after 322? In two scenes leading up to the ejection of Chrysis, Demeas delivers monologues that resemble forensic speeches, even addressing the crowd as though they are a jury in each scene (ἄνδρες, 269, 329).[14] The spectators themselves know that Demeas is unjustly judging Chrysis based on incomplete information about the paternity of the baby. The first speech (206–82) features an extensive narrative in which he comes to all the wrong conclusions, the second (324–56) his rash reaction to these conclusions and thus the decision to expel Chrysis. The joke, then, places Demeas as the misinformed and unjust initiator of ostracism, colouring the institution as one ripe for abuse through rash action and bad deliberation. Thus the reference offers implied support for ostracism's abolition and, as a result, hints at Menander's pro-Macedonian leanings.[15]

The joke, the dating of the play, and previous scholarship on Menander's pro-Macedonian leanings all fit perfectly with Heftner's theory about the abolition of ostracism. Furthermore, as Arnott has demonstrated, the *Samia* has more references to contemporary political events than any other surviving Menandrian play, including a nod to a piece of Demetrius' legislation—the abolition of the *chorēgia* (13).[16] Nor is the *Samia* the only play in which Menander addresses recent oligarchic legislation. A fragment of the *Kekryphalos* (fr. 208 K.–A.) references the Demetrian sumptuary laws as well as their enforcers (the γυναικονόμοι).[17] Despite existing uncertainty, the revelation of an ostracism joke in Menander adds fresh detail to the ever-expanding picture of the historical, political and literary contours of his plays.

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LUCRETIUS 6.391: AN EMENDATION

ABSTRACT

*This article argues that at Lucr. 6.391 (*icti flammas ut fulguris halent*)* fulguris *is a corruption, and proposes to read* sulpuris *instead. While the case against* fulguris *may in itself not be incontrovertible, the advantages of* sulpuris *include the acquisition of a new Homeric intertext in* Il. *8.135* δεινὴ δὲ φλὸξ ὧρτο θεείου καιομένοιο.

Keywords: Lucretius; textual criticism; Latin poetry; lightning; Homer; intertextuality

[14] See A. Scafuro, *The Forensic Stage: Settling Disputes in Graeco-Roman New Comedy* (Cambridge, 1997), 95 for the legal undertones of this address.

[15] For arguments in favour of Menander's support for the Demetrian regime, see W.E. Major, 'Menander in a Macedonian world', *GRBS* 38 (1997), 41–73 and W.M. Owens, 'The political topicality of Menander's *Dyskolos*', *AJPh* 132 (2011), 349–78. For a contrary interpretation—that Menander's plays supported Athenian democracy—see S. Lape, *Reproducing Athens: Menander's Comedy, Democratic Culture, and the Hellenistic City* (Princeton, 2004).

[16] Arnott (n. 13), 3.8–12 identifies six such references.

[17] Sommerstein (n. 1), 45 n. 133.

Lucretius argues that thunder and lightning have natural causes, for if they are produced by the gods –

> cur quibus incautum scelus auersabile cumquest
> non faciunt icti flammas ut fulguris halent
> pectore perfixo, documen mortalibus acre? (6.390–2)

The passage is seemingly sound and appears not to have attracted critical attention.[1] I propose to argue that *fulguris* is a corruption, but I admit from the outset that the case *against* the transmitted reading may, *per se*, be inconclusive.

To begin with, what exactly does *halent* mean? Bailey glosses it with 'reek of', comparing 6.221 *notaeque* [*sc*. *fulminis*] *grauis halantes sulpuris auras* (a passage to which we shall return), but there *halantes* rather means 'exhaling, emitting'.[2] As *OLD* s.v. *halo* makes clear, this is the normal sense of *halare* with the accusative, whereas the meaning 'to smell of' is expressed by *halare* with the ablative. It seems clear that *flammas … halent* must mean 'exhale flames', as can additionally be confirmed by Enn. *trag*. 169 Jocelyn *quadrupedantes flammam halitantes* (of the Sun's fire-breathing horses) or Ov. *Met*. 15.343 *spiramenta locis flammam exhalantia multis* (of volcanoes as the Earth's breathing holes), as well as by Virgil's imitation of the Lucretian passage, *Aen*. 1.44 *illum exspirantem transfixo pectore flammas* (of Locrian Ajax, struck by Athena's thunderbolt).[3] Apart from the linguistic considerations, this construal also seems superior in terms of content: seeing someone set aflame by a lightning bolt is much more of a *documen* than deducing that the person was killed by lightning from the smell of the corpse. The obvious problem is that *flammas … fulguris* is what a person struck by lightning receives rather than emits, though it can perhaps be got around by taking the phrase to mean something like 'flames produced by lightning' or 'flames of the nature of lightning'.[4] This no doubt was the reasoning behind Rouse's translation: 'breathe out sulphurous flames'.[5]

This I suggest is indeed the sense we need, but it should be obtained not by forcing the transmitted text but by substituting *sulpuris* for *fulguris*. Although the shortcomings of *fulguris* may not be unsurmountable, the advantages of *sulpuris* seem overwhelming. First of all, it must be noted that the corruption is extremely easy in minuscule script (*fulp-* → *fulg-*) and would further be facilitated by contextual pressure.[6] More to the

[1] Suffice it to note that both Deufert's apparatus criticus and his commentary have nothing to say on this passage (M. Deufert, *Titus Lucretius Carus: De rerum natura libri VI* [Berlin, 2019], 260; M. Deufert, *Kritischer Kommentar zu Lukrezens 'De rerum natura'* [Berlin, 2018], 396–7).

[2] C. Bailey, *Titi Lucreti Cari De rerum natura libri sex*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1947), 3.1613.

[3] B. Taylor, 'Rationalism and the theatre in Lucretius', *CQ* 66 (2016), 140–54, at 144–5 plausibly suggests that Lucretius alludes here to a fragment of Accius' *Clytemestra*, likewise referring to Locrian Ajax (*trag*. 35 *pectore fulmen inchoatum flammam ostentabat Iouis*), but its exact text and sense are uncertain, so as to be of little help in construing the Lucretian line.

[4] One may, though, have some misgivings about the plausibility of the expression as such: *fulgur* properly means 'flash', and normally implies the visual aspect of a thunderbolt rather than, so to speak, its essence, so that 'flames of a flash' would be a rather odd way of putting it (Lucretius can speak, conversely, about 1.725 *flammai fulgura* and 6.182 *fulgura flammae*: 'flashes of flame', both a periphrasis for lightning); *flammae fulminis* is the expression we might rather expect (cf. e.g. Verg. *Aen*. 10.177 *fulminis ignes*, and note Serv. on *Aen*. 1.44, quoted above: *non animam dicit flammas, sed cum anima fulminis flammas uomentem*).

[5] W.H.D. Rouse, M.F. Smith, *Lucretius: On the Nature of Things*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA, 1992), 523. M.F. Smith, *Lucretius: On the Nature of Things*, rev. ed. (Indianapolis, 2001), 188 translates literally: 'exhale the lightning's flames'.

[6] The archetype of Lucretius as well as its exemplar were in all likelihood written in minuscule; see

point, writing *sulpuris* will produce unambiguous Latin, while also harmonizing the two Lucretian passages describing the effect of lightning: the one speaking about places struck by lightning 'exhaling sulphurous fumes', the other about people struck by lightning 'exhaling sulphurous flames'.[7] In and of itself, this harmonization may not be a strong argument for making the change, but it opens up attractive interpretative possibilities.

One might think that the idea of lightning smelling of sulphur was a commonplace in antiquity, but in fact before Lucretius it is only explicitly attested in Homer.[8] The *Odyssey* features two identical contexts referring to a ship being struck by a thunderbolt, which as a result ἐν δὲ θεείου πλῆτο (12.417 = 14.307); these appear irrelevant for our present concerns. The other two passages, from the *Iliad*, have greater potential. One belongs to a simile comparing Hector felled by Ajax to an oak struck by a thunderbolt, which produces a strong smell of sulphur (14.415–16 δεινὴ δὲ θεείου γίγνεται ὀδμὴ | ἐξ αὐτῆς). Given the lack of other pre-Lucretian references to the phenomenon, it is difficult not to connect 6.221 *notaeque grauis halantes sulpuris auras* to this Homeric passage (*grauis* ~ δεινή, *sulpuris* ~ θεείου, *auras* ~ ὀδμή).[9] Lucretius is there arguing that the sulphurous smell which lightning leaves betrays its fiery nature, and it must have pleased him to be able to derive this physical argument from Homer. The fourth, and last, Homeric passage associating lightning with sulphur is potentially the richest intertext. In *Iliad* 8 Diomedes and Nestor are about to attack Hector, but are stopped by a thunderbolt striking right in front of them and producing an explosion of sulphurous flames (8.135 δεινὴ δὲ φλὸξ ὦρτο θεείου καιομένοιο); Nestor interprets this as a warning from Zeus (which in fact it is), and the two heroes halt their attack. First of all, if we accept my proposal to read *sulpuris* at 6.391, here we obtain another exact point of contact between Lucretius and Homer: not only on the lexical level (*flammas … sulpuris* ~ φλὸξ … θεείου), but also in that the reference is in both cases not to the flame of a lightning bolt as such but to that produced by its strike. While this alone makes *sulpuris* an attractive correction (we thus have two interrelated Lucretian passages modelled on two interrelated Homeric passages), the context in *Iliad* 8 also proves a fitting target of polemic allusion. On the one hand,

e.g. D. Butterfield, *The Early Textual History of Lucretius'* De rerum natura (Cambridge, 2013), 268–70, citing as evidence, among other things, the confusion of *s* and *f* (at 269 n. 3); he concludes that the archetype 'was a manifestly corrupt codex that still requires a good dose of conjecture' (272). The postulated corruption can be paralleled e.g. at Claud. *Rapt. Pros*. 3.399 *stridunt admisso sulpure rami*, where some manuscripts read *fulgure*.

[7] Lucretius refers to sulphur two more times, both later on in the same book (6.747 and 806), though in rather different contexts; note, however, that the former (*acri sulpure*) uses of sulphur the same adjective that occurs in 6.392 *documen mortalibus acre*, where it may hint at the smell of sulphur (I owe this observation to the anonymous reviewer).

[8] For a recent overview of the evidence, see R. Cowan, 'The smell of Sophokles' *Salmoneus*: technology, scatology, metatheatre', *Ramus* 43 (2014), 1–24, at 3–7, focussing on Soph. fr. 538 Radt, which alludes to but does not actually name sulphur; cf. also E.S. McCartney, 'Classical weather lore of thunder and lightning', *CW* 25 (1932), 183–92, 200–8, 212–16, at 185–6.

[9] Lucretius' pervasive and sophisticated engagement with Homer is well known, if still understudied; for some specific examples, see e.g. P.J. Aicher, 'Lucretian revisions of Homer', *CJ* 87 (1992), 139–58; cf. more recently e.g. E.A. Kyllo, 'Two allusions to the songs of Demodocus in Lucretius' *De rerum natura*', *CB* 73 (1997), 31–7; L. Kronenberg, 'The light side of the moon: a Lucretian acrostic (*luce*, 5.712–15) and its relationship to acrostics in Homer (*leukē*, *Il*. 24.1–5) and Aratus (*leptē*, *Phaen*. 783–87)', *CPh* 114 (2019), 278–92; for Lucretius' indebtedness to (Greek) epic more generally, see e.g. D. West, 'Lucretius and epic', in D. West, *The Imagery and Poetry of Lucretius* (Edinburgh, 1969), 23–34 and E.J. Kenney, 'Doctus Lucretius', *Mnemosyne* 23 (1970), 366–92, both reprinted in M.R. Gale (ed.), *Lucretius* (Oxford, 2007), 289–99 and 300–27.

Diomedes and Nestor are exactly the kind of superstitious cowards Lucretius is admonishing his readers not to be. On the other, the fact that the thunderbolt actually misses Diomedes—who, we may remember, wounded Aphrodite and Ares on the previous day—cannot but prove that it was not sent by Zeus: with characteristic irony, Lucretius thus obtains an argument against Homer from Homer himself.[10] Virgil, in turn, may be seen to be disputing him when he refers at *Aen*. 1.44 to Locrian Ajax as being struck by Athena's thunderbolt, in a clear imitation of the Lucretian passage (cf. above).[11]

Textual critics usually ask, before accepting a conjecture, whether we can be certain that the transmitted reading is corrupt; it may be more honest, especially in the case of texts whose tradition is demonstrably unreliable, to ask, before accepting a transmitted reading, whether we can be certain that it is intact. In the case of Lucr. 6.391 *fulguris*, I admit that the answer to the former question may not be positive; at the same time, especially if we consider the alternative *sulpuris*, I cannot see how the answer to the latter question can be positive either.

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LUCRETIAN DIDO: A STICHOMETRIC ALLUSION*

ABSTRACT

In the fourth *line of her* first *speech in Book 1, to Ilioneus and the Trojan castaways, Dido quotes the* first *word of the* first *line of Lucretius'* De rerum natura*, and in the* fourth *line of her* second *speech, to Aeneas, she quotes the* first *words of the* second *line of the* De rerum natura. *This is not a coincidence but a signal of the importance of Lucretius and Epicureanism for the characterization of Dido in the* Aeneid.

Keywords: Virgil; *Aeneid*; Dido; Lucretius; Epicureanism; intertextuality

That Dido in the *Aeneid* is characterized as a proto-Epicurean was recognized long ago. A.S. Pease, developing hints already present in Servius, was perhaps the first to deal with the matter in these terms in an article from 1927 and in the introduction to his

[10] On Lucretius' practice of turning against his opponents their own *ipsissima verba*, cf. P.H. De Lacy, 'Lucretius and Plato', in *Συζήτησις: Studi sull'epicureismo greco e romano offerti a Marcello Gigante* (Naples, 1983), 291–307, at 291, observing that Lucretius 'not only rejected Platonism but even derived anti-Platonic arguments from the *Dialogues*, thus turning Plato against himself'.

[11] The matters are further complicated by Accius' fragment that already referred to Ajax' death by a thunderbolt, to which Lucretius appears to be alluding (see n. 3 above); Lucretius may be seen to be correcting Accius, since in the Homeric account Ajax drowns (*Od*. 4.510)—or perhaps simply silencing him (after all, even in Homer Ajax' death is brought about by Athena's and Poseidon's actions)?

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