

## Citation style

Eckerman, Chris: review of: T. H. M. Gellar-Goad, *Laughing Atoms, Laughing Matter: Lucretius' "De Rerum Natura" and Satire*. Lucretius' "De rerum natura" and Satire, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2020, in: *Exemplaria Classica*, 27 (2023), p. 309-315, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33776/ec.v27.8040>, downloaded from Website

**exemplaria**  
C L A S S I C A  
Journal of Classical Philology

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*cascus* « ancien » (*Ling.* 7.28) et *catus* « aigu » (*Ling.* 7.46) à une langue « sabine » qu'il distingue de l'« osque » (mentionné p. ex. en *Ling.* 7.54). En outre, il aurait été utile de rappeler que, désormais, le gentilice osque *Ennis* est attesté dans une inscription samnite de Pietrabbondante,<sup>9</sup> apportant un indice plus solide de l'ascendance osque d'Ennius.

Je conclurai en soulignant encore la grande valeur de cet ouvrage. S'il se veut une porte d'entrée vers l'étude de la poésie latine préclassique (p. 88), il ne fait aucun doute qu'il atteint son but. Il le dépasse, à vrai dire, car même les spécialistes du sujet y trouveront un état de la question fort utile et très à jour.

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T.H.M. GELLAR-GOAD, *Laughing Atoms, Laughing Matter: Lucretius' De Rerum Natura and Satire*, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2020, 290 pp., hardcover, \$85.00 ISBN 978-0-472-13180-8.

It may come as a surprise to some readers of this review that a didactic poem, largely devoted to the explanation of Epicurean physics, should be replete with satiric humor and mockery. But readers familiar with the phenomenon of *die Kreuzung der Gattungen*, so familiar from Hellenistic poetry, will be less surprised to consider *De rerum natura* (hereafter, *DRN*) a generically complex, if not generically ambivalent, work of poetry, perhaps one of satire as much as of earnest didactic. With this monograph, T.H.M. Gellar-Goad (hereafter, G-G) is successful, making an important contribution to the study of satire. Surely few readers of this book will be able to read the *DRN* without greater appreciation for the role of satire in the poem.

In the introduction, G-G begins with reference to Lucretius' use of Anaxagoras at *DRN* 1.915-20, noting Lucretius' employment of mocking imagery in relation to a philosophical opponent. With this vignette behind him, G-G asserts that he will be examining Lucretius' interaction with satire, both as mode (i.e., the use of themes and conventions that are typical to the genre of satire, even outside the genre of satire) and as genre, *satira*. He remarks that scholars generally read the *DRN* as a text aimed at converting its readers to Epicureanism (4-5), although he is skeptical of this approach (G-G will come back to this position in the conclusion). Turning to consider the history of reading satire in the *DRN*, G-G overviews scholars' positions in relation to this study and concludes that these studies have been "helpful but incomplete" (9).

<sup>9</sup> P. D'Amico, A. La Regina, "Sannio. Pietrabbondante. Tavola con dedica di un *medix tuticus*", *SE* 76, 2013, 301-4.

G-G turns to audience, narrator, and author and suggests that Lucretius' addressee, Memmius, would have had "at least passing familiarity with Rome's (elite) poetic tradition" (10). This seems fair. Thereafter, he turns to Lucretius' broader intended audience and suggests that it would have been a relatively small subsection of Roman society, "those who knew how to read" (10); and he cautions that we can say little about the social situations of these readers. This too seems fair. He also opines that we should not read the *DRN* either as aimed at the 'novitiate of philosophy' or as at the 'expert Epicurean' (11); that the text would attract a capacious audience with various levels of familiarity with Epicureanism, again, seems fair, but I stress that we should keep in mind that Lucretius does tailor his work to be accessible to novices. A short section on the narrator follows, with G-G remarking that he will not refer to the narrator as 'Lucretius' but as 'the Lucretius-ego', 'the Lucretian speaker', or 'the narrator of *DRN*.' In this respect, G-G is in tune with his contemporary critical moment. The introduction closes with a chapter overview, and G-G ends with the following important observation: "Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* uses satire extensively and broadly, a phenomenon that should prompt more delicate and cautious treatment of the philosophical content, doctrine, and argumentation presented in the poem" (16).

In the first chapter, G-G provides a theoretical overview of satire as 'genre' and 'mode.' G-G begins by discussing satire as genre, commenting both on the importance of verse in the history of the genre (with dactylic hexameter becoming the canonical meter of satire) and on the importance of the employment of a 'lower' style, for the composition of satire, in relation to some other genres, such as epic, a 'higher' genre. Thereafter, G-G provides a history of satire from the perspective of the canonical satirists. He observes that Horace chastises Lucilius, the forebear of the genre, for being 'muddy' and overly productive, whereas Persius situates himself in relation to his forebears (Lucilius and Horace) by 'narrowing' the horizons of his predecessors, and Juvenal moves the genre in the direction of outrage, *indignatio*. This is a brief summary of G-G's more sophisticated discussion. G-G also makes a case for reconceptualizing diatribe, suggesting that "the diatribe we perceive in Bion, Horace, or Lucretius is not a genre, register, or mode but, rather, a discursive response of the speaker to a situation in the speaker's cultural context" (26). This is a noteworthy sub-argument in the book, since diatribe has played a considerable role in the history of the interpretation of the *DRN*.

So much for satire (and 'diatribe') in relation to the history of genre. We turn to mode, the satirist, and satire. And G-G offers four features of the satiric mode: 1) satire has an object, which can be "a vice, a particular human target, an event, or practically anything else" (28); 2) satire has a model, and we are told that "the antecedent can be one of genre, discourse, or medium" (28); 3) satire must be humorous; 4) satire contains ambiguity. G-G also offers four features of the satirist: 1) the satirist cultivates a personal voice; 2) the satirist proffers 'comic mockery and blame'; 3) the satirist professes 'indignation justified by claims of the moral high ground'; 4) the satirist constructs 'a collusive relationship with the

audience.’ These taxonomical schemata will be helpful for readers as they consider the development of G-G’s arguments. Furthermore, G-G reminds us that satire is intellectually demanding and that many audience members will simply not be up to the task of being ‘ideal’ readers of satire. After all, audience members may not grasp a particular occurrence of satire or they may misconstrue it altogether. Moreover, ‘one’s ideological mindset’ may impede the understanding of satire; this is an important point to which G-G will return in the conclusion. G-G closes the chapter noting that readers need not always take satirists seriously and that satirists need not always take the task of satirizing seriously.

In the second chapter, G-G begins by considering elements that *satura* and the *DRN* share in common. G-G asserts that *DRN* and the genre of satire share in common both the satiric mode (which need not always be active in the genre *satura*) and a didactic pose. The dactylic hexameter is another commonality, and G-G also marks reflection on, and study of, language as a *topos* common to satire and Lucretius’ *DRN*. The final commonality, according to G-G, is the concept of ‘fullness’; this is perhaps best witnessed by the broad subject matter of *satura*, which may be paralleled in the *DRN*, given the narrator’s aspiration to explicate the entire cosmos.

G-G turns to address Lucretius’ engagement with the satire that preceded him. He examines intertexts between Varronian satire and Lucretius’ poem and, thereafter, having more text to consider, studies Lucretius’ engagement with Ennius’ satiric writings. G-G catalogs four similarities whereby Lucretius may be viewed as indebted to Ennius. These include the use of an ‘otherworldly poetic *locus amoenus*,’ asyndeton, the use of personification in the discussion of death, and an approach to the making of satire that is less belligerent than is that of Lucilius. Some readers of this section may be skeptical with regard to the view that we should read such phenomena in the *DRN* with Ennius particularly in mind, since, as G-G himself acknowledges (58), all four of the similarities that G-G here catalogs may be paralleled in other authors and genres. A substantial section on Lucretius and Lucilius follows, with G-G considering ‘philosophy’, ‘love and sex’, ‘metapoetic and didactic stance’, and ‘public life’. These sections detail several valuable correspondences, but I note that, in relation to his ‘love and sex section’ G-G (64) focuses his reading in a way that furthers his own argument when the topic at hand deserves a more even handed approach: G-G reads 4.116-70 in relation to Lucilius and bypasses discussion of the important Greek models that Lucretius also engages in that passage.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, it is worth noting that G-G does not problematize the concept/genre of satire at the time of Lucretius, although it may have been worth doing so, for *satura* as a genre does not really come into shape until the production of Horace’s *Sermones*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See G-G’s footnote 41, p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> On this topic, see e.g., S. Goldberg, “Lucilius and the *poetae seniores*” in B. Breed, E. Keitel, R. Reed, eds., *Lucilius and Satire in Second-Century BC Rome*, Cambridge 2018, 39-56.

In chapter 3, ‘*De rerum natura* and Later Roman Satire,’ G-G addresses Horace’s, Persius’, and Juvenal’s allusions to the *DRN*. This is a dense chapter, and readers who have more familiarity with the *DRN* than with satire may struggle to read the chapter as a self-standing entity, since G-G offers little background to the satirical texts addressed. G-G reminds his reader that Horace engages Epicureanism considerably, Persius engages Stoicism considerably, while Juvenal considers and rejects “the value of formal philosophy” (81). In this chapter, G-G provides extended catalogs of Horace’s, Persius’, and Juvenal’s allusions to Lucretius and thereafter settles into some extended discussions of particular passages. (It may have been better to present these catalogs in tabular form or as an appendix, since little argument is developed herein.) G-G then offers argumentative discussions regarding Lucretius and the satirists. He reminds us that “Roman satire is obsessed with food” (98), while Lucretius’ narrator is not. Furthermore, G-G shows his readers how Lucretius’ ‘alphabetic imagery’ is worked with by Horace, Persius, and Juvenal. G-G then addresses possible Epicurean imagery in Persius 1.1. Thereafter, G-G addresses the satirists’ use of what he refers to as the *suave mari magno* proem to Book 2 of the *DRN*. G-G refers to this proem as ‘satiric’,<sup>3</sup> but I do not find G-G’s suggestion persuasive, and no argument is provided in favor of the assertion; the fact that later satirists engage the proem need not mean that the proem is satiric. While discussing Lucretius’ proem, G-G assumes, like most scholars, that Lucretius integrates a reference to a “fortress of philosophy” (111).<sup>4</sup> I have recently argued that this is not the case.<sup>5</sup> A few more subsections follow and, therein, G-G offers a compelling reading of Juvenal Poem 12 in relation to Epicurean discourse on animal sacrifice.

In chapter 4, ‘The Lucretian Speaker and the Mode of Satire,’ G-G engages Lucretius’ programmatic satiric elements. He first addresses Lucretius’ use of *reductio ad absurdum* against philosophical opponents, using Lucretius’ critique of Anaxagoras’ theory of *homoeomeria* as a primary case study. In this valuable discussion, G-G submits that “underlying the Lucretian practice of *reductio* is the relentless pursuit of rival hypotheses and analogy to their logically illogical ends” (132). In the following section, ‘Erotic Foibles’, G-G considers Lucretius’ well-known satire on love and sex in Book 4 (particularly lines 1121-33) and observes

<sup>3</sup> The claim is repeated at 166-7, where G-G asserts that “this scene of viewing the troubles of others from a secure vantage point provides just the sort of isolation that satire requires.” Isolation is, I think, a tendentious word choice, and the separation of the viewer from the ills of others need not be read in relation to satire. The imagery of spatial security, I think, derives from the imagery of the safety provided by allegiance to a philosophical school. For citations, see D. Fowler, *Lucretius on Atomic Motion: A Commentary on De rerum natura 2.1–332*, Oxford 2002, 51.

<sup>4</sup> This supposed stronghold is evoked several times in the monograph: 13, 145, 167, 202, 207, 213, 215, 218.

<sup>5</sup> See “Practicing ataraxia at Lucretius’ *De rerum natura* 2.7–8,” *RhMPh* 163, 2020, 167-73 and, building thereon, “Ataraxia Vanquishes Eros: Lucretius’ Sappho at *De rerum natura* 2.1–8,” *Mnemosyne* 74, 2021, 152-60, “Ratio, Aponia, Ataraxia: On the Proem of Book Two of Lucretius’ *De rerum natura*,” *RhMPh* 165, 2022, 66-74.

that Lucretius' narrator herein exudes a 'comic voice.' The final sub-section on 'Language' focuses on the narrator's mockery of Heraclitus. Thereafter, G-G provides a section on Lucretius' narrator and submits that "the Lucretian speaker has more in common with the satirists...than with the Homeric narrator" (137). The third section of the chapter addresses, *inter alia*, the 'moral, intellectual, and poetic high ground' that the Lucretian narrator claims. I am not persuaded that the passages that G-G herein discusses need be read in relation to G-G's supposed moral high-ground of satire (140) because they may also be read in relation to the trope that a philosophical life is 'higher' than a normal life, without reference to satire.<sup>6</sup> In the fourth illuminating subsection, G-G focuses on the narrator's mockery and parody of opponents, both philosophical (e.g. Sceptics) and religious (e.g. *vates*), and the manner in which Lucretius introduces what G-G refers to as 'guest satirists' (e.g. *Rerum Natura* at 3.931-62). A section on *indignatio* follows, and herein G-G addresses the narrator's attacks against philosophers (e.g., Heraclitus) and *religio*, in relation to which he thoughtfully concludes "moral value-laden terminology allows him to appropriate the sense of moral righteousness conventionally linked with the religious system he is attacking" (158). In the following section, G-G shows that Lucretius' narrator, like Horace's, "engages his readership collusively and...occasionally points to an out-group as a derisible target for satire" (158-9).

In chapter 5, G-G argues that "where other satiric works incorporate conflict between satire and didactic as a thematic concern, *De Rerum Natura* deploys the two in mutually reinforcing ways. Satire emerges as a possibly surprising but ultimately powerful auxiliary for the Lucretian narrator's aims" (164). I think that G-G misleads when he asserts thereafter that the proem to Book 2 exemplifies satiric ambiguity because "on first read, the book's opening may strike the reader as blatant *schadenfreude*, glorying maliciously in the misfortunes of others" (167).<sup>7</sup> Lucretius' narrator is explicit that no joy is taken in the suffering of others (*non quia vexari quemquamst iucunda voluptas, sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suave est*, 3-4).<sup>8</sup> In the following sections, G-G addresses the use of didactic in the Roman satirists and asserts that "it is characteristic of satire to take advantage of the expectation of utility conferred on it by the didactic pose" (171); he notes that "satire frequently misrepresents its targets in order to compel the audience to admit the satire's version of reality as the only acceptable account. In other words, satire creates straw men" (172). This is a very important point and needs to be taken into

<sup>6</sup> For discussion of such *topoi*, see Fowler, *Lucretius on Atomic Motion*, 49-51.

<sup>7</sup> G-G elsewhere makes the claim that enjoyment is taken in soldiers' and sailors' misfortunes (207) and, at 214, he asserts "the Lucretian speaker claims that it is pleasurable to see others in hard times...when you yourself are watching from a safe vantage point." This second quotation bypasses the important point that the narrator stresses that the pleasure comes from cognizance of one's own safety and not from the harm of others.

<sup>8</sup> On this topic, see too Eckerman "Ratio, Aponia, Ataraxia", 73, with reference to previous bibliography.

account by readers of Lucretius who might be put off by Lucretius' seeming lack of interest in doing credible doxography in relation to philosophical opponents: it is not of the nature of a satirist to do so. G-G suggests that "The Lucretius-*ego*, who presents himself as a didact, at times poses as a satirist. This adoption of the satiric persona...effectively fuses didactic and satiric authority" (175); he suggests that "the [*DRN*] self-presents as a poem of philosophical initiation. The act of siding with the mocking Lucretian speaker over the objects of his blame...amounts to satiric initiation as well" (179); G-G observes that "By contrast [sc. with the genre of Roman verse satire], *De Rerum Natura* does not make a theme out of the concern, evident in Roman satire, that didactic success may close off the potential for continued didactic production" (181).

In the sixth chapter, G-G considers representations of social and political life in Roman satire and in the *DRN*. G-G observes that "*De Rerum Natura* both criticizes the Roman civil order for its glaring flaws and still engages constructively with the *civitas* from time to time" (189). Herein G-G observes that a trait of the *DRN* which makes it stand out from its Epicurean predecessors is its Romanness and suggests that the Lucretius-*ego* may be viewed as playing the doctor to all of Rome, as Epicurus may be viewed as playing the doctor to all of Athens. Thereafter, G-G argues that the two farmers who lament the fertility of the earth, at the end of Book 2, may be read in relation to satire (G-G analyzes theme and word choice in support of his argument) and he briefly considers the satiric elements at the ends of Books 3 and 4, which have already been widely studied by previous scholars for their satiric tones. G-G also argues for the presence of substantial satire at the ends of Books 5 and 6; I do not find his argument regarding the end of Book 6 particularly compelling, and I think it is worth noting that G-G does not comment on evidence that works against his thesis.<sup>9</sup> The chapter ends with G-G suggesting that the satiric passages of the *DRN* may be read in relation to the Greco-Roman tradition of *spoudaiogeloion*.

G-G begins his conclusion with a helpful chapter overview, reminding the reader of the arguments that have been made. He closes the book with the observation that satire may take advantage of the fact that it can have two audiences, those who get the joke and those who do not, as well as of the fact that it may have multiple addressees. G-G begins by using Catullus 56 as a case study, noting that the poem becomes funny in different ways based on the identity of the Cato addressed. Is it Cato the Younger, a man of traditional Roman morals or Valerius Cato, one of the so-called Neoterics? Catullus 56 may be funny because it would be inappropriate humor for the strict Cato the Younger. Whereas the humor may come otherwise for an audience member who envisions Valerius Cato as the addressee. Another example comes in the form of Stephen Colbert, who was invited to the 2006 White House Correspondents dinner by the Bush administration, based on the belief that his humor was pro-Conservative. At the dinner, Colbert critiqued

<sup>9</sup> Note Lucretius' language of compassion: *miserandum* (1230), *aerumnabile* (1231).

the Bush administration, making the conservative audience uncomfortable. But Colbert's performance was widely successful with his YouTube audience. And so the immediate addressees, at a certain level, were never Colbert's intended audience. Such examples lead G-G to suggest that "the *De Rerum Natura* is not the conversion document of a zealous Epicurean missionary. Rather, it stages the attempt of such a follower of Epicurus to persuade the internal addressee" (219). So, G-G asks us to ruminate on the tension that may derive from having an internal addressee, Memmius, and external addressees, whom he engages otherwise. I think it is fair to say that the *DRN* stages an attempt to persuade an internal addressee, but I do not think that we have the evidence to conclude that the *DRN* is not the conversion document of a zealous Epicurean missionary.

I hope this review has clarified to the reader that this is a dense and thoughtful book that makes an important contribution to studies of Lucretius and satire. It well repays time spent with it.

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NICOLETTA BRUNO, *L'origine della violenza e della paura. Commento a Lucrezio, De rerum natura 5, 1105-1349*, *Studia Classica et Mediaevalia* 29, Nordhausen: T. Bautz, 2020, 527 pp., ISBN 978-3-95948-487-9.

Il V libro di Lucrezio è fra i più commentati dell'opera. Oltre ai classici Munro (London 1886<sup>4</sup>), Giussani (Torino 1898), Merrill (New York-Cincinnati-Chicago 1907), Leonard e Smith (Madison 1942), Bailey (Oxford 1947), Ernout e Robin (Paris 1962<sup>2</sup>), disponiamo infatti dei commenti specifici di Costa (Oxford 1984) e Gale (Oxford 2009), nonché di tre commenti parziali di diverso valore e impegno: quello di Jackson ai vv. 1-280 (Pisa-Roma 2013), di Salemme ai vv. 416-508 (Napoli 2010) e di Campbell ai vv. 772-1104 (Oxford 2003). A questi va ora aggiunto il volume di Nicoletta Bruno, dove sono passati al vaglio i vv. 1105-349 della *Kulturgeschichte*, dedicati alle prime forme di organizzazione politica e sociale, all'origine della religione, alla scoperta dei metalli e alla storia delle arti belliche.

Il volume è costituito da tre sezioni principali: una densa *Introduzione* (pp. 19-96), suddivisa in tre paragrafi; il testo latino e la traduzione italiana, preceduti da una *Breve storia del testo del De rerum natura* (pp. 99-126) e da una *Nota al testo* (p. 127); il commento (pp. 151-457). Seguono la *Bibliografia* finale (pp. 461-503) e due indici, dei passi citati e dei nomi e delle parole notevoli (pp. 507-25).

Nell'*Introduzione*, Bruno offre varie considerazioni interessanti: richiamiamo in particolare il confronto tra Tucidide e Lucrezio sull'uso dell'analogia come strumento ermeneutico per l'indagine del passato (pp. 25-49), un tema di cui la