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0521542146 - Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom

David Sedley

Excerpt

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CHAPTER I

The Empedoclean opening

I. CICERO'S LETTER

Lucreti poemata ut scribis ita sunt, multis luminibus ingeni, multae tamen artis. sed cum veneris, virum te putabo si Sallusti Empedoclea legeris, hominem non putabo.

Writing to his brother in 54 BC, Cicero supplies two unique testimonies (*Ad Q. fr.* II 9.4). In the first sentence he echoes Quintus' admiration for Lucretius' poem, thus providing the sole allusion to the *De rerum natura* likely to be more or less contemporary with its publication. In the second, he attests the publication of an *Empedoclea* by a certain Sallustius, presumably a Latin translation or imitation of Empedocles (compare Cicero's own near-contemporary use of the title *Aratea* for his translation of Aratus).

But even more striking than the two individual testimonies is their juxtaposition. Modern editors have taken to printing a full stop after *sed cum veneris*, understanding 'But when you come . . . (*sc.* we will discuss it).' This suppresses any overt link between the two literary judgements: the first breaks off abruptly with an aposiopesis, and the second, juxtaposed, is to all appearances a quite independent observation. On the equally natural and more fluent reading that can be obtained simply by reverting to the older punctuation,¹ as printed above, with a comma instead of the full stop, the letter is an explicit comparison between the *DRN* and the *Empedoclea*:

Lucretius' poetry shows, as you say in your letter, many flashes of genius, yet also much craftsmanship. On the other hand, when you come, I shall consider you a man if you have read Sallustius' *Empedoclea*, though I won't consider you human.

¹ This was the standard punctuation until the late nineteenth century. The repunctuation, with its aposiopesis *sed cum veneris . . .* (unique, but cf. partial parallels at *Ad Att.* XII 5a and XIV 20.3), appears to have been introduced by R. Y. Tyrrell in 1886, in his revised text of Cicero's Letters (Tyrrell (1885–1901)), but without offering any evidence or argument – since when it has been repeated, without comment, by all editors.

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Excerpt

[More information](#)

2

1. *The Empedoclean opening*

If this is right, the two works were being directly compared at the time of their publication, and Cicero, at least, judged the Lucretian poem vastly superior.

Why did this particular comparison suggest itself? It is well recognised that Empedocles is, along with Homer, Ennius, and others,² an important literary influence on Lucretius, and it has even been claimed that he was a philosophical influence.³ But I do not believe that the depth and significance of the poem's Empedoclean character have yet been properly understood. If what I shall argue in this chapter is right, Cicero's comparison of the *DRN* with the *Empedoclea* will turn out to be an entirely natural one, which Lucretius would have welcomed and indeed invited. My case will be centred on the relation of Lucretius' poem to the poem of Empedocles' *On nature*.

2 EMPEDOCLES' TWO POEMS

There is plentiful evidence that it was principally if not exclusively in the hexameter poem usually known in antiquity as the *On nature* (Περὶ φύσεως) or the *Physics* (Τὰ φυσικὰ) – I shall discuss its actual title in §7 – that Empedocles expounded his world system. The central features of the cosmic cycle it described are well known: four enduring elements – earth, air (called 'aether'),⁴ fire, and water – are periodically united into a homogeneous sphere by a constructive force called Love, then again separated out into the familiar stratified world by the polar force, Strife.⁵ But there is a longstanding scholarly tradition, deriving primarily from Diels' editions published in 1901 and 1903, of attributing all the fragments concerning Empedocles' theories on the pollution and transmigration of the individual spirit, or 'daimon', to a second hexameter poem, the *Katharmoi*, or *Purifications*.

The original ground for this segregation was the belief that the physical doctrine of the cosmic cycle and the 'religious' doctrine of transmigration belonged to radically distinct and probably incompatible areas of Empedocles' thought. But Empedoclean studies have now reached a curious stage. On the one hand, the old dogma has been subjected to searching criticism, and is regarded by many as an anachron-

² The range of literary influences on Lucretius was considerably enlarged by the findings of Kenney (1970). ³ Furley (1970), discussed below; also Bollack (1959).

⁴ For 'aether', rather than 'air', as Empedocles' chosen designation of this element, see Kingsley (1995), ch. 2.

⁵ The traditional belief that zoogony took place in both halves of this cycle, for which see especially O'Brien (1969), has been powerfully challenged by Bollack (1965–9), Hölscher (1965), Solmsen (1965), and Long (1974), and ably defended by Graham (1988).

2. *Empedocles' two poems*

3

istic imposition on fifth-century thought.⁶ On the other hand, the conventional apportionment of fragments between the two poems, which was founded on that dogma, remains largely unchallenged, as if it had some independent authority. I believe that it has none.

One radical challenge to this picture, however, has been developed recently. Catherine Osborne⁷ proposes that there were never two poems: rather, both titles name one and the same work. Although this proposal has found some favour,⁸ and has certainly inspired some important reassessment of the doctrinal relation between the two sides of Empedocles' thought, I do not think that it can be right. Diogenes Laertius is unambiguously speaking of two separate poems when he tells us that 'On nature and the *Katharmoi* (VIII 77, τὰ μὲν οὖν Περὶ φύσεως καὶ οἱ Καθαρμοί . . .) run to 5,000 lines.⁹ Moreover, a number of the surviving fragments of Empedocles are reported with explicit assignations to one or the other poem, yet not a single one with attributions to both the physical poem and the *Katharmoi*. Finally, as Jaap Mansfeld has brought to light, Giovanni Aurispa is known to have had a manuscript entitled (in Greek) 'Empedocles' *Katharmoi*' (now tragically lost) in his library at Venice in 1424.¹⁰ Even if this evidence were thought insufficient, I hope that the matter will be put beyond doubt by my next section, where it will turn out that one major fragment cannot be placed in the *Katharmoi* without glaring inconsistency: Empedocles must have written at least two poems.

If we simply stick to the hard and the relatively hard evidence for what was in the *Katharmoi*, a different picture will emerge. We do at least have its opening lines.¹¹

⁶ E.g. Kahn (1960), Barnes (1979) II 93, Wright (1981), Osborne (1987), Inwood (1992), Kingsley (1995); reservations in Long (1966). ⁷ Osborne (1987).

⁸ Cf. its further development in Inwood (1992), pp. 8–19. The reply to Osborne and Inwood in O'Brien (1995) is unfortunately timed: it contains news of the recent papyrus find (see pp. 10 and 28 below), but not the specific information that this now virtually proves at least one 'Katharmic' fragment to belong to *On nature*.

⁹ See Osborne (1987), pp. 28–9 on the unreliability of the figure 5,000. But as for the separation of the two titles, there is no compelling reason to doubt Diogenes' reliability, especially when no ancient source contradicts him on the point.

¹⁰ Mansfeld (1994b), which should also be consulted for its further arguments for the existence of two separate poems. Of course his evidence is not strictly incompatible with the thesis that there was one poem, whose proponents may reply that this *was* that one poem. But it is uncomfortable for them, since it means that, if they are right, *Katharmoi* was the official title, contrary to the great bulk of the ancient citations.

¹¹ Empedocles B112. The square-bracketed words represent Greek words apparently corrupt or missing in the quotation as preserved. Here and elsewhere, I use the Diels/Kranz (1951–2) numbering of Empedocles' fragments, although a significantly better text is now available in the valuable edition of Wright (1981). Since the many available numerations are, as I shall argue, all equally misleading as regards the apportionment of fragments between the two poems, it is better for now simply to stick to the standard one.

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[More information](#)

4

1. *The Empedoclean opening*

Friends, who in the great town of the yellow Acragas dwell on the city's heights, caring about good deeds, I greet you. You see me going about as a divine god, no longer a mortal, honoured amongst all, it seems, and wreathed in ribbons and verdant garlands. [Whenever] I arrive in prosperous towns I am revered by men and women. They follow me in their thousands, asking me where lies their road to advantage, some requesting oracles, while others have asked to hear a healing utterance for ailments of all kinds, long pierced by troublesome [pains].

Thus Empedocles addresses the citizens of his native Acragas, telling how they revere him as a living god, 'no longer a mortal'. Men and women flock to follow him, pressing him with enquiries, requesting oracles and cures.

Why should we not suppose that the poem was nothing more nor less than a response to these requests, a set of purificatory oracles and 'healing utterances'?¹²

There is immediate support for this conjecture in the pseudo-Pythagorean *Carmen aureum*: 'But abstain from the foods that I spoke of in my *Katharmoi* and *Absolution of the soul*.'¹³ This citation, or pseudo-citation, of the author's own *Katharmoi* invokes it for just the kind of self-purificatory advice that the title itself suggests. And that the allusion is inspired by Empedocles' work of the same name is confirmed just three lines later, where the poem closes with the words 'You will be an immortal, divine god, no longer a mortal' (ἔσσεαι ἀθάνατος θεὸς ἄμβροτος, οὐκέτι θνητός), pointedly recalling the famous opening of Empedocles' *Katharmoi*, 'You see me going about as a divine god, no longer a mortal' (β112.4–5, ἐγὼ δ' ὑμῖν θεὸς ἄμβροτος, οὐκέτι θνητός, | πωλεῦμαι). Whatever the date of this forgery may be, its author clearly knows Empedocles' *Katharmoi*, and associates it with advice to abstain from certain kinds of food.

That a work with this title should be one dedicated to purificatory advice is unsurprising, since the very word *katharmoi* means ritual acts of purification. To adherents of the traditional interpretation, it is easy to assume that the poem was one about the wandering spirit's *processes* of purification, but I know no evidence that the word can mean that:¹⁴ such processes would normally be called *katharseis*.

¹² For the scope and content of the relevant notions of pollution and purification, see Parker (1983). I have no particular suggestion to make about the function of the 'oracles'. The evidence of a purificatory role for oracles is meagre (Parker (1983), p. 86), and I would guess that it is Empedocles' assumed divinity that makes this an appropriate designation for his pronouncements.

¹³ *Carmen aureum* 67–8, in Young (1971), 103–4: ἀλλ' εἴργου βρωτῶν ὧν εἵπομεν ἐν τε Καθαρμοῖς | ἐν τε Λύσει ψυχῆς.

¹⁴ The use of *καθαρμοί* is usefully surveyed by Guthrie (1969), pp. 244–5.

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0521542146 - Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom

David Sedley

Excerpt

[More information](#)2. *Empedocles' two poems*

5

Better still, the hypothesis also fits the other two items of evidence known to me for *Katharmoi* as a literary genre. These two references also resemble the *Carmen aureum* in fathering the works in question on archaic figures of semi-legendary status. First, Epimenides the Cretan is said to have written *Katharmoi*, in verse and perhaps also prose,¹⁵ and, although their content is not reported, it can hardly be a coincidence that Epimenides was celebrated above all for his ritual purifications, an expertise that led the Athenians to send for him to purify their city of plague.¹⁶ Second, the remark at Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1033 that Musaeus taught 'healing and oracles' is glossed by a scholiast with the comment that Musaeus 'composed absolutions [?], initiations, and *katharmoi*'.¹⁷ Healing and oracles are precisely the two services mentioned by Empedocles at the opening of his *Katharmoi*. Then why look further for the content of the poem?

Certainly no fragment explicitly attributed to the *Katharmoi* forces us to look further. Apart from the proem, there are just two such cases. One is B153a: according to Theon of Smyrna (104.1–3), Empedocles 'hints' (αὐνίπτειται) in the *Katharmoi* that the foetus achieves full human form in seven times seven days. Aetius¹⁸ confirms the report – though not the attribution to the *Katharmoi* – with the further information that the differentiation of limbs starts at thirty-six days. That Empedocles should only have 'hinted' this in the *Katharmoi* suggests that we are not dealing with an expository account of embryology. We learn from Censorinus¹⁹ (third century AD) that in Greece the pregnant woman does not go out to a shrine before the fortieth day of her pregnancy. This is thought to be linked to the widespread belief that miscarriages are likeliest to occur in the first forty days.²⁰ There is a strong possibility that Empedocles' original remark occurred in the context of ritual advice to pregnant women, perhaps to avoid shrines for the first 'seven times seven' days. Here it is important to remember the opening of the *Katharmoi*, where it is made explicit that the demands for healing and oracles to which Empedocles is responding come from women as well as men.

The other explicit attribution to the *Katharmoi* – in fact to book II of the poem – occurs in a fragment first published in 1967, fr. 152 Wright:²¹

¹⁵ 3A2–3 DK. ¹⁶ 3A1, 2, 4, 8 DK.

¹⁷ 2A6 DK. There is a close parallel at Plato, *Rep.* II 364e–365a: Adimantus, as evidence of the belief that the gods can be bought off, cites the books of Musaeus and Orpheus, on the basis of which rituals are performed to bring about the λύσεις τε καὶ καθαρμοὶ of wrongs done by both the living and the dead. ¹⁸ Aetius V 21.1 = Empedocles A83.

¹⁹ Censorinus, *De die natali* 11.7. ²⁰ See Parker (1983), p. 48.

²¹ Wright (1981), pp. 151 and 298; not, of course, to be found in Diels/Kranz (1951–2).

Cambridge University Press

0521542146 - Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom

David Sedley

Excerpt

[More information](#)

6

1. *The Empedoclean opening*

‘For those of them which grow with their roots denser below but their branches more thinly spread . . .’ Trees, or more generally plants, of this kind were singled out for a reason which cannot now be recovered.²² The context may well have been one concerning the avoidance of certain leaves. According to Plutarch, in a probable but unprovable citation of the *Katharmoi*, Empedocles urged that all trees should be ‘spared’, but especially the laurel:²³ ‘Keep completely away from the laurel’s leaves’ (B140). This has every chance of tying in with Empedocles’ views on transmigration – he holds, for example, that the laurel is the best tree to transmigrate into (B127)! But it is significant that here once again, if the link with the injunction about laurel leaves is accepted, the actual fragment may well contain moral or purificatory advice rather than the doctrinal exposition characteristic of the physical poem. To repeat, ritual advice is just what we should expect in a work entitled *Katharmoi*.

The expectation finds further strong support in the story surrounding fragment B111. We learn that the biographer Satyrus quoted this fragment as confirming the suspicion that Empedocles dabbled in magic.²⁴ Since, according to Apuleius,²⁵ it was Empedocles’ *Katharmoi* that brought upon him just such a suspicion, there is a strong likelihood that B111 is from this poem.²⁶ Significantly, the fragment is once again not a doctrinal exposition but ritual advice: how to influence the weather and to summon up the dead.

B111 uses the second person singular: ‘You [singular] will learn . . .’ Because the *On nature* was addressed to an individual, Pausanias, whereas the opening lines of the *Katharmoi* address the citizens of Acragas in the plural, it has often been thought that any fragments containing the second person singular must be assigned to the former poem. This is a very dubious criterion, since changes of address within a single didactic poem are quite normal. Hesiod’s *Works and days* switches in its first three hundred lines between addresses to the Muses, to Perses, and to the ‘bribe-swallowing princes’.²⁷ That the *Katharmoi* should, after its opening, move into the second person singular may merely reflect the fact that Empedocles is by now answering the individual requests from his audience of which the poem spoke.

²² According to Theophrastus, *HP* 1 6.4, all plants have their roots more densely packed than their parts above ground, but some, e.g. the olive tree, have a particularly dense mass of slender roots.

²³ Plut. *Quaest. conv.* 646b, see preamble to B140 DK. ²⁴ DL viii 59. ²⁵ Apuleius, *Apol.* 27.

²⁶ This attribution is supported, as Inwood (1992), p. 16 has shown, by the fact that Clement (*Strom.* vi 30.1–3) directly associates B111 with the opening lines of the *Katharmoi*.

²⁷ See further, Osborne (1987), pp. 31–2, who appositely compares Lucretius’ own switches of address.

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0521542146 - Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom

David Sedley

Excerpt

[More information](#)2. *Empedocles' two poems*

7

There are no further unambiguously attested fragments of the *Katharmoi*. But we may, with caution,²⁸ consider as potential fragments of it any citations of Empedocles whose sources explicitly call them *katharmoi*. The clearest case of this is in Hippolytus,²⁹ who describes prohibitions on marriage and on certain foods as tantamount to teaching the *katharmoi* of Empedocles. Given this remark, along with the association of the *Katharmoi* with food prohibitions in the *Carmen aureum*, it seems safe to assume that the poem carried Empedocles' advice to abstain from slaughter, meat-eating, and perhaps even beans.³⁰ And it seems that abstention from marriage was a further injunction to be found in the same work.³¹

Another plausible such candidate is a fragment preserved by Theon of Smyrna.³² Comparing philosophy as a whole to a religious ritual, Theon calls Plato's five propaedeutic mathematical studies in *Republic* VII a *katharmos*, which he immediately proceeds to link with Empedocles' injunction to cleanse oneself by 'cutting from five springs (in a bowl of indestructible bronze' (B143)).³³ We are here firmly in the territory of ritual self-purification. Theophrastus' godfearing character, for example, refuses to set out on his daily rounds until he has washed his hands at three springs.³⁴

Deciding just which other verbatim fragments should be assigned to the *Katharmoi* is a problem to pursue on another occasion. The argument to which I shall now turn relies on a primarily negative conclusion: there

²⁸ B139, which in Sedley (1989a) I incautiously left in the *Katharmoi*, can now be shown to belong to the physical poem: see p. 30 below.

²⁹ Hippolytus, *Ref.* VII 30.3–4; see preamble to B110 in Diels/Kranz.

³⁰ Empedocles B141, carrying the Pythagorean advice to abstain from beans, is condemned as inauthentic by Wright (1981), p. 289, perhaps rightly.

³¹ Hippolytus *loc. cit.* presents the advice not to marry as itself Empedoclean: 'You are dissolving marriages made by God, following the doctrines of Empedocles, in order to preserve the work of Love as one and undivided. For according to Empedocles, marriage divides the one and makes many.' This is a curious view to take of marriage, although it could well apply to the *family*.

³² Theon of Smyrna 14–15.

³³ I here translate the Diels/Kranz text, based on Theon, κρηνάων ἄπο πέντε ταμώντ' <έν> ἄπειρί χαλκῶ. Aristotle, *Poet.* 1457b13 quotes (without attribution) the words τεμών ἄπειρί (A, τανακεί B) χαλκῶ, explaining that 'cutting' here is used to mean 'drawing'. This leads van der Ben (1975), 203–8, and Wright (1981), 289–90, to follow the lead of Maas and conflate the two quotations in the form κρηνάων ἄπο πέντε τεμών (οἱ ταμών) τανακεί χαλκῶ, with the further inevitable conclusion that the reference is to drawing blood with a knife – which of course Empedocles would be condemning. This seems to me too high a price to pay, since it totally contradicts Theon's report that Empedocles with these words is advising us to cleanse ourselves.

³⁴ Theophrastus, *Char.* 16.2. See Parker (1983), pp. 226–7. Cf. Apollonius Rhodius III 860, where Medea, before preparing an ointment which confers invulnerability, bathes herself in seven streams.

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0521542146 - Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom

David Sedley

Excerpt

[More information](#)

8

1. *The Empedoclean opening*

is no reason to attribute to this poem any fragments of Empedocles beyond those offering ritual advice.³⁵

3. THE PROVENANCE OF EMPEDOCLES B115

There is a decree of necessity, an ancient resolution of the gods, sworn by broad oaths, that when one of the daimons which have a share of long life defiles . . . its own limbs, or does wrong and swears a false oath, for thirty thousand years it must wander, away from the blessed ones, being born during that time as every form of mortal creature, exchanging for each other the arduous paths of life. The might of the aether drives it to the sea, the sea spits it out onto the threshold of land, the earth sends it into the rays of the gleaming sun, and the sun hurls it into the whirling aether. One receives it from another, and all hate it. I too am now one of these, a fugitive from the gods and a wanderer, who trust in raving Strife.

These lines (B115),³⁶ which are crucial for explaining the daimon's migrations, have been assigned to the *Katharmoi* by every editor of Empedocles since Diels.³⁷ The attribution has been questioned by N. van der Ben, and subsequently defended by D. O'Brien.³⁸ But this renewed debate has so far focused excessively on the contexts in which the lines are quoted by our sources, as if one could settle the question of their provenance by counting the allusions in those contexts to *katharsis* and cognate terms and likewise those to the cosmic cycle. Given the improbability that any ancient reader of Empedocles might have expected the physical poem and the *Katharmoi* to conflict doctrinally, the provenance of the lines will have mattered less to those who cited them than their value as evidence for Empedocles' views on the *katharsis* of the soul – a topic on which Platonism had conferred an absolutely pivotal importance.

Plutarch reports that Empedocles used these lines 'as a preface at the beginning of his philosophy'.³⁹ Is this too vague to be helpful? 'Philosophy' certainly might describe the content of the physical poem.⁴⁰ It might also be appropriate to the *Katharmoi*, on the tradi-

³⁵ I agree with Kingsley (1996), p. 109 that the *Katharmoi* must have contained some indication of how it is the facts of transmigration that make meat-eating a sin. But Empedocles' declared celebrity at the time of writing this poem hardly suggests that he would need to do very much explaining of his doctrine. I certainly see no necessity on this ground to attribute any specific known fragment (e.g. B137, as Kingsley suggests) to it, beyond those I have listed.

³⁶ I have avoided engaging with the textual difficulties of this passage, which are well discussed by Wright (1981). They do not affect any of the issues I am addressing here.

³⁷ This of course applies to Inwood (1992) only in so far as he identifies the *Katharmoi* with the whole of Empedocles' poetic *oeuvre*.³⁸ Van der Ben (1975), pp. 16ff.; O'Brien (1981).

³⁹ Plut., *De exilio* 607c: ἐν ἀρχῇ τῆς φιλοσοφίας προαποφωνήσας.

⁴⁰ Kingsley (1996) argues, in reply to Sedley (1989a), that 'philosophy' to Plutarch would normally

3. *The provenance of Empedocles B115*

9

tional view of that poem's content as expository and doctrinal. But it is very much less appropriate if, as I have argued, the *Katharmoi* was not a doctrinal work but a set of purificatory pronouncements. Indeed, if that suggestion is correct, Plutarch's expression 'at the beginning of his philosophy' would immediately gain a much clearer sense. If Empedocles wrote two doctrinal poems, the words 'his philosophy' are a desperately vague way of referring to either one of them. But if he wrote just one, they become an entirely natural way of referring to that one.⁴¹

Plutarch's description in no way indicates that these were the very opening lines of the poem to which they belonged, just that they preceded the philosophy proper. Hence there is little value in the argument⁴² that since we have the opening of the *Katharmoi* and it differs from these lines, they must have opened the physical poem instead. Much more mileage can be got out of the content of the disputed lines. First, it is hardly insignificant that they name five of the six cosmic entities on which Empedocles' physical system is based: the daimon's wanderings are graphically described in terms of its being tossed into and out of each of the four elements in turn; and Strife is named as the cause of its downfall. This at least supports the *coherence* of the passage with the physical poem.

But far more important, and strangely absent from the debate about its provenance, is the following consideration. In these disputed lines, Empedocles is himself a fallen daimon: 'I too am now one of these, a fugitive from the gods and a wanderer, who trust in raving Strife.' Is it credible that these words came in the introductory passage of a poem in whose opening lines Empedocles had moments earlier described himself

mean the kind of moral precepts, tinged with myth and religion, that are associated with the *Katharmoi*. This may not seem much of a challenge to my position, since I argue that there was a good deal of this kind of material in *On nature*. But Kingsley's claim is that 'philosophy' is precisely the word Plutarch would use to distinguish the 'philosophical' *Katharmoi* from the other, merely 'physical' poem. However, his evidence crumbles on examination. At *De gen. Socr.* 580c Plutarch's speaker Galaxidorus does (on a plausible restoration of the text) say that Pythagoras' philosophy, already full of 'visions and myths and religious dread', became positively 'Bacchic' in the hands of Empedocles. But in no way does this, as Kingsley seems to think, delimit what Plutarch would mean by the expression 'Empedocles' philosophy', and thus exclude physics from it. Plutarch's other speakers often make it abundantly clear that, like anybody else, they regard 'philosophy' as including physics (*De def. or.* 420b, *De facie* 942b) and logic (*De Is. et Os.* 387a), as well as contemplation of first principles (*ib.* 382d–e). And although, as Kingsley notes, at *De poet. aud.* 14e and 15f, Plutarch recommends the couching of philosophy in versified myth as a didactic device, that tells us nothing about what he means by the word 'philosophy', especially when at least one of his speakers, Theon (*De Pyth. or.* 406e), takes an almost diametrically opposed view of philosophy. ⁴¹ Cf. Osborne (1987), pp. 29ff.

⁴² Van der Ben (1975), p. 16.

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0521542146 - Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom

David Sedley

Excerpt

[More information](#)

10

1. *The Empedoclean opening*

as ‘a divine god, no longer a mortal’?⁴³ Without the straitjacket of the old prejudice that science and religion do not mix, it is hard to believe that anyone would ever have thought of assigning the former text to the *Katharmoi*. The most natural interpretation is that B115 comes from a poem in which Empedocles classed himself as a fallen daimon still working through its long cycle of transmigrations, whereas in the *Katharmoi*, opening as it does with his confident self-proclamation as a god, ‘no longer a mortal’, he presented himself as having now completed the cycle and recovered his divinity. I therefore feel a reasonable degree of confidence in placing Empedocles’ major fragment on the wanderings of the daimon somewhere in the proem to the *On Nature*.

Since I first developed this argument several years ago,⁴⁴ it has received welcome confirmation in the discovery of papyrus fragments from book 1 of Empedocles’ *On nature*.⁴⁵ They include lines denouncing animal slaughter⁴⁶ – lines which editors have always hitherto assigned to the *Katharmoi*. The taboo on slaughter is, famously, one which Empedocles based on his doctrine of transmigration. Hence the transfer of these lines to the opening book of the *On nature* should do much to obviate any remaining resistance to the conclusion that B115, on the migrations of the daimon, belongs to the proem of that same book.

This conclusion will prove important at a later stage in my argument. Earmarking it for future use, we can now at last turn to Lucretius.

4. LUCRETIVS AND EMPEDOCLES

Numerous echoes of Empedoclean passages have been recognised in Lucretius’ poem, with varying degrees of certainty.⁴⁷ It is no part of my purpose to catalogue these. But two observations seem in order. First, the 500 or so extant lines of Empedocles⁴⁸ represent around one-tenth of his

⁴³ B112.4, reinforced by B113.2 (‘if I am superior to frequently-perishing mortal human beings’), if, as Sextus’ juxtaposition of B113 with B112 suggests, it is also from the *Katharmoi*. In Empedocles’ world, even the generated gods perish eventually, i.e. at the end of each cosmic cycle: hence they are not immortal but ‘long-lived’ (B21.12, B23.8; cf. B115.5 on the daimons). By contrast, mortals are ‘frequently-perishing’, πολυφθερέων, see Wright (1981), p. 269. ⁴⁴ In Sedley (1989a).

⁴⁵ The exciting new Strasbourg papyrus of Empedocles has its *editio princeps* in Martin/Primavesi (1998). Although, at the time of completing the present book, I had not seen this edition, Oliver Primavesi was kind enough to send me a copy of his *habilitationsschrift* (the basis of Primavesi (forthcoming)), and both he and Alain Martin have been extremely generous in keeping me informed about their work. ⁴⁶ B139, see n. 107 below.

⁴⁷ Esp. Furley (1970); also Kranz (1944), Castner (1987), Gale (1994a), pp. 59–75. I have not seen Jobst (1907), but I understand from Don Fowler that he anticipated Kranz’s most important findings. For other studies, see Tatum (1984), p. 178 n. 5.

⁴⁸ This figure tries to take some account of the new papyrus find. I understand from the editors,