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Emendations on the fourth book of Lucretius

Summary – Ten emendations are offered on the text of the fourth book of Lucretius' *De rerum natura*: 4, 79; 81; 397; 553; 594; 632; 785; 809; 884; 1282. In two of these instances I challenge what has been the vulgate text for the last five centuries (4, 785; 884) and in one instance I suggest that corruption has occurred in a previously unsuspected passage (4, 809).

78–83:

*namque ibi concessum caveai supter et omnem
scaenai speciem †patrum matrumque deorum†
80 inficiunt coguntque suo fluitare colore;
et quanto circum mage sunt inclusa theatri
moenia, tam magis haec intus perfusa lepore
omnia conrident correpta luce diei.*

78 *concessum* O^s : *concessum* O^{a.c.} : *consensum* Q 79 *scaenai* Lambinus : *scaenali* O : *scaenali* Q : *scaenalem* O¹ Itali *patrum matrumque deorum* mss : *pulcrum variumque decorem* Lachmann : *multi alii multa alia* 81 *inclusa* Q : *inclaustra* O : *angusta* Lachmann : *ita clausa* Brieger : *his clausa* Giussani : *induta* Reid : *ut claustra* Diels : *iam clausa* Edelbluth : *in claustra* Martin : *ibi clausa* García Calvo

I open in the heat of controversy, for line 79 is perhaps the most vexed passage in Book 4 of *De rerum natura*¹ and almost all critics are agreed that the words *patrum matrumque deorum* cannot stand as transmitted in O and Q.² Since it would be tiresome to treat individually the great mass of conjectures upon the passage,³ it will suffice to say that no single suggestion has been

¹ It is worth citing the apology of L. A. MacKay, *Conjectures on the text of Lucretius*, CPh 70 (1975), 270/271, at 270, before offering his own conjecture upon the line: “New suggestions for this passage are probably read more in the expectation of amusement than of instruction; but one may still nourish a mild hope of hitting on an acceptable emendation.”

² Since I am convinced that the Italic mss do not represent an authority independent from OQGVU and are therefore only of use as a repertory of Renaissance conjectures, I shall treat O and Q alone as witnesses to the Lucretian tradition throughout this article (the text of GVU does not survive for Book 4).

³ The following editors alter *patrum matrumque deorum*: *pulcrum variumque decorem* Lachmann, *claram variamque deorsum* Bernays, *parvum magnumque, deorsum* Bergk,

welcomed by even a small number of editors and that obeli deserve to retain their place in the line.⁴ Lucretius here treats the visual effects of the veiled theatre (an adornment reputedly introduced to Rome by Q. Catulus in 78 B. C.)⁵ and it is certain that the close of 79 further depicted the theatrical scene onto which the bright colours from these awnings fell. The strange and otiose presence in the verse of fathers and mothers (for such focus on parents is surprising and *consessum* of the preceding line already treats the audience in general) has been questioned by many scholars since Lachmann, who first objected “etsi deorum signa in scaena sunt, nulla tamen sunt *patrum matrumque*. turpis est in hoc loco interpretum levitas, qui primum per se non viderint *decorum* scribendum esse ubi est *deorum*.”⁶ Although Lachmann needlessly concentrates upon *signa*, he was certainly right to highlight the problems of the text as transmitted. His attractive alteration of *deorum* to *decorum* gains potent support from the strikingly similar passage that he adduced from later in Book 4, which also relates to the visual appearance of the theatrical stage: *et consessum cernere eundem / scaenaique simul varios splendere decores* (982/983). I likewise

*propriam variamque deorsum or colorum Polle, vitrum marmorque deorsum Brieger, personatumque tragoedum Romanes, (speciem) patrum atque decores S. B. Smith, patulam manantia deorsum MacKay, pulcrum variamque deorsum Richter. The following alter patrumque matrum: varium ornatumque Höfer, Parium marmorque Brieger, variam statusque Meurig-Davies, patrium marmurque Orth. The following alter matrumque deorum: coetumque (earlier auratumque or ornatumque) decorum Munro, turmamque decoram Howard (reading O’s scaenalem), turbamque (earlier partemque) decoram M. F. Smith; it should be noted, however, that patrum turmamque/turbamque decoram had already been conjectured by A. E. Housman in the margin of Vol. 1 of his copy of Munro’s Lucretius (Cambridge 1873), now preserved at St John’s College, Oxford (these conjectures I discovered, among others, in January 2008). Colin alters only matrumque to *Matrisque*. The following alter only deorum: *deumque* Bockemüller, *deorsum* Martin (after Bernays), *decorum* (after Lachmann) Merrill (and Petrowski), *levamen* Büchner. Ross Taylor and García Calvo accept the paradosis, as does Krokiewicz (but reading O’s *scaenalem*); yet more oddly, the Italic mss AFL and most pre-Lachmannian editors added a hypermetric *-que* to *deorum*; for my emendation to remove the sole hypermetric verse in the mss of Lucretius (at 5, 849) see my *Lucretiana quaedam*, *Philologus* 152 (2008), 111–127, at 118–120. This list of conjectures is no doubt still incomplete. Nonetheless, the task of collecting such emendations will be made notably easier by a work which I am in the early stages of preparing, a comprehensive Lucretian thesaurus emendationum.*

⁴ Obeli were sagely deployed by A. Ernout in his *Budé* (Paris 1920), by C. Bailey in both editions of his OCT (Oxford 1900 and ²1922) and his commentary (*T. Lucreti Cari De rerum natura libri sex*, Oxford 1947), by M. F. Smith in his *Loeb* (London ³1992) and by F. Giancotti (*Lucrezio: La natura*, Milan ⁴2000).

⁵ Cf. *Plin. Nat.* 19, 23, 1 and *Val. Max.* 2, 4, 6. *Pliny* (loc. cit.) proceeds to inform us that linen awnings were introduced by Lentulus Spinther (in 60 B. C.); cf. also *Lucret.* 6, 109/110.

⁶ K. Lachmann, *In T. Lucreti Cari De rerum natura libros sex commentarius*, Berlin 1850, ad loc.

follow Lachmann, as have many others, in seeing corruption in both *patrum* and *matrumque*, one mistaken transcription having facilitated the introduction in turn of the (semantically similar) other.⁷ In their place Lachmann elected to supply an adjective to modify *decorem* and another to qualify *speciem*; although this is by no means impossible, it certainly brings a weak close to an otherwise colourful passage.⁸

With the removal of the last transmitted genitive (*deorum*), I would prefer to convert the preceding two (*patrum matrumque*) to a natural source of visual *decor* to complete the picture. In his bold and attractive critical edition,⁹ K. Müller took this same tack and conjectured *personarumque*. The suggestion is ingenious but it must be confessed that such focus upon the actors' masks is too specific to be suitable; if perhaps *persona* is employed in its transferred sense,¹⁰ the conjecture is more probable but remains rather removed from the paradosis. The visual image seems better completed if focus still lies upon the stage (as with *omnem / scaenai speciem*) but turns to its painted scenery as a whole. I conjecture *picturarumque decorem*, '[the splendour of the stage] and the beauty of its scenery'.¹¹ Valerius Maximus relates that Claudius Pulcher first brought lavish painted scenery to the Roman stage in 99 B. C.¹² and Vitruvius, a most trustworthy source for terminology, employs *picturae* of scene paintings at 7, pr., 11.¹³ Lucretius himself uses *pictura* of decorated tapestry at 2, 35 and of general pictures at 5, 1451. If either *patrum* or *matrum* emerged from the *ductus* of *picturarum* owing to their sheer familiarity, the corresponding corruption of

⁷ I fail to see why the appearance of *caveae consessum* at Verg. Aen. 5, 340, a passage adduced by many commentators, means that *patrum* in our present passage is defended by *patrum*, 'elders', in the following Virgilian verse: not only is *patres* there employed in a different sense but the phrase *caveae consessus* also occurs at Aen. 8, 636 and Tac. Ann. 13, 54 without any further Lucretian echo.

⁸ His *varium* gains good support from the parallel passage later in the book but I believe his conjecture could be improved by reading *pictam*, 'painted', for *pulcram*. W. Richter, Textstudien zu Lukrez, Munich 1974, 54, believes that he improves Lachmann's emendation by reading *pulcram variamque deorsum*, thereby modifying *speciem* with both adjectives. It is only having accepted *deorsum* into his text that he reaches the surprising conclusion that "etwas anderes [sc. than adjectives qualifying *speciem*] ist zwischen *speciem* und *deorsum* schwerlich unterzubringen".

⁹ K. Müller, T. Lucreti Cari De rerum natura libri sex, Zurich 1975.

¹⁰ In the two instances where Lucretius employs *persona* (3, 57 and 4, 297), both unequivocally mean 'mask'.

¹¹ For a quadrisyllabic noun placed in the same *sedes* of the Lucretian verse and followed by *-que*, cf. *tempestatesque* at 6, 611.

¹² 2, 4, 6: *Claudius Pulcher scaenam varietate colorum adumbravit vacuis ante pictura tabulis extentam* (cf. also Plin. Nat. 35, 23, 6).

¹³ Cf. also *in scenis pictis* at 6, 2, 2 and the general discussion of wall painting at 7, 5. Vitruvius of course had read his Lucretius and makes respectful mention of him at 9, pr., 17.

the remaining letters would have most easily followed.¹⁴ The corruption of *decorem* to genitival *deorum* presumably occurred at a subsequent stage.

I must also reject the transmitted text of 81, although many editors have retained it. Crucially, *moenia* cannot in the present context be *inclusa*, regardless of whether a temporary or permanent theatre is here being envisaged: they can be closed (off) and can enclose the auditorium within but they are not themselves enclosed.¹⁵ The discrepancy between O's *inclaustra* and Q's *inclusa*¹⁶ suggests that the archetype offered *inclaustra*, from which I believe Brieger was right to extract *clausa*: the pleasure of those inside the theatre is increased by how much the theatre's walls are closed off, thereby shutting out all external visual distractions.¹⁷ What then should precede *clausa* in lieu of the nonsensical *in*? Brieger's own *ita* is somewhat unexpected (for the closure of the walls has not yet been discussed), Giussani's *his* (sc. *velis*) is most inelegant and Edelbluth's *iam* unexplained. Perhaps we could introduce a word emphasising the location under discussion; since these verses treat the same scene as the preceding six lines, the word we seek should have close deictic reference. It would perhaps be better than García Calvo's *ibi* to read *hic* ('here')¹⁸ *clausa*. With the pervasive loss of initial *h*, corruption to *in* could easily have followed; it is worth noting that, if M. F. Smith's *hunc* (perhaps written *hūc*) is accepted for the impossible *in* at 5, 1105, the two corruptions are most similar.¹⁹

397–399:

*exstantisque procul medio de gurgite montis
classibus inter quos liber patet exitus ingens,
insula coniunctis tamen ex his una videtur.*

397 *exstantisque* OQ : *exstant usque* Lachmann : *existuntque* Purmann

¹⁴ Alternatively, *picturarumque* could have been corrupted (and shortened) to *patrumque*, after which the apparently suitable *matrum* was inserted to repair metre but placed after *patrum*, as per typical Latin word order.

¹⁵ The gloss of W. A. Merrill, T. Lucreti Cari De rerum natura libri sex, New York 1907, ad loc., "shut in by curtains", will convince few.

¹⁶ The vulgate reading *inclusa* was first printed in the Giuntine edition (Florence 1512) although J. B. Pius, the author of the first modern commentary upon Lucretius (Bologna 1511), states in his note ad loc. "potes et cum priscis exemplaribus scribere inclusa".

¹⁷ *circum* ... *clausa* effectively serves as *circumclusa* in tmesis.

¹⁸ The same deictic focus is found with *haec* of 82.

¹⁹ Munro's attempt to heal the passage by emending *moenia* of the following line to *moenibus* (reading *inclusa*), adopted by K. Müller, is unattractive, not least owing to the controversial position of sigmatic ecthipsis it introduces; the same stands for Bergk's *inclusa theatra/moenibus*. See my Sigmatic Ecthipsis in Lucretius, *Hermes* 136 (2008), 188–205. Romanes' reordering of syllables (with alteration of *mage* to its prosodic byform), *magis insunt claustra*, is clever but neither *inesse* nor mention of *claustra* is suitable.

The accusativus pendens of 397 is uncommonly harsh and emendation to the nominative would hardly bring sufficient improvement;²⁰ I do not believe it possible to take 397 as dependent upon *inter*, as Winckelmann, Polle, Munro, Giussani, Merrill, Ernout and S. B. Smith *inter alios* desire. These critics and others are content to leave the transmitted text untouched as a striking example of Lucretius' looseness of expression.²¹ On the contrary, I think that Lachmann and Purmann were right to reject the anacoluthon and posit corruption in the clumsy participle that opens the verse. Yet the former's *usque* and the latter's weak *existuntque* are inappropriate in sense. Perhaps we could restore a more striking expression by reading *exsurguntque ... montes*: the mountains 'surge' or 'rise up' far from the midst of the sea.²² Once the opening word was corrupted to a plural participle,²³ the transmitted *montes* was necessarily taken as an accusative.²⁴

553 – 555:

*hoc ubi non longum spatiumst unde illa profecta
perveniat vox quaeque, necessesst verba quoque ipsa
555 plane exaudiri discernique articulatum.*

553 *illa* OQ : *una* Bentley

illa of 553 lacks an obvious deictic reference and stands oddly alongside *vox quaeque* (a pairing certainly to be taken together) to signify each spoken utterance: Lachmann fairly objected that “hoc ne Latinum quidem est”.²⁵ Bentley's *una* (i. e. *unaquaeque*), however, though accepted by almost all editors, seems to throw excessive emphasis on individual utterances.²⁶ Focus should lie not on the actual singularity of each utterance but rather on the utterance itself as a corporeal entity making its journey from one's mouth to another's ear. I therefore

²⁰ As Lachmann states with typical conviction (as n. 6, ad loc.): “Nominativi pendentes Wakefieldo et Forbigero placent, scilicet grammaticae imperitis.”

²¹ J. Godwin, Lucretius: De Rerum Natura IV, Warminster ²1992, ad loc., sees artistic purpose in the anacoluthon: “the mountains float in glorious isolation in grammar as in life.” As beautiful as this suggestion is, I cannot believe it.

²² For the use of *exsurgere* of natural, motionless geographical features, cf. Sil. 7, 274/275 (of rocks near Formiae), Curt. 8, 11, 7 (of the peak of the rock Aornis) and Mela 1, 20 (of the landmass Africa).

²³ A similar unmotivated addition of *is* can be seen at 2, 867: *consistere* O^{a.c.}Q^{a.c.}V for *constare*.

²⁴ There is of course no need for an alteration as violent as Bergk's *exstant sic scopuli medio de gurgite ponti*.

²⁵ As n. 6, ad loc.

²⁶ *verbum ... unum* (563) and *vox una* (565) belong to a quite different argument and therefore provide no support for the emendation.

suggest that *ipsa* should be read for *illa*, thereby balancing *verba quoque ipsa* of the following clause.

592 – 594:

*ideo iactant miracula dictis
aut aliqua ratione alia ducuntur, ut omne
humanum genus est avidum nimis auricularum.*

594 *auricularum* OQ : *miraclorum* Bentley : *terrircularum* Bergk : *aucupiorum* Brieger : *auribus horum* Cartault (et K. Müller, *avidis* lecto) : *auscultare* Merrill : *ridiculorum* Birt : *avicularum* Orth : *oraclorum* Mackay : *terrircularum* Flores *nugarum genus est avidum nimis agricolarum* Albert

Although the grammar of 594 is unproblematic, the resultant meaning can scarcely be tolerated: if the human race is indeed often misled by misguided reasoning to recount apparently miraculous events, it can hardly be said to be ‘too greedy for ears’. Lucretius laments in this passage that humans are so easily swayed by the sounds of the hills and believe the fabulous tales told of them; it is here an irrelevance whether or not such humans desire to recount these tales to others. Therefore, even if one is charitable enough to grant to Munro that *est avidum ... auricularum* could be unpacked as “*avet captare aurículas alienas*”,²⁷ the problem of sense remains. Yet it is too convoluted to posit instead that *auricularum* is a genitive of sphere, ‘greedy as regards their ears’ and therefore ‘greedy-eared’; such extension of locatival expressions of the type *ferox animi* would be unparalleled. Finally, Diels’ suggestion to take *avidum* as a contracted form of *avidorum*²⁸ and emend *auricularum* to a neuter form (attested only in a glossary of the late 7th century),²⁹ thereby bringing about a descriptive genitive, does not convince: Lucretius’ use of *-um* for *-orum* has strict delimitations³⁰ and neuter *auriculum* is unknown in extant Latin literature.

Emendation of the text is therefore required. The form *auricularum* seems specific enough to be a genuine contemptuous diminutive³¹ and, taking note also

²⁷ H. A. J. Munro, *T. Lucreti Cari De rerum natura libri sex*, Cambridge 41886, comm. ad loc.

²⁸ G. Wakefield, *T. Lucretii Cari De rerum natura libri sex*, Glasgow 21813, ad loc., had already suggested “*possis ... scribere, si placeat, avidum, pro avidarum; quae minus ambigua sane verborum structura fuerit.*”

²⁹ CGL 5, 340, 7 and 12. The manuscripts are Cod. Amplonianus F. 42 (s. viii/ix) and Cod. Epinalensis 72 (2) (s. vii/viii); the archetype of these siblings was tentatively dated to 675 A.D. by H. Fladieck (see J.D. Pfeifer, *Old English Glosses in the Épinal-Erfurt Glossary*, Oxford 1974, lxxxix–xc).

³⁰ It is limited to words of Greek origin, words of (or closing with) choriambic scansion and the commonplace archaic survivals *deum* and *virum*.

³¹ As C. Giussani, *T. Lucreti Cari De rerum natura libri sex*, Turin 1896/1898, ad loc., states, “*auricularum* ha schietta impronta di genuinità”.

of the “assonance associative”³² between the word and *miracula* of 592, it should be left unaltered.³³ The sense required in 594 is rather that the ears of humans are excessively open to being misled by the strange sounds and echoes of the hills and the fantastic tales told by others. It is this particular fault that brings about the subsequent recycling of these superstitious tales. Diels’ modification of *auricularum* with an adjective to introduce a genitive of description was right-minded. I therefore suggest emending *avidum* to *levium*: the human race is ‘of excessively fickle (or ‘unreliable’) ears’, i. e. ‘too fickle-eared’: they are too open to listening to any mysterious sound or tale, however far-fetched and ill-founded.³⁴ If *levium* became *evium* or *levidum*, correction to *avidum* could easily have followed.

630–632:

630 *nec refert quicquam quo victu corpus alatur,
dum modo quod capias concoctum didere possis
artubus et stomachi umidum servare tenorem.*

632 *umidum* OQ : *validum* A (atque Orth suo Marte, qui *nitidum* ante ci.) : *vividum* B : *umectum* Pontanus : *umidulum* Lachmann : *ividulum* Wakefield : *tumidum* Martin : *item* post *umidum* olim add. Diels : *mundum* vel *nitidum* (sed iam Orth) García Calvo : *usque unum* Socas

The transmitted *umidum* of 632 is unmetrical and has been altered to either Pontanus’ *umectum* or Lachmann’s *umidulum* by almost all editors. Yet do we require any sense of moisture? Lucretius here states that one can eat any given food provided that it is distributed throughout the body’s limbs and, if we accept either of these two emendations, provided that the ‘moist tenor’ of the stomach is maintained. But such mention of moisture seems odd in the general context of

³² The term is that of P. H. Schrijvers, *Horror ac divina voluptas*, Amsterdam 1970, at 60.

³³ Bentley’s *miraclorum*, adopted by Lachmann, introduces a contraction of the noun attested only in a corrupt fragment of Lucilius (14 M [= Non. 839,29 L] *miracula ciet elephantas*), despite Lachmann’s attempts to introduce the same form at 4,419 and 462, and a weak repetition of *miracula* in 592. The other emendations of the word are evidently changes for the worse.

³⁴ The fickleness of the mind and its senses was of course an ancient commonplace and for the specific demotion of hearing below other senses, cf. e. g. Lucr. 5, 100–103 and Hor. ars 180–182. It is curious that Pius (as n. 16) glosses the transmitted text in a manner that seems impossible but would well suit my emendation: “Procliviter homines credunt et ducuntur auribus etiam si illa quae audiunt citra credulitatem sint: mera videlicet somnia et aegroti veteris nugae.” Such ears, open to any talk, however foolish, are naturally at the opposite end of the spectrum to Virgil’s *durae aures* (Aen. 4,428); for Lucretius’ free use of adjectives with *aures*, cf. his demand at 4,912: *tu mihi da tenues aures*.

nourishment and is not explained or expanded upon elsewhere in the work.³⁵ It therefore seems rash to insert either conjecture, not least since both adjectives are unattested in Lucretius; as a further objection to Lachmann's *umidulum*, neither he nor any subsequent critic has explained why Lucretius would here have employed an epithet with a diminutive suffix.³⁶ Of other suggestions, those of Martin and García Calvo are truly bizarre, and Socas' draws needlessly upon 5, 508 to produce very odd sense. The conjecture of A (i. e. Vat. Lat. 3276), *validum*, which the prolific Emil Orth independently hit upon, is indeed supported by a verse of Quintus Serenus Sammonicus;³⁷ although the parallel is drawn from a notably late (i. e. 4th-century) source, the conjecture may well be right and was accepted by Müller, Godwin and M. F. Smith. An alternative perhaps worth considering is that the adjective emphasises maintaining an *intermediary* state of the stomach between the potential extremes that foodstuffs could bring: I therefore conjecture *medium*. For the phrase, one could compare Manilius' statement about the tenor of the weather produced by Egypt: [*Aegyptus*] *medium ... facit moderata tenorem* (4, 725b). The emendation has the further advantage of the spatial overtones of 'middle course', 'middle route': *tenor* is so used by Lucretius at 5, 508 (the only other occurrence of *tenor* in the work) and Virgil at Aen. 10, 340.³⁸ Corruption of the adjective to its anagram *emidum* or perhaps the nonsense form *midum* could well have led to introduction of the inappropriate *umidum*.

783–785:

*si mare, si terram cordist, si denique caelum,
conventus hominum, pompam, convivia, pugnas,
785 omnia sub verbone creat natura paratque?*

I know of no critical discussion of 785, a line which contains an unparalleled feature in Lucretius' poem, namely the position of *-ne*. This interrogative enclitic particle is elsewhere used by Lucretius in the following circumstances alone: (i) added to the particles *non* (2, 16; 196; 207; 263; 3, 166; 4, 122; 1286; 5, 50; 382; 556; 602; 646; 6, 813; 900; 1103), *iam* (2, 277; 883; 4, 214; 5, 561), *nec* (3, 713), *quo* (4, 206) and *an* (4, 781) to form recognisable interrogative collocations;³⁹ and

³⁵ The discussion of drinking at 4, 870–876 focuses upon the dispersal by *umor* of *glomerata ... vaporis / corpora* (871/872) but does not discuss the general *tenor* of the stomach.

³⁶ Indeed, the adjective is only used by the arch-coiner of adjectives Ovid at ars 3, 629.

³⁷ Lib. med. 302.

³⁸ Cf. Porph. ad Hor. carm. 2, 3: *subitis bonis non esse gaudendum, nec malis desperandum, sed medium tenorem sequendum*.

³⁹ Editors are therefore right, for this among other reasons, to reject Bernays' *gratisne* at 3, 395 and Munro's *crassane* at 4, 1259.

(ii) attached to the first word of the interrogative clause. *verbone* is therefore not only an unmotivated marking of a question, since the preceding verses 781/782 were likewise interrogative (opening with *anne*), but, more problematically, it presents two stylistic irregularities at once. I believe that removal of the anomaly can be achieved by simply reading *recreat* for *-ne creat*.⁴⁰ Since the images in question – *conventus hominum, pompae, conviviae, pugnae* etc. – have been past events of the world, the idea of ‘recreating’ the image is not inappropriate. In early minuscule the similarity of *r* and *n* was close.⁴¹

Since first formulating this conjecture I have discovered that the change had been made before, but over five centuries ago and without argument: Wakefield records that his manuscript delta (= Brit. Lib. Harl. 2694) offers the reading (which is perhaps a scribal error rather than a conscious correction), and it is consequently found in the first printed edition (Brescia 1473). Since then, however, it has been entirely forgotten. Now it deserves, I think, serious reconsideration.

807–810:

807 *nonne vides oculos etiam, quom tenuia quae sunt*
 809 *cernere coeperunt, contendere se atque parare,*
 810 *nec sine eo fieri posse ut cernamus acute?*

808 (= 804) recte del. Avancius

contendere se atque parare of 809 has not hitherto been suspected by critics. Yet, since *contendere* is yoked with *parare*, it should naturally mean ‘strive [to see well]’ rather than ‘strain themselves’;⁴² although *se* must be supplied with *parare*, I find it difficult to wring suitable sense from its usage with *contendere*. Instead, we here rather expect the intransitive use of the verb, as employed by Lucretius at 802 (where dependent *cernere* is likewise understood); comparison of *oculorum acies contenta* at 1, 324 is of no avail because *contenta*, ‘strained’, should be understood as passive. I think that the passage would run far more smoothly if *seque* stood for *se atque*. With the accidental addition of an *a*, *t* or *c* before *que* (a particle often written separately in early mss), the subsequent transmission of *se atque* would have been almost inevitable. Romanes’ emendation of the corrupt 804 (i. e. *nisi quaerere se ipse paravit*), which I am strongly

⁴⁰ It is perhaps noteworthy that both O and Q present *ne* as separate from *verbo*.

⁴¹ For this error in the Lucretian tradition, cf. 1, 884 *tenemus* for *terimus* and 5, 412 *undis* for *urbes*; for the reverse error, cf. 1, 646; 6, 466 and 1021; if Lambinus’ emendations stand, cf. also 4, 143 and 159.

⁴² I have not succeeded in finding any other example in Latin literature of *contendere* employed in the sense of ‘straining’ with a reflexive pronoun.

inclined to follow, provides a close verbal parallel for *se parare*, as does 805 (*ipse parat sese*).

883/884:

*inde voluntas fit, neque enim facere incipit ullam
rem quisquam, <quam> mens providit quid velit ante.*

884 *quam* suppl. ed. Brix. (iam post *mens* suppl. AB) : om. OQ : *nisi* Avancius (et Diels ac Romanes suo Marte)

The supplement in 884 has rarely been questioned, presumably because all agree that *quam* is required with *ante* (the reversed word order being paralleled at 3, 973; cf. also 6, 979) and because some authority has typically been conceded to the Italic mss that offer *quam*.⁴³ Yet the cacophonous repetition of *quam* in adjacent syllables is most infelicitous and unparalleled in the poem.⁴⁴ Indeed, among post-scenic poets, the collocation is only found in Ovid.⁴⁵ Diels' *nisi*, independently conjectured by Romanes, does well to remove the pairing and may well be right. Yet a suggestion that provides a motivation for the loss of a syllable is to take *quisquam* of the mss⁴⁶ as the contraction of *qui <vi>s quam*, via an easy 'saut du même au même'. *quivis*, employed in the same form at 3, 158, would be perfectly Lucretian for 'anyone' and would make the point more forcefully than *quisquam*.

1280–1282:

1280 *nam facit ipsa suis interdum femina factis
morigerisque modis et munde corpore culto,
ut facile insuescat secum degere vitam.*

1282 *te* ante *secum* suppl. Bernays : post *secum* L. Müller (quod sibi trib. Diels) : *nos* post *secum* Lachmann : om. OQ *im* (= *eum*) *suescat secum quoque* mirab. Orth

⁴³ For my rejection of the Italic mss as textual authorities, see n. 2 above.

⁴⁴ I therefore agree with the latter element of the assertion of N. H. Romanes, Further notes on Lucretius, Oxford 1935, at 46: "The suggestion is plausible, but hideous." A. Ernout (Lucrèce: De rerum natura, commentaire exégétique et critique, Paris 1925, ad loc.) highlights the ugliness of sound but does not provide any explanation for its appearance: "cacophonie, d'autant plus sensible que les deux *quam* forment le spondée."

⁴⁵ Ov. am. 2, 2, 52; met. 12, 41; tr. 1, 1, 116 (all preceding *quamvis* and a concomitant sense pause); cf. the valuable note of J. C. McKeown, Ovid: Amores. Text, Prolegomena, and Commentary, Vol. III, A Commentary on Book 2, Leeds 1998, ad 2, 2, 52. The potential Statian example, silv. 3, 5, 49 *et quam (quam saevi!) fecerunt maenada planctus*, is mitigated by the parenthesis.

⁴⁶ O's *ens* for *mens* (as found in Q) is presumably an error committed through haplography in that manuscript alone.

Bernays' supplement for the metrically deficient 1282 has typically been followed and is superior to L. Müller's proposal for its more natural word order and immediate juxtaposition with *se-*. Yet the thrust of the discussion in these lines is most general and we therefore expect a first person plural pronoun rather than the direct singular (cf. esp. 4, 1277 *coniugibus quod nil nostris opus esse videtur*);⁴⁷ in a phrase of a similar nature elsewhere in the poem (3, 322 *ut nil impediatur dignam dis degere vitam*) the focus is likewise upon the first person plural. I therefore prefer the supplement of Lachmann,⁴⁸ with reference to Romans or even humans in general, but believe that it can be improved by employing the preferred word order *nos secum*. The loss of *nos* may be a simple scribal oversight or perhaps the purposeful deletion of the nonsensical *no* that would have resulted from haplography of *s* before *secum*.

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⁴⁷ That we have the second person singular in the two closing verses of the Book (1286/1287) is irrelevant: the opening didactic formula *nonne vides* requires such a focusing.

⁴⁸ I do not understand the complaint of R. D. Brown, *Lucretius on Love and Sex. A Commentary on De Rerum Natura IV 1030–1287*, Leiden 1987, ad loc., that it “seems too personal”.

