present. On purely lexicographic grounds both are possible. But if Aristotle did not in fact think that Plato had meant the Timaeian creation-account literally, then the latter of the two possible contrasts cited is the one intended. It is the Xenocrateans, then, not Plato himself, whom Aristotle, in evident allusion to Plato's equation of the materialists with latter-day Giants in *Sophist* 246 A, charges with "terrible impiety". Unlike the materialists, however, the Xenocrateans commit this impiety not deliberately but only by default<sup>20</sup>. They fail, so Aristotle

19) The statements of Jaeger (above, note 7), 141, and Bignone (above, note 8), II. 204 should be correspondingly modified. Aristotle's abolition of the ἔξω τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (*De Coel.* 279 a 17), in which Plato, *Phaedr.* 247 C 2 had notoriously located the Forms, would then pretend to be no more than the consistent working out of Plato's own philosophical intention.

20) According to Aristotle's *De Philosophia* (Sen., *QN* 7. 30 = fg. 14),



was seen to argue in *De Coel.* I, 279 b 33 ff., to base their would-be metaphorical reading of the Timaeian creation-account on a sound foundation and so inadvertently leave the literal reading intact. It is this crucial difference as to intention, which explains why Aristotle does not make the parallel of the Xenocrateans and Plato's materialists explicit and why, instead, he presents the former as but more powerful versions of the blind forces (storms, old age, disrepair) that used to threaten his house. Here, too, is the key to his statement at the end of the fragment that now he is living in permanent fear of those who by their logos are bringing down "the whole universe" (*πρὸς τῶν τὸν ἅπαντα κόσμον*<sup>21</sup>) *τῷ λόγῳ καθαιρόντων*). The logos in question, of course, is the Timaeian creation-account<sup>22</sup>). Aristotle's point is twofold. By failing to provide a viable resolution of the creation-metaphor, the Xenocrateans enable the logical consequence of creation, destruction, to remain intact, too. Thus the logical connection between creation and destruction of the cosmos automatically turns their well-intentioned appeal to the creation-account into unintentioned blasphemy of the divine cosmos. Their involvement in the automatism of ritual pollution is no less real for being inadvertent. Worse still, however – and this is Aristotle's second point – by invoking the Timaeian creation-account they not only mobilize the force of logical entailment (and so commit blasphemy), but they also mobilize the power inherent in magical spells physically to enforce this consequence, destruction, upon the real cosmos, in defiance of its axiomatic imperishability. Aristotle's sarcasm is predicated on the notion that language is

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the materialists would correspond to those who *scientes mentiuntur*, the Xenocrateans to those who *ignorantes affirmant*. So far as the astral deities are concerned, both of them are doing so *impudenter*. For blasphemy, like ritual pollution, is notoriously independent of the intentions of the violator.

21) τὸν ἅπαντα κόσμον is here synonymous with the ὅλος οὐρανός, i. e. "the total (sc. not merely the astronomical) universe", from whose inspection Aristotle has Xenophanes derive his theology at *Met.* A 5, 986 b 24–5 and its putative source, *De Phil.* A [see my book above, note 10], note 11). This non-specialized use of ὅλος οὐρανός is what we should expect from someone aware, as Aristotle evidently is (cf. *De Coel.* B, 294 a 21 = *DK* 21 A 47), that Xenophanes and Heraclitus rejected the circles and spheres of Milesian cosmology.

22) For the *Timaeus* as a whole referred to as ὁ λόγος, see e.g. *Tim.* 92 C 4. In this case, however, τῷ λόγῳ means (1) "by the Timaeian creation-account", in particular, (2) "by theory" as against overt action, and (3) by the immanent logic governing the affirmation of creation (sc. so as to entail destruction).

not only "like" the things to which it refers<sup>23</sup>), but by virtue of that likeness has a magical hold over them, directly in the case of such "living" reality as fauna, flora, water, and living rock<sup>24</sup>), indirectly, i.e. by way of living intermediaries, in the case of inanimate reality<sup>25</sup>). The force of this verbal magic is as much an automatism independent of the wishes of those triggering it as is the force of logical entailment and that of ritual pollution.

The Xenocrateans, then, are portrayed as unintentionally outdoing what Thessalian witches are popularly accused of doing deliberately, viz. pulling down sun and moon by their spells to cause eclipses<sup>26</sup>). Though not themselves sorcerers, the Xenocrateans are prisoners of the logico-magical powers over reality inherent in the Timaeian creation-logos. The line between seriousness and mockery is quite thin here. Aristotle's fear lest by their faulty resolution of the creation-metaphor his

23) Cf. Dilthey, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Leipzig, 1921), 7.

24) On rock as living, see Plumpe, "Vivum Saxum, Vivi Lapides", *Traditio* I (1943), 1-14, esp. 6-10. By confining himself almost exclusively to the Roman evidence, however - Aesch., *P.V.* 301 *ἀυτόκλιτ' ἄντρα* and Soph., fg. 332 Pearson *ἀυτόκλιστούς δόμους* are the only Greek passages cited, labelled "isolated phrases" - and by claiming Verg., *Aen.* I. 167 to be "independent of Greek patterns", he creates the misleading impression that "to vest solid and immobile stone, bedrock, with life" is overwhelmingly Roman and a poetic conceit at that. Orpheus and Amphion, the obvious models of Cic., *Or.* I. 24; *Arch.* 19; Ovid, *Met.* VII. 204, go oddly unmentioned. On them, see below, note 42. For men born of rivers, rocks, and caves, see Dieterich, *Mutter Erde* (Leipzig, 1905), 64; for homo *~χθών~ humus*, *ibid.* 76ff., 98ff.

25) The literature on magical incantations seems to contain no instances of words credited with direct power over inanimate objects. In all cases cited by Heim, "Incantamenta Magica", *Fleck. Jbbh.*, Suppl. 19 (1890), 495ff., the ultimate object affected is either itself animate or, if inanimate, affected by way of a living person or agency, to whom the incantation is (explicitly or implicitly) directed. Thus, in two cases similar to ours, where a church is moved (*Acts* 4: 31) and a minaret brought to collapse by the force of words alone (van der Leeuw, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation* [London, 1938], 423), the words in question are prayers addressed to a personal God acting as mediator. On the fluid distinction between prayer and compulsion, see below, p. 316.

26) On pulling down sun and moon by means of witchcraft, see above, note 4. Since sun and moon are conceived as living deities, their being pulled down by means of spells is, in effect, a form of *defixio* (cf. Kuhnert, *RE* s. v. [1901]): the *ειδών* of the intended victim is verbal here, the magical compulsion of *caelo deducere* (*~καθαυρεῖν*) being lodged in the spell (*carmen*, as in Verg., *Ecl.* VIII. 69). Here the *carmen* is the Timaeian creation-account, which at 47 B 7 is equated with a "hymn".

fellow-Platonists pollute their own enclave of astrotheological intelligence, their rational soul, is perfectly consistent with the notion of virtue and vice as respectively self-rewarding and self-punishing, which the Academy opposed to the older view of divine retribution. Aristotle's fear, by contrast, lest verbal magic prevail over the imperishability of the divine cosmos is mere sarcastic pretense. In reality, of course, he is no more worried about the cosmos than Plato (*Sophist* 246 A) is about the fate of the Forms and the astronomicals. Thus, for all their lack of intention, the Xenocrateans end up in the same predicament as Plato's materialists: hoisted aloft with their own petard and so the fit subject of high comedy. Consistently, therefore, Aristotle rejoins his Platonic model for the terminal transition to the Golden Rope metaphor. Plato, as we saw, had made the transition from Giants clutching missiles to gods pulling on the Golden Rope by making the missiles double as supplementary weights. Aristotle makes his transition from unwitting sorcerers to Homeric gods pulling on the Golden Rope by capitalizing on the convenient ambiguity of τῶν τὸν ἅπαντα κόσμον τῷ λόγῳ καθαιρούντων. For besides occult pulling like that exerted by the Thessalian witches the phrase can simply mean "pulling down (as on city-walls or Olympus) by physical means" (the creation-account being cast in the role of a rope)<sup>27</sup>. To dour Puritans like Xenocrates and Speusippus this final note of malicious comedy must have seemed like insult heaped on injury. A tabular comparison of the corresponding steps in Plato, *Sophist* 246 A and Aristotle, *De Phil.* fg. 18 may usefully conclude this section:

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27) According to LSJ<sup>9</sup>, *s.v.* καθαιρεῖν, "taking or pulling down" in the sense of physically demolishing or wrecking cities or city-walls is attested by Thucyd., I. 58 and Plato, *Menex.* 244 C; the magical meaning of "pulling" from the sky, by Aristoph., *Nub.* 750 and Plato, *Gorg.* 513 A (with Dodds, ed. *Gorgias* [Oxford, 1959], *ad loc.*). Aristotle's fondness of the Golden Rope episode is familiar, even when he does not find it ready-made in his Platonic model, as here in *Sophist* 246 A. At *De Mot. An.* 699 b he evokes it to dramatize the need for an Unmoved Mover to serve as fulcrum for the polar axis, Homer's Zeus being Aristotle's alternative to an Atlas supporting the earth or to a World Soul strapped Ixion-like to the rotating firmament. Cf. Jaeger (above, note 7), 355–56. Homer's Zeus, then, provides the model for the fixed point upon which the moving parts of a physical system and the logical consequents in an argument "depend" (ἐξήκτιται). Lévéque (above, note 5), 22, does discuss *De Mot. An.* 699 b, but ignores *De Phil.* fg. 18 as he does *Sophist* 246 A.

Plato on materialists:		Aristotle on Xenocrateans:	
Like Giants	about to hurl their arguments like missiles;	Like worshippers guilty of involuntary ritual pollution;	
	clutching these argument-missiles as extra weights while	like involuntary sorcerers "pulling down" not only sun and moon, but	
(εἰς γῆν ἔξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῶν ἀοράτων πάντα ἔλκουσι)	pulling down on celestial Olympus like the gods of Homer's Golden Rope episode, only to find themselves hoisted aloft, instead.	(τῶν τὸν ἅπαντα κόσμον τῷ λόγῳ καθαιρούντων)	
Rope = materialist reductivism		Rope = perishability of cosmos entailed by Timaeian creation-account.	

### III: Lucretius

In the first half of *DRN* V, Lucretius seeks to show that the present cosmos, like any other atomic compound, has a beginning and an end in time. To obtain a hearing for his proof, however, he must first dispel the common prejudice that to deny the immortality of the cosmos is impiety and thus subject to divine retribution. Lucretius presents the supposedly pious alternative in two variants, viz. that the cosmos is imperishable and uncreated (114-21) and that it is imperishable yet created (156-63) and tries to refute both on physico-theological grounds<sup>28</sup>), the first because inanimates are *in ... deum numero ...*

28) He argues ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοπραποῦς, which is the ground on which Epicurus, *Ep. Herod.* 176-77 had argued against both notions. The history of this criterion was the subject of my 1955 Harvard Ph. D. Dissertation (Harv. Univ. Archives 90. 6844, 265 pp.; summary in *HSCP* 67 (1957), 148-51), written under the direction of the late Prof. W. Jaeger (for the topic, see his *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* [Oxford, 1947], 214 note 56; for mention of my work, *Scripta Minora* [Roma, 1960], II. 480-81 and *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia* [Cambridge, 1960], 128), and soon to be published in totally revised book-form (cf. my "Empirical Aspects of Xenophanes' Theology", in *Essays in Greek Philosophy: Selected Papers from the Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy*, edd. Anton and Kustas [Albany, 1970]).

*indigna videri* (123)<sup>29</sup>), the second because innovation and bad workmanship<sup>30</sup> are equally inconsistent with deity (168 f., 198 f.):

religione refrenatus ne forte rearis  
 terras et solem et caelum, mare sidera  
 lunam, corpore divino debere aeterna  
 manere, propterea que putes ritu par esse  
 Gigantum pendere eos poenas immani pro  
 scelere omnis qui *ratione sua disturbent*  
 moenia mundi praeclarumque *velint* caeli  
 restinguere solem immortalia mortali  
*sermone notantes*;

dicere porro hominum causa voluisse  
 parere praeclarum mundi naturam  
 propterea que allaudabile opus divum  
 laudare decere aeternumque putare  
 atque immortale futurum nec fas esse,  
 deum quod sit ratione vetusta  
 gentibus humanis fundatum perpetuo  
 aevo, *sollicitare* suis *ulla vi*  
 ex sedibus umquam nec *verbis vexare*  
 et *ab imo evertere summa*

114-21

156-63

The historical reference of each of these variants is unmistakable. The first reflects the position of Aristotle's *De Philosophia*, albeit in a manner contaminated with Stoic pantheism<sup>31</sup>). The second reflects the language, though not the intention, of Plato's *Timaeus*, albeit in a manner contaminated with anthropocentric (i. e. Stoic) teleology<sup>32</sup>). To the adherents of both views Lucretius imputes a fear at once for themselves and for the cosmos. They fear, he claims, lest by affirming an end or even only a beginning of the cosmos they attract upon themselves the divine

29) By disproving the possibility of mind in anything but beasts, men, and gods (122-45), he disproves the divinity and eternity of the world.

30) He argues from the imperfection of the world, 195 ff.

31) Unless Lucretius' attribution of divinity and eternity (*debere aeterna manere*, 116) to earth and sea, besides the supralunary realm, merely echoes Aristotle's explanation of the inexhaustibility of rivers and earth in terms of an *ἐμφυτος ἀρχὴ ζωῆς καὶ κινήσεως* (*De Phil.* fg. 14), which like his *ἐμφυτος ὁρμηὶ μεταβολῆς* blurs the distinction between animates and inanimates (see passages collected by Cherniss [above, note 11], 465, note 413).

32) De Lacy, "Lucretius and the History of Epicureanism", *TAPA* 79 (1948), 12-23 showed that this extension involved the adoption from the Academy not only of arguments like the Skeptic tetralemma against providence, but also of the protreptic, literary devices, which Epicurus himself had professed to scorn. According to Bignone (above, note 8), this scorn extended to form only and was fully consistent with competitive attempts at substantive imitation of the *Protrepticus* (I. 133 ff.) and *De Philosophia* (II. 373 ff.), given Epicurus' attunement to the religious temper of his time and place (II. 367-70). Mondolfo, *L'Infinito nel Pensiero dell'Antichità Classica*<sup>2</sup>, (Firenze, 1956), 493-94 even detects four respects in which Epicurus' theology is *di tipo nettamente aristotelico*. Solmsen, "Epicurus and Cosmological Heresies", *AJP* 72 (1951), 1-23, esp. 3-8, stresses the omission of Later Epicureanism to distinguish between Platonism and Stoicism. For the role of *a priori* convictions in this omission, see below, note 45.



retribution reserved for the impious and, upon the cosmos, the catastrophic self-fulfillment magically latent in the very language. This, of course, is the precise and very curious combination of fears which we found Aristotle expressing on behalf of the Xenocrateans in *De Phil.* fg. 18. A second peculiarity is the anachronistic order in which Lucretius here takes up the positions associated with the language of the Timaeian creation-account and with Aristotle's critique of the Xenocrateans' attempt to prove it a mere metaphor, respectively. He takes up the position of *De Philosophia* before, not after, that of the Xenocrateans. Both peculiarities combine to argue that Lucretius is here, in fact, presenting the Timaeian creation-account as seen through Aristotle's eyes, i.e. as presented in *De Phil.* fg. 18<sup>33</sup>). Small, but telling differences remain, nevertheless. These, as we shall presently see, are precisely what is specifically Lucretian in Lucretius here.

First, he takes at face-value what Aristotle had professed by way of mocking exaggeration only. In effect, Aristotle's mockery is presented as mere whistling in the dark<sup>34</sup>). Second, he seriously imputes these fears not merely to the Aristotelians but also to the Platonists. Thus the τῶν τὸν ἅπαντα κόσμον τῷ λόγῳ καθαιρούστων of Aristotle's *De Phil.* fg. 18 is the model at once of the *qui ratione sua disturbent moenia mundi* (119)<sup>35</sup>) of the first passage and of the *sollicitare suis ulla vi ex sedibus umquam / nec verbis vexare et ab imo evertere summa* (162–163) of the second. Third, he makes the *materialists* the object of the fears of Aristotelians as well as of Platonists. Thus he has the Aristotelians

33) Bignone (above, note 8), reaches the same conclusion (II. 417 on *DRN* V. 110ff.; II. 427 on *DRN* V. 157ff.), but ignores the difference between *De Phil.* fg. 18 and *Sophist* 246 A, calls Lucretius' reference to Giants in V. 117 Aristotelian rather than Platonic, omits to note the role of the Golden Rope episode and of verbal magic in particular, and thinks Lucretius' opening reference to anthropocentric teleology Timaeian rather than Stoic.

34) Notice that what Lucretius is here imputing to Aristotle is but a virulent form of the fear lest the mention of something unpleasant, unless accompanied by some apotropaic word or gesture, will cause it to come about. For a random and, of course, innocent version of that *nomen et omen* fear even in Aristotle, see his last will and testament (D. L. V. 12): "if anything happen to the girl (sc. my daughter, Pythias) – which heaven forbid and no such thing will happen (ὃ μὴ γένοιτο οὐδὲ ἔσται) . . .".

35) Bignone (above, note 8), 418, note 5, notes a "polemic reference". His earlier claim (415, note 5), however, that V. 108 makes the same reference "ironically" strikes me as unfounded.

fear an enemy who, unlike the Xenocrateans in Aristotle's own fragment, acts deliberately. Witness his labelling the materialists "Giants" (117) and deliberate (*velint*, 120). Yet though Lucretius follows Plato, *Sophist* 246 A in presenting the materialists as Giants, he does not show them hurling missiles. Instead, his language shows that he has replaced the bombardment associated with the Gigantomachy by the peculiar *modus operandi* which Aristotle had imputed to the Xenocrateans, viz. pulling down by magical means. Aristotle's distinction between the involuntary pulling exerted by the Xenocrateans and that deliberately exerted by Thessalian witches is tacitly dropped in the process. Not inappropriately, the Giants are thus assimilated to the Thessalian sorcerers. Lucretius does exactly the same in his portrayal of the Platonists. *Sollicitare ... ulla vi* (162) and *verbis vexare* (163) are evidently hendiadys for "pulling down by the occult force inherent in verbal magic"<sup>36</sup>. The conflation cited and Lucretius' omission to specify that the Platonists ought to extend their fears of the materialists to their own creation-account shows that Lucretius is interested in fidelity to his sources only to the extent that it can serve his own purpose of dispelling antimaterialist prejudice.

But before proceeding to the reasons for Lucretius' procedure, we must clear up the precise manner in which this verbal magic is supposed to work here upon the cosmos. That the reference to Giants (117) does not mean that the materialists attack by means of bombardment we have already seen. A *ratione disturbare moenia mundi* (119) that eventuates in, at very least, solar eclipse (120) must involve the "pulling down" of the sun associated with Thessalian witches. The *sollicitare ... ulla vi* (162) culminating in *ab imo evertere summa* (163) shows how this is meant. *Sollicitare ... ulla vi* denotes the activity of pulling down celestial bodies by magical spell and thus assimilates the materialists to the Thessalian sorcerers. *Ab imo evertere summa*, however, introduces a novel, poliorphic aspect. For, as Bailey rightly explains the phrase, it means "to overthrow the top (*summa*) beginning at the bottom, i. e. to undermine the foundations and so cause it (sc. the top) to fall; it continues the metaphor of

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36) Lucretius lists the logico-verbal means of attack allegedly feared by the Aristotelians, viz. *ratione disturbant, velint restinguere, sermone notantes*, and by the Platonists, viz. *sollicitare ulla vi, verbis vexare, ab imo evertere summa*, in triadic form. This form is not only a device of emphasis but may also reflect the triadic structure common in incantations.

*fundatum*”. Thus the *ab imo evertere summa*, which the Platonists allegedly fear from the materialists, resumes the metaphor of *moenia mundi* as used in connection with the Aristotelians (119). An allusion to what, according to Epicurus, *Ep. Pyth.* 88, is the light and fiery envelope of the universe (*οὐρανὸν λυομένον πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ σύγχυσιν λήγεται*) would therefore be wholly out of place in what purports to be a portrayal of Academic fears for the Academic cosmos<sup>37</sup>). All that these *moenia mundi* can signify here is the visible confines of the sky, i. e. what in terms of Academic cosmology would be the fixed star sphere<sup>38</sup>). Two further points deserve special notice. As Lucretius’ *ratione disturbent moenia mundi* takes at face-value Aristotle’s mock-fears in *De Phil.* fg. 18 in order to characterize the Aristotelians’ alleged fears, so, in order to characterize the Platonists’ fears, Lucretius’ *ab imo evertere summa* takes at face-value, and turns the tables on, Plato’s famous anti-materialist mockery at the end of the *Laws*. What Plato had there claimed was that by failing to draw the proper conclusions from their own *Nous*, the Anaxagoreans ἄπανθ’ ... ἀνέτρεψαν πάλιν, ἑαυτοὺς δὲ πολὺ μᾶλλον (*Nom.* XII, 967 C 1–2)<sup>39</sup>). Moreover, by interpreting the Platonic conceit (of the materialists as turning upside down the universe and themselves) in terms of the Aristotelian conceit (of the Platonists as magically pulling down the Peripatetic cosmos), Lucretius ends up imputing to both camps the fear of a materialist attack that varies importantly from the procedure standard in siegecraft. For the Academics are made to fear lest the materialists topple the *moenia mundi* not by *tunneling* underneath the foundations but by magically *pulling* these foundations out from under the *moenia mundi*.

Lucretius’ retention of this magical pulling in place of the more conventional sapping makes two points. First, what in Hesiodic and Lucretian terminology are mere *moenia mundi*, i. e. inanimate walls, is in Academic cosmology considered as alive because animated by star-souls. In other words, since the cosmos is considered as itself alive, the materialists’ verbal magic, unlike spells

37) Pace Bailey on V. 119, “a very carefully chosen expression, which both suggests the attack of the Giants on the celestial bulwarks and recalls the *flammanitia moenia mundi* (I. 73) of Epicurean cosmology”.

38) For the controversy on the relation of ether to this sphere, see Moraux, *RE* (1963), s. v. “*quinta essentia*”.

39) The allusion to Plato’s anti-Anaxagorean passage is the more likely as Anaxagoras was Epicurus’ own favorite Presocratic (D. L. X. 12).

affecting ordinary, inanimate walls and buildings, does not require a live intermediary (divine or human) by way of which to affect it<sup>40</sup>). It can do so directly. Second, and by the same token, despite the explicit reference to Giants (117) and *moenia mundi* (119; implicit at 163), Lucretius' Academics do not in fact construe the materialists' attack upon astral theology in terms of the Gigantomachy-paradigm with its distinction of inanimate ramparts and defending Olympians<sup>41</sup>). What then is Lucretius' point in evoking this paradigm? For one thing, as already noted above, the materialist sorcerers do match the Giants in aggressive intent. For another, the Gigantomachy-paradigm serves Lucretius' purpose of reducing Academic cosmology to mythology in illustration of the thesis that all cosmologies other than the Epicurean (and perhaps Empedoclean) one are anthropomorphic, overtly or latently. If the Gigantomachy is mythological in having inanimate *moenia mundi* defended by living, anthropomorphic gods, Academic astrotheology is doubly so for treating the celestial bulwarks themselves as subject to direct magical compulsion, i. e. as animate and by that token indistinct from their anthropomorphic defenders. In effect, the Academy is charged with fearing a twilight of the gods induced by magic<sup>42</sup>). Thus, Lucretius' taking at face-value what Aristotle and Plato had meant in mockery, his claim that they really think of the universe in anthropomorphic terms, and his corresponding omission to reproduce their terminal modulation to the redeeming high comedy of the Golden Rope metaphor<sup>43</sup>) turn

40) Cf. above, note 24.

41) *Pace* Bailey (above, note 37).

42) Lucretius' attack is predicated on the following principle: Where (as in the Academic case) the notion of godhead as nonanthropomorphic is both inherently false and contradicted by the corollary notion of divine providence, continued adherence to popular cult confirms the presumption of primitivism. But where (as in the Epicurean case) the god-notion is unrelated to providence though anthropomorphic, continued adherence to popular cult is excused as philosophical allegorizing. Lucretius' point is that (in the words of Schmid, *RAC* 1962, s.v. "Epicur", 732) "die wahre Bedeutung des Gebets kann nur in der Vergegenwärtigung des Göttlichen liegen, wie überhaupt alle Einzelheiten der Kultbräuche in den Dienst dessen zu treten haben, was die philosophisch-legitime Substanz des religiösen Aktes ausmacht". In effect, since only Epicureans have the correct god-notion, only they have the right to the allegorical use of religious categories.

43) Lucretius explicitly refers to the Golden Rope episode in one place only, II. 1153, where it functions as polemical allegory for *εἰμασμένη* (so Lévêcque [above, note 5], 28). His omission to cast the materialists (seen through Academic eyes) as the gods of Homer's Golden Rope episode

out to be integral parts of a single strategy. It is that of “unmasking”<sup>44</sup>) Academic philosophy as “mythological” at once in the material sense of conflating the data of physics and of anthropomorphic theology (*Ep. Herod.* 81; *Pyth.* 113; *Men.* 124) and in the formal sense of deciding among a plurality of possible causes on purely *a priori* grounds (*Pyth.* 87).

Can one be more specific and identify the precise mythological paradigm on which Lucretius patterns his imputation of the fear of verbal magic to the Academy? The magical building-feats attributed to Orpheus and Amphion strike one as the most likely candidates. Orpheus and Amphion are reported to have pulled “living rock” (*πέτρας*, not *πέτρους*) out of its natural sites by the sheer power of their incantatory song (*ἔπωδή*) and into joining together, presumably in successive courses, to form city-walls<sup>45</sup>). Now what the Academics are presented as fearing is lest the materialists duplicate this magical feat, except in the opposite, destructive sense. To the Academics the Epicureans’ materialist *ratio* (119) and *verba* (163) are the functional equivalents of *ἔπωδαί*. Through them they threaten to pull the living foundations out from under the *moenia mundi*<sup>46</sup>) and down to earth.

Such are the quasi-mythological superstitions which Lucretius imputes to Academics and Stoics. Yet before examining

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is exactly matched by his omission to duplicate the *ἑαυτοὺς δὲ πολὺ μᾶλλον* of Plato’s anti-materialist statement in the *Laws*, while he does duplicate the *ἄπανθ’ ... ἀνέτρεψαν*, immediately preceding the words cited, by his *ab imo evertere summa* (163).

44) Cf. his triumphant *eripitur persona* in III. 58.

45) See Pausanias VI. 20, 18 καὶ Ἀμφίονι (sc. ἀρικνεῖσθαι) ἔς τὰς τοῦ τεύχους οἰκοδομίας τὰς πέτρας, Horace, *A. P.*, 394–96, and generally Ziegler, *RE* XVIII, 1 (1939), s.v. “Orpheus”, esp. 1249 ff. In Quintilian, *Inst.* I. 10, 9 it is Orpheus, who is said *non feras modo sed saxa etiam silvasque duxisse*, and in the Orphic *Argonautica*, 947 ff. it is Orpheus’ song which launches the Argo, forces apart the clashing rocks, and opens the magical gates. By contrast, the magical power whereby Epicurus’ *dicta* make the very *moenia mundi* open up for Lucretius (III. 14–17) is patterned not on Orpheus’ *carmen* in particular but on the powers credited to the mere sound of a god’s voice: see below, pp. 325 ff.

46) Lucretius’ reasons, then, for presenting the Aristotelians’ alleged fear for the fate of their animate *ἅπας κόσμος* as fear for the *moenia mundi* are these (in order of importance): (1) the fact that *moenia* are an integral part of the scenario associated with the magical feats of Orpheus and Amphion, (2) that *moenia mundi*, in particular, are associated with the Gigantomachy, and (3), if at all, that *moenia mundi* serves to evoke the specifically Epicurean notion of I. 73 (cf. above, note 37).



more closely his reasons for so sharply contradicting the established facts of the history of philosophy, we present a brief, tabular summary of the mythological paradigms so far identified.

Plato, <i>Sophist</i> 246 A, on the materialists	Aristotle, <i>De Phil.</i> fg. 18, on the Platonists	L's Aristotelians ( <i>DRN</i> V. 114-21)	L's Platonists ( <i>DRNV</i> . 156-63) on the materialists
Gigantomachy (Hesiod)			
Golden Rope (Homer)			
Pulling down by means			
(πάντα ἔλκουσι)	of verbal magic		
	inadvertently	deliberately, reversing the building-feats of Orpheus and Amphion,	
(ἄπανθ' ... ἀνέτρειψαν)	(τῷ λόγῳ καθαιρούντων)	<i>ratione disturbare moenia mundi</i> (119)	<i>verbis vexare et ab imo evertere summa</i> (163)
-Nom. XII, 967C			

Colorful as is Lucretius' account of the fears with which Academically and Stoics allegedly view the materialists, it is conspicuously inaccurate history. Stripped of their humor and sarcasm, *Sophist* 246 A and *De Phil.* fg. 18, Lucretius' obvious sources, are made to tell the most unlikely tale. The picture of Academic anti-materialism as essentially superstitious no more accords with the plain meaning of the texts cited than it does with the doxography, both Theophrastean and Epicurean<sup>47</sup>. Perhaps a vituperative Epicurean like Zeno of Sidon or Cicero's Velleius (*ND* I. 18), by contrast to someone as courteous as Philodemus, could be described in Diels' words (*Dox.* 122) as

47) That at least some of Lucretius' historical material derives from doxographic handbooks, some of them no doubt Epicurean like Philodemus' lost *Σύνταξις φιλοσόφων* seems certain, even if the "homoeomerics" attributed to Anaxagoras (I. 834), but so far found in the doxography alone, should prove authentic after all. How much of what De Lacy (above, note 32) has shown to be Later Epicurean polemic against Stoicism antedates Philodemus' *Περὶ τῶν Στωικῶν* (Crönert, *Kolotes* [Leipzig, 1906], 53-67) remains to be seen. Certainly, the use of doxography is notoriously consistent with knowledge of the originals (cf. e.g. Reinhardt, *Parmenides*<sup>2</sup> [Frankfurt, 1959], 93 f., note o), and knowledge of the originals no guarantee of reliability, witness Aristotle (cf. my "Aristotle on Breathing in the *Timaeus*", *AJP* 86 [1965], 404-08, with correction of printer's erratum in *AJP* 88 [1966], 17).

*suapte disciplina occaecatus aliena nec intellegere recte nec proferre incorrupte poterat.* Lucretius' very freedom from such vituperation argues that so wide and subtle a departure from the conventional picture of Academic anti-materialism is not only a mere by-product of polemical zeal, but, on the contrary, the deliberate result of carefully considered opinion. Nor, finally, can Lucretius' ostensibly so grotesque account be traced to a misunderstanding of his authorities, as it can be in the genuinely complex matter of the planetary orbits (V. 614-49, with Bailey *ad loc.*).

The reason, then, for Lucretius' reduction of Academic cosmology to anthropomorphic and magical terms must be sought not in his primary or secondary sources, but in the preconceptions with which he approaches them<sup>48</sup>). Chief among these preconceptions is the one already identified as the reason for Lucretius' retaining the outer shell of the Gigantomachy-metaphor (above, p. 312). It is that all views prior to Epicurus' total disjunction of physics and theology stand guilty of that mutual contamination of physics and anthropomorphic god-*eidola* which is the hallmark of primitive *religio*<sup>49</sup>). In effect,

48) Mere chronology, then, i.e. the felt need of Later Epicureans to extend their anti-Academic polemic to the Stoa (see above, note 32), can hardly provide a sufficient reason for Lucretius' imputing anthropocentric (Stoic) teleology to the Platonists (V. 156-63). As a good Epicurean, Lucretius was convinced on *a priori* grounds that *all* teleology is anthropomorphic, i.e. that even the Academy's overtly cosmocentric teleology (*Tim.* 34 B; 47 B ff.) is in reality crypto-anthropomorphic. Thus Aristotle's parallel in *De Phil.* fg. 18 between his past fears for his house and his present fears for the cosmos, if taken at face-value, may have struck Epicureans as a confirmation, in the defendant's own words, of this *a priori* conviction. In effect, Academic teleology is thus forced back into the very mold from which it sought to break away. Posidonius' deliberate misconstrual of the antecedent of *τούτων* in Plato's *ὁμολοσις θεῶν* text (*Theaet.* 176 A), perpetuated by Cic., *ND* II. 153 (with Theiler, "Die Vorbereitung des Neuplatonismus", *Problemata* 1 [1930], 107), is a good parallel. Actual emendation of the text for dogmatic reasons (cf. Harder [above, note 16], 126, note 1) is something else again.

49) See *DRN* II. 644-45; 655-56. Freymuth, "Zur Lehre v. d. Götterbildern i. d. epik. Phil.", *DAdW* 2 (1953), esp. 11-13; 21-22 disposes of Diels' notion (*APAW* 1916, 6) that, unlike Epicurus himself (*Ep. Pyth.* 97), Philodemus π. *θεῶν* III, col. 10, 2 ff. makes the stars an inferior class of gods. Philodemus' distinction is not between two classes of gods but between two classes of idols proceeding from one and the same class of gods. Popular religion contaminates the first with the second kind; so does Academic astrotheology (Philipson's sharp distinction between popular and astral religion ["Die Götterlehre der Epikureer", *Rb. M.* 83 (1934), 172-73] becomes correspondingly untenable). Thus, the same contamination accounts for vulgar anthropomorphism and Academic anti-anthropo-

the very notion of a non-anthropomorphic god-concept is disallowed as a contradiction in terms. If it is non-anthropomorphic, it is not a god-concept; if it is a god-concept, it is not non-anthropomorphic. On this axiom, then, the astral intelligences of the Academy are but a pseudo-scientific form of the primitive endowment of celestial events with the volition of anthropomorphic gods<sup>50</sup>), and, like these anthropomorphic gods, open to human pressure, whether in the shape of prayers<sup>51</sup>) “fatiguing”<sup>52</sup>), of sacrifices bribing or “enabling”<sup>53</sup>), or of outright magic compelling them, into compliance.

#### IV: Conclusions

This picture of Academic anti-materialism is plainly predicated on the conviction that the Epicurean principle cited enables one to understand his predecessors better not only than the doxography understands them, but also better than they understood themselves. The belief that possession of a particular set of principles enables one to understand his predecessors better than they did themselves is not, of course, original with Epicureanism. It already informs Aristotle's famous survey of Presocratics and Platonists<sup>54</sup>). The parallel is hardly accidental.

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morphism alike. Both are equidistant from the pure, i.e. correctly anthropomorphic (and in that sense *θεομορφῆ*) idols discerned by Epicurus.

50) See DRN I. 68-69; V. 1183-93; 1204-17. On this view, the whole prehistory of nonanthropomorphic theology from, say, Xenophanes to Aristotle and the Stoa is but a case of self-deception (*desiperest*, V. 164) as to the primitive confusion at issue and potentially just as murderous (I. 82-83). In effect, Lucretius and his Epicurean sources are rejecting Theophrastus' postulate (in *II. Ἐνδοξείας*) of a preanthropomorphic stage of piety. They could (with Burkert, “Urgeschichte der Technik im Spiegel antiker Religion”, *Technik und Geschichte* 34 [1967], 291, note 32) cite the female statuettes, archaeologically *predating* the primitive *ξόανα*, as evidence against Theophrastus.

51) Provided they are respectful (V. 1224).

52) Sen., *Ep.* 31. 5; Hor., *Carm.* I. 2; Tacit., *Hist.* I. 20, with Heiler, *Das Gebet* (München, 1923), 89 and van der Leeuw (above, note 25), 426.

53) Van der Leeuw (above, note 25), 354.

54) As originally set forth in *De Phil.* A and its pendants, *Met.* A and (at least for its historical information) *Met.* A. What Cherniss (above, note 14), 30, says about Aristotle applies to Lucretius as well. He, too, “is one of those who cannot be refuted by an author's words because he is sure that the author was unable to say what he really thought”. Hence the relentless attempt “to recast into the terms of his own philosophy the

After all, Bignone has shown to what extraordinary extent Epicurus' thinking is patterned on a close, running polemic against the early Aristotle, in particular<sup>55</sup>). Yet we can go beyond this general presumption. Lucretius' imputation of mythological fears to Platonists and Aristotelians combines with his express claim that philosophy proper was not born till Epicurus (*primum Graius homo*, I. 66)<sup>56</sup>) to evoke the corresponding passages in *Met.* A and its prototype, *De Phil.* A:

Lucretius, <i>DRN</i> –	Aristotle, <i>Met.</i> A 3, 983 b –
mythological fears: V 114–21, 156–63	28–9: <i>παμπάλαιοι ... καὶ πρῶτοι θεολογήσαντες (= μυθικῶς σοφιζόμενοι</i> B 4, 1000 a 18)
<i>primum Graius homo</i> : I 66	6–7: <i>πρῶτοι φιλοσοφήσαντες</i>

Lucretius' point is deliberately paradoxical: it turns Aristotle's distinction between philosophy and myth against its author. Aristotle's view of the matter was as follows. Mythology shares with philosophy both its coherence and its chief subject-matter. Its pursuit of knowledge (cf. the famous opening sentence of the *Metaphysics*), though not conceptual, is as coherent as that of philosophy proper. This is why the practitioners of mythology are termed *μυθικῶς σοφιζόμενοι* (*Met.* B 4, 1000 a 18). Its chief subject-matter is the same astrotheological intuition that along with veridical dreams forms one of the two sources of man's knowledge of the divine<sup>57</sup>) (*De Phil.* III, fg. 12a). This is why both mythology and first philosophy are termed *θεολογία* (*Met.* A 3, 983 b 29; E 1, 1026 a 19). Mythological theology, then, deals with the same nonanthropomorphic data as philosophical theology. It, too, takes astral motion as evidence not of human volition writ large and of anthropomorphic gods, but of that

statements of other philosophers and then to treat as their 'real meaning' the implications of the statements thus translated" (51).

55) Bignone (above, note 8), II. 415.

56) Edelstein's thesis ("Primum Graius Homo", *TAPA* 71 [1940], 78–90) that this refers to the Presocratics generally is refuted by the proems to III, V, and VI. Cf. also Bailey on *DRN* I. 66. To the Epicureans, then, the Presocratics are not enlightened positivists (as Gomperz saw them) but rational theologians (as Aristotle and Jaeger saw them).

57) Reading "something divine" (*τι θεῖον*) at S.E., *Phys.* I. 21, p. 217, 20 Mutschm.

rationality which is precisely the nonanthropomorphic, "divine" element in man (*Protrept.* fg. 10c; *N.E.* X 7, 1177a 16). Here then is one crucial difference from Epicurus' analysis of the same data. Veridical dreams, like those of Patroclus and Hector, confirm the astral, nonanthropomorphic origin of our intelligence. They thus confirm – and this is Aristotle's second difference from the Epicurean analysis – the nonanthropomorphic nature of deity, even when their prophecies come in association with dreams of anthropomorphic gods<sup>58</sup>). Aristotle, of course, would not deny the psychological reality of such dream-images. But he would insist that Epicurus' argument from the appearance of anthropomorphic god-images in dreams to the real existence of such gods (*DRN* V. 1169–82) neglects Xenophanes' proof of the extent to which the biological, ethnic, and cultural predicament of the uncritical subject relativize his god-notion<sup>59</sup>). In effect, he would brand Epicurus' argument from dreams an epistemologically naive misappropriation of his own argument in *De Philosophia* III. To Aristotle, then, the difference between mythology and astrotheological philosophy is not one of coherence or subject-matter but of expression and relative awareness only.

His cyclical philosophy of history postulates a perpetual succession of (1) initial possession of the truth, (2) gradual loss through oblivion occasioned by terrestrial catastrophes, (3) gradual recovery (i.e. *Met.* A 981 b 13–20), and (4) full-fledged repossession of the truth. At the first and last stages of this cycle, concept and myth occur side by side, mythology serving as a deliberately allegorical, exoteric disguise of the one, perennial, conceptual, and esoteric truth. Thus the deliberate encoding of truth, for reasons of social control, in the language of therio- and anthropomorphic mythology marks at once the end of the pre-Hellenic cycle and the pinnacle, from which the first phase of the Greek cycle constitutes a decline. Aristotle simply speaks of those at this pinnacle as "extremely ancient" (*παμπάλαιων*, *Met.* A 1074 b 1); that he means the Egyptians is virtually certain<sup>60</sup>).

58) Note importantly that what Aristotle means by the divination of deity in dreams is entirely non-anthropomorphic in content.

59) See my "Empirical Aspects of Xenophanes' Theology" (above, note 28).

60) So Ross on b 6, with Alexander. See also *Met.* A 8, 1074 b 6; 4–5; 10. In *Met.* A 1, 981 b 23, the Egyptians are named as the consummation of previous development. Aristotle discerns a (necessary?) connection, then,



Compared to them, the first figures of the Greek cycle, viz. Homer, Hesiod, and Pherecydes, the *παμπάλαιοι καὶ* (sc. within that cycle) *πρωῶτοι θεολογήσαντες* (*Met.* A 983 b 28), mark a sharp decline. Having forgotten the esoteric, conceptual insight behind the mythology, they mistake that mythology for the literal truth. Aristotle's indiscriminate reference to both the Egyptians and Homer *et al.* as *παμπάλαιοι, θεολόγοι* (in a restrictive sense that notoriously contrasts with his generic use of the corresponding *nomen actionis, θεολογία*)<sup>61</sup>, and *μυθικῶς σοφισζόμενοι* (*Met.* B 1000 a 18) must not be allowed to blur the sharp distinction between them<sup>62</sup>. As the first of the *πρωῶτοι φιλοσοφήσαντες* (*Met.* A 983 b 6), finally, Thales ushers in the next 250 years, during which conceptual formulation gradually reasserts its inherent primacy over myth, until with Aristotle himself the lispng Aristotelianism of his predecessors achieves full articulation. As if to symbolize the fact that Aristotle understands himself as returning philosophy to a stage of consummation equivalent to that which it had reached once before, in Egypt, Aristotle stresses his own growing fondness for myth (*Demetr., De Interpr.* 144 = *Epist.* fg. 618 R<sup>2</sup>). Each of these successive cycles is teleological in the sense of a self-actualizing entelechy (*Met.* A 984 a 18; b 10).

As an Epicurean, Lucretius has of course no more use for a teleological explanation of historical than of natural facts. To mistake teleological appearances for reality is inherently "mythological"<sup>63</sup>, whether the phenomena in question are those of intellectual history or those of physics, even if the formal categories in which this mistake expresses itself are not themselves mythological but conceptual. Conversely, to distinguish teleological appearances from non-teleological reality is the hallmark of philosophy, even if the categories employed are not themselves conceptual

between undemocratic polities and allegorical mythology, on the one hand, and (more or less) democratic polities, like those of 6th century Ionia, and either primitive mythologizing or conceptual philosophizing, on the other. Would he see in the deliberate re-mythologizing of purely conceptual insights (as e.g. in Derveni-papyrus, with Burkert, "Orpheus und die Vorsokratiker", *Antike u. Abldd.* XIV [1968], 93-114) evidence of political reaction?

61) Cf. e.g. Jaeger, *The Theology etc.* (above, note 28), 5.

62) If this second distinction is ignored (as it is e.g. in Jaeger [above, note 58], 10; 195, note 31), the mistaken impression arises that Aristotle claims Homer, Hesiod, and Pherecydes as conscious allegorists.

63) For the Epicurean expansion of the meaning of "mythology", see above, pp. 312f.

but (sc. allegorically) mythological, as they are in Empedocles and Lucretius himself. To an Epicurean, then, the pre-history of his own philosophy is a random, non-progressive series of variations on the theme of mythology and *religio*, unrelieved except by one or two oases of incipient enlightenment, which even among themselves are unrelated by any logical, teleological, or providential link. This is why Lucretius simply transfers to Epicurus the great innovative roles which Aristotle, in a very different context, had assigned to Thales and Xenophanes respectively. For it appears to have gone unnoticed that as *primum Graius homo* (I 66)<sup>64</sup>) transfers to Epicurus what *Met.* A 3, 983 b 6 had credited to Thales, viz. to be the first of the *πρῶτοι φιλοσοφίσαντες*, so the rest of the sentence, *mortalis tollere contra | est oculos ausus* (sc. *caeli regiones*), transfers to Epicurus what A 6, 986b24 had credited to the first monist, viz. to have conceived his nonanthropomorphic henotheism *εἰς τὸν ὄλον οὐρανὸν ἀποβλέψας*. Both critiques are complementary. They correct Aristotle by downdating “firsts” crucial to philosophy to a period later than Aristotle. To Lucretius, this correction (*διόρθωσις*) of Aristotle is a point not only of philosophic but also of poetic import. For the reclassification of Academic philosophy as mythology opens up for the Epicurean poet a whole new reservoir from which to draw, if only rhetorically, such mythological comparisons and outright allegories as promise to sweeten the bitter medicine of didactic exposition. As the mythical apotheosis of benefactors like Hercules *et al.* is cited to dramatize Epicurus’ even greater merit (V. 13–28); as the myth of Mars and Venus was cited in the proem to Book I as an outright allegory of Epicurean key-concepts; so the rhetoric of cosmic piety, familiar from *De Philosophia*, is reproduced in the proem of Book V only to show that it is even more appropriate to the Epicurean separation than to the Academic contamination of theology and physics; so the Timaeian scheme of continuous proportionality is reproduced in the same proem only to show that an Epicurean universe of pure chance is capable of saving teleological appearances with the aid of even fewer hypotheses than the inherently teleological cosmos of the Academy.

Epicurus’ own earlier agonistic imitations of Aristotle’s *Protrepticus* and *De Philosophia*<sup>65</sup>) cannot by themselves explain

64) Cf. also V. 9–10.

65) See above, note 32, for Epicurus’ material, not formal, “imitation”

Lucretius' inclusion here of Academic philosophy among the mythological subjects suitable for allegorical treatment. Only Epicurus' redefinition of mythology to include teleological, i.e. Academic and Stoic, philosophy can do so. Yet the Master himself, with his notorious aversion to literary adornment<sup>66</sup>), could hardly have drawn this conclusion from his own premise. That precisely is where the poet of Epicureanism can go beyond Epicurus himself. Thus, as V. 114-21 and 156-63 have shown the Epicurean in Lucretius the doxographer (above, p. 308), so the poem of Book V<sup>67</sup>) shows the Lucretian in Lucretius the Epicurean:

Quis potis est dignum pollenti pectore carmen	1
condere pro rerum maiestate hisque repertis?	2
quisve valet verbis tantum qui fingere laudes	3
pro meritis eius possit qui talia nobis	4
pectore parta suo quaesitaque praemia liquit?	5
nemo, ut opinor, erit mortali corpore cretus.	6
nam si, ut ipsa maiestas cognita rerum,	7
dicendum est, deus ille fuit, deus, ...	8

Lucretius modestly asks: who but a god could compose a poem that

- (1) does proper justice to the inherent majesty of things (*pro rerum maiestate*) sc. (a) of the secular, spatially infinite, and temporally finite physical universe itself,
  - (b) of the Epicurean gods as wholly unconcerned with that universe;
- (2) does proper justice to the corresponding majesty of Epicurus' discoveries (*bisque repertis*) concerning the universe, the gods, and their total separateness; and
- (3) properly praises Epicurus personally for bestowing on mankind the ethics (*vital rationem*) implicit in this separation of theology from physics, a gift so precious that benefactor (V. 50f.) and gift (III. 12-3) alike deserve to share with the divine models of this ethic the attribute of immortality, – the same attribute that Lucretius expects his own work to earn through its beauty alone (I. 28)? Lucretius here chooses

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of Aristotle. What Bignone (above, note 52) calls Lucretius' *bellissimi versi apocalittici* (viz. V. 91ff.), his response to *De Phil.* fg. 14, is a case in point. It is inspired by *certandi cupido*, not *amor* – unlike his "imitations" of Epicurus (III. 5).

66) Cf. Norden, *Kunstprosa* (Leipzig, 1898), I. 124.

67) Bignone's remarks on this poem (above, note 8), II. 402 do not touch on our point.

to convey the special, Epicurean meaning of *δμοίωσις θεῶν* through the allegorical use of two mythological notions, viz. apotheosis and poetic praise as the guarantors of immortality.

Yet our passage contains two more such allegorical adaptations of "mythology". One is contained in Lucretius' concern (see (1) and (2) above) that his poem – for it is his own poem, of course, that he has in mind – properly reflect the *rerum maiestas*. As we saw, that term covers both the purely secular majesty of an infinite universe and the purely theological majesty of gods serenely unconcerned with that universe. Both forms of majesty are, of course, profoundly un-Aristotelian. To the early Aristotle, as to the rest of the Academy, the majesty of the universe derived from its alleged combination of inherent (astrotheological) divinity, spatial finitude, and eternity; the majesty of the star-gods, conversely, from their providential involvement with that cosmos.

In *De Philosophia* III (fg. 14) Aristotle had given that cosmic piety its classic expression. He there spoke of the cosmos as of an astrotheological mysteries-temple and, according to Plutarch, called it a *ἱερόν ... ἁγιώτατον ... καὶ θεοπροπέστατον*<sup>68</sup>). Lucretius' repeated, hence emphatic, use of the term *rerum maiestas* to refer to universe and gods alike strongly suggests that through it he makes a polemical point against Aristotle's "mythological" because astrotheological use of the category *θεοπροπέτες*, i.e. that he engages in Epicurean allegorizing. This allegorizing proceeds on two levels. On the first, Lucretius polarizes Aristotle's category into a purely secular *maiestas* inherent in spatial infinity and into a purely theological *maiestas* inherent in the gods' non-involvement with the physical universe. On the second level, he rejoins into a higher (analogical) unity the two separate realms and *maiestates* just discriminated. The point, of course, is that nature and gods are both produced by stable and fertile combinations of atoms. In the proem to Book I all of these combinations, whether occurring in nature (I. 21) or among the gods (I. 1) are expressly referred to the allegorical Venus-figure. Insofar as this allegorical Venus symbolizes the higher, analogical unity of nature and the gods (sc. by reference to the stable and fertile atomic combinations common

68) There is no reason to distrust Plutarch's terminology. But the case does not depend on his verbal accuracy.



to both), her *maiestas* plainly includes, side by side, the purely secular *maiestas* of the infinite universe and the purely theological *maiestas* inherent in the very separation of the gods from that universe. It is this celebration of a single *maiestas*, uniting the separate dignities of universe and gods, which the repeated singular, *rerum maiestas*, of Book V expressly resumes. The *Veneris maiestas* or *Venere dignum* implicit in the proem to Book I is as much the Epicurean alternative to Aristotle's *ἱερὸν . . . θεοπρεπέστατον* as the *rerum maiestas* explicit in the proem to Book V. As such, it deserves a separate chapter in a history of the concept τὸ θεοπρεπές<sup>69</sup>.

As the Venus-figure in Book I serves to allegorize the association in *conventional* mythology of stability and fertility with providential design, so the references to *rerum maiestas* in Book V serve to allegorize the association in (what to Lucretius is) *philosophical* mythology, viz. Aristotle, *De Philosophia*, Book III, of the astronomical cosmos with the peculiar dignity (*θεοπρέπεια*) of gods. Lucretius' prominent references to *rerum maiestas* in the proem to Book V, then, turn out to be an Epicurean allegory of Aristotle, *De Phil.* III (fg. 14) in the same sense that *primum Graius homo mortalis tollere contra est oculos ausus* (I. 66–7) was seen to be (above, p. 320) an allegory of the passages in *De Phil.* A corresponding to *Met.* A 983 b 6 + 986 b 24. By contrast, Lucretius' claim in the proem to the Third Book that Epicureanism's spatially infinite and inherently "episodic" universe and intermundial gods are both intelligible (*omnia dispiciantur*, III. 26) and aesthetically enjoyable (*divina voluptas*, III. 28) through the finite medium of the Epicurean corpus is a mere critique, not an actual allegory, of Aristotle's doctrine (*Poet.* VII 1450 b 40–1451 a 4) that only an object that is inherently both finite and "comprehensible at one glance" (*εὐσύννοπτον*) can be intelligible and beautiful. For since this particular Aristotelian doctrine does not involve the conflation of physics and theology, it cannot, strictly speaking, be classed as philosophical mythology and, by that token, become the subject of Lucretian allegorizing.

According to the proem to Book V, the ideal Epicurean poem must do for Epicurus as well as reality (i. e. for nature and the gods) what Epicurus himself had done, in jejune prose, for reality alone. All three, nature and the gods, Epicurus and his

69) See my forthcoming book (above, note 28), chapter on Epicurus.



treatises, and Lucretius and his poem are the subject of religious predication, allegorically employed. The stable and fertile combinations of atoms, to which the universe and the gods owe their existence, are credited to "Venus" and, in effect, declared more deserving of Aristotle's pious rhetoric than Aristotle's own astrotheological cosmos. Epicurus is termed more "godlike" than Ceres, Liber, and Hercules (V. 8). And the poet of Epicureanism is said (ideally) to be "godlike" himself (V. 6), if his poem is to prove *dignum pro rerum maiestate* (i.e. *Venere dignum*) and to possess the "immortal" *lepor* that only "Venus" can bestow<sup>70</sup>). The literal meanings of the allegorical uses of religious predication cited include, but are irreducible to, the specific *maiestas* of the Epicurean gods and/or their "assimilated" followers. At every level, the literal meanings include the purely secular *maiestas* of the physical universe as well. This necessarily follows from the fact that Lucretius' *rerum* (i.e. *Veneris*) *maiestas* includes the purely secular *maiestas* of the infinite universe alongside the specifically theological *maiestas* of the Epicurean gods and their human followers.

More important for our purposes here, however, than the literal meaning of these successive, religious predications *more allegorico* is the significance of the series itself when taken as a whole. For then the four terms: (A) reality, (B) Epicurus and his treatises, (C) Lucretius and his poem, (D) posterity, evoke the sort of continuous proportion,  $A : B = B : C = C : D$ , which since at least Plato's *Timaeus* has been considered prime evidence of providential design<sup>71</sup>). The point is that the 4-term

70) The successive cognitive and verbal responses to the *rerum maiestas* by Epicurus, Lucretius, and posterity (in that order), perpetuate in the name of their smallest units, *elementa* (see Diels, *Elementum* [Leipzig, 1899], 5-14; Friedländer, "Pattern of Sound and Atomistic Theory", *AJP* 62 [1941], 17; 30) and in the attribute "eternal" (III. 13; I. 28 with Elder, "Lucretius I. 1-49", *TAPA* 88 [1954], 112-14), accruing to the actual words compounded of these elements, the ultimate components of the reality they celebrate. The corollary, too, deserves notice, however. Since the "immortality", which Lucretius hopes will accrue to his poem, is pictured as a gift of Venus, it is just as allegorical as the Venus-figure. After all, his poem cannot outlast the coming destruction of this universe.

71) According to *Tim.* 32 B, "solids (as against plane surfaces) are always conjoined not by one mean but by two. Hence water and air are needed to link the extremes of fire and earth into a two-way relation. At 35 B-C the World-Soul and the world are similarly linked. H. Fränkel, "Eine heraklitische Denkform", *Wege und Formen frühgriechischen Denkens* (München, 1955), 280-81, traces the proportionality of the elements back to Heraclitus.

series as a whole allegorizes what, to Lucretius, is the philosophical "mythology" of the *Timaeus*, just as the *dignum ... pro rerum maiestate* allegorizes that of *De Philosophia*. Lucretius pretends, in effect, that the universe is governed by an antecedent divine plan (so the Academics), which provides for the creation of Epicurus so that this universe may be properly celebrated<sup>72</sup>), and man be properly benefited (so the Stoics). Lucretius' real point, of course, is the exact opposite of this. Reality is without teleological, let alone anthropocentric plan and is exclusively governed by the fortuitous, i. e. at once random and occasionally lucky ("Veneric"), concurrence of atoms<sup>73</sup>). Though it produced Epicurus and his philosophy (*irritat...ut...cupiret*, I. 70-1), it did so without design. Conversely, Epicurus' own creative purpose (V. 5), like the subsequent conversion of Lucretius and posterity to Epicureanism, is but evidence of a lucky, because stable and fertile, combination of atoms<sup>74</sup>). The quasi-mechanical link between stimulus and response explains all three, exemplified by the attraction of bees to honey in the second case (III. 11-2) and of all men to beauty in the third case (I. 28).

In his own case, so Lucretius tells us, the encounter with Epicurus' work happened to translate itself into two stable and fertile forms in particular: into personal enlightenment (III. 14-17) and into poetry that will beneficently do to posterity

72) Cf. Pindar, fg. hymn. 12 Bowra (with Snell, *AuA* II [1946], 195): Having completed the cosmos, Zeus asks the gods if there is anything they still need/want (*δέουρω*). They reply, "gods made by Zeus to adorn (i. e. celebrate) the cosmos in *λόγοι* and *μουσικίη*". According to the proem to *DRN*, Epicurus is that "needed", "divine" celebrator. Yet his deification rewards his services not to the *rerum maiestas* but to man. Lucretius himself does not expect to be deified for celebrating the celebrator and is content if his words prove to have the magical powers of a mere Orpheus: see below, pp. 326f.

73) It is hardly mere coincidence that a lucky dice-player's winning throw was called *Venerius iactus* (cf. Koch, *RE* VIII A, 1 [1955], s.v. "Venus", 863-65). Saltzer, *Parmenides, Leukippos und die Grundlegung der Epikurischen Physik und Ethik bei Lukrez*, Dissertation (Frankfurt, 1964, Xerox only), 98ff. rightly calls Venus "der Anti- oder Realmythos der Immanenz" (109), symbol of purely fortuitous, if luckily stable and fertile, combinations of atoms.

74) Storing, proleptically composing, and interpreting sensory images is a mechanical reaction to the corresponding effluences. So is the "decision" how to act upon the resultant interpretation. Lucretius' own conversion, his composing *DRN*, and the expected conversion of others through the aesthetic appeal of his poem (see below, p. 326f.) are, like the formation of human politics in Book V, typical instances of reducing action to reaction.

what, according to fearful Academics, it maleficiently threatens to do to the very universe, viz. spellbind it. As for his poetry, his use of *carmen* at least once (I. 143) in a sense that “seems to have a slight suggestion of ‘magical song’ or ‘incantation’”<sup>75</sup>) is the positive complement of what we have found the Academics fearing as Epicureanism’s evil verbal magic (V. 114–21; 156–63). He thus casts himself and is cast by the Academics in the role of another Orpheus. Yet Lucretius is careful to mark the differences between the hoped for powers of his poem and the proven powers of Epicurean philosophy. Note that the impact of Epicureanism during its author’s lifetime is not even allegorically spoken of as magical. It only became “magical” after Epicurus’ death. According to the proem of Book I, Epicurus himself had to force open the gates of the *moenia mundi*<sup>76</sup>) by breaking gates and locks together, presumably with the battering-ram of intellectual courage (*animi virtus*, I. 70). Only after his death and apotheosis (Book V) his words acquired the magical power to make the *moenia mundi* open up by themselves: *simul ac ratio tua coepit vociferari naturam rerum... moenia mundi discedunt* (III. 14–17)<sup>77</sup>). They acquired this new power only through Epicurus’ posthumous apotheosis, witness the mythological tradition, as old as Homer (E 749 =  $\Theta$  393), that a god’s voice and *a fortiori* his epiphany<sup>78</sup>) possess the power of causing gates to unbolt themselves and to swing open. We shall notice presently two ways in which Lucretius modifies this Homeric

75) So Leonard and Smith, *ad loc.*

76) By contrast to the gates of, say, Parmenides *DK* 28 B 1, 11 and 21–22 (on them, see Fränkel [above, note 68], 161, note 3), these gates appear to lack a specifically astronomical content and to be purely metaphorical.

77) Lucretius’ use of the present tense: *coepit* (14), *diffugiunt* (16), *discedunt* (17) shows that he thinks of this conversion as an ongoing process with results never to be taken for granted, i.e. as a challenge to his *virtus* ( $\alpha\rho\epsilon\tau\eta$ ) comparable to that of Epicurus (I. 70). The exact relation of this active *virtus* to the model of mechanical reaction remains problematic.

78) See Weinreich, “Gebet und Wunder. Zwei Abhandlungen zur Religions- und Literaturgeschichte”, *Tüb. Beitr.* V (1929), 169–464; esp. 68 (on Callimachus, *Hymn. Apoll.* 6–7); 87 ff. on “Türwunder beim Erschallen der göttlichen Stimme (partielle Epiphanie) und als Zeichen göttlicher Willensäußerung”; 280 ff. on “Türöffnung im Befreiungswunder” (as in Eurip., *Bacch.* 445 ff. and *Acts*); 342 ff. on “Türöffnung bei Zauber und Gebet” (as in *Orph. Argon.* 985 ff.). As Lucretius uses this tradition only in denaturalized form (see the sentences immediately following in my text), Weinreich passes over the Lucretian passages in silence.

motif. Suffice it here to note that it is precisely Epicurus' more-than-Herculean labors (*Πόνοσ*) and corresponding merit during his own lifetime (V. 22 ff.) which earn him posthumous apotheosis and, with it, the permanent divine privilege of achieving without effort what even men of genius like Epicurus can achieve only through effort, if at all<sup>79</sup>). Disclaiming for his own labors (I. 141 ff.) a merit equal to that of Hercules, let alone Epicurus, Lucretius does not hope to earn posthumous deification. Instead, it is by a combination of effort and good luck alone that he must hope to impart to his poem *aeternus lepor* (I. 28), i. e. the verbal magic that will ensure it an aesthetic appeal as durable as the moral relevance of its subject, Epicureanism. The task is superhuman (V. 1 ff.). Like Orpheus of old, Lucretius is only human and so must rely on skill and luck alone. Yet it is not Orpheus' song but Epicurus' technical philosophy which, for all its narrow and slow appeal, furnishes Lucretius with his primary example of verbal magic. Capitalizing on the ambiguity of *λόγος/ratio*, he modestly treats the magical power of his own poetry as inferior to that vested in the concepts of the deified Master.

In the process, however, he modifies the Homeric motif cited in two respects. What tradition had reserved to the voice of gods or goddesses alone he extends to the words of a deified man as posthumously, i. e. vicariously, pronounced by the *persona* of his reader (reading aloud, of course, being standard throughout Antiquity). And he extends to the very walls the self-opening response that tradition had reserved to gates only. The point of this second extension, surely, is that, once he had battered open the gates, Epicurus had pushed straight on to new discoveries – *et extra processit large flammantia moenia mundi* (I. 72–3) –, leaving the *moenia mundi* themselves behind in his rear, to be demolished by his followers. Lucretius is one of them. Yet what Lucretius now discovers is, as said, that the written word of the deified Master possesses the same miraculous opening-power as the voice of living gods and that it possesses this power not merely over doors and gates but also over the very walls in which doors and gates are set. For the plain meaning of *moenia mundi discedunt* (III. 14–17) is that they spontaneously swing apart like gates and so, in effect, dispose of themselves.

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79) We can here moot the question whether Epicurus' apotheosis in V was therefore composed before the proem to III.

Reduced to their literal meaning, *moenia mundi* are in all cases but the visible limits of the sky. To the Academics they form a sacred shell, providentially guarded by astral gods and magically endangered by Epicurean argument. To the Epicureans they are purely relative boundaries, which man's own ignorance and fear tend to absolutize and so convert into a prison. By progressing beyond them with the help of Epicurean doctrine man can and must escape imprisonment by them. Typologically, therefore, Lucretius' metaphor of *moenia mundi* opening up at the (vicarious) sound of the Master's voice is at once an adaptation and a mixture of what Weinreich (with reference to doors only) distinguishes into "Türwunder beim Erschallen der göttlichen Stimme" and "Türöffnung im Befreiungswunder" (as in Eurip., *Bacch.* 445 ff.).

In sum, the self-same power of Epicurean doctrine, which in III. 14-17 Lucretius himself metaphorically hails as beneficent, he charges the Academy with literally fearing as maleficent in V. 144-21 and 156-63. Obviously, verbal magic joins the ranks of those mythological categories which (like Venus, cosmic piety, and the providential arrangement of things) strike the Epicurean poet as contemptible superstition when taken literally, yet as perfectly acceptable when employed and understood allegorically. In everyone of the cases cited (some originating in popular, some in philosophical mythology) Lucretius not only does not soften but actually maximizes the clash of the literal and the allegorical meanings. For he makes the allegorical meanings carry a sense not only contrary but actually contradictory to the literal one<sup>80</sup>). Given the Epicurean extension of mythology to include most pre-Epicurean philosophy, the literal, ostensibly familiar meanings of Lucretius' "mythological" categories turn out to be part of the "baiting"-function that he expressly assigns to his poetic vehicle (I. 935-50). To the reader's enjoyment of the poetic form they add the equally pleasurable illusion of material familiarity and so delay the shock of recognition till after the Epicurean medicine has had a chance to take. Whence enlightenment with respect to the universe and the gods necessarily entails enlightenment with respect to the mythologi-

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80) Lucretius uses the language of teleology and mythology to startle his readers out of the vulgar identification of teleological appearances and reality. Cf. Plato's using the Timaeon creation-account "to startle his audience out of the vulgar identification of temporal and ontological priority" (Cherniss, [above, note 11], 424-25).



cal categories, popular or (pseudo-)philosophical, of Lucretius' own poem. The latter becomes, as it were, the acid-test of the former. To be reliable (in the sense of *K. Δ. XXIV*), our sensory perception of Lucretius' mythological passages, like that of nature and the gods, must be corrected by the "true" perception that physics and theology are in reality separate realms.

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## EURIPIDIS IN ANAXILAE FRAGMENTO FRAGMENTUM

In Athenaei *Δειπνοσοφισταῖς* cum alia Anaxilae<sup>1)</sup> comoediae mediae scriptoris fragmenta inveniuntur, tum longior ille monologus fabulae cuiusdam, quae ex meretricis Atheniensis nomine *Νεοττίς* nominatur (fr. 22 K)<sup>2)</sup>. quo in fragmento primum (vv. 1-7) monologi totius propositio, quae est comparatio scelerati meretricum generis atque fabularium monstrorum, verbis admodum concitatis catalogo talium prodigiorum uberrimo quasi prooemium datur, deinde (vv. 8 ss) confirmationis loco subsequitur meretricum Atheniensium plus minusve adhuc nobilium enumeratio, quarum suum cuique monstrum attribuitur, ut *Πλαγγόνι* Chimaera (vv. 8-11), quod mercatores peregrinos incendio inflamet, vel *Σινώπη* excetra Lernaea (vv. 12-14), quod ab hac meretrice iam vetula liberatus in alteram nomine *Γνάθαιναν* iuxta habitantem incurras, quae altero tanto peior sit illa. tertia enumerationis particula ab Athenaeo sophista his tribus versibus traditur:

15 ἡ δὲ Νάννιον τί νννι<sup>3)</sup> διαφέρειν Σκύλλης δοκεῖ;  
οὐ δὲ ἀποπνίξασ' εταίρους τὸν τρίτον θηρεύεται  
εἶτι λαβεῖν; ἀλλ' ἐξέπεσε πορθμῆς ἐλατίνῳ πλάτῃ.

1) de Anaxila cf. A. Meineke, *Historia critica comicorum Graecorum* (= FCG I), Berolini 1839, 406-409; RE I (1894) 2084 s.v. Anaxilas (Kaibel). Fragmenta ediderunt Meineke FCG III (Berolini 1840) 341 ss, Kock CAF II (Lipsiae 1884) 264 ss, Edmonds FAC II (Leiden 1959) 332 ss.

2) Ath. 13, 558a-e (III 230/31 ed. Kaibel); octo primos versus septimo excepto laudat etiam Eustathius (Od. 1714, 38-41), fortasse ex Athenaeo excerptos; cf. FCG III 347-50, CAF II 270/71, FAC II 340-343.

3) ννν Ath., νννι coniecit Jacobs, ννν δη Grotius (unde itacismo νννδιαφέρειν fieri potuit, inde etiam ἀπλογραφία lectio Athenaei).